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Reclaiming Their Rightful Place?
An Analysis of the Links between Medieval and Early Modern Female Brewers and Consumers in Ireland with their Modern Counterparts

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Over the course of the past several decades the world of beer and brewing has undergone a major shift. What was once an industry and culture dominated by men has seen a considerable influx of both female brewers and consumers. This has often been heralded in the media as a return to the historical status quo, because, they contend, women had generally been the dominant force in brewing for centuries all over the world. These articles explore this brewing history for links to the modern craft beer scene and often conclude that women are once again achieving their rightful position within the industry, one that they haven't held for many years. Tara Nurin's aptly named "How Women Brewster's Saved the World" declared that, "until fairly recently as history goes, women were the driving force behind much of the world's beer production" (Nurin 2016). Furthermore, in her "Brewing Beer has Always Been a Women's Game", author Maya Oppenheim (2017) exclaimed: "women are now reclaiming an industry that was pretty much birthed by them".

While it is true that for centuries women were primarily responsible for brewing in many regions globally, their position within the socio-economic system in which they lived was not always a particularly good one (Vaughan 2012, pp.34-41; Sauer 2015). For example, Judith Bennett (1996, p.147) argued that in medieval England "when women brewed, it was a humble employment, offering little prestige and little profit...compared to the sorts of work available to men, it was a poor option indeed". Instead, it was only after brewing became a desirable position for men did either of these variables meaningfully increase across the board. Additionally, alewives in high and late medieval and early modern England were becoming increasingly maligned. From William Langland's Beton the Brewster in *Piers Plowman*, to John Skelton's *The Tunning of Elynour Rummyng*, to the John Lydgate's "Ballad on an Ale-Seller", they are represented as selling befouled and adulterated ales in illegal measures and generally lying and seducing their way through the literary world of high and late medieval and early modern society.¹ In addition to these literary depictions, the cheating alewife was often represented in art. For example, in St. Laurence's Church in Ludlow, a misericord depicts a naked alewife being dragged to hell. Alewives in hell are also

¹ See Skelton 2012, pp.1-8; Langland 2006; Lydgate 1920-1934.

found in the Doom painting of Holy Trinity Church and a carving in Norwich Cathedral boasts a nude alewife perched in a wheelbarrow pushed by a demon. These sorts of negative depictions, combined with the typically poor social position of female brewers, suggests the resurgence of female brewers and consumers in England is not a return to the past in all ways, but instead a combination: a reclamation of the traditional brewing art, with the social and economic position it affords currently; a position that was gained after male interest and involvement in the trade. There are of course exceptions to this lack of social standing as individual women could become quite wealthy, but Bennett's study demonstrated that these were likely exceptions to an overall low financial and social position for these women who brewed, particularly single women and widows, as this article will investigate further. Irish women, and English colonial women in Ireland, remained a central part of the brewing industry much later than many of their contemporaries in England. This article will explore this history of women brewers and consumers of ale and beer in Ireland, specifically focusing on the later medieval and early modern periods, when brewing came to shift into male hands in many areas of the world. Currently, in Ireland it is clearly apparent that more and more women are becoming involved in the craft, and indeed macro, brewing industries. The Ladies Craft Beer Society at the time of this writing boasts over one-thousand beer consuming female members (Meetup 2018). Breweries like Metalman, Rascals, Mountainman, Dungarvan, Two Sisters, N17, Hilden, among others, have women at their helms. This article will examine the position of women within these medieval and early modern contexts to ascertain whether the current climate within the beer industry is a return to a long held historical precedent, something completely new, or a mix of both.

The information for women brewing in Ireland in the early medieval periods is scant compared to the later source materials and, therefore, the analysis of brewing women in this period is largely speculative. That, combined with the limitations of this article, means that this will begin in the high and late medieval periods.²

In this context women were certainly brewing in regions under English, or Anglo-Norman, rule in Ireland. According to the *Calendar of the Contents of the Chain Book of the City of Dublin* women appear to be the primary brewers. The *Ordinances by the Common Council of the City of Dublin*, written in the early 14th century, only referenced women with regards to the brewing trade: "no woman-brewer shall brew with straw under penalty of 20 shillings" (Gilbert 1889, p.220). A further ordinance can be found from around the same time regarding

² This is, however, a topic of this author's continuing research.

finer for brewsters making “inferior ale” (Ibid., p.223). Another appeared in 1305 which stated that “every woman brewer must pay two shillings yearly, unless exempted by the baliffs. Fine for making ale inferior to the quality of the assize, 15 pence” (Ibid., p.224). Again, there is clear emphasis on women who brew, with no mention of men. This is mirrored in other laws throughout Ireland such as the *Corporation By-laws of Kilkenny*, where it was decreed in 1333 that if an alewife, *braciatrix*, sells a false measure a third time she will be subjected to the *swyngligstol* for corporeal punishment - that is the dunking stool (Graves 1849, p.49). Fewer argued that since the term “alewife” was used exclusively that this suggested “that it was only women who actually brewed or sold ale in mid-fourteenth century Kilkenny” (Fewer 2015, p.22).

