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**“THAT WHICH SHE CALLS HER OWN:”  
GENDER AND MATERIAL CULTURE IN EARLY PHILADELPHIA WILLS**

by  
Jody E. Cross

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Early American Culture

Summer 2001

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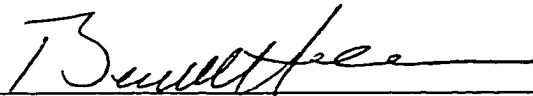
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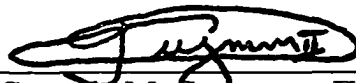
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This manuscript is dedicated to Matt Cross who has made me so very happy.

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## ABSTRACT

Sixteen Philadelphia couples left wills during the years 1682 to 1712. A total of forty-four women also left wills during these same years. These wills (and inventories) offer a unique chance to study issues of gender and material culture for the first generation of city residents. Analysis of the types of property, portion sizes, and kinds of specific object bequests bequeathed to heirs between husbands and wives and between women testators themselves actually reveal that gender may not be the best way to view the material culture shown in these wills. There are only a few discernible patterns to the way these women and couples bequeathed. In fact, one pattern seems to be that of exception. These wills suggest that factors, such as number of children, individuality, and possibly religious views, and not gender, guided the behavior and thinking of these early testators.

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

Many studies in the past thirty years have used race, ethnicity, and/or gender as factors to explain past human behaviors. Material culture scholars have followed this trend, noting the ways in which race and ethnicity can and have affected the way an object has been constructed and decorated. Additionally, artifacts such as teacups and other tea wares have been interpreted as being “feminine” objects as the gendered identity of tea drinking evolved over the eighteenth century. Following the lead of these earlier scholars I investigate whether the material culture exhibited in early Philadelphia wills either is gendered, like the tea wares, or demonstrates observable gendered behaviors.

Gendered behaviors include giving different objects or portion sizes to heirs based on their sex and/or the sex of the testator. Various historians have noted time and again that early wills do exhibit such gendered behaviors with men testators bequeathing principally money and some moveables to wives and daughters, and realty and moveables to male heirs.<sup>1</sup> Another historian, Barbara Ward, found that women testators in Connecticut also bequeathed in gendered ways by giving daughters heirlooms such as beds, bedding, linens, and engraved plate.<sup>2</sup> This study seeks to get at the possible

gendered behaviors toward material culture for a specific temporal and spatial locale: the city of Philadelphia from 1682 to 1712.

For this study, I chose to focus on the city of Philadelphia, rather than the entire county, because I felt that there existed the distinct possibility that patterns of giving for the city and for those living in the rural areas surrounding it could be different. With gender, rank, number of heirs, and religious affiliation all as possible variables impacting the behavior of testators, I felt that it would be best to leave out the “rural” versus “urban” factor. I chose the years 1682 to 1712 because much less has been done on the city during its earlier, founding years than for the years surrounding the Revolutionary War. And I chose a thirty-year period as representative of a full generation of settlers.<sup>3</sup>

With the aforementioned variables affecting the behaviors of testators it is hard to isolate gender as the deciding factor for why someone bequeathed the way they did. How do we then get at gender and what is a workable methodology for doing so? I have decided that the best way to get at gendered behaviors is to look at couples that have *both* left wills. Husbands and wives are usually considered of the same rank, with the wife’s status determined by her husband’s. As well, most couples tend to be of the same religion. And, unless they have been married before, they have the same heirs. With these factors of rank, religion, and number of heirs then removed, “gendered” behaviors in bequeathing one’s realty and personal estate should become clearer to the investigator.

To my knowledge, a study of probate materials using couples as the test sample has never been done before. This is most likely because not many husband and wife couples both left wills. My sample is admittedly small, with only sixteen couples for this

thirty-year period. This may affect my results, but I believe the benefits (being able to isolate gender as one of the few or only variables affecting bequeathing patterns) outweigh the disadvantages of such a small sample.

Although I am interested in getting at the possibility of gendered behaviors for both men and women, I am especially interested in the gendered behaviors of women testators. Both Barbara Ward and Shammas et al, for Connecticut and Bucks County, Pennsylvania, respectively, found that women testators tended to “show some bias toward daughters.”<sup>4</sup> In order to investigate the behaviors of women testators more fully and to see whether Philadelphia women fit into this same pattern of bias toward daughters or any other sorts of gendered behavior, I have used a larger test group than the sixteen women whose husbands left records. Therefore, this study also looks at all of the women testators for this thirty-year time period who, based on their wills, appeared to be living within the city limits. This allows me to situate the sixteen women from my couples sample into a larger base of forty-four women testators.<sup>5</sup>

I begin this examination of gendered behaviors in Chapter Two by looking at patterns of testation for the sixteen men from my couples sample group. Chapter Three examines the behaviors of the forty-four women testators and Chapter Four ends by comparing the records of my couples in order to answer that tantalizing question: *is material culture really gendered?* And if so, in what ways?

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Julia Cherry Spruill, *Women's Life and Work in the Southern Colonies* (1938; reprint, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998), 354.

<sup>2</sup> Barbara Ward, "Women's Property and Family Continuity in Eighteenth-Century Connecticut," *Dublin Seminar for New England Folklife* XII (1989): 84.

<sup>3</sup> Thirty years is only one standard of time used by demographers to indicate one full generation. Some prefer to use shorter or longer periods instead.

<sup>4</sup> Carole Shammas et al., *Inheritance in America From Colonial Times to the Present* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987), 45.

<sup>5</sup> Women testators for Philadelphia County as a whole only comprised between 7.2 and 10.4% of those leaving wills between 1682 and 1710.

## Chapter 2

### EARLY PHILADELPHIA MEN

As stated previously, my test group of Philadelphia men who left wills during the years 1682 to 1712 is very small compared to the total number of men living in the city who left wills during those years.<sup>1</sup> This test group of sixteen men includes only those Philadelphia testators whose wives also left wills during the same years. Nevertheless, I believe these sixteen men represent well both those who left wills and to a much smaller extent, the population at large. I have tried to determine the rank or class of these sixteen men based on three factors: the 1693 tax assessment rates for Philadelphia County, the worth of estate at time of inventory, and the occupation of the testator.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to occupations, I have placed merchants, professionals, and gentlemen among the ranks of the “higher sort” or upper class, while putting skilled craftsmen and shopkeepers among the “middling sort.” There is a need however to differentiate within the “middling sort” between skilled and less skilled workers and thus I have used Susan Klepp’s definition of the “lower middle class” as one consisting of less skilled workers such as shoemakers, tailors, and coopers.<sup>3</sup> The “lower sort” consists of unskilled laborers, such as seaman or carters.

While occupation was an important component in determining rank, it was by no means the only one. Worth or value to one’s community and wealth were also usually factors involved in determining rank. The 1693 tax assessment rates are useful because they were based on “the clear value of all real and personal estates.”<sup>4</sup> They also allow me

to assess the wealth of these testators in the same year and at the same time. The lowest rating (besides those rated at zero worth) for those on the entire tax list was £30, while the highest rating assigned to any one person on the entire list was £1300. Assessments of £600, £800, and £1000 were the next highest assessments.

My third category of determining rank was the value of the decedent's estate at the time of inventory. Those men whose estates (or their wives' estates) were valued at more than £1000 I considered to be among the wealthy or "higher sort." Five of these testators fall into this category. In addition, five men held estates that were valued at between £368 and £717. These men by occupation generally fell into the category of higher skilled craftsmen or Klepp's "upper middle class." Four men had estates worth between £182 and £276. The occupations for these men did seem to correspond to the lesser skilled crafts, or in Klepp's terms, the "lower middle class." There were no inventories taken for two men (or for their wives).

When my three categories of determining rank are meshed together some discrepancies do occur such as in the case of James Fox, a baker who was rated at £200 in 1693 and whose wife, three years after his 1699 death, had an estate worth £1873.7s. 9¼d. This was the second highest estate worth among any in my test group. By trade he should still be considered a craftsman, and thus, of the "middling sort," but the amount of his wife's (and therefore his) estate places him among the wealthy of the city. Nevertheless, with the few exceptions such as James Fox, I believe I can state with some accuracy that six of my sixteen testators fell among the "higher sort," while there were five each among the upper "middling sort," and the lower "middling sort."<sup>5</sup>

This early period of Philadelphia settlement has often been thought to include a large or majority population of Quakers who were fleeing from religious persecution in Great Britain. My test group shows a slight majority of Quakers with ten men who were members of the Friends monthly meeting at the time of their death. Only one man among my group was a member of the Church of England and one was possibly a Baptist minister. However, two of the sixteen men, including the one Anglican, had close or previous connections to the Quakers, although they were not Friends at the time of their death.<sup>6</sup>

The majority of the immigrants to the colonies at this time were also generally from the British Islands. That, combined with the English background of Pennsylvania's proprietor, William Penn, meant that Pennsylvania would most likely follow English common law when it came to considering inheritance and dower laws. Common law inheritance practices were actually undergoing substantial changes at this period in England's history, some of which were followed in the colonies and some of which were not.

English laws on testamentary and intestacy procedures often varied from region to region in the early half of the 1600s. However, a 1670 statute replaced these regional laws with a national one, giving widows one-third of their husbands' personal estates *forever*. Dower at this time still included a *lifetime* claim to a third of the real estate. This began to change in the latter part of the seventeenth century in England and also in some of the colonies. By 1700, widows in most areas of England had rights only to a life

interest in one-third of their husband's real estate. At this point, widows no longer had rights, life or otherwise, to the personal property of their husbands.<sup>7</sup>

Pennsylvania did follow this trend in dower laws, changing its mind, however, several times along the way. At the time of the founding of the colony, 1682, widows were to be given a third of the estate as dower. The dower right was always for life use only and did not include absolute rights.<sup>8</sup> This law was not clear on whether dower included both real and personal property or only one type. In 1693 the assembly rewrote the law, in imitation of English laws, to include dower in realty only. It is unclear whether widows still received absolute rights to one-third of the personal estate under this law, or not. However, in 1697, the assembly apparently changed its mind again and revised the law to make dower include both personalty and realty. The laws in 1701 kept dower in both personalty and realty, but a 1706 statute revised this yet again, giving widows dower in realty only.<sup>9</sup> With all of this uncertainty and indecision about what dower included, and with the possibility that by the time of a testator's death the law would be changed again, it is no wonder these sixteen men felt the need to leave last wills and testaments specifying exactly what their wives were to receive.

Not only was English common law the prototype for laws on dower rights, it also influenced what should go to the heirs in cases of intestacy (i.e. no will). According to English law, the eldest son received absolute rights to all of a man's real estate in cases of intestacy, while the testator's personal property (after his widow's third was subtracted) was divided equally among all his children, including the eldest son. This is the law of primogeniture. However, many of the colonies rejected this early in the seventeenth

century, substituting double portions of both realty and personalty for the eldest son, in place of primogeniture, through intestacy statutes. In 1682 Pennsylvania inheritance laws called for children to receive equally a third of the estate but only a year later, in 1683, the colony followed the lead of New England in giving eldest sons double portions of realty and personalty. Additional intestacy laws decided who would get what when there was no living spouse, no sons, or even no children. Each colony decided for itself the line of descent and where it would end. Pennsylvania “ended descent with nephews, nieces, and parents.”<sup>10</sup>

In 1682, wills in Pennsylvania could only be used to dispose of one-third of a testator’s realty (the other two-thirds went to his wife and children). However, this was quickly changed. A 1688 statute gave Pennsylvania testators “complete freedom to bequeath their realty but did not make clear how widows’ dower rights were to be handled.”<sup>11</sup> Thus wills written or proved after the 1688 statute could alter the intestacy laws regarding descent to heirs. They enabled a testator to give away any amount of his property to whomever he chose, leaving nothing to his heirs or everything to one heir if he so wished. Men could even give their wives more or less than intestacy statutes provided for. However, in these cases, it was up to the widow to decide whether she wanted her “thirds” (according to whatever the current dower law was) or if she wanted to accept the provisions of the will in place of dower. Heirs did not have this option.

Thus those men living in Pennsylvania who disliked their colony’s changes or adherence to English common law regarding dower, disliked the idea of primogeniture or even double portions for eldest sons, or who simply wanted to give away property to

others besides his widow or heirs, could do so by writing a last will and testament. I believe that one of the above explanations was the reason these sixteen men in my test group left wills.

John Crowley found during his work on South Carolina inheritance practices that there was a high rate of testation in colonial South Carolina. Marylynn Salmon's conjecture for this finding was that it could "indicate dissatisfaction with the law of intestacy, with regard to both primogeniture and widow's rights."<sup>12</sup> This could also have been the case in colonial Philadelphia, especially considering how often the assembly changed its mind about what dower would include. However, more work needs to be done to determine the rates of testation for the population of the city and the colony before deciding if this was indeed the case or not.

Regardless of whether the rate of testation for the city was high or not, it is clear that these sixteen Philadelphia men in my test group did exercise their right to bequeath differently, both to their wives and to their heirs, than intestacy laws called for. I considered three factors (in addition to gender) when looking at bequests these testators left to their widows, their heirs, and others: known religious affiliation, the rank and wealth of the testator, and the number of children or heirs he had.

