

You are what you Drink:

Gender Stereotypes and Craft Beer Preference within the New York Craft Beer Scene

ABSTRACT

Anecdotal references to “chick beer” abound without citation. This empirical study is the first to confirm the existence of gender stereotypes associated with beer preference. In this study I ask a purposive sample of 93 patrons at four specialty craft beer bars in New York City to define “feminine beer” and “masculine beer” and to report their assumptions, if any, about gender-transgressive drinkers. I find that those who prefer “masculine beers” are rewarded through favorable appraisals while those who prefer “feminine beer” are not. I interpret these findings within the context of the Women’s Craft Beer Movement and discuss their implications for gender equality within the craft beer scene.

Key Words: craft beer, gender stereotypes, legitimacy

Word count: 5140

You are what you Drink:

The masculinization of cultural legitimacy within the New York craft beer scene

“To Lemon or not to lemon... I will say that if you’re a male beer geek seeking the respect of your equally geeky friends, you had best leave it off,” warns Randy Mosher in *Tasting Beer*, a guide to craft beer that the sommelier program Cicerone endorses as authoritative. Mosher’s casual reference to the misogyny undergirding craft beer culture deemphasizes the struggles that women have reported in their attempts to assert cultural legitimacy within the inarguably masculinized scene. The 2014 Great American Beer Festival’s official data suggests that women currently comprise 37% of consumers of craft beer within the United States; yet, women continue to report marginalization on every level, from consumers to brewers. The purpose of this investigation is to determine whether beers that are considered feminine are also considered less legitimate.

Mosher is not the only craft beer writer who observes gendered anxiety about ordering fruity “feminine beers”; similar references proliferate throughout the craft beer blogosphere. In this chapter I test the external validity of these anecdotal references to a conflation between fruit, femininity, and illegitimacy, by asking 93 craft beer bar patrons in four locations across New York City to provide me with operational definitions of “masculine beer” and “feminine beer,” along with their assumptions about gender-transgressive drinkers. Informed by cultural

sociology, symbolic interactionism, and the craft beer communities in Cyberspace, I hypothesize that cultural capital increases in conjunction with a preference for “masculine beers.”

Originally, beer was brewed domestically by women, as a safe and nourishing alternative to water. However, once beer production became a lucrative industry, the location of its production shifted from the home to the factory; contingently, control over the product shifted from women to men. Following American Prohibition, the product itself became masculinized, contrasted against the feminized cocktail. This masculinization of beer further intensified during World War II when soldiers developed a taste for cheap lager, returning home with a thirst that inspired the mass-production of the adjunct lager that comprises mainstream beer culture today. After Jimmy Carter passed the Home Brewer’s Act in 1979, the home brewing culture and commercial craft breweries that emerged were dominated by men. When craft beer connoisseurship became more established, women exponentially entered the previously homosocial cultural scene (Mosher, 2009). As is typical when women enter formerly homosocial spaces, a marginalizing stereotype emerged about women’s capabilities and preferences, a stereotype that reinforces male dominance: women do not like the “taste of beer,” and thus gravitate towards fruity beers. As this chapter explores in closer detail, this stereotype reinforces women’s cultural marginalization as both brewers and consumers.

It is important to clarify that there is no “taste of beer.” Between ales and lagers, the taste spectrum that beer encompasses includes sweet, sour, salty, bitter, and umami; yet, when people refer to the “beer taste,” they generally refer to beers that taste bitter. Moreover, it is these bitter beers that women and new drinkers are supposed to find aversive. This conflation leads to the

legitimization of bitter beers as “real beer” and the contingent myth that women prefer beer that is not bitter, that does not “taste like beer.” This myth inspires such products as “Chick Beer,” which appeals to female consumers through references to the product’s appearance instead of its taste:

Chick Beer finally gives women a beer choice that suits their tastes and their style. The bottle is designed to reflect the beautiful shape of a woman in a little black dress. The six-pack looks like you are carrying your beer in a hip stylish purse. Chick's unique reflective bottle blings you up! It's fun, fabulous, and female!

In response, beer writer Lorna Juett protests that, “Dumbing women drinkers down to the lowest common beer denominator does not legitimize our presence in the marketplace.” “Chick Beer,” and other comparable products that target female beer drinkers, delegitimizes female connoisseurs through rhetoric that casts female beer drinkers as uninformed, uninterested, and even incapable of enjoying the range of beer flavors.