This carried on throughout the 15th century, where a 1455 decree in Dublin, regarding the selling of ale in particular portions, was again only directed at women (Gilbert 1889, p.288). This continued in a final mention in 1470 in a similar act referring only to brewsters, and declared that, among other things, they should “sell their ale outside their houses, and this must be sealed” (Ibid., p.342). The only mention of women in relation to brewing of ale probably means that women were the primary brewers of the beverage. It is possible that women were only targeted by these laws, but it is more likely that they were by and large the ones doing the majority of the brewing, and therefore, they were mentioned by name. In 1480/1481 an ordinance found in the *Dublin Assembly Rolls* finally mentioned the possibility of male brewers using the phrase “brewers ne brewsteres” (brewers nor brewsters) (Ibid., p.360). Just two years later, however, in 1483, an entry returned to referencing only women, discussing “brewsteresses” and “tapestresses” (Ibid., p.364). This was also regarding the portion and sealing of measures of ale as had many of the previous ordinances. So there was apparently an anxiety surrounding cheating alewives in Ireland that the government felt necessitated continued ordinances regarding proper portions and serving laws.

While these legal codes mostly, with one exception, reference women, there is some evidence that men also brewed, albeit in small numbers. The *Guild Rolls of Dublin*, for example mention two brewers, both male (databases.dublincity.ie). This is a relatively small amount, which if representative of brewers in Dublin, may account for why it is only women mentioned in those other texts. Additionally, there are around 13 mentions of taverners who were all male found in the *Irish Exchequer Payments* from 1270 to 1446, who might not have been making ale, but likely selling it (Connolly 1998). So it is interesting that there is no mention of men in these earlier measures, when there is evidence of them brewing, though

perhaps in significantly smaller amounts to their female contemporaries. These men likely represent exceptions to the rule of female brewers.

Mary Ann Lyons (2000, pp.6, 12) contended that, in comparison to medieval or early modern England or other large continental powers, Ireland's economy was "backward, introverted and uncommercialized" due to the small population, highly localized trade (except in the Pale and East Munster), under-urbanization, little capital investment, the conversion of surplus produce into tributes for lords, and agricultural underdevelopment. Furthermore, this underdevelopment was maintained in some capacity or another until the 1640s. This concept in the early modern period is not unchallenged as exemplified in studies like the one conducted by Susan Flavin (2014), but it does appear that in comparison to those other countries', Ireland's economy was not as expansive or developed during the Middle Ages. This may have had an impact on the sustained brewing of ale and role of women in the industry. According to Fewer (2015, p.13), this lack of commercialization may have inhibited the professionalization of brewing in Ireland and the consequent setting up of industrial breweries until late in the seventeenth century. The concept of lack of commercialization is also supported in studies such as Thomas Halpin's *The Flowing Cup* (1998, p.31), where he postulated that brewing prior to the middle of the 17th century in Ireland was a largely domestic art done by ale-housekeepers with a few commercial breweries. From these late medieval records it is possible to conclude that women were likely the primary brewers in high and late medieval Anglo-Norman and English controlled Ireland. As for areas controlled by the native Irish, the information is much scarcer as with the early medieval period, and is a subject of this author's on-going research.

In early modern Ireland, while beer was making in-roads, in particular with newly arrived English colonists and military, ale was still exceedingly popular. According to Fewer (2015, p.34), home-brewed ale remained the popular drink of Kilkenny, throughout the second half of the sixteenth century and early seventeenth, and this was mirrored in Waterford. In 1551, the first mention of beer can be found in the *Assembly Rolls of Dublin*, with regards to a four-hundred-pound payment that was to be "bestowid in ber and biskit and the rest to be delyverit in mony" (Gilbert 1889, p.425).

Women are predominately mentioned in association with brewing throughout the sixteenth century in Ireland, though it is clear that men are becoming more and more active. According to John Bradley (2000, p.4), "private brewing remained characteristic of the town until the beginning of the seventeenth century" with a shift towards commercial brewing taking place

after 1650. This means that women may have still dominated the trade, or at least, taken part, longer than in areas like London.