The majority (nine men) of my test group had more than two children or heirs, two had only two children, two had only one child, and three had no children at all. The three men with no children/heirs gave their wives absolute rights to more than half of the entire estate regardless of what rank, occupation, wealth, or religion he was.<sup>13</sup> In fact, the three men with no children represent the extremes of rank, occupation, and religion

among my test group. John Watts was a butcher, John Parsons, a carpenter, and Andrew Robeson, a merchant. Their wealth followed according to their occupations. Both John Watts and Andrew Robeson were not Quakers, while John Parsons was. Regardless of these two factors of religion and rank, all three bequeathed in a similar manner, giving their wives absolute rights to either all of the estate or most of it. Intestacy laws in comparison gave widows dower in exactly half of the estate if there were no children, while giving the other half to the decedent's next of kin. So, not only did these men give their wives larger portions than they would have received under intestacy laws, but they also gave them absolute, rather than life rights to the real property.

The two men with only one heir were also more generous to their wives than intestacy laws called for. For example, Thomas Duckett gave his wife Ruth their dwelling house, other housing, lot, and lands in the city, as well as one-third of his personal estate "forever," meaning absolute rights. In addition he also gave her the other two-thirds of his personal estate for her life use, as well as the land he owned on the Schuylkill River until their daughter got married. Both of the men with only one heir had however, a daughter and not a son. There is the possibility that a son might have meant less for the widow. Shammass, Salmon, and Dahlin found that for Bucks County, Pennsylvania, fathers with only one son favored him over wives and daughters, thus exhibiting gendered behavior.<sup>14</sup>

Joseph Walker, a skinner, and Abraham Cox, a yeoman, each had only two children. Joseph wrote his will in 1697 when Pennsylvania's intestacy laws were revised to include dower in both personalty and realty. Since dower is "for life only," this

appears to mean that a widow's share of her husband's personal property was now limited to use during her life. Abraham wrote his will a year later when the laws on dower were still the same. Joseph followed the current dower law, giving his wife exactly one-third of his estate both real and personal, for her *life use* only. Apparently however, Abraham Cox did not agree with the intestacy laws. He decided, through the act of writing a will, to give his wife much more than she would have under intestacy laws: one-half of his entire estate, real and personal, *forever*. For those seven men in my test group with two or less children, only one man was not more generous to his wife than intestacy laws.

Having more than two heirs did seem to affect how much and what husbands were able to leave to their wives, but those men with more than two heirs were, overall, still more generous than intestacy laws would have been. The other nine men in my test group had more than two heirs. Of these men, two, Thomas Worrilaw and John White, wrote their wills during a period in which dower was restricted to one-third of the realty. Both men fell among the lower strata of the "middling sort," wealth-wise, one calling himself a yeoman and the other possibly the owner of a small shop. One was definitely more generous to his wife than intestacy would have been. John White gave his wife absolute rights to one-third of his entire estate plus life rights to another third of his entire estate, real and personal, minus about £35 in legacies to their son.

Thomas Worrilaw gave his wife life use of their dwelling house and garden up to the "Privet Hedge," in addition to "such sums of money as I have heretofore given her."<sup>15</sup> It is not known what amount of money he had previously given her, but the worth of the

house and lot was £100. Worrilaw's entire estate, including his realty was only £225.0s.2d. This meant that Susannah's lifetime share of the realty was actually greater than the one-third dower laws called for. In addition, his specification that she be able to use the entire dwelling house during her life was very generous. Thirds of estates were normally dispensed of in "metes and bounds," meaning one-third of every piece of real estate owned, not one house out of three owned. Thus Susannah escaped having to live in only one-third of the same dwelling house she had lived in while Thomas' wife. Her husband gave her no share in his personal estate, giving away all of their household goods to his grandson. Their marriage was a late one however, and Susannah most likely had brought her own household goods to the marriage that she then kept at Thomas's death. Her inventory does indeed contain household goods. As well, depending on how much money he had "heretofore given her," she could have bought needed household goods with that same money.

The other seven men with more than two heirs wrote wills during a period of Pennsylvania's history when dower included life rights to one-third of both real and personal property. Again, although none of the men behaved in the exact same manner towards their wives, all were more generous than intestacy laws. Two men, Jaspar Farmer and Thomas Prichard, gave their wives exactly one-third of their entire estates (most likely absolute rights), while another (Philip Richards) gave his wife the same, plus an additional £100 in Pennsylvania currency. John Jennet was the most generous of those men with more than two children. He gave his wife absolute rights to all of the

remainder of his estate not before given. This included all of his personal estate, the dwelling house, and a few other lots and land, minus £10.6s in legacies.

Alexander Beardsley, a wealthy shopkeeper and glover, acted in the same manner as Thomas Worrilaw had regarding his realty. He did not simply give his wife, Margaret, life rights to only one-third of his real estate, as dower called for. Instead, he left her a life interest in a “messuage,” along with the lot of land and the “appurtenances that go with it.” This was their dwelling house with all the household goods residing within it. Thus she was able to continue to enjoy the house and objects that she had been accustomed to as his wife, even if she had no power to bequeath them after her death. Again, this can be seen as more generous than intestacy because she held life rights to the entire house, rather than one-third of it. Alexander also left her the entire “residue” of his estate, to be disposed of by her, indicating absolute rights.<sup>16</sup> This most likely included his shop, shop goods, and debts due to him, as these appear in Margaret’s inventory. Indeed, Alexander Beardsly left his wife something very important to both her survival and the upkeep of her current standard of living: a shop that appeared to be very lucrative indeed. She would definitely have received far less, and experienced a decline in her standard of living, had she received the traditional dower’s thirds instead of the provisions in her husband’s will.

The final two men, James Fox and Charles Read, both wealthy, chose to go with rent annuities rather than absolute rights, when leaving realty bequests to their wives, although again, they did this in different ways. James Fox spelled out exactly what his wife was to receive as her dower portion, as Thomas Worrilaw and Alexander Beardsley

had also done. James gave his wife absolute rights to £80 worth of household goods, leaving it up to her to decide what she wanted, as well as £200 in current Pennsylvania money. This absolute bequest was in itself more generous than dower, which was for life only. He also gave his wife a £30 lifetime annuity to issue from their new dwelling house, backward bake house, and granary, but stipulated that she was to be given the “said [premises] dureing [her] naturall Life.” This might mean that she was given the entire dwelling house, for life, to reside in, as Susannah Worrilaw and Margaret Beardsly were, or the annuity could mean she was only given a portion of the house to live in. Since I do not know how much the household goods, dwelling house, bakehouse, and granary were worth because there is no inventory with James Fox’s will, it is impossible to know whether £80 in goods and a £30 rent annuity was a third or more than the real and personal property was worth. I suspect it was the same or more than her one-third dower rights as James Fox claimed that what he was giving to her was “in fful Compensation & Law of her thirds or Dowery out of my Estate.”<sup>17</sup>

Charles Read was also clear about what his wife’s dower portion was to include. Amy received absolute rights to the best bed and furniture (worth £10), a silver cup, and the money already “in her Custody.” Apparently she did not get her choice of the household goods as Elizabeth Fox had. However, she, like Elizabeth Fox, received the rent of the dwelling house and granary, but only until her stepson turned twenty-one. From then on she was to receive a lifetime annuity of £20 from that same stepson. This appears to mean that she received the use of the whole house until her stepson came of age, at which time she would receive only a portion of the house to reside in. Amy also

received absolute rights to one-third of the rest of the estate (minus the dwelling house, some object bequests, and £21 in legacies), which was to be sold for “specie” only.<sup>18</sup> This meant that the large shop Charles kept was to be sold. Amy could have used this monetary bequest to buy household goods to replace those sold or given away. Again, the fact that she received bequests with absolute, as opposed to life use, rights attached to them was more generous than intestacy dower laws.

I have shown, in great detail, that the number of children a man had affected how much he was able to devise to his wife; however, not even the number of children affected how generous he was to her in comparison to what she would have received under intestacy laws. Shammass, Salmon, and Dahlin found evidence to the contrary in their book on inheritance in the colonies and America: “husbands often gave their widows less or limited their ownership over personalty and realty more than the intestacy laws would have.”<sup>19</sup> All of the men, except one, in my test group gave their wives more than intestacy. For those men with fewer heirs this generosity usually meant absolute bequests of larger portions than thirds of both real and personal estates, while for those men with more heirs it meant giving one’s wife absolute power rather than life use over her thirds or giving her the use of the *entire* dwelling house during her lifetime.

Shammass, Salmon, and Dahlin also claim that for Bucks County, Pennsylvania, “affluent testators tended to be less generous with their wives than the nonaffluent, perhaps because the amount required to maintain a widow was a smaller proportion of their estate...They were also more likely to bequeath food and lodging instead of control over capital.”<sup>20</sup> Was this true for these early Philadelphia testators? None of these men,

whether affluent or not, gave food allowances in place of real or personal property, but two of my sixteen male testators did leave rent annuities (which can be considered lodging allowances) to their widows. These two men were indeed among the six testators that can be considered wealthy according to either their 1693 tax rates, their worth at time of inventory, and/or their occupation. But besides this fact, these six wealthy men did not seem, in comparison to the other men of lower rank with the same number of heirs, to give their wives less of their estate. In fact, Joseph Walker, with the second lowest estate worth among those in my test group, was the least generous to his wife, giving her only what she would have received as dower anyway.

Rank and wealth, however, did definitely seem to have something to do with those who appointed trustees, overseers, or assistants in addition to executors. Eleven of the sixteen men named their wife “sole executrix” of their will, while four named their wife, along with one son, as co-executors. Only one man, Thomas Worrilaw, did not ask his wife to execute his will. This shows an obvious trust by these men in their wives’ ability to deal competently with the estate, regardless of how much it was worth. But those who were wealthy, with much more to lose, obviously wanted a safeguard. Of those six wealthy men, five of them named either assistants, trustees, or overseers to help their wife execute the will properly. Five other men, four of them among the higher “middling sort,” also named friends to assist their wives. Those men with not much wealth declined to name anyone to help their executrix.

Because fifteen of these sixteen men gave their wives more than they would have received under intestacy dower statutes it raises the distinct possibility, raised before, that

one of the reasons these men left wills in the first place was a dissatisfaction with the current statutes. Were these men dissatisfied with the dower laws because of religious principles? Were the Quaker men in my test group more generous than the other men? Did they treat their wives as William Penn declared they should, as “a Second Self; one that bears an equal share with thee in all thy Toyls and Troubles?”<sup>21</sup> Quaker women were indeed treated more equally in the Society of Friends than within other Protestant groups.

Not only were women involved in the governing of the Society through the various women’s meetings, but they were also accepted into the ministry as the equals of men. George Fox, the founder of the Society of Friends, claimed equality for women by stating: “For man and woman were helpsmeet...in the dominion before they fell; but, after the Fall...the man was to rule over his wife. But in the restoration by Christ...they are helpsmeet, man and woman, as they were before the Fall.” The restoration had come, according to Fox, with the revelation that Christ dwelt within everyone, and thus women and men were once again “helpsmeet,” or William Penn’s “Second Sel[ves].”<sup>22</sup>

If Quaker men believed that their wives bore equally in the “Toyls and Troubles” of daily life as “helpsmeet” and “Second Sel[ves]” then it makes sense that they would treat them in more equal ways after death. All of the ten Quakers in my test group did just that by giving their wives more than they would have received otherwise. But why, if this was purely a Quaker phenomenon, would the other six men in my test group be as generous to their wives? Closeness to the Quakers could be one reason. Of those six men who were not Quakers, two had close ties to the Friends. Joseph Walker and Charles Read were one-time Quakers whose wives were still members in Philadelphia at

their deaths.<sup>23</sup> These close ties to the community of Friends in the city could be one explanation for why Walker and Read left the wills and provisions they did.

That still leaves Jaspar Farmer, John White, Andrew Robeson, and John Watts who did not appear to be members of the Friends monthly meeting. Andrew Robeson and John Watts most likely bequeathed the way they did towards their wives simply because they had no other living heirs to give to. I do not have any explanations for Jaspar Farmer's or John White's generosity to their wives. Until a larger group of wills from this same thirty-year period are examined, the conjecture that it was mainly Quakers that were more generous to their wives than law required is still only that.

Another possibility, outside of religious views, in explaining these testators' generosity might be the number of *minor* children he had. Men testators probably realized that for the survival of the family their wives would need the power to sell and devise real estate and personal property at some point in raising the family, thus using wills to give their wives more absolute control over the family estate. Of the thirteen testators who had children it is not known for two of them whether their children were minors or "of age." Otherwise, two men had all adult children, four men had at least one son who was an adult, and the other five men had all minor children. Those with all minor children, with the exception of Charles Read, gave their wives absolute rights to the portions of realty left to them. And four of those men with at least one adult child either gave their wives rent annuities or restricted their portion of the real estate to life use only. Only two men with adult children appeared to give their wives absolute rights to realty, but since they did not specify by either the words, "forever," or "life use only,"

it is hard to tell. This shows a pattern of restricting widows' power over the family realty to lifetime use only, when there was a living son or grandson, already "of age" that could possibly inherit it intact.

Thus far, I have found two basic patterns that link these sixteen testators. First, they were almost all more generous to their wives than intestacy laws on dower called for, while none were less generous than intestacy. In fact, eleven of these sixteen wives received absolute rights to realty. And second, the exact manner in which this generosity took shape depended somewhat on the number of heirs a man had, and more so on how many of these heirs were minors. What I did not find was that men who were wealthy, or who had more than two heirs, or who only had one son gave their wives less than their dower right. This means that I have not been able to definitely link either wealth or religion as causes for this generosity to wives, although certainly both could have shaped some aspect of these men's behavior.