Beers “for women” that do not “taste like beer” are generally sweet and fruity. This reflects the conflation between fruit, femininity, and illegitimacy that simultaneously delegitimizes female beer geeks while rendering male connoisseurs of fruit beer vulnerable to homophobic and misogynistic taunting. For example, beer blogger Troy Patterson warns his readers:

Treating this matter with the seriousness it deserves, I’d like briefly to address any social insecure bros who happen to be grazing these pixels: You need to know that, if you publicly drink a fruit beer—if you are drawn to the not-bad taffyish tug of Wells Banana Bread Beer or to the raspberry creamy-crispness and after-dinner dulcitude of Founders Rübæus—there’s a 20 to 30 percent chance that your fellow bros will tease you about it, possibly by way of strained ovary jokes.

Tired of this relentless gender-policing, male connoisseurs of fruit beer advocate for fruit beer's rise in cultural legitimacy, conditioned upon its disassociation from femininity. For example, beer blogger Colin Joliat rebuffs:

Fruit ≠ girly. In what world is fruit for chicks? The saying doesn't go, "apple a day keeps the yeast infection away." Our ancestors were picking berries long before Bear Grylls stuck his head in a dead zebra. Plus, those 100+ IBU Double IPAs you love so much? That's right, not only do they taste like grapefruit (holy shit, a fruit!), they're flavored with hops – a flower. Who's girly now?

Others advocate for fruit beer's legitimization by invoking the subcultural value of experimentation and food pairing:

Fruit-flavored beers have been much maligned by men the world over for being, well, of questionable masculinity. But these weeks between the brutal summer and much-awaited fall are the perfect time to try beers that are as flavorful as they are refreshing. Below are four carefully researched fruit beers that have real body, color, and flavor and will prime your palette for autumn's heavier fare. You may not be toting them to Monday Night Football, but they're worth your time at any cookout or dinner party as this summer winds down.

This anonymous author reports an awareness of fruit beer's feminized stigma by warning fellow men to be smart about the context within which they drink fruit beer; evidently, when participating in masculinity rituals such as football, fruit beer consumption is risky.

In opposition to the sweet and feminized fruit beer, the bitter taste profile of Indian Pale Ale is a masculinized "real" beer. Dan Conley from Community Beer Works testifies to the cultural superiority of this initially off-putting beer type within his blog post "IPA Hegemony:"

innately we like the taste of sweet things as children, but perhaps do not take to sour or bitter flavors right away. But as we grow up and try new things, our brain figures out that not all sour and bitter flavors are bad, such is the case with IPAs.

Problematically, Conley ignores the socializing forces that steer women away from hoppy beers, further infantilizing those who prefer sweet beers. Conley also suggests that those who do not

cultivate a taste for IPAs are illegitimate as craft “beer geeks” when he declares that, “professing your love of them (IPAs) can show you’re really “one of us.”” He follows this with the qualifier, “This is more subconscious than overt, and I may have pulled it out of thin air, because nobody has ever asked me for the secret code word before letting me into a tasting.” Almost as an afterthought, Conley admits that there are other routes towards cultural legitimacy besides becoming a “hop-head;” but this admission is half-hearted.

According to Conley’s logic, one must be prepared to take taste risks in order to cultivate a status of cultural legitimacy. Unfortunately, risk-taking is culturally associated with masculinity more so than femininity and as a result, men are more likely to take such risks and thereby accrue cultural capital. (West and Zimmerman, 1987). For instance, a multinational study into gendered wine consumption found that men are more likely than women to purchase wine in the highest price range (categorized as above twenty-five dollars) (Atkin and Sutanonpaiboon, 2007). Yet another study noted that men were significantly more likely than women to favor foods that pose a health risk, such as items high in fat and calories (Allen-O’Donnell, Cottingham, Nowak, and Snyder, 2010). In contrast, female “foodies” report that when they indulge in high-fat foods they are stigmatized as “piggish” (Cairns, Johnston, Baumann, 2010). Finally, another study found that women were four times less likely to consider eating a hot pepper than were men, “even if they were starving” (Alley and Burroughs, 1988). Unlike Conley, these researchers are all careful to avoid attributing these gender differences to biological disposition, citing gender socialization as the more likely explanation for taste divergence.