Unfortunately for brewsters and female ale-sellers, official steps were taken to push women out of the brewing industry in Waterford. The particular egregious example is a city bylaw passed in 1603 that forbade women and girls from selling ale, among other things:

This lawe was made for the insuing consideracions; ffirst for avoyding whordome, Secondlie to avoyde the consealment of goods stollen, Thyrdlie for dryving away of unprofitable dwellers, and lastlie for strengthning of the Citie ffor then that all the retaylers within the Citie must be hereafter men servants and no women servants (Byrne 2007, p.211).

This link between alewives and prostitution was not unique to Waterford, and was quite common in England. Indeed, as mentioned in the introduction, both in art and literary texts alewives and sellers were commonly associated with cheating, lying, and sexually deviant behaviours which were viewed as socially threatening. Waterford's bylaw was not the only place for this ideology to manifest itself, however, as this article will now examine.

Barnabe Rich was an English Army Captain who served in the colonization of Ulster. He moved to Dublin to live out his later years and composed three works specifically about his findings on the country of Ireland. Rich was certainly biased against the Irish, and especially Catholics, spending significant portions of his works highlighting what he believed to be the evils of the religion (Rich 1612, p.14). In 1610 Rich penned his *New Description of Ireland*. While the text was by and large a horrific accounting at what he believed to be the many faults of the Irish people, he also devoted a portion of his diatribe to Dublin alewives. This mirrored the works of his English contemporaries, but also represented a pattern made by English observers in Ireland who often decried the drunkenness and promiscuity particularly of Irish women and blamed them as to why Ireland was hard to govern (Palmer 1992, pp.699-700). Therefore, it is at the intersections of these tropes that Rich must be understood. He wrote a particularly scathing commentary of these brewsters, stating that:

I will speake onelie of the riffe-raffe, the most filthy queanes, that are knowne to bee in the Countrey, (I meane those Huswiues that doe vse selling of drinke in Dubline, or elsewhere) commonly called Taurner-keepers, but indeed filthy and beastly alehousekeepers: I will not meddle with their honesties...they are in the manner of their life and liuing to bee detested and abhorred (Rich 1610, p.11).

Rich is clearly echoing the sentiments of his English cohorts here and painting a rather horrific portrait of the brewsters of Dublin. What is perhaps most fascinating about Rich's

accounting of alewives is that his *New Description of Ireland* was so poorly received in the city, that he was forced to write an apology text. In this he tried to distance himself from many of his original comments, though he certainly attempted to reaffirm others. For example with regards to women who brewed, he declared, that brewing “be|longes to good huswifery, that euey wise womanne is to vnder take” (Rich, 1612, p.12). A distinction he made no effort to make previously, but one he is almost forced to do so in this later work. Furthermore, he also attempted to create this distance by marking a clear difference between these honest women and those that instead keep filthy houses that are “shamefull to be spoken of” and it was of these women who he had been previously speaking (Ibid.). Central to the purposes of this article, Rich made mention of the amount of women selling and brewing ale in the capital:

hath vent in every house in the Towne, in every day in a weeke, at every house in the day and in every minute of the house: these is no merchandise so veniable, it is the very marrow of the commonwealth of Dublin: the whole profit of the Towne stands upon Ale-houses, and the selling of Ale... (Rich 1610, p.70).

Therefore, ale was still quite commonly brewed in Dublin, and indeed, he continued on to state that “every Householder’s Wife is a Brewer”. So there was still a strong female dominated presence in Ireland. This is also supported in other primary source documents like the *Dublin City Pipe Water Accounts of 1680 and 1681* and the *Dublin City Cess Book of 1647-1649*.

Dublin City Cess Book of 1647-1649 contains the payments levied by the Dublin City Assembly on the people of Dublin and its liberties for the weekly cess, a loan to Cromwellian Governour of Dublin, Colonel Michael Jones, in the amount of some £463 to supply his occupying army (databases.dublincity.ie). Importantly, for the purposes of this article, it also contained weekly payments to the Dublin City Assembly for “impost for grinding of malt and retailing of ale for the period 3 March 1647 - 5 August 1648” (Ibid.). *The Dublin City Pipe Water Accounts of 1680 and 1681* were detailed listings of those who had acquired water for use in brewing - literally “water for ale brewing” or just simply “brewing”. This seems to indicate a continuing popularity in ale sales in the capital.