What about bequests left to heirs? Actually there is a pattern here as well: Almost forty-eight percent of all the daughters/granddaughters and forty percent of all the sons/grandsons received solely monetary bequests, while almost twenty-four percent of all female heirs and thirty-two percent of all male heirs received portions of the "real and personal" estate. The percentages of male and female heirs receiving goods alone, realty alone, goods and money, goods and realty, or all three, goods, money, and realty, are also comparable. Thus, these sixteen male testators tended to treat their twenty-five male heirs and their twenty-one female heirs in much the same manner, giving both sons and

daughters the same *kinds* of property. This does not seem to indicate strong gendered behaviors.

Shammas, Salmon, and Dahlin found that in Bucks County “when...testators divided their estates, they exhibited a strong tendency toward giving women sums of money and reserving the realty and, to a lesser extent, the tangible personalty for the men...”.<sup>24</sup> What holds true for Bucks County, Pennsylvania obviously does not hold true for the city of Philadelphia, at least for these sixteen testators. These sixteen men did not give their wives sums of money over realty or tangible personalty. But both sons and daughters received sums of money or portions of both real and personal estates before any other kinds of bequest. To be sure, this shows a tendency towards giving heirs, rather than wives, sums of money over realty or tangible personalty. In addition, “real and personal” property was given in almost equal proportions to men and women heirs. While these men generally gave the same kinds of bequests to their male and female heirs, portion sizes did occasionally differ depending on gender. However, portion size also depended on a number of factors other than gender, including again, the rank of the testator, the number of minor children there were, and the total number of heirs.

The two men with only one heir both had daughters and both of these daughters received portions of both real and personal estate, as their mothers had. The two men with only two heirs also treated them more generously than intestacy laws would have. Abraham Cox had two sons, one of whom received an extra bequest of £10. He was most likely the eldest son. This was, however, much less than a “double portion for the eldest” of intestacy laws. Otherwise the two sons shared equally the remaining half of

the estate. Joseph Walker, the skinner who had given his wife exactly what she would have received under intestacy was less generous to his wife in favor of his two children, a son and a daughter. Joseph gave each of them half of the estate during their mother's life and half of the entire estate after her death. Joseph did not leave his son either the entire real estate or double portions. Gender equality characterizes his will.

Those with three or more children could also be considerably more equal in their treatment of them, although not always. Philip Richards had two daughters and one son, each of whom got an equal third of the remaining two-thirds of the estate. Gender equality also characterizes his will. But overall, when it came to having *more* than two children there was definitely much less equality in portion sizes between the heirs. However, this inequality did not always show itself as favoritism to the eldest son, or in lesser portions to all daughters. In other words, gender was not always the reason behind unequal portions. For example, John Jennett gave two of his daughters and his only son approximately equal bequests of realty, while giving the remaining daughter only 6 shillings. Perhaps he had already given this daughter either money or realty as a marriage portion. Thomas Prichard gave one son and three daughters equal monetary bequests (£5 apiece) while giving his dwelling house and lot equally to two other sons. Prichard favored two sons rather than just one and treated the other children, male and female, exactly alike.

James Fox gave three of his four living children, two of them sons and one a daughter, an equal third of the rest of his estate (meaning both real and personal estate), and the other daughter a £25 rent annuity. The eldest son received the dwelling house,

bake house, bolting mill, and garden as his portion which he was to then use to pay the portions of his sister and brother, as well as the annuities to his other sister and mother. Thus while James Fox favored one son with the family realty, keeping it intact, he did not do so by giving his other heirs less equal portions. Three heirs, two sons and one daughter, received equal portions (strictly according to monetary worth) while one received a rent annuity, a bequest that usually seemed to apply only to widows. Possibly she was considered a spinster, as she was not married at the time of the writing of the will.

Charles Read acted in a similar manner by giving his son, rather than either of his two daughters, the dwelling house and granary. But his daughters were compensated with heirlooms (plate) and bigger portions of the rest of the liquidated estate than their brother had received. Charles' two daughters each received one-fourth of the rest of the estate whereas his son received only one-sixth of the remainder of the estate. If Charles Read had been following intestacy laws his son would have received a double share of the realty and the personal estate (two-thirds of the house and granary and two-thirds of the remaining personal estate). Instead, Charles Read opted to keep the family property intact by giving his son less of the personal estate in favor of the entire dwelling house and granary.

Only four men in my test group clearly favored one male heir by following the laws of either primogeniture (Jaspar Farmer), entailed estates (Alexander Beardsly and Thomas Worrilaw), or double shares for the eldest son or grandson (John White). Two of these men were Quakers and two were not. Two were also very wealthy, and two were

not. All had more than two heirs, but so did five other men in my test group. The majority of the fathers in my test group used their wills then, not to favor eldest sons or to give girls less than intestacy dictated, but to provide either completely equal or much more equal treatment of younger and older sons and daughters than that called for by intestacy laws.<sup>25</sup> Thus the behaviors exhibited in these wills are not clearly gendered and they are also not clearly influenced by either wealth or religion, as evidenced by the four men above who did favor one male heir.

Specific object bequests made by these sixteen male testators also show this disinclination to favor one child over another based on gender.<sup>26</sup> In fact, gender was simply not an issue in who got what objects because there were so few object bequests even made. Less than half of the sixteen testators even left specific object bequests. And, of those seven men leaving specific object bequests, only two left what can be considered heirlooms: beds, bedding, and/or plate. Charles Read left his wife the best bed and furnishings, along with a silver cup. He also left his daughters a marked silver tankard, a small silver tankard, two of the largest silver spoons, and a French Louis D'Or. In contrast, Thomas Worrilaw gave one of his grandsons, not his wife, a bed with furnishings. Since so few of these testators left object bequests in the first place, and because one left a bed to his wife while the other left one to his grandson, the heirloom bequests that were given can hardly be considered "gendered" objects.

Clearly, as evidenced by these wills, these men did not consider objects or household goods to be either "male" or "female" possessions. Beds could be given to a wife or to a grandson. In addition, both male and female heirs received the same types of

bequests, mostly monetary. In fact, wearing apparel was the only tangible personalty bequest given exclusively to one gender: males. The other five men in this test group who left object bequests gave their apparel to other males. I believe this is more likely an example of common sense than gendered behavior since it is far easier to adjust men's clothing to fit another man than to make it into women's clothing. Because so few men even left object bequests it begs the question: did these men give their material possessions the same deep meanings of status and gender that we in the twenty-first century like to ascribe to them?

What about differences in portions given to married and unmarried daughters? Twelve of the testators in my test group had daughters but only three of those men had a married daughter. And out of those three, only one had both unmarried and married daughters to compare treatment of. Jaspar Farmer gave his married daughter just 10 shillings to buy a mourning ring, as opposed to the £300 apiece he gave to her two unmarried sisters. However, this inequality was most likely because the married daughter was still in Ireland, as three of her brothers, also in Ireland, got the same 10 shillings bequest.

The other two men with married daughters did give their married daughters much smaller portions than the daughters within this test group. One of the married daughters was given a £5 annuity to be paid by her son out of his inheritance, while another only received a "Jack to turn the spit," and the goods that were already in her house. These were also the same two men who had entailed their estates. This does bring up the possibility that since the majority of men in my test group had daughters who were still

minors, portions between sons and daughters might not have been so equal had the daughters been married. If this were the case, it would mean testamentary behavior was based on the marital status of daughters, and not necessarily gender. However, the numbers of married daughters for my test sample is simply too small to make a claim for inequality for married daughters. Plus, there is the distinct possibility that they might have been given their inheritances at time of marriage rather than having to wait until their father's death. The daughter that was given the objects that were already at her house is a case in point.

Only three men among my test group did not leave any bequests to non-kin groups. This means that thirteen men or eighty-one percent *did* leave to non-kin groups. This is a clear statement by those in my test group. Not only dissatisfaction with dower and inheritance portions, but a desire to bequest to others not considered heirs, was probably a primary reason these men left wills. Stepchildren, in-laws, nieces and nephews, cousins and kinsmen, friends, trustees and executors, the poor, ministers, and the Friends Public School all received mainly monetary bequests as a result of the writing of these wills.

The number of heirs a man had affected how much he could afford to give to other non-kin or non-lineal kin groups, but not whether or not he would give. Church groups were the biggest recipients of these bequests with one bequest to "poor Friends," three to the Friends Public or Free School, and one to the support of an Anglican minister. Assistants and trustees were the next biggest beneficiary group with five different men leaving bequests to them.

By looking at beneficiary groups, portions sizes, kinds of bequests, and comparisons to intestacy law I have discovered that these sixteen men did indeed seem to exercise their right to bequest differently than intestacy laws called for by giving wives more than their dower right, by giving heirs more equal treatment, and by giving to other non-kin groups. One of the primary questions of this thesis is: are these wills and the material culture exhibited within them gendered? The answer is not so clear. Objects were definitely not viewed by these sixteen men in a gendered light. If anything, these men's wills show indifference towards whether particular objects from their personal estate went to particular heirs.

Portion size was also more equal related to gender than intestacy laws called for. Daughters were not overwhelmingly sacrificed to sons to give them more of an intact estate. In fact many wives and daughters were given portions of real estate, effectively breaking up the family estate, while three wives were given full powers as executrix to sell and dispose of all or any of the lands and real estate if it was in the best interest of the heirs. To be sure, the most popular bequest to heirs of either sex was money only. Thus, while there was some gender bias towards sons there was also evidence that many sons received money instead of land, and that some sons and daughters were treated completely equally. Factors other than simply gender appear to be at play here. Did women testators bequest in the same way as these men or did they exhibit more clearly gendered behaviors toward their heirs?

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> About 800 men left wills that were registered in Philadelphia County for the years 1682 to 1710. Much less than this however actually resided in the city or even the county itself. Many of the wills are from Bucks and Chester Counties, New Castle County, and a few other places in Pennsylvania, the Lower Counties, and West Jersey.

<sup>2</sup> Please see Table 1 in the Appendix for a break down of the known occupations, 1693 tax assessment rates, inventory values, and religious affiliation of these sixteen male testators.

<sup>3</sup> Susan Klepp, *Philadelphia in Transition: A Demographic History of the City and Its Occupational Groups* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1989), 9-10. When discussing the rank of these Philadelphia men or their wives I will try to use period terminology, such as "lower sort" and "higher sort," rather than "lower class" and "upper class." However, occasionally it will be clearer for me to use the latter terms.

<sup>4</sup> John Russell Young, ed. *Memorial History of the City of Philadelphia* (New York: New-York History Company, 1895), 123-128.

<sup>5</sup> I consider Alexander Beardsley, Jaspar Farmer, James Fox, Charles Read, Philip Richards, and Andrew Robeson to be among the "higher sort." I have placed Abraham Cox, Thomas Duckett, John Jennett, John Parsons, and William Walker among the upper "middling sort" and Thomas Prichard, Joseph Walker, John Watts, John White, and Thomas Worrlaw among the lower "middling sort." There was a John White who was Speaker of the Assembly in 1684. If this is the same John White he should probably be placed among the higher "middling sort" or even "higher sort" based on his standing and worth to the community. See Young, 89 for this information on John White.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Read bequeathed money to the Church of England in his will, but earlier had been a member of the Society of Friends and a follower of George Keith. However, his wife, Amy Read, remained a member of the Society of Friends, giving them money at the time of her death. See William Wade Hinshaw, *Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy* Vol. 2 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1994), 252 and 1022. Also see Young, 101 for this information on Charles Read. Joseph Walker was "liberated to marry" his future wife, Margaret, by the Quakers in 1689, but by his death in 1697 he was listed by William Hudson under the burials and deaths of those "not Friends." However, his wife's death was recorded by the monthly meeting. Alexander Robeson (Robinson), his wife, Elizabeth Robeson (Robinson), and John White were also listed as "not Friends" on Hudson's burial and death list. Jaspar Farmer or Mary Farmer's name has not been found in either the monthly meeting's records or on Hudson's list although their son, John, is on Hudson's list. John Watts, like

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Jaspar Farmer, cannot be found in either Hudson's or the Quaker's records, although his wife, Hester, was listed by Hudson as a non-Friend.

See Hinshaw, 329-697.

There is the possibility that John Watts was a Baptist preacher. In her dissertation, Susan Mackiewicz names a Baptist minister by the name of John Watts who was requested in 1695 by the Baptist and Presbyterian members of the city to preach to them every other Sunday at the Barbadoes Store. I do not know whether the "John Watts, butcher" of my test group was the same Baptist minister noted by Mackiewicz or not.

See Susan Mackiewicz, "Philadelphia Flourishing: The Material World of Philadelphians, 1682-1760," Ph.D. diss. (University of Delaware, 1988), 359.

<sup>7</sup> Shammas et al, *Inheritance in America From Colonial Times to the Present* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987), 26-27.

<sup>8</sup> Marylynn Salmon, *Women and the Law of Property in Early America* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 143.

<sup>9</sup> Shammas et al, 1-30.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 30 and 38.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 30.

<sup>12</sup> Salmon, 157-8.

<sup>13</sup> These three men were John Parsons, Andrew Robeson, and John Watts.

<sup>14</sup> Shammas et al, 43.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Worrlaw, 1709, Will no. 145, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>16</sup> Alexander Beardsley, 1697, Will no. 154, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>17</sup> James Fox, 1699, Will no. 223, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Read, 1705, Will no. 3, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>19</sup> Shammas et al, 28.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 53.