Thus discouraged from taking masculinized risks that lead to palate cultivation, women become constructed as uninformed drinkers. Pierre Bourdieu (1984) famously expounded upon the meanings behind such a paradox:

The paradox of the imposition of legitimacy is that it makes it impossible ever to determine whether the dominant feature appears as distinguished or noble because it is dominant- i.e., because it has the privilege of defining, by its very existence, what is noble or distinguished as being exactly what itself is, a privilege which is expressed precisely in its self-assurance- or whether it is only because it is dominant that it appears as endowed with these qualities and uniquely entitled to define them (Bourdieu, 92).

In other words, “illegitimate beer” is feminine precisely because those with the power to designate legitimacy are men. Furthermore, the taste profile that is deemed legitimate is that which the palate must conquer in a masculinized quest of man versus nature. As Bourdieu further explained, “Rejecting the “human” clearly means rejecting what is generic, i.e., common, “easy” and immediately accessible, starting with everything that reduces the aesthetic animal to pure and simple animality, to palpable pleasure of sensual desire (Bourdieu, 32).” Flavors that are easy to appreciate, such as fruit, become constructed as culturally inferior while those that require cultivation and practice, such as IPA, become constructed as superior. The stereotype that women prefer the beers that considered easier and less legitimate leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy that reinforces men’s status as culturally superior connoisseurs.

METHOD

I interviewed 93 patrons of the New York City craft beer scene in order to test the extent to which beer preference is gendered and whether the masculine is afforded greater cultural legitimacy than the feminine. The total sample included 63 self-identified men, ranging in age

from 21-58 (mean 33.64) and 30 self-identified women, ranging in age from 22-50 (mean 30.06). I employed non-random sampling techniques in order to purposively sample the minority demographics of women and older patrons while convenience sampling the dominant demographic of young men, often based upon their physical proximity to the female survey respondents.

The bars that I selected market themselves explicitly as craft beer venues, attracting patrons who desire craft beer highly enough to seek it out and pay the premium price associated with the luxury product (average price for a 12 oz. pour is typically \$8-10 as opposed to a \$6 draft of Industrial American Lager or Guinness). In order to eliminate the possible demographic confound of a bar's location, I selected a diverse range of craft beer bars, including one in the Bronx, another in Washington Heights, one in Greenwich Village, and another on the North Fork of Long Island. My intention was to counterbalance any effect of the bar's location on the clientele's political beliefs about gender. Despite this counter-balancing, it must be noted that New York City is famously liberal, a political leaning which tends to correlate with more egalitarian gender ideology; as such, findings about the gendered stereotypes within the New York City craft beer scene do not represent the attitudes in other regions of the United States. For example, fruit beer in New York City may be less gender-stigmatized than elsewhere.

Each interview lasted from five to fifteen minutes. I approached respondents as they waited to place beer orders at the bar and introduced myself before asking whether they would consent to answer four quick questions about gender and beer preference. It is impossible to know whether respondents had consumed alcohol prior to answering the investigator's questions,

but I did not survey those with slurred speech or impaired motor functions. Upon receiving verbal consent, I proceeded, asking, “When I say “feminine beer” what descriptors come to mind?” As the respondent listed adjectives and brand names, I recorded notes until they were finished. Next I asked, “When I say “masculine beer” what descriptors come to mind?” Once again, I recorded the respondents’ associations until they stopped. I then asked, “What assumptions, if any, would you have of a man who ordered what you just defined as a “feminine beer,” followed by “What assumptions, if any, would you have of a woman who ordered what you just defined as a “masculine beer”?”

Because few patrons were alone, this survey process was oftentimes administered to a couple or a group of 3-4, which possibly compromised the internal validity of the responses. However, this group effect proved to be enlightening since I was able to record the interplay between associates as they adjusted their opinions to account for the possible judgments of their companion(s). Group feedback during the debriefing also helpfully highlighted the difference between the gendered stereotypes that patrons espoused and their beliefs in those stereotypes.

In order to process the data, I collated the key adjectives patrons associated with “feminine beer” and “masculine beer,” along with key words associated with their assumptions about transgressive drinkers. I analyze these findings with regards to impression management, cultural capital, and gender equality within the craft beer scene.

RESULTS

Defining “Masculine Beer” and “Feminine Beer”

Male respondents and female respondents generally report the same definitions of “feminine beer” and “masculine beer,” with concordance rates of 83.75% and 88.73% respectively. Although men and women both report that “feminine beer” is a bit of a misnomer since women stereotypically do not like beer at all, the descriptions that respondents gave unanimously defines “feminine beer” as light, fruity, and sweet, including flavored lagers and Hefeweizens/ Wheat beers/ White-ales; “masculine beers” are defined as hoppy/ bitter/ strong/ high-alcohol IPAs, and dark/ heavy/ strong/ high-alcohol Stouts.