A search for the term “brewing” returned 31 entries from the *Dublin City Pipe Water Accounts 1680 and 1681*. Of these 31, eight were repeat entries: Richard Kelly, Edward Juckes, John Hawkshaw, John Kelly, Lewis Desmineries, Luke Lowther, Widow Malone (or Mallone) and Widow Weldon, each had entries in both 1680 and 1681. The remaining entries represented distinct individuals, making for a grand total of 23 different people in what

remains of these accounts. Of these, six were widowed women: Widow Malone, Widow Weldon, Widow Surdeville, Widow Toole, Widow Devine, and “Alexander Norton’s Widow” are all listed as paying for “water for ale brewing” of £1 10s, with the exception of Widow Malone who in 1681 paid £1 15s. So that makes for 26% female, 74% male, which is not in keeping with Rich’s arguments of women brewing and selling. However, as is the case in England and elsewhere, women were often subsumed under their husband’s or father’s name, even if he had naught to do with the brewing and it is quite likely that the same thing occurred here. So these six widows do not represent the only women. For example, Luke Lowther and Lewis Desminieres are both listed as Aldermen. It was Aldermen who, Rich stated, had wives who brewed, so it is possible they are representing their ale, or beer, brewing wives (Rich 1612, p.12). Unfortunately, while this account can’t be used to determine how many women were brewing, it perhaps can give clues as to how many unmarried women were remaining in brewing. Additionally, all of the widows listed were listed as making ale (Ibid.).

Furthermore, of these 31 total entries, 16 specified ale and the remaining 15 did not, which could mean beer or ale. A search for the term “beer” in these records comes up empty. A further search for “ale” returns 99 entries, of which 15 were from those *Pipe Water Accounts* and the remaining 84 coming from the *Cess*. These *Cess* accounts are all listed for “weekly payment of impost for grinding of malt and retailing of ale to 5 August 1648”. Of these 14 were women, five widows and the remaining nine likely single-women. This accounts for 17% of the total of the *Cess*. However, just like the *Pipe Water Accounts*, this represents a minimum number, as again, women were likely subsumed under their husbands or kin (Ibid.). Another point of interest is of the women listed, some 20 in total of both accounts, 11 were widows and nine were listed on their own, perhaps as single women. However, it is important to note that some of the women in this listing also had impressively large impost fees, for example: Widow Hanlon and Widow Fitzwilliams were listed as £6 each, which might represent a large or well frequented alehouse or brewery. This is in comparison to Ellen Miller who paid 12s 6d or Elizabeth Ussher who paid £2 2s (Ibid.).

Elsewhere in Ireland women were also not cut out entirely as evidenced in malt bequeathments studied by Fewer (2015, p.36). Additionally, in Kilkenny, he found that two tavern licenses were given to father-and-daughter teams. Fewer suggested that it might be possible that “the fathers owned the premises in each case but that their daughters ran the taverns as ale-wives” (Ibid., p.38). That women were still a part of selling ale or beer in Kilkenny is in direct contrast to what was happening in Waterford with its 1603 bylaw

forbidding women and girls from the retail of alcoholic beverages. Women selling and brewing beer continued throughout the seventeenth century in Kilkenny; one widow sold “bottled drink” in a shop at the drawbridge of Kilkenny Castle through 1677 (Bradley 2006, p.107).

Many more single or widowed women were brewing for profit in Dublin than in places in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For example, in Stockton in the late 13th century single-women and widows accounted for some 20% of the market, this decreased to 13% in early 14th, 11% in decades after Black Death and a mere 6% in the early fifteenth. Bennett (1996, p.51) contended that, “by the second half of the fifteenth-century, commercial brewing by single-women and widows had virtually disappeared”. An additional example is Norwich where women’s involvement went from 16% in 1288 to 7% in 1390 (Ibid., pp.183-4). This varied across geographical locations, with places like York still having one out of ten brewers to be unmarried women in the 1560s (Ibid., p.51). This, however, does not compare to the amount of women still brewing in Ireland a further century down the line. It is clear here, that Dublin, and indeed Ireland more generally, was quite different from what was happening in England and that Rich’s assertions of so many women brewers is likely to be accurate.

Unlike England, female brewers in Ireland would continue to play an active and key role until the introduction of industrial and commercial breweries in the 18th century. Perhaps in this way, the modern resurgence of female brewers, and indeed, couples who brew, is very much like the late medieval and early modern social climate in Dublin. There are, however, clearly notable differences, with the more obvious including scale, amount of breweries, legal supports, and access to resources.