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<sup>21</sup> Klepp, 75.

<sup>22</sup> Mary Maples Dunn, "Women of Light," In *Women of America: A History*. edited by Carol R. Berkin and Mary B. Norton (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1979): 118.

<sup>23</sup> See Young, 101 for the reference to Charles Read being a follower of Keith after the schism.

<sup>24</sup> Shammass et al, 43.

<sup>25</sup> Shammass et al found differently for Bucks County: "The majority of fathers used wills to give girls less than intestacy provided." See Shammass et al, 46.

<sup>26</sup> Please see Table 5 in the Appendix for the specific object bequests given by these male testators to their heirs.

## Chapter 3

### EARLY PHILADELPHIA WOMEN

This chapter discusses the patterns of testamentary behavior for the forty-four women living in the city of Philadelphia who left wills between 1682 and 1712. This includes both those sixteen women whose husbands also left wills, as well as those whose husbands did not. These women, like the sixteen men from my smaller test group, held varying levels of wealth, ranging from £15.7s.0d. to £1873.7s.9¾d.<sup>1</sup> Six women had £50, or less, of wealth at the time of their death, eleven had between £51 and £200, five had between £200 and £500, two had between £501 and £1000, and four had more than £1000. Sixteen women did not have inventories taken.<sup>2</sup> Also like my smaller test group, a slight majority of these women were known Quakers. Twenty-seven were members of the Society of Friends at the time of their death, two were Anglicans, six were listed as “not Friends” in the monthly meeting’s record of the burials of non-Friends, and nine had an unknown religious affiliation.

Those women whose husbands did not leave wills should have received their dower portion based on current intestacy laws. Since dower was only a life right, it seems confusing at first that the twenty-eight women whose husbands left no wills had any property to bequeath. I can think of three possibilities to explain this: one, the property owned by these twenty-eight women consisted of the one-third of the personal property that was given to a widow absolutely during the years when the intestacy laws only included realty as dower. Two, the property could be property that the woman had

brought into the marriage. She regained control of this property when her husband died. This was the right of survivorship.<sup>3</sup> Three, there is the possibility that some widows were given more than dower by the administrators of the estate. Most of the women whose husbands did not leave wills did seem to own only personal property, indicating that they received one-third of their husband's personal estate absolutely. But, there are several exceptions to this. Six of these twenty-eight women owned houses, lots, and/or land.<sup>4</sup> This realty they most likely had brought into the marriage.

One of the first inquiries when looking at women testators includes documenting the types of broad patterns that exist in the way they bequeathed. I have done this for these forty-four women. First, I identified four broad groups of possible heirs: sons or grandsons, daughters or granddaughters, siblings or parents, and finally, non-kin or non-lineal kin. (This final category will be broken down into further subgroups later.) Next, I identified the three basic kinds of property that can be bequeathed, intangible and tangible personalty, and realty. Intangible personalty includes money, stocks, bonds, and other investments. Tangible personalty includes household goods, heirlooms, and all other objects of a material nature. And realty, of course, refers to real estate such as land, lots, houses, tenements, wharfs, and all other buildings.<sup>5</sup>

The majority of male and female heirs received, in roughly the same percentages, bequests solely of an intangible nature, or money. This was the most popular bequest made to heirs by the sixteen male testators as well. Nineteen of the forty-nine male heirs and twenty-seven of the seventy-one female heirs received this type of bequest. Daughters and granddaughters also received bequests of tangible personalty alone,

intangible and tangible personalty, and tangible personalty and realty in about equal percentages. Only four female heirs received all three forms of property, and only one female heir received realty only. Thus, although daughters and granddaughters did indeed receive the money and moveables that various historians have documented as the female inheritance domain, a significant percentage (23.9%) of them also received some kind of realty as well. This definitely contradicts the view of only “money and moveables” for females.

Sons and grandsons were more likely than their sisters to receive all three types of property, as this was the second highest type of property bequest to them. But, like their sisters, a comparable proportion also received tangible personalty alone, intangible and tangible personalty, and tangible personalty and realty. In fact, thirty of these forty-nine male heirs (61%) received tangible personalty (goods) in some combination or another. This can be compared to the female heirs, forty-three (60.1%) of whom received goods solely or in combination with another bequest. No male heirs received realty alone as their inheritance.

Generally speaking, female testators, like the smaller male testator group, treated their male and female heirs relatively equally in the *types* (not necessarily quantities) of property bequeathed. So although money and moveables are considered by historians to be the domain of female inheritors, and realty the domain of males, these female testators prove differently by giving both sets of heirs money, moveables, and realty in comparable proportions. Thus “money and moveables” are shared and not exclusive domains. In other words, money and goods as broad categories are not gendered.

Although goods were given in equal proportions to both daughters and sons, my next objective was to discover if specific types of goods were gendered. Goods were given either as a portion of the “personal estate,” or as a specific object bequest. These specific bequests are what I am specifically concerned with. Plate, jewelry, beds and bedding, and textiles are usually the most expensive items on any period inventory. These types of items, as well as family Bibles, are also the types of items that most people think of when the term “heirloom” is used. By looking closely at whether daughters or sons had a monopoly on particular objects, I tested three assumptions: how many female testators even specified objects to particular heirs; whether specific bequests did indeed fall under the category of “heirloom,” or whether they included more mundane items; and whether heirlooms were passed on to sons, daughters or others entirely.

About half (twenty-one) of the forty-four female testators left specific object or heirloom bequests.<sup>6</sup> There are several possible reasons for why more women did not leave this type of bequest. Perhaps they were not left the family heirlooms by their husbands. And as a correlate to this, their husband might have already disposed of heirlooms in his will. Also, these women may already have given the object away previous to their death. Or, these seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century men and women were not as concerned with objects as we would like to believe. As we have seen from my test group of the sixteen husbands, men testators were not prone to making specific object bequests either. Religious affiliation did not seem to affect who left bequests. Only fifteen Quaker women out of twenty-seven left specific object bequests and six out of seventeen non-Quaker women left object bequests. Quaker women were

slightly more likely to leave object bequests than those who were not. But, regardless of why more women did not bequeath objects, there *was* a similar pattern that was followed by the twenty-one women who did leave object bequests.

To begin with, there were slightly more daughters/granddaughters who received specific bequests than their male counterparts, but this is to be expected as there were more female heirs to begin with. Five women left their male heirs bequests of silver or plate. Five women, some the same, also left their female heirs bequests of silver. However, these bequests differed from one another. The sons/grandsons received silver objects such as tankards, porringers, and spoons, while the daughters/granddaughters received a silver cup, salt, sugar box, and spoons. Tankards (and porringers) thus appear to be, from this sample of women testators, “male” objects. This is the first example I have found of a possibly gendered object. In comparison, only one of the male testators bequeathed silver tankards. Charles Read gave one daughter a silver tankard marked “CRA” (Charles and Amy Read) and the other a “small silver tankard.”<sup>7</sup>

Beds were the next “heirloom” objects I considered. Five women left beds, bedding, and bed furniture to their daughters while a comparable number (four) left beds to their sons. Based on this, beds cannot be considered gendered objects.<sup>8</sup> In fact, even the types of beds bequeathed were given in similar proportions to males and females. By this I mean that daughters and sons received beds, best beds, flock beds, and feather beds equally. Daughters did not get the lesser flock beds more often than sons, or vice versa. And only slightly more female heirs were given linens or textiles (non-clothing).

Only one woman bequeathed her Bible. Alice Guest gave her “Great Bible” to her eldest son, George. Furniture other than beds was the next category considered. Four women gave their daughters gifts of furniture and two gave their sons furniture. Brass, pewter, and ironware were also given in comparable proportions to sons and daughters. Indeed, the only category of objects in which female heirs dominated was wearing apparel. The pattern for objects bequests for these women testators is twofold. One, only half of the women even left heirloom or other specific bequests. And two, only tankards and porringers can really be given tentative status as gendered objects or subject to gendered behaviors, as exhibited in these wills.

My findings thus contradict Barbara Ward’s findings for Connecticut women. Her research found that beds and bed furniture “are frequently associated with women, probably because they were associated with life-giving activities.” She also found that unmarried daughters were often given silver and textiles, goods needed to set up a household. She postulated that engraved silver could even serve to “remind[ ] daughters of their lineage.”<sup>9</sup> I have found differently for these early Philadelphia females.

Ward was correct in saying that engraved silver could remind a daughter of her lineage. It could also do the same for male heirs. Both a wife’s and a husband’s initials often appear on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century tankards and porringers. Tankards, along with textiles such as sheets, tablecloths, and napkins were some of the few household items on which a woman’s initials appeared. Perhaps these women simply wanted to bequeath objects with their mark (i.e. initials) on it to their heirs. They did this by giving their sons, tankards, porringers, or textiles and their daughters, other types of

silver objects, as well as textiles. Thus both sons and daughters could have received objects that were marked with their mother's initials, physically reminding them of her and their lineage.

Barbara Ward's findings also bring up another question: were unmarried daughters in early Philadelphia treated differently than married daughters? Ward found that "evidence demonstrates that married daughters received objects meant to 'fill out' what they already owned and that they were more likely to receive old or worn-out items than their unmarried sisters. Unmarried women received goods needed to set up a household—the most valuable being silver and textiles."<sup>10</sup>

This is a hard question to answer using these particular women testators. Only four women had both an unmarried and married daughter. Three of these women favored their unmarried daughter over their married one, but one did not. For example, Mary Cresson gave her married daughter, Rachel Sluyter, £60, all of her clothing (worth £5.18s.6d.), the chest and everything in it, the bed (bedding was worth £4.3s.6d.), and half of the household goods. In comparison, her unmarried daughter and namesake, Mary Cresson, only received £2. While Mary Cresson favored her married daughter over her unmarried one, Mary Jeffes did not.

Mary Jeffes instead gave her married daughter, Elisabeth [Coig?], a mere ten shillings, while leaving her namesake, Mary Jeffes, the "Residue of all my Estate wt soever." While we can only guess at why Mary Cresson left less to her unmarried namesake and more to her married daughter, Mary Jeffes kindly provides us, in her will, the reason for why she favored her namesake. This was "not only [because] of the love

which I doo naturally beare to my Daughter Mary Jeffes but for that she hath assisted me for som years by gone with severall soms of mony...and also for her care...[in] other waies.”<sup>11</sup> Mary Jeffes bequeathed the way she did for both emotional reasons and economic ones. By this I mean that she did not leave bequests simply based on what belongings her married daughter needed to have “filled out” or because her unmarried daughter needed a marriage portion. She gave the bequests she did because she owed her unmarried daughter money for past debts, and also because of innumerable kindnesses that had been done for her by that same daughter. These continual small acts of kindness, or emotional ties to certain children, could lead women (or men) testators to bequeath unequally at times.

But for the other two women with both a married and unmarried daughter, it is more likely that unequal bequests were made for less emotional reasons than Mary Jeffes’s. For instance, Sarah Eckley gave each of her two daughters a third of her real and personal estate, but the unmarried daughter received an additional bequest of £200 sterling to be given at the time of her marriage. This was clearly meant to be a dowry or marriage portion. Comparably, Mary Merryweather left her son two-thirds of her estate, her unmarried daughter one-third of the estate, and her married daughter, only five shillings. Again, the one-third that the unmarried daughter received was most likely meant to substitute for a marriage portion since she was to receive it at her coming of age or her marriage. While these two women did give their unmarried daughters a larger bequest, most likely to set them up for a future marriage, they did not follow the pattern described by Barbara Ward. Other women did however.

Neither unmarried nor married daughters held a monopoly on object bequests. Only three of the forty-four women testators gave specific object bequests to their unmarried daughter(s) and only four gave specific object bequests to their married daughter(s). Generally speaking, women testators did not often leave specific objects to their children. But for those seven that did, they did seem to bequest objects based on their daughter's marital status that corresponded to Barbara Ward's findings. One testator who left specific bequests to an unmarried daughter left her wearing apparel, textiles such as napkins, tablecloths, sheets, and pillowcases, a silver sugar box, silver spoons, and jewelry. Another left her unmarried daughter silver spoons, chairs, a table, and two beds and furniture. And the third bequeathed what appeared to be a complete room including the best bed and furniture, a chest of drawers, two black walnut chairs, and one brass kettle.<sup>12</sup> These are all objects needed to set up a household. However, one complication is that one of the three testators who bequeathed objects to her unmarried daughter also had a second unmarried daughter who received no specific object bequests.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, the two testators that bequeathed objects to married daughters left wearing apparel, a bed, and objects that fall into the household goods category: a large brass pan, a brass kettle, a pair of coarse sheets, pewter-ware, an iron pot, a chest, and a chest of drawers. One anomaly was the "Negro Girl named Sarah" who was given by Esther Wilson to her daughter.<sup>14</sup> There were no silver items given, few pieces of furniture, and textiles were restricted to coarse sheets and wearing apparel. This arrangement does follow what Barbara Ward described for Connecticut. The "big-ticket"

items such as silver, textiles, furniture, and beds were given to unmarried daughters, probably in preparation for the setting up of their own households, while more utilitarian items like brass and pewter ware were given to the married daughters. These objects could indeed have been meant to “fill out” a married daughter’s household. Thus, this evidence suggests that for those seven women testators (out of thirty total women testators with daughters) who left object bequests to daughters, the type of object given *was* most likely based on the marriage status of their daughters.