Although the men and women alike typically agree on definitions of “feminine beer” and “masculine beer,” minor discrepancies occasionally arise. Certain terms and types of beer seem to be more contentious than others, such as malt and Barley Wine, which are claimed by both men and women without corroboration. Similarly, “pumpkin” appears as a descriptor of “feminine beer” according to both men and women, yet here it appears again under “masculine beer,” reported by men without female corroboration.

Curiously, even Belgian Ale appears in the terrain of both genders, despite references to it as a typical gateway beer. For example, one female-authored Internet article titled “Three Best Cross-Over Beers for Wine-Loving Women” only lists Belgians, prefaced by the introduction “Does your lady drink more Chardonnay than IPA? Try converting her — gently — with these crossover brews: They're smooth Belgian-style ales with hardly any bitterness but a ton of luscious flavor” (Hoffman). In light of the high cultural capital afforded to the long-standing tradition of Belgian Ale, it may be significant that men do not acknowledge the category as a “feminine” beer, but rather think of it as masculine when they think of it at all.

Notably, women use technical terminology much more than men to describe “feminine” beer, connoting their cultural legitimacy as educated connoisseurs. When prompted to describe “feminine beer,” women report such beers as Barley Wine, Frambois, Saisan, Sour, and Triple. They also use technical terminology associated with tasting culture, such as *aromatic*, *crisp*, and *malty*. These results reflect upon the respondents’ intellectual involvement with tasting culture and informed validation of such “feminine beer.” In contrast, male respondents typically report simple descriptors such as *sugary*, *perfumed*, and *frothy*, in addition to trivializing and condemnatory terms such as *crappy* and *bad*. It is unclear whether this terminology reflects men’s best efforts at describing “feminine beers” or whether it reflects their opinions of those who would hypothetically prefer such beers; if it is the latter, then the women in men’s imaginations are not nearly as educated as the female craft beer bar patrons in this study. Perhaps men are not as familiar with beers that women stereotypically drink and thus remain uninitiated into the knowledge that female respondents possess about the technical terminology and taste profiles. It is further possible that female and male respondents are not describing the same beers at all, as some men think that women drink beer that women do not mention, including Lambic, Pilsner, Cherry-Wheat, coffee-flavored, and non-alcoholic.

While describing the beer type that is stereotypically assigned to their own gender, men and women tend to use adjectives descriptive of hegemonic masculinity and femininity. For instance, while describing “masculine beer,” men describe the drink as *rich*, *powerful*, and *bold*. Similarly, women describe “feminine beer” as *pretty*, *aromatic*, *expensive*, and *flowery*. Both genders agree that “feminine beer” is *light*, *sweet*, and *refreshing*, all of which describe idealized

femininity. Similarly, both genders illustrate masculinity as *stout, heavy, strong, bitter, full,* and *rough*. This distinctly gendered lexicon suggests that the public consumption of beer is a gendered performance of identity construction that can either affirm or dispel mainstream gender stereotypes.

Lager proves to be a unique case, assigned to both genders, depending on whether the Lager is flavored; flavored Lagers are associated with femininity, presumably due to the stereotype that women require a sweet flavor to mask the beer taste. Unflavored Lager, on the other hand, is associated with traditional “hegemonic” masculinity. The deep entrenchment of this cultural trope was recently made explicit by the Super Bowl Budweiser advertisement, wherein Bud drinkers were labeled “hard” compared to men who drink “peach pumpkin ale.” This ad constructed male craft beer drinkers as “soft” by portraying a group of fleshy, pale, bespectacled men sniffing their beer specified as “pumpkin peach ale.” Without further elaboration, these representatives of craft beer culture are implied to be “not real men,” due to their concern with the quality of their beverage and their appreciation for sweet flavored beer, which respondents in this study identify as stereotypically “feminine.” This rhetoric reflects Michael Kimmel’s observation that men’s gendered performances are much more influenced by the fear of judgment by other men than by the fear of judgment by women (Kimmel, 1996). Indeed, the advertisement’s narrating voice is unmistakably masculine; this ad is about men sizing one another up based on alcohol preferences.