The remainder of this article will focus on female consumers before summarizing its findings. Research into female beer consumers is an especially useful component to understanding women and beer in modern Irish society, because the analysis of female consumers is the study of the masculinization of beer drinking, particularly with regards to public consumption.

Beer was consumed by men, women, and even children throughout the Middle Ages and into the early modern periods. But this relationship of women with beer drinking gets quite complicated when discussing its consumption in the public arena, specifically the pub. As seen in tales like the *Tunning of Elynour Rummyng*, female patrons of alehouses, who attended alone or in an all-female group, often found themselves increasingly becoming

sexualized by their cultures. After all, if the female-run alehouse was not so very far removed from a brothel, as contemporaries postulated, what did this suggest about the women who frequented them, especially women alone? There was even anxiety about women attending reputable alehouses. Tim Reinke-Williams (2012, p.88) argued that:

... though women were not excluded from the early modern alehouse their visits were regulated by certain social conventions. Wives visited with husbands whilst travelling, girls accompanied young men they were courting if other couples were present, and women of all ages attended betrothals, christenings, and churchings...but those who ventured into alehouses alone, or in all female groups, risked being accused drunkenness or whoredom...

Drunkenness and whoredom, as was evidenced in Rich and other English authors, was a common insult surrounding female brewers and consumers of ale. This problematic association between alcohol and prostitution was also seen in other Irish sources, such as the Waterford ordinance banning women aged 14-40 from selling it for this very reason, among others.

Women who worked in pubs and those who ventured in single, “were at best uncomfortable and at worst subject to verbal and physical abuse” according to Reinke-Williams (2012, p.89). Barbara Hanawalt (1998, p.105) described alehouses and taverns as “among the most complex institutions of medieval social life...their very interior spaces were ambiguous territories”. She contended that those people who frequented these sorts of establishments were “held in general suspicion as potentially disorderly”. Pubs, taverns, and alehouses, in particular, held an ambiguous place because while work was typically sex-segregated, brewing could be an extension of domestic work, and therefore the tavern or alehouse could potentially occupy part of this “domestic space” (Ibid., p.105). Indeed, according to Hanawalt (Ibid., p.109), women who frequented pubs often found themselves under suspicion as “of easy virtue”. Amanda Flather (2007, pp.30, 54, 110) contended that these were ambiguous spaces, at once public and domestic and, therefore women, particularly women alone, were often the victims of drink induced male violence and this is also supported by Hanawalt’s study (1998, p.110). A. Lynn Martin (2001, p.38) has argued that two different images of women emerged depending on how much she drank: the good woman drank small amounts or not at all, but the bad woman, drank way too much and thus “as a consequence gained a reputation for unbridled sexuality”. The two “double standards” were linked because of widespread ideology that “a sober woman was chaste whilst a drunk woman was promiscuous” (Ibid., p.134). This, she contended, continues to our modern society, whereby

men lose some honor if they cannot hold their alcohol because they use this as a way to “demonstrate their macho virility” versus women who “gain a reputation for their lack of self-control, which leads to sexual promiscuity and in turn leads to a loss of respect” (Ibid.). This ideology was certainly pervasive in Ireland where the 1798 “Dublin Committee Against Drunkenness” declared that while drunk men were rebellious brutes, “among women it destroys all feminine modesty, producing viragos and sluts” (Kearns 2014, p.48).

Irish pubs, as Kevin Kearns (2014, p.17) argued, were absolutely male dominated arenas; spaces where modest or virtuous women would dare not enter for fear of social ostracization or also because they were literally forbidden from coming into the “male only” public house. There were two exceptions to this according to Kevin Kearns: the revered grannie and the hard-living women street dealers, who he described as “bellicose” and who could “drink and curse and fight with the best of the men”.

As for the remaining women, they could instead go to Spirit Grocers, which ran from 1791 to 1910, which as Kearns (Ibid., p.39) stated would “spare women the moral danger of having to enter public houses to purchase spirits”. However, in practice these really weren’t all that different from the pubs themselves, with men and women drinking openly and to excess within their walls (Ibid., pp.39-41). They were certainly drinking beer - plain porter and even Guinness are mentioned in the sources. Even after the closure of the Spirit Grocers, women’s entry into the pub was still viewed with disdain, or even forbidden entirely in the mantle of all male public houses. But women still drank beer, in some amounts, but the accepted place to do so was typically at home.