However, the other twenty-three women with daughters left either monetary bequests or portions of the real and personal estate to both unmarried and married daughters, leading one to believe that overall, the marital status of their daughters did not matter much to these women testators. The majority of daughters (like the majority of sons), whether married or not, received money or portions of the real and personal estate, and not specific goods.

If women testators did indeed give equal *types* of property bequests, spreading out their moveables, money, and realty in relatively equal proportions between male and female heirs, then the next logical question is whether or not the actual *quantities* or portions were equal. In other words, did these female testators show any kind of bias towards daughters by giving them bigger portion sizes, as Shammas, Salmon, and Dahlin indicate happened for Bucks County, Pennsylvania?<sup>15</sup>

The evidence from these wills show that most testators treated sons and daughters equally, portion-wise, as long as there were only two children involved. Mary Jeffes was the only exception.<sup>16</sup> She favored one daughter over another for reasons discussed

earlier. Whether the testator had two girls, two boys, or one boy and one girl did not matter. These women always specified that their two heirs were to receive an “equal division” of their estate. Of course, it was up to the executor(s) to decide what exactly an “equal” portion consisted of. The estate could very well have been divided up with the elder son getting the land and house (if there was one) and money or goods going to the other sibling. At this point, I am only concerned with the testator’s provisions and not with the executor’s enforcement or interpretation of them.

So, whether the estate actually ended up being divided in this “traditional” way or not, the very fact that these women did not specify that land was to go the son, and indeed, that they stressed over and over again that their “Estate *both* reall & personall” was to be “equally divided” between the two heirs takes on great importance as a possible symbol of gender equality in the minds of these Philadelphia mothers.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, only one mother specified exactly what she meant by “equally divided” when she gave a house and lot to her son and a house and lot to her daughter as well. She then proceeded to give each of them half of the household goods and money, as well as half of her “Gold buttons buckles & Clasps.” Her daughter received an additional bequest of her “child=bed=things” and the best of her “wareing Cloths,” although these were probably part of her half of the household goods.<sup>18</sup>

However, when there were more than two heirs, portions were not always equal. In fact, they were almost always unequal. This follows the behaviors found for the male testators. Shammass, Salmon, and Dahlin’s findings for Bucks County, Pennsylvania show that when there was only one son he usually was given a double share or more by

his father. When there was more than one son however “fathers were more inclined to equalize shares among some of them.” Shammass, et al also found that the number of daughters did not matter as far as what portions sons received from their fathers.<sup>19</sup> There is no such recognizable pattern like this as far as Philadelphia women testators are concerned.

For instance, Alice Guest had two sons and two daughters. In 1705 she specified by a last will and testament that she wanted her *personal* estate divided in four equal portions. But then she went on to leave her eldest son her real estate, including her brick house and lot, her wharf lot, and her other buildings. Her other son was given a silver tankard and £150 extra. One daughter was given £60 extra, while the other daughter was given nothing beyond her fourth of the personal estate. Both daughters were already married, thus the £60 was most likely not a marriage portion. This division of her estate is quite “traditional” in that she left all of the real estate and an equal share of the personal estate to her eldest son. By dividing her estate in this way, Alice Guest really was following the English law of primogeniture. Her additional bequests of a tankard and money to her second son, and money to only one of her daughters simply reinforced the inequality she exhibited towards her four children through the act of bequeathing property.

Barbara Pritchard also had two sons and two daughters, but her treatment of them was completely unlike that of Alice Guest. Barbara decided to leave her house and lot, as well as the best bed and furnishings, to one of her daughters, rather than any of her three sons. One of the two sons received a monetary bequest of £15, while the other son and

daughter received equal portions of money and objects. One son received nothing. A third woman, Katherine Howell, also had two sons and two daughters. Again, she treated them unequally by giving different monetary bequests to her two sons and eldest daughter, while leaving “all the rest of goods Leases Lands good moveables [ ] bond some of mone and all whatt so ever is in my possession” to her youngest daughter, Katherine Robingon.<sup>20</sup>

The only pattern that does seem clear from these wills is that when there were more than two children they were not usually treated equally. Even those women who left their children equal monetary bequests (Grace Thomas and Elizabeth Fox) also left different and unequal object bequests to them. Not only does the number of daughters not seem to matter when there were more than two children, but the number of sons did not seem to matter either. I did not find, as Shammass et al did, that more than one son meant more equalized portions for sons, or that mothers tended to favor daughters. When it came to three or more heirs, these women overall did not seem to favor either male or female children, or younger versus older children. Some women favored the eldest son, others favored the eldest child, some favored the son over the daughters, some favored two children over others, others favored the younger son over the older one, and still another favored a youngest daughter. All that is clear is that individual women favored different children, most likely for reasons that are un-recoverable now. One reason that *is* unlikely, based on these records, is that favoring of children was based on their gender.

I have not yet discussed the extensive amount of non-kin and non-lineal kin bequeathing that these women engaged in. This is very important, however, to understanding these women and the roles they perceived objects and money to play in the construction and upkeep of social networks. Twenty-seven (61%) of the forty-four women testators in early Philadelphia bequeathed to non-kin or non-lineal kin. These two groups included servants, stepchildren, in-laws, nieces and nephews, friends, executors, churches, and public institutions.

It seems logical that those women who had many heirs would have less property, or less desire, to give away to non-kin. Of the seventeen women who did *not* give to non-kin groups, nine had more than two heirs, three had only two heirs, and five had only one heir. On the other hand, having three or more heirs did not stop ten women from giving to non-kin groups. Thus it seems to be the case that a slight majority of the women testators in early Philadelphia gave something to non-kin, whether they had many heirs or not.

What did they give? As shown in Table 4 (See Appendix), about seventy percent of those included in the non-kin/non-lineal kin group received a monetary bequest, while almost one-quarter of them received an object bequest. Very few of the non-kin group received real and personal estate, and this was always on the condition of the true heirs dying before coming of age or because there were no heirs. The object bequests given to non-kin mainly consisted of wearing apparel, although bequests of a book, a bundle in a trunk, silver spoons, wooden spoons, some pewter dishes, and a lesser bed were also

made. Obviously monetary gifts were preferred to all other kinds of property transfer when giving to non-kin groups.

Friends, both male and female, received the most bequests out of this category of non-kin, followed by executors, who often happened to be friends as well. The Philadelphia monthly meeting and the Friends Public School also received a significant number of bequests. Seven women left bequests to either the monthly meeting, the men's meeting, or the women's meeting, while there were four bequests to the Free School or Public School founded by "the people Called Quakers."<sup>21</sup> One woman specified that her bequest was to go to the "poor among the Quakers," and another, to "poor widows and their families."<sup>22</sup> Only one woman left bequests to a church other than the Quakers. Sarah Welch gave monetary bequests to the Reverend Evan Evans, as well as the "psent wardens of Christ Church" (Church of England).<sup>23</sup>

Why did so many leave to non-kin, presumably at the expense of their heirs? An extensive network including friends, neighbors, kinsmen, servants, and fellow church members could be one answer. Much has been written about the social networks that were crucial to the success of a merchant or craftsman.<sup>24</sup> These wills show that a similar network consisting of non-kin and non-lineal kin was just as important to women, and that they paid tribute to these networks of friendship and obligation even after their deaths. At least five of these forty-four women testators ran shops, and one woman continued to run her husband's inn.<sup>25</sup> An extensive and supportive network would have been just as crucial to these women as to a male merchant or shopkeeper.

In addition, perhaps these women hoped that bequests of this nature would ensure the continued help and friendship of those they gave bequests to. After all, widows and their families were always among the most needy of any city during this time period, and one day these widows' children might need help from the monthly meeting or their parents' friends. Cementing ties in the community was accomplished by giving small gifts of money or clothing to others outside the family.

Wills allowed both men and women testators the right to bequeath their property to whomever they chose, including people that were not related to them. These women testators took advantage of this right to give their friends, and others that they were close to, gifts of money and objects. Individuality, or highly individualized emotions and reasons, led these women (and men) testators to bequeath to others, just as it led Mary Jeffes to give more to her youngest daughter because of her daughters "care...[in] other waies."<sup>26</sup> People, both past and present, do not always act according to prescribed notions of gender, religion, or rank, and these wills exhibiting many different responses to the problem of dividing one's property, show this to be true.

I began this thesis by presenting one main question: Is material culture really gendered? After comparing kinds of bequests, portion sizes, and specific object bequests, I have not discovered a clear pattern of gender bias. Simply put, these forty-four women sometimes favored their sons, and sometimes, their daughters. They did not give only one gender more of one type of property or bigger portion sizes. The exception to this was the giving of silver tankards solely to sons. And yet, only three women did this.<sup>27</sup>

Other variables such as religion did not seem to influence giving patterns either. Some Quaker women favored sons, while others favored daughters. The same was true of non-Quaker women. Half of both Quaker and non-Quaker women did not leave specific object bequests. However, the number of children or heirs each woman had did seem to have an affect on giving patterns. Those with two children usually treated them equally. Those with more than two children (eighteen women) followed no bequeathing patterns.

This means that there were reasons, other than gender or religion, for why these women favored one or more child over others. These reasons were most likely personal, emotional, human reasons that cannot be categorized or easily explained by historians. Looking at comparisons between husbands' and wives' wills can help us in deciphering whether these women (or sixteen of them at least) truly bequeathed they way they did for individual reasons, or if they were reacting against or with their husbands' wills.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Ann Riggs has the distinction of having the least wealth among these women while Elizabeth Fox had the most.

<sup>2</sup> Please see Table 2 in the Appendix for the complete listing of the known religion, occupation, husband's occupation, 1693 tax assessment rates, and worth of estate for these women testators.

<sup>3</sup> Marylynn Salmon, *Women and the Law of Property in Early America* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 144.

<sup>4</sup> These six women were Katherine Blaney, Elizabeth Cullcup, Sarah Eckley, Prudence West, Sarah Willcox, and Rebecca Williams.

<sup>5</sup> Please see Table 4 in the Appendix for information on the types of property and groups of beneficiaries named by these women testators. The form of the table I have borrowed from Shammass et al, 44.

<sup>6</sup> Please see Table 6 in the Appendix for the types of specific object bequests made by women testators and which heirs they were given to.

<sup>7</sup> Charles Read, 1705, Will no. 3, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>8</sup> Barbara Ward found that Connecticut women tended to receive and bequest to their daughters engraved plate, linens, and beds. See Ward, 77 and 84.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 78 and 80.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 77.

<sup>11</sup> Mary Jeffes, 1709, Will no. 152, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>12</sup> These three women were Mary Farmer, Elizabeth Fox, and Barbara Prichard, respectively.

<sup>13</sup> This testator was Elizabeth Fox.

<sup>14</sup> Esther Wilson, 1710, Will no. 159, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>15</sup> Shammass et al found that "the comparable figure for mothers who were testators, show some bias towards daughters." See Shammass et al, 45.

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<sup>16</sup> Susannah Elton also treated her son and daughter unequally, giving her son nothing and her daughter only a riding hood. However, she did leave all the remainder of her estate equally to her grandchildren.

<sup>17</sup> Katherine Deane, 1694, Will no. 117, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm. (emphasis mine)

<sup>18</sup> Mary Richards, 1699, Will no. 222, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>19</sup> Shammass et al, 43.

<sup>20</sup> Katherine Howell, 1695, Will no. 133, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>21</sup> Margaret Beardsley, 1700, Will no. 42, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>22</sup> Margaret Leeds, 1703, Will no. 162, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm;  
Margaret Beardsley.

<sup>23</sup> Sarah Welch, 1705, Will no. 11, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>24</sup> Ian Quimby, ed. *The Craftsman in Early America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1984).

<sup>25</sup> The five women shopkeepers were Margaret Beardsley, Elizabeth Cullcup, Sarah Eckley, Elizabeth Fox, and Mary Meareweather. Alice Guest ran an inn or tavern.

<sup>26</sup> Mary Jeffes, 1709, Will no. 152, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>27</sup> Also, the only male to bequest tankards, Charles Read, left them to his two daughters, rather than his son. This makes it doubtful that tankards were considered gendered objects.

## Chapter 4

### **EARLY PHILADELPHIA COUPLES**

The following comparison of early Philadelphia couples' wills and inventories is the key part of this study. It offers some answers to questions that might otherwise remain simply that. My comparison of wives' and husbands' wills and inventories discovers whether wives bequeathed in a similar manner as their husbands or completely differently. I have already found that some women testators treated their heirs equally while others favored individual children. Because some favored individual children over others, I wanted to discover the reason why. Thus, I investigate whether these women bequeathed the way they did in order to correct gendered biases in their husband's will. In other words, did these sixteen wives give their daughters (or sons) more than other heirs to make up for what they did not get from their father? In keeping with this line of questioning, I also explore whether or not couples made similar bequests to non-kin or church groups. And finally, a comparison of these couples' records also makes it possible to contrast what a husband gave to his wife with what was actually in her inventory. This gives us a rare glimpse into what objects a wife might expect to get out of the personal estate as part of her portion. Were these sixteen women consistently given the same material goods? If so, are these then examples of gendered objects?

A comparison of the treatment of heirs between a husband and his wife does not immediately produce a recognizable pattern of mothers giving more to daughters or younger children. In fact, a few women seemed to favor sons or in particular, eldest sons,

over other heirs. Their husbands had done the same. A good example of this is Margaret Beardsley. She gave her eldest grandson, the one that was already to inherit the dwelling house from his grandfather, the best silver tankard, the best silver porringer, and six silver spoons, as well as an equal share in the rest of the estate. The second oldest grandson, who had been given £200 by her husband, was left the lesser silver tankard, two silver porringers, six silver spoons, an additional £100, and an equal share in the rest of the estate. The third grandson received the other plate under her or her daughter's mark and an equal portion of the rest of the estate.

Margaret favored her eldest grandson by giving him the "best" silver objects, just as her husband had favored him with the house and lot. She gave her second grandson, Joseph, an additional monetary bequest. Alexander had bequeathed the same way. However, all three grandsons received equal shares of the "rest of the estate" from Margaret, something Alexander had not done. Margaret did not give anything to her daughter (according to the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting records, their daughter, Mary Gray, was buried in 1737 and thus she was still alive at this time), while Alexander had at least given her a £5 yearly annuity.<sup>1</sup> This does not show a preference for daughters over male heirs by either Margaret or Alexander Beardsley.

Mary Farmer also favored her two sons over her daughter by giving both of them realty. However, one son and one daughter did receive what appear to be equal object bequests.<sup>2</sup> The second son received two brick houses, backhouses, and lots in the city; another house in the city; a plantation with livestock and buildings; a mill and land; and all other "Chattels Goods Moveable and Immoveables what Ever they be."<sup>3</sup> This was

indeed similar to her husband, Jaspar, who had given this same son all of his estate, excluding Mary's portion, while giving the other children equal monetary bequests.

Like Margaret Beardsley and Mary Farmer, Elizabeth Fox followed in the footsteps of her husband, giving each of her three children one-third of the liquidated estate. The two younger children received additional object bequests. Only a few years before, James Fox had given equal portions (strictly according to monetary worth) to three of their four children, although the eldest son's part of the portion included all the realty. The eldest daughter received an annuity and not an equal portion of the estate. (The son who inherited this realty died shortly after his father, before Elizabeth wrote her will.) Like her husband James, Elizabeth gave their three remaining children equal portions. Also like him, she gave their eldest daughter less, by leaving her no additional object bequests. The significant difference between both Elizabeth and her husband, and between Elizabeth and Mary Farmer, is that she did not leave her realty (worth £1400) to her only son, Francis.

Sarah Cox, Amy Read, Mary Richards, and Margaret Walker all gave completely equal bequests to their children. For two of these women it was exactly what their husbands had done and for the other two, it was more equal than how their husbands had treated their heirs. All four of these women had only two children. Thus far, the seven women I have discussed either bequeathed exactly like their husbands or similarly. And those who bequeathed in a *similar* manner were slightly fairer towards their heirs than their husbands had been.

Bridget Jennett followed her husband's lead in bequeathing unequally to their four children, but she did so to different heirs. Bridget gave one daughter the only bequest of realty she had. Her husband, John, had given relatively equal portions of realty to one son and two daughters, while giving a third daughter only six shillings. The daughter who received six shillings was the same who received Bridget's realty more than a decade later. However, this realty was actually worth fifteen pounds less than the monetary bequest given to one of her sisters and the same as the monetary bequest given to the other. Thus this particular daughter still received less than one of her sisters. Bridget did not leave anything to her son. Possibly he was dead. Either way, John had given one daughter, Lydia, less than the other three heirs, while Bridget gave one daughter, Sarah, more than the other heirs. Because she did not favor Lydia over the others, Bridget cannot be seen as reacting against her husband's will. In other words, her will did not act to correct the biases that had occurred in John's will. So, unlike the seven women above, Bridget's will exhibits patterns independent of those of her husband.

The Parsons did not have any children or grandchildren with whom to leave their estate, but Anne's choice of beneficiaries did differ from her husband's, as she favored friends and he did not. While John gave bequests to his brother and his nephews and nieces, Anne bequeathed to this same brother, his wife, and his son, as well as her husband's sister's children. In addition, she gave to *her* niece, eight female friends, and four male friends. Even though Anne gave to the same kin her husband had, she also named numerous other friends to receive bequests of money, clothing, and silver objects.<sup>4</sup>

This shows that, like Bridget Jennett, she did not blindly follow the patterns of bequeathing established by her husband's will.

While several of these women did not follow their husbands' bequeathing patterns, and seven did follow the patterns set by their husband, Barbara Prichard is the only example I have found who reacted directly against the biases found in her husband's will. She clearly favored a female heir over a male, in direct contrast to her husband's actions. While Thomas Prichard gave his dwelling house to two sons and equal monetary bequests to the other four children, Barbara gave her dwelling house and lot, the best bed and furnishings, one chest of drawers, two black walnut chairs, one brass kettle, and one-third of the rest of the household goods to one daughter. The other four children received completely unequal bequests. One son actually received nothing, although he was named her executor. This son was one of the two who had inherited the dwelling house and lot given earlier by her husband. Although Barbara favored one daughter over her male heirs, by no means does her will exhibit gender equality. To be sure, her other two daughters received unequal bequests compared to even each other. By reacting against her husband's will and giving one daughter much more than the other heirs, Barbara actually continued his pattern of inequality.

Twelve of these women were Quakers and ten of their husbands were as well. Those twelve women and ten men who were Friends did not bequest in the same manner. By this I mean that they did not all treat their children completely equally, although several did. They also did not favor sons over daughters or vice versa. Thus religion is not an obvious factor in bequeathing patterns either, although I am not ruling out the

possibility that religious views could have contributed to the decision to leave one's estate in more equal portions.

Other, more personal reasons for treating heirs unequally could have been the contributing factor to unequal divisions of estate. Such was the case with Mary Jeffes who stated that she was giving one daughter (over another) the residue of all her estate not only because of "the love which I doo naturally beare to my Daughter Mary Jeffes but for that she hath assisted me for som years by gone with severall soms of mony...and also for the care of my [ ] other waies..."<sup>5</sup> How many others of these testators had one child who had assisted them and cared for them over and above what their siblings did and were thusly rewarded?

Another aspect in which these women's wills differ from their husbands' wills is in the amount of specific object bequests granted by them. More than twice as many of these sixteen widows gave objects bequests as the men in my test group. Twelve women gave specific object bequests versus only five men. And for those five men, three had wives who gave object bequests while two did not. Thus wives did not always follow their husband's lead in bequeathing objects. Rather, women mainly initiated bequests of objects, at least within this particular test group of couples.<sup>6</sup>

The widows within this test group not only gave more object bequests but they gave more *heirloom-type* bequests than their male counterparts. Three of the men giving object bequests only bequeathed wearing apparel, buttons to go with the wearing apparel, and working tools. The other two gave plate and bedding, respectively. Charles Read gave tankards and spoons to his daughters, and a silver cup and bed to his wife, while

Thomas Worrilaw gave a complete bed with furnishings to his grandson. The twelve women, on the other hand, gave away plate, beds/bedding, textiles, jewelry, wearing apparel, furniture, pewter-ware, a brass and iron kettle, gold accessories, and “child-bed things.” Religion did not determine who left object bequests, as both Quakers and non-Quakers left them. Those women who were wealthy were slightly more likely to leave heirloom/object bequests than those who were not, although a few of the wealthiest women did not leave this type of bequests while several poorer women did.

Other bequests between these husbands and wives at first appear to be more similar. For example, equal numbers of women and men among the couples group made bequests to religious groups (five men and women). However, only two were couples. The other three women gave bequests to the Quakers when their husbands had not while three men gave bequests to the Quakers while their wives did not. This shows that again, women testators were not following the pattern of testation established by their husbands. Indeed, a slight majority of the five men (three) gave to the Friends Public School over the poor or the monthly meeting while a slight majority of the women preferred giving to the monthly meeting over the other two groups.

An equal number of husbands and wives also gave to non-kin and non-lineal kin. Both husbands and wives favored siblings, nephews, and nieces, but women were more likely to give to friends than were their husbands. Four women versus two men gave to friends. Both men and women gave these non-kin and non-lineal kin groups monetary bequests and bequests of wearing apparel. One man also gave pairs of good gloves to his sisters-in-law, while two women gave silver spoons to their sisters-in-law and friends.

Again, the evidence shows that women broke away from their husbands' bequeathing patterns by giving to beneficiary groups (friends) that their husbands had not.

There is no hard and fast rule to determine who these sixteen women testators gave to and why. Some gave to the same heirs their husband had, favoring the same child or children. Others gave to completely different people, including friends. And another favored a completely different child than her husband had. This shows that same pattern of exception or difference that characterized women testators' treatment of heirs in general. This group of sixteen women did not overwhelmingly favor their female children over males or their eldest son over other children. They also did not give heirlooms to one gender more than the other. What they did do is exercise their right to bequeath the way they chose, including either differently or the same as their husbands. This pattern of exception (individuality) can actually be seen then as a characteristic of the female testators of the city.

The second major advantage derived from comparing couples' records is the ability to compare what a wife was given by her husband with what she had at the time of her inventory. Eleven of these widows died within three years of their husband's death while five died between five and thirteen years later. It is more likely that the eleven who died close to the time of their husbands' deaths still had the objects that they were given as their portion of his estate or inheritance.

Charles and Amy Read both died in 1705 and their inventories seem to have been taken at the same time. In his will, Charles gave Amy bequests consisting of the best bed and furniture, a silver cup, and the money "she hath which she calls her own now in her

Custody,” as well as one-third of the rest of the estate which was to be sold for money only.<sup>7</sup> Her inventory includes a complete bed with furnishings worth £10, a silver can, and £32.4s.1d. worth of gold and silver. Her estate does not include her one-third share of the rest of the liquidated estate. Since she died so soon after Charles the estate was still in the stage of inventory and not liquidation.

Because Amy died when she did it gives us a chance to look at what other belongings were considered by male appraisers to be a wife’s own property and not her husband’s to give away. Charles himself even hints at this recognition by husbands, of separate ownership by their wives, when he gave his wife, a *femme covert* under law, the money that she both called her own and kept separately from him. Other items that Amy Read owned separately included a silver tumbler and spoons, her wearing apparel, napkins, towels, tablecloths, and a sideboard cloth all marked “AC,” as well as thirteen “pillowbears,” a parcel of small linen, and two shifts.<sup>8</sup> Plate and textiles thus make up the rest of Amy’s separate estate.

All of these objects were among the heirloom/object bequests given to girls by their parents. This points to a distinct possibility that girls/women receiving bequests from their parents before or during their marriage considered these gifts theirs and not their husbands’ belongings. Some men, like Charles Read, appeared to agree with this. This is backed up by the fact that all of my testators gave to their daughters, by name, rather than to their daughters’ husbands. Occasionally some sons-in-law were also given small bequests or asked to execute the will but in these cases there was a clear desire on the part of the testator to give her daughter and her daughter’s husband separate bequests.

Bridget Jennett's will and papers are a case in point. She gave bequests to her three daughters and some grandchildren and named one of her sons-in-law, James Parrock, as her executor. A paper detailing his execution of her will appears with the inventory. Parrock did indeed give Lydia Fordham's inheritance of realty to her husband, Benjamin, and Hester Spencer's monetary portion to her husband, Samuel, as the law required concerning those who were *femme coverts*. Parrock also indicated that he gave Lydia and Margaret Fordham, Bridget's granddaughters, their monetary portion directly. They were unmarried and thus, *femme soles*. However, when it came to dealing with his own wife's inheritance, Parrock wrote, "to My wife sarah parrock."<sup>9</sup> This indicates that although legally he was entitled to her legacy, Parrock recognized that the money had really been left to benefit his wife. Benjamin Fordham and Samuel Spencer may very well have later done the same as Parrock had and given their wives their legacies—we will never know. By no means am I arguing here that women received equal treatment. The fact that they had to rely on their husband's generosity rather than a legal right proves this inequality. However, these wills and inventories point out the possibility that many more husbands recognized their wives' rights to separate property than we might think.

Amy's estate thus shows us that there were indeed items that were considered by both her husband, and the male appraisers of her estate, solely a wife's to bequeath even if she was a *femme covert* under law. It also points to two other possibilities besides inheritance. She could have owned these items before her marriage as a *femme sole*. Any property she brought to the marriage as a *femme sole* would still be hers when she

became a widow, unless she had agreed to its sale. One of her minor daughters already owned “other small things she calls her own,” if Charles Read’s will is any indication. Or these objects could have been made or bought by her during her marriage to Charles, using that money “which she calls her own.”<sup>10</sup>

Susannah Worrilaw is a good example of a wife who probably brought her own household goods to the marriage and retained them as a widow. In his will, Thomas Worrilaw only gave Susannah life use of the dwelling house and all the sums of money that he had “heretofore given her.”<sup>11</sup> She received no share in his personal estate. Yet her inventory, taken less than a year after Thomas’s shows a variety of personal and household goods (worth £78.7s.5½d.). In contrast, Thomas’s inventory shows household goods worth a paltry sum of £20.2s.0d. There are several reasons to explain why Susannah held the property she did. To begin with, this was not a first marriage for Thomas and possibly not one for Susannah either. They were given permission by the monthly meeting to marry in 1701, several years after Thomas’s own two daughters received permission from the monthly meeting to marry.

Because this was a late marriage for Susannah, she brought to the marriage either personal estate she had inherited from a deceased husband or belongings that she had acquired while a *femme sole*. Thomas indicates that Susannah owned separate property when he gave his grandson Thomas Worrilow “all the Goods in my said Dwelling house which are properly mine.”<sup>12</sup> This points out that there was property in the dwelling house that was *not* his. Since his children were all married and living elsewhere, the most likely

explanation is that the property not “properly” his was actually Susannah’s—those objects that show up in her inventory.

In addition, Thomas gave his son, John, “all my houshold Goods which he hath in his possession.” And to his daughter, he gave “All my Goods which are at her Husband Daniel Hoops’s house.” Most likely, Thomas gave his household goods into the keeping of his son and daughter when he married Susannah, keeping only a few of his own goods, and using Susannah’s belongings as his. Susannah retained this property at his death. She could also have added to this property in the year after Thomas’ death with the money he had “heretofore given her.”<sup>13</sup>

This shows recognition by at least three husbands (Read, Parrock, and Worrilaw) and several male appraisers that property could effectively belong to a *femme covert*, whether the law stated so or not. Thomas Worrilaw would not have indicated that there were goods in his dwelling house that were not his; Charles Read would not have stated that his wife had her own money; Parrock would not have given his wife her own inheritance; and the appraisers for both Charles and Thomas would not have kept Amy’s and Susannah’s property separate from their husbands’ property if this was not so. This proves that *femme coverts* could effectively own their own property, whether it was a monetary inheritance (Sarah Parrock), textiles and some plate (Amy Read), or a more extensive assemblage of household goods (Susannah Worrilaw).

Susannah’s and Amy’s inventories point to property considered separate from their husbands’ property, even during marriage. What about that property that a wife was given as her share of her husband’s personal estate at the time of his death? Because

property was taken by creditors, sold for money, or appraised by different men with different styles of appraising, it is not as easy to match up items on the two inventories as one would wish. However, some conclusions can still be drawn. For example, Sarah Cox was given absolute rights to half of her husband's real and personal estate after his debts and a £10 legacy were paid. She also received the right to "sell and dispose" of his lands if it was in the interests of their two children (both minors).<sup>14</sup> This means that she should have received approximately £200 in both real and personal property if he had no debts.

Sarah died only two years after her husband Abraham. Abraham's inventory included £250 in "land, improvements, and corn in ye ground," £8 in wearing apparel, £126.13s.0d. in livestock and farming equipment, and £33.4s.0d. in household goods.<sup>15</sup> Sarah's estate, in contrast, consisted of £37.10s.0d. in household goods and £115 invested in indentured servants. Her entire estate was worth £143.0s.1d., much less than half of Abraham's estate. This suggests that creditors might have taken a significant chunk of Abraham's estate before her portion was meted out. She apparently sold both the land and farming paraphernalia as Abraham had stated she could.

Abraham's appraisers summarize his household goods in six short entries, while Sarah's extend on for two and a half pages. This does make it hard to match up Abraham's "sundry Iuran [Iron] goods" with goods that are specified by name and not material in Sarah's inventory. Even so, it is clear that Sarah did own at least some different objects than Abraham. For instance, her household goods were worth £4 more than her husband's were. This indicates that either she received all of Abraham's

household goods as part of her portion rather than exactly half of his personalty and half of his realty, or that she had added to them slightly in the two years since his death. A third possibility is that, like the three women discussed earlier, some of these objects were considered her property and thus not listed in Abraham's inventory.

Her wearing apparel definitely falls under this category, as do several other categories of textiles. In fact, the only textiles listed in Abraham's inventory were "his wearing apparel" and the "bedding" belonging to the two beds. Sarah, in contrast, owned not only her own wearing apparel, but also a turkey-wrought cushion, two tablecloths, a parcel of linen yarn, pairs of shoes, two coarse cloths, a bag of flax, a linen wheel, a parcel of yarn, and a long wheel. Earthenware also appeared in her inventory and not in Abraham's. Sarah may have received or chosen more (she was his sole executor) of Abraham's household goods, rather than his land, livestock, or farming implements as her half of his estate, but she must also have supplemented them with some of her own goods.

What can we learn from a comparison of Abraham and Sarah's inventories? First of all, this comparison of inventories continues to highlight the idea of separate ownership of goods. Sarah, like Amy Read, owned textiles that did not appear on her husband's inventory. Secondly, while Sarah was given half of her husband's realty and personal estate, neither land nor livestock show up on her inventory. Since she was Abraham's sole executor, she must have decided her own portion. If this was indeed the case then she obviously preferred to invest in indentured servants rather than holding on to a part of the land and animals. Sarah, not Abraham or male executors, chose her

portion of his estate. If she chose moveables (considered to be by many historians an inheritance domain dominated by females) over land it was not because of decisions made by males. Since all but one of these wives were either sole or co-executors we can assume that when they were given portions rather than specific bequests, they had absolute or almost absolute control over what their portions would consist of. Although Sarah did not choose land, Hestar Watts did.

Hester was given “all” of her husband, John’s, real and personal estate. This consisted of several houses, lots, and two plantations. This realty shows up almost word for word, in both Hester’s and John’s inventories. The worth of Hester’s household goods, on the other hand, is worth only about half that of the goods listed on her husband’s inventory (this does not include those items appearing to relate to his trade or the £104 in debts due to him). Creditors’ claims in Pennsylvania did supersede that of the widow and heirs, so this is the probable explanation for why there is less in her inventory.

While Hestar owned fewer objects than John, it is still possible to match up a considerable number of objects on both of the inventories. What becomes immediately clear is that the same items on both inventories are always worth slightly less on Hester’s inventory than on John’s. This is likely just a difference of opinion among the appraisers.<sup>16</sup> This also explains why her estate was worth less than John’s if she had indeed inherited everything he had. The second point that becomes obvious is that although object names matched up, quantities did not. For instance, John owned two feather beds and furniture as well as two flock beds and furniture. Hester’s inventory in

comparison only showed two featherbeds and no flock beds. The other items that Hester appeared to have either sold (as John's sole executor) to pay creditors or simply thrown or given away were all redundant food preparation and food service items. By this I mean that instead of keeping three brass skillets, she kept two. Instead of eighteen pewter plates, Hester kept three.

Three noticeable items appear on John's inventory and not on Hester's. These are a silver salt, a silver dram cup, and a silver tankard, altogether worth £13. Hester possessed three pewter salts but no silver one. She also owned a silver [locket?] worth £12 that did not appear in John's inventory, and which she gave to her brother's wife in her will. Today we think of these silver items as heirlooms and Hester probably thought of her locket as such as well. It was obviously an object that was hers and not John's, again emphasizing the reality of separate ownership by *femme coverts*. But how did she feel about her husband's silver objects? Although material (i.e. silver) makes an object special, it is usually the associations with others or special occasions on which an object was given, that make something into an heirloom. These silver items of John's do not seem to have been considered heirlooms by Hester if we can judge by her inventory. She kept and bequeathed what she probably felt to be an heirloom while selling off the other silver objects listed as part of her husband's estate. These three silver objects might have been the easiest items to sell off in order to pay creditors or Hester might have even preferred a variety of household objects rather than three heirloom-type objects. This example gives us two clues as to why only half the testators I have examined even gave specific object/heirloom bequests: one, silver objects were not always thought of as

heirlooms or two, they were the easiest things to sell off to pay creditors. Expedience rather than preserving one's lineage through heirlooms is one explanation for the lack of heirloom bequests exhibited by all of these testators.

One more example will suffice, showing both the ownership of separate property by married women and the material choices available to women as their husbands' executrixes. Joseph Walker left his wife, Margaret, one-third of his estate, real and personal, for her life use only. In addition, dower laws at the time he wrote his will included both realty and personalty, so Joseph gave her only what she would have received under intestacy. What this means is that she should have had no property to bequeath. However, Margaret did indeed leave a will five years after Joseph's death in which she ordered "all my other goods be sold...in order to mentain my Children."<sup>17</sup> A corresponding inventory lists £54.4s.9d. worth of household goods, cash, and debts owed to her.

Even if Margaret had been given one-third of Joseph's personal estate absolutely, as was the case during some years of Pennsylvania's history, £54 worth of goods was twice as much as a one-third portion of his personal estate would have been.<sup>18</sup> Margaret was thus either given absolute rights to these household goods in direct defiance of Joseph's will and intestacy statutes or, this property was considered her separate property. A comparison of their inventories reveals that most of the objects found in Margaret's inventory *can* be found in Joseph's. Thus Margaret must have been given a substantial portion of Joseph's personal estate, in clear disregard to his will. Some textiles and additional food preparation and serving items are also on her inventory and not Joseph's,

showing that she either owned these items previous to her marriage or had recently bought them as a widow.

This comparison of couples' records, as well as early women testators' estates as a whole, leads to several interesting hypotheses about gender and material culture. Although some of these male testators did favor an eldest son with realty, almost all were more generous towards their heirs, both male and female, than intestacy laws called for. This phenomenon might just be due to the Society of Friend's religious principles and their notions of female spiritual equality. However, the test group is really too small to support this hypothesis since there were several non-Quakers among the group. Also, both men and women testators tended to bequest more equally when they had only two children, while inequalities arose when there were more than three heirs. Men were also more likely to leave their wives realty when there were no heirs or when all of the heirs were minors.

Women, however, did not always favor the same children as their husbands. Indeed, they bequeathed in ways that do not follow a pattern, giving more to some heirs and less to others, never solely along an axis of gender. This is what I have named the "pattern of exception." An independence of thought and a willingness to take full advantage of the personal choices allowed by wills, characterize these women testators.

Both men and women testators show equal propensities toward giving to religious groups (almost always the monthly meeting or related to it), non-lineal kin, and friends, although women named more friends as beneficiaries than men. Stronger networks of friends and extended family were most likely the result of these bequests.

Another finding was that several men testators, and their male appraisers, recognized the reality of separate property for *femme coverts*. This property often included the obvious categories of wearing apparel and textiles, but it could also include silver and other, more mundane household objects as well.

Both fathers and mothers gave bequests to their married daughters by name. Some also gave minor bequests to their sons-in-law as well, showing that bequests made to a married daughter were meant to go to her and not her husband. Those women who were afraid that what they gave to their married daughter would not remain hers gave money to their executors, asking them to dispense small sums to their daughters separate from her husband's use. Sarah Welch pursued this option when she asked her executors to use the money she was giving them and "from time to time dispose thereof for the better support and separate Maintenance of my daughter Susanna Guest...". She continued with her reasoning for this: "...my desire [being] that due care & provision bee made & taken for her...my intent being that her husband should not bee in any sort the better for itt...".<sup>19</sup>

Because of a law in Pennsylvania that treated a creditor's claims before that of a widow's, much, and even all that a wife had been left by her husband, either by will or by dower rights, could be taken by his creditors. Since all but one of these women were named sole or co-executors of their husbands' estates, this presumably gave them the power to choose what property to sell to pay creditors and what to keep for herself and the heirs. Some women kept the portions of realty that had been left to them while others did not. These women also chose to sell objects that were duplicated in their husbands'

estates. They kept objects that completed a household, including at least one bed and furnishings, serving and food preparation objects, furniture such as chairs, a table, and a chest, and of course, textiles and wearing apparel. There is even evidence that one woman sold what we would consider heirlooms while keeping more mundane items.

In the end, do the probate records for these couples document fundamentally different values that men and women held for the material world? Was there really a gendered material divide? My answer is no. Gender (and other factors like ethnicity, race, and religion) does not always leave its mark on objects or behaviors. Actually it would be a very different world if things that were that clearly divided. Neither men nor women were that concerned with leaving specific objects to their heirs. And those that did, did not leave the same objects or types of objects to their heirs based on gender. Wearing apparel was the only exception. Three women also gave their male heirs silver tankards while leaving their daughters other types of silver objects. However, this is only three women out of forty-four. And, the only male to leave silver tankards left them to his two daughters. Both the small numbers and the fact that both genders gave and received silver tankards rules this out as a gendered object.

Behaviors do not appear gendered either. Men did not consistently favor only their eldest son. In fact, when there were two or less children they often equalized portions. Women did not consistently favor their daughters (or any other heir for that matter). Neither men or women testators favored one gender with only one type of property while giving another type to the other gender. To be sure, both daughters and sons tended to receive the same type of property—money. Both daughters and sons

received the same types of object bequests as well. Both received engraved silver; both received beds and bedding; both received wearing apparel; and both received iron, brass, and pewter-ware.

This thesis does not argue for complete gender equality in early Philadelphia. What it does call for instead is a more complete and realistic look at gender relations. I have tried to examine, for a small proportion of the city's population, the ways in which Pennsylvania laws concerning women and property were in actuality obeyed, resisted, or subverted by both men and women through wills, as executors, or as appraisers. My thesis also shows a level of free agency and individual choice that I believe is left out of most discussions of probate documents. Men and women do not always act according to prescribed notions of gender, race, or religion. Especially these forty-four women testators show this to be true. Both men and women tried devise their property in ways that would help their heirs. However, since these women were all widows, and their husbands had usually provided well for their heirs, it gave them much more freedom to bequest to whom they wanted without worrying about being fair or equal to all. Some chose to bequest like their husbands, others chose not to. If anything, the gendered behavior I have found for women is one of free agency.