Perhaps reflecting this fear of not measuring up to ideals of hegemonic masculinity, men in this study report more appearance-based concerns than women when imagining the difference

between “masculine” and “feminine” beer. For example, men mention citrus garnish (à la Randy Mosher), tulip glassware, and packaging. This trend reflects Bourdieu’s observation that working-class masculinity favors function over form, encouraging men to opt quantity over quality:

And the principal philosophy of the male body as a sort of power, big and strong, with enormous, imperative, brutal needs, which is asserted in every male posture, especially when eating, is also the principle of the division of foods between the sexes, a division which both sexes recognize in their practices and language. It behooves a man to drink and eat more, and to eat and drink stronger things (Bourdieu, 1984: 192.)

Bourdieu’s reasoning would corroborate my finding that “frills” such as citrus garnish potentially compromise the impression management of a man who wishes to assert a hegemonic masculine identity. Whether or not the connoisseurs hail from working class backgrounds, these findings suggest that a working class aesthetic is a component of the public performance of masculinity within the craft beer culture (Kimmel, 1996).

Cultural Capital Fluctuations for Gender-Transgressive Drinkers

In summary, female transgressive drinkers are rewarded through higher cultural capital, while male transgressive drinkers’ cultural capital either remains the same or decreases slightly; this confirms my hypothesis that beers deemed masculine are associated with higher cultural capital than beers deemed feminine. I expected men’s cultural capital to markedly decline in conjunction with gender-transgressive drinking; however, nearly two-thirds of my respondents replied with “no comment” when I asked for their assumptions about men who preferred what they just

defined as “feminine beer.” In contrast, these same respondents freely reported positive evaluations of female transgressive drinkers.

In general, respondents’ assumptions about transgressive drinkers fall into three dominant categories: reason for transgression, implications of the drinker’s gender/ sexuality, and implications of the drinker’s personality. Female respondents typically assume that men’s beer orders are influenced by their expertise, regardless of which type of beer they order. Men do not similarly assume that fellow men select “feminine” beer due to expert knowledge; rather, men are more inclined to excuse the transgression as a matter of taste or novice status within the craft beer scene. Both men and women attribute male transgressive drinking to taste, season, and calories, and men additionally consider factors such as the male transgressive drinker’s mood, situational circumstances, and reluctance to becoming inebriated.

Only one woman uses the word “lesbian” in a possibly derogatory manner; the other instance of its usage is by a self-identified lesbian who asks her friend, “Is she a lesbian? Can you give me her number?” The female respondents do not reference gender or sexuality besides these two references to lesbianism, suggesting that the hypothetical woman’s gender-transgressive drinking is generally irrelevant to her gendered and sexual status.

In contrast, approximately one-third of the male respondents refer to the female transgressive drinker’s sexuality. Examples of positively encoded sexualized rhetoric include: “Does she have plans on Friday night,” “she likes to be on top,” “she’s very hot,” and tellingly, “Kinda hot. It’s always hot when a woman does something a man does like when she drinks whiskey or a Manhattan.” Ambiguous sexualized rhetoric includes “marry her unless she has

testicles then no," and "That's cool, but she can't be a dude, growing a beard and brewing at home. I like feminine girls. If you want to try it though, that's cool." Despite the presence of this sexualizing rhetoric, male respondents typically cite the hypothetical woman's personality and knowledge as predominant reasons for awarding her higher cultural capital.

Despite Goffman's observation that teammates police one another's gendered fronts, gender-policing within each gender is much less conspicuous than heteronormative aspersions concerning the opposite sex (Goffman, 1967: 44-66). Only two out of thirty female respondents had anything negative to say about a fellow woman who preferred "masculine beer." Moreover, the positive evaluations respondents report do not suggest jealousy or competition, just praise. Similarly, male respondents are extremely reluctant to say anything negative about a man who prefers "feminine beer," excusing the behavior due to a wide range of hypothetical considerations.

Heterosexism and homophobia are prevalent throughout the responses, but generally such judgments are made about the opposite gender and not the same gender. For instance, men are more likely than women to cast female transgressive drinkers as gender-inverse, saying: "Where's her beard, did she shave this morning," "You don't want to wrestle with her, she might mess you up," and "She'd probably be a little intimidating." Similarly, women are more likely than men to cast a male transgressive drinker as gender-inverse. When asked about their assumptions, if any, of a man who preferred a "feminine" beer, 23.33% referred to him as gay/fag/pussy/ or bitch and two admitted that they would make fun of him if he was a friend or a relative. In contrast to women's 23.33%, only 6.35% men referred to the hypothetical

transgressive male drinker as gay/ bitch/ homosexual and only 3.17% (compared to 6.66%) supposed that they would make fun of him if he was a friend. Female respondents were harsher than their male counterparts when it came time to reflect upon the personality of a male transgressive drinker, though neither gender voiced such condemnatory opinions as often as they demurred entirely through “no comment.”