In post-World War II period, the barriers of male exclusivity began to be dismantled (Ibid, pp.20-1). Women began to demand entry into pubs. For example, in 1947 Ethel Mannin wrote an article regarding this issue where she stated that:

In Ireland where once no decent woman could be seen in the public bar, now perfectly decent women are to be seen in bars and lounges. What is the difference, morally, between a man taking a drink in a bar and woman doing likewise? To say that bars are all right for men and not for women is illogicality of the most sentimental kind. If women are banned in bars they will drink at home and it is much easier to drink too much at home (Mannin 1947).

Of course, there is plenty to unpack here about internalized misogyny with regards to conceptions of morals and “decent” women, but her quote offers some insight into women trying to gain access to the male pub. Additionally, Nell McCafferty led a protest of some 30 women at Neary’s Pub in Dublin in the early 1970s. Here they ordered a brandy and after it was served proceeded to attempt to order a pint of Guinness, which they were promptly refused on account of them being female, and most especially because they were ordering

pints. They drank their brandy, walked out and refused to pay. It wasn't until 2000 that the Equal Status Act barred this sort of paternalistic patronizing conception of the male pub and the disgust at the female pint drinker.

As women gained entry into pubs, the prevailing association of beer with forms of masculinity continued to permeate culture and would solidify throughout the 20th century. For instance, according to scholars like Debbie Ging (2005, p.42), beer advertising had much to do with this association. She supported L. Strate's critical contention that: "beer commercials constitute a guide for becoming a man..." (Strate 1992, p.5). This association of beer with masculinity has begun to shift, and quite rapidly with the onset of the craft beer revolution. The oldest independent brewery on the island of Ireland is Hilden Brewing Company, which was established in 1981 by Seamus and Ann Scullion, so not so very far removed from the protests at Neary's pub. Now, as mentioned in the introduction, Ireland is seeing a resurgence of female consumers and re-emergence of women who brew. But is this a return to the past? Women certainly brewed in Ireland for centuries, so in this way it is certainly a reclamation of a traditionally female trade. Unlike their counterparts in England, Irish women and English female colonists brewed much longer and in perhaps much stronger economic positions in certain locations. In Dublin in particular, women were still dominant in the ale trade well into the 17th century as seen in Rich's account and confirmed with the *Cess and Pipe Accounts*. Additionally, couples that brewed also remained a strong factor, instead of becoming, as Bennett (1996, p.147) contended they did in England, housewives who supported their husbands. This return to couples brewing is also quite common in Ireland with examples like Rascals Brewing and Metalman Brewing Company. Additionally, many of these breweries are also small businesses, starting off in their homes, back gardens, and sheds, similar to their medieval and early modern counterparts. However, unlike these earlier breweries that were often based entirely within the brewers' homes, these grow significantly, expanding to warehouses and big brewing kits. So in this modern brewing is quite different for women, with better business opportunities, funding, leases and legal rights, to name but a few modern developments.

There is also perhaps a wholly negative call back to medieval and early modern eras, specifically relating to the stereotypes of women who brew or consume beer with sexual availability, promiscuity and "whoredom". Tragically, in contemporary culture these horrific and potentially dangerous associations appear to have manifested themselves in objectifying or sexist beer branding. Luckily this is being consistently and unwaveringly challenged from female brewers, consumers, and writers and appears as of late to be hopefully singing its

swan song. This is will be addressed in more depth in this author's upcoming monograph. Additionally, the association of beer drinking with masculinity, while still ubiquitous, is also being challenged by a whole host of female consumer groups, bloggers, journalists, and women who just love craft beer. From Ladies that Beer, to Women Enjoying Beer, to the Ladies Craft Beer Society of Ireland, women are becoming more and more enmeshed in craft beer. As previously stated, the Irish women's beer group has seen a dramatic increase in membership from a mere ten to near to 1000 women. In conclusion, the women of the modern craft beer industry in Ireland appear to be echoing their medieval and early modern predecessors by taking up the mantle of this brewing art, while challenging many of the negative hold-overs from those eras.

Christina Wade completed her doctorate at TCD in 2017 focusing on medieval Irish and Viking history, in particular gendered symbolism and burial practice. Her MPhil project considered Irish medieval gender roles and marriages as it related to the Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh. So her background, while varied, is centred around the history of gender and women. During the course of her thesis, she was also working on the study of beer and beer history - specifically as it related to women and gender. Upon her submission in 2016, she began to work on this in earnest and launched Bracatrix.com in May of 2017. Bracatrix is a project dedicated to the history of women and beer. This includes those who brewed, served, consumed and even opposed it.

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