There is much left for future researchers. The rates of testation for the city during these first thirty years need to be assessed. What was the proportion between those leaving wills during these years and the population of the city? Was there really a high level of dissatisfaction with intestacy laws shown by the number of men leaving wills? A second avenue of research concerns the Quakers. The proportion between non-Quaker

and Quaker testators needs to be determined. These two groups must then be compared in order to judge whether religious principles of female equality led Quaker men to be more equal than others. Religious views might be a stronger factor than I have interpreted it to be. Until then, free choice and individuality are the primary characteristics of these wills, not gender.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> When Alexander entailed his realty, he listed the order in which it was to descend if the heir died before having a “lawful” heir: George Gray, Joseph Gray, whoever is the senior male child, all the “female children” equally, and finally, his daughter, Mary. This is the only indication that his daughter Mary, had girls, as they were not given anything by either Alexander or his wife, Margaret. In fact, Margaret consistently refers to only “three grand Children,” making it appear as though there were no female grandchildren at the time she wrote her will.

<sup>2</sup> Mary’s inventory is illegible but both one son and daughter received a £20 bequest, as well as textiles and plate. See Table 6 in the Appendix for the exact object bequests given by Mary to one of her two sons and her daughter.

<sup>3</sup> Mary Farmer, 1687, Will no. 32, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>4</sup> Hestar Watts and Susannah Worrilaw also gave bequests to numerous friends, nieces, and nephews, in direct contrast to their husbands.

<sup>5</sup> Mary Jeffes, 1709, Will no. 152, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>6</sup> However, the proportion of women testators as a whole who gave specific object bequests was still only about fifty percent, comparable to the proportion of men leaving this type of bequest.

<sup>7</sup> Charles Read, 1705, Will no. 3, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>8</sup> Amy Read, 1705, Will no. 7, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>9</sup> Bridget Jennett, 1711, Will no. 230, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>10</sup> Charles Read.

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Worrilaw, 1709, Will no. 145, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Abraham Cox, 1698, Will no. 180, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

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<sup>15</sup> Abraham Cox.

<sup>16</sup> Differences in methods of appraising are also problematic for the Coxes. Both Abraham and Sarah owned two beds and bedding but Abraham's were worth £20; Sarah's were only worth £8.1s.2d. Maybe they were different beds or perhaps they were the same beds, given different valuations by different appraisers.

<sup>17</sup> Margaret Walker, 1702, Will no. 85, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

<sup>18</sup> Joseph Walker's entire estate was worth £272.7s.6d. However, household goods made up about £81 of that sum. This means that one-third of his personalty would have come to around £27. Margaret owned twice as much at £54.4s.9d.

<sup>19</sup> Sarah Welch, 1705, Will no. 11, Register of Wills, Philadelphia County, Microfilm.

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## APPENDIX

Table 1. Religion, Occupation, and Wealth of Men Testators<sup>±</sup>

Name	Religion	Occupation	1693 Tax Assessment Rates	Worth of Estate at time of Inventory
Alexander Beardsley	Society of Friends	Glover and Shopkeeper	£200	No inventory taken
Abraham Cox	Society of Friends	Yeoman? <sup>*</sup>		£430.17s.0d. Real and Personal estate
Thomas Duckett	Society of Friends	Malster/Bricklayer	£100	£359.12s.10d. Real £357.12s.10d. Personal
Jaspar Farmer	Unknown	Retired officer? <sup>**</sup>		Illegible inventory
James Fox	Society of Friends	Baker	£200	No inventory taken
John Jennett	Society of Friends	Tailor	£120	£479.10s.8d. Real and Personal estate
John Parsons	Society of Friends	Carpenter	£150	£674.14s.8d. Real and Personal estate
Thomas Prichard	Society of Friends	Cordwainer	£30	£182.9s.8d. Real and Personal estate
Charles Read	Church of England	Merchant		£1784.19s.¾d. Real and Personal estate
Philip Richards	Society of Friends	Merchant	£400	£1908.18s.9d. Real and personal estate
Andrew Robeson	Unknown, NF <sup>***</sup>	Merchant	? <sup>****</sup>	No inventory taken
Joseph Walker	Unknown, NF	Skinner	£60	£272.7s.6d. Real and personal estate
William Walker	Society of Friends	Unknown	£80	Illegible inventory
John Watts	Unknown	Butcher		£276.14s.0d. Personal £? Real
John White	Unknown, NF	Small shopkeeper	£50	£188.19s.7d. (in Phil.) £180.0s.0d. (in New Castle)
Thomas Worrlaw	Society of Friends	Yeoman		£225.0s.2d. Real and Personal estate

<sup>±</sup> Information on religion was found in Hinshaw's *Quaker Genealogy*, as well as the wills themselves. Information on occupation was taken from the wills, as well as Roach, 31-68. Tax assessment rates were reproduced in a table in Young, 123-128. And, values of estates are known if an inventory accompanied the will.

<sup>\*</sup> Abraham Cox does not name his occupation although his inventory reveals that he had "corn in ye ground," bushels of Indian corn, wheat, oats, and hay, as well as cows, horses, sows, and hogs. This indicates that he was a farmer or yeoman.

<sup>\*\*</sup> Jaspar Farmer is consistently given the title of "Major Jaspar Farmer" in both his and his wife's wills, signifying former military service.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> NF means "not a Friend." These men were listed by William Hudson in his "account of the Burialls of such as not Friends within this town of Philadelphia." This list is found in William Hinshaw Wade's *Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy*, Volume II.

<sup>\*\*\*\*</sup> An "Andrew Robinson" was assessed at £600 as well as £60 "for J Songerst." "Robeson and Sanders Mill" was assessed at £350. I do not know if they are one and the same with Robinson a misspelling for Robeson, or if they are two different men.

Table 2. Religion, Occupation, and Wealth of Women Testators<sup>±</sup>

Name	Religion	Occupation/ Husband's Occupation*	1693 Tax Assessment Rates	Worth of Estate at time of Inventory
Margaret Beardsley	Society of Friends	Shopkeeper/ Glover and Shopkeeper	£200	£1398.0s.6¾d.
Katherine Blaney	Unknown, NF**	Unknown/ Unknown		£198.18s.11d.
Sarah Cox	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Yeoman?		£143.0s.1d.
Ann Cox	Unknown	Unknown/ Unknown		No inventory
Elizabeth Cullcup	Society of Friends	Shopkeeper/ Unknown	£40	£573.17s.1¾d.
Mary Cresson	Unknown	Unknown/ Unknown		£142.9s.4d.
Katherine Deane	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Nailor	£30	No inventory
Mary Dean	Society of Friends	Unknown/ N/A		No inventory
Ruth Duckett	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Malster/ Bricklayer	£100	No inventory
Sarah Eckley	Society of Friends	Shopkeeper/ Merchant	£200	£607.16s.9¾d.
Susannah Elton	Unknown	Unknown/ Unknown		
Mary Farmer	Unknown	Sold limestone/ Former officer		≈£1298—illegible inventory
Elizabeth Fox	Society of Friends	Shopkeeper/ Baker	£200	£1873.7s.9¾d.
Mary Goff	Unknown	Unknown/ Unknown		£16.14s.9d.
Elizabeth Green	Unknown, NF***	Unknown/ Unknown		No inventory
Alice Guest	Society of Friends	Innkeeper (ordinary)/ Brickmaker	£250	£141.9s.8d.
Elizabeth Hammond	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Unknown		£37.4s.6d.
Katherine Howell	Church of England?	Unknown/ Unknown		£22.14s.8d.

<sup>±</sup> Information on religion was found in Hinshaw's *Quaker Genealogy*, as well as the wills themselves. Information on occupation was taken from the wills, as well as Roach, 31-68. Tax assessment rates were reproduced in a table in Young, 123-128. And, values of estates are known if an inventory accompanied the will.

\* The first line in the occupation column is the woman's occupation, if known, and the second line in the occupation column is for her husband's occupation, if known.

\*\* NF means "not a Friend." These women were listed by William Hudson in his "account of the Burialls of such as not Friends within this town of Philadelphia." This list is found in William Hinshaw Wade's *Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy, Vol. II*.

\*\*\* An Elizabeth Green was buried on 11-30-1704/5. She was listed in William Hudson's list of the "deaths of persons not Friends." However, an Elizabeth Green was also listed as being received by the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting from the Dublin Monthly Meeting in Ireland in 1703. Presumably this was the same Elizabeth who then married John Sharp of Burlington County in 1707/8 at the Philadelphia Meeting House. This means that the Elizabeth Green who left will #79 is most likely the first Elizabeth.

Mary Jeffes	Unknown	Unknown/ Unknown		£50.0s.9d.
Bridget Jennett	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Tailor	£120	£163.19s.0d.
Margaret Landsdale	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Bricklayer	£80	No inventory
Ann Leakin	Unknown	Unknown/ Unknown		No inventory
Margaret Leeds	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Unknown		No inventory
Mary Meareweather	Unknown, NF	Shopkeeper/ Unknown		£213.4s.0d.
Mary Morris	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Baker/merchant	£800	£50 Boston money from a prenuptial marriage contract
Ann Parsons	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Carpenter	£150	
Jane Peart	Unknown	Unknown/ Whitesmith		£224.10s.4d.
Barbara Prichard	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Cordwainer	£30	No inventory
Amy Read	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Merchant		£70.12s.3d.
Mary Richards	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Merchant	£400	No inventory
Ann Riggs	Unknown	Unknown/ Unknown		£15.7s.0d.
Elizabeth Robeson	Unknown, NF	Unknown/ Merchant	£600	No inventory
Mary Russell	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Unknown	£60	£78.4s.0d.
Elizabeth Sanders	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Bricklayer	£100	No inventory
Grace Thomas	Unknown, NF	Unknown, Unknown		No inventory
Elizabeth Walker	Society of Friends	Unknown, Unknown	£80	£277.17s.5¼d.
Margaret Walker	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Skinner	£60	£54.4s.9d.
Hestar Watts	Unknown, NF	Unknown/ Butcher		£86.6s.9d. Personal Estate no amount given for Realty
Sarah Welch	Church of England?	Unknown, Unknown	£100	No inventory
Prudence West	Society of Friends	Unknown, Shipwright	£100	£473.17s.10d.
Mary White	Unknown	Unknown, Small shopkeeper	£50	No inventory
Sarah Willcox	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Ropemaker		£1632.0s.7d.
Rebecca Williams	Society of Friends	Unknown, Carpenter		£140.3s.0d.
Esther Wilson	Society of Friends	Unknown, Unknown		£121.4s.10d.
Susannah Worrlaw	Society of Friends	Unknown/ Yeoman		£78.7s.5¼d. Personal Estate £165.15s.0d. Bonds

**Table 3. Types of Property Willed by Men Testators (N=16)**

<b>Types of Property</b>	<b>Wives<sup>*</sup></b> <b>(N=15)</b>	<b>Sons or</b> <b>Grandsons</b> <b>(N=25)</b>	<b>Daughters or</b> <b>Granddaughters</b> <b>(N=21)</b>	<b>Siblings or</b> <b>Parents</b> <b>(N=3)</b>	<b>Non-kin or</b> <b>Non-lineal kin<sup>**</sup></b> <b>(N=42)</b>
<b>Intangible personalty (money, stocks, bonds)</b>		40% (10)	47.6% (10)	33.3% (1)	83.33% (35)
<b>Tangible personalty (household goods, objects)</b>		4% (1)	4.8% (1)	33.3% (1) <sup>***</sup>	9.52% (4)
<b>Realty</b>		12% (3)	9.5% (2)		2.38% (1)
<b>Intangible and tangible personalty</b>	13.3% (2)		9.5% (2)	33.3% (1)	4.76% (2)
<b>Intangible personalty and realty</b>	6.7% (1)	4% (1)			
<b>Tangible personalty and realty<sup>****</sup></b>	66.7% (10)	32% (8)	23.8% (5)		
<b>Intangible personalty, tangible personalty, and realty</b>	13.3% (2)	8% (2)	4.8% (1)		
<b>Total</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	99.99%

<sup>\*</sup> The percentages in this column represent both property given to wives absolutely and for life use only.

<sup>\*\*</sup> This group includes step-children and in-laws, nieces and nephews, friends, executors, public institutions, and church groups.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> John White's sister was to receive "some Token of [his] love." I took this to mean an object such as a ring or gloves, but he could have meant money.

<sup>\*\*\*\*</sup> Many wills used the phrase "real and personal estate" when stating bequests to various heirs. I took this phrase to mean tangible personalty (goods and chattels) and realty, as opposed to intangibles (money and bonds) *and* tangible personalty, and realty. I interpret this phrase this way because most testators seemed to specify monetary bequests in addition to "real and personal estate," when they wished an heir to have intangible personalty, or they asked that their estate be sold and turned into money. Thus, "real and personal estate," signifies tangible personalty and realty, for the purposes of this table.

Table 4. Types of Property Willed by Women Testators (N=44)

Types of property	Sons or Grandsons (N=49)	Daughters or Granddaughters (N=71)	Siblings or Parents (N=8)*	Non-kin or non-lineal kin** (N=126)
<i>Intangible personalty***</i> (money, stocks, bonds)	38.78% (19)	38.03% (27)	75% (6)	69.84% (88)
<i>Tangible personalty</i> (household goods, objects)	10.2% (5)	19.72% (14)	12.5% (1)	24.6% (31)
<i>Realty</i>		1.41% (1)		
<i>Intangible and tangible personalty</i>	10.2% (5)	18.31% (13)		0.79%(1)
<i>Intangible personalty and realty</i>				
<i>Tangible personalty and realty†</i>	18.37% (9)	16.9% (12)	12.5% (1)	3.97% (5) (only if daughters die)
<i>Intangible personalty