Both genders consider a female transgressive drinker to be “cool” and “awesome,” but they elaborate upon this evaluation differently. Women explain the transgressive drinker’s positive evaluation in terms of words indicative of her power, expressing an interest in being friends with her. Women primarily think more highly of other women who prefer “masculine beer” (56.66%), followed closely by no/ ambiguous opinion (43.33%). Men also predominantly think more highly of the hypothetical female transgressive drinker (60.32%) followed by no/ ambiguous opinion (30.16%), and six report an explicitly lower opinion (9.52%). Women’s positive evaluations tend to focus on the woman’s personality, such as: “she’s a badass bitch who knows what she’s doing,” “She’s a stud, she rocks, probably drives a pick-up truck, independent,” and “She’s an experienced beer-drinker.”

CONCLUSION

The results from this investigation confirm the existence of gendered stereotypes that denigrate women’s palates and ability to appreciate “complex” beers, while simultaneously feminizing men who prefer simple or fruity beers. Evidently there exists a gendered hierarchy within craft beer culture that assigns masculinity to the beer types that are regarded as more

culturally legitimate and assigns femininity to the beers that are widely regarded inferior. The conflation between hierarchies, patriarchy and beer typology, is difficult, if not impossible, to disentangle. However, it is clear that the semantic conflation between femininity and cultural illegitimacy is problematic for women who progressively join the ranks of craft beer enthusiasts, only to find themselves defending their palates against gendered stereotypes or alternatively find themselves eroticized as accessories to men's scene.

It is important to recognize that the most frequent assumption about a transgressive drinker is "no comment." As one respondent specifies, "No comment. The craft beer scene is open-minded." Male respondents were generally reluctant to say anything condemnatory about men who prefer "feminine beer," but they were equally withholding of explicit support. Given the recent rise in fruit beer's popularity, I suspect that I observed a transitional moment within Bourdieu's paradox, as a critical mass of men became advocates of fruit beer.

I was surprised by the lack of homophobic responses within my findings, but several methodological limitations and confounds might have influenced my results. For one, my sex and gender might have made men reluctant to report homophobic and misogynistic assumptions about male transgressive drinkers. It is also possible that New York City craft beer patrons are more politically correct than patrons in other American regions. They might even be less homophobic and misogynistic and thus less complicit within gender policing. Finally, the focus group style of these interviews might have influenced positive reporting bias. Future investigations into patrons' cognitive associations should eliminate the confounding variable of

audience feedback, to obtain a clearer impression of the extent to which these stereotypes exist in patrons' minds when alone versus while interacting with other patrons.

This investigation confirms an ideological current within craft beer culture that conflates fruit, femininity, and illegitimacy. The craft beer scene constructs itself as an alternative to the mainstream beer scene, which is notoriously rife with gender inequality; yet, it appears that gender inequality is reproduced within the craft beer scene, though less overtly. For instance, in 2013 the beverage director at Howells and Hood began a Women's Forum by saying "Ladies, I know beer can be confusing..." This statement created an uproar across Twitter as a prime example of beer culture's implicit misogyny. Metropolitan Brewing's Tracy Hurst responded:

Dear Media: Please do stop trying to identify what a person will drink based on their genitals. Unless a drinking vessel requires the *actual use* of a woman's delicate flower or a man's joystick, please just stop. Just. Stop. – Signed, the broad who owns a brewery and drinks whatever the hell she wants.

This assumption that women do not and cannot appreciate beer the same way that men can reinforces male dominance and women's marginalization and subordination.

In an attempt to embolden female beer geeks to take risks with their palate cultivation and thereby establish cultural legitimacy, craft breweries across the country have begun to offer woman-only beer tasting opportunities. Simultaneously, male fruit beer advocates have encouraged men to experiment with fruity beers. As more men publicly consume fruit beers and more women publicly embrace stouts and IPAs, the binary beer typology will progressively queer, deviants will become less conspicuous, and beer orders will come to reflect the drinker's true taste preference; however, in the meantime, drinkers should consider beer a political medium for challenging gender stereotypes, one drink at a time.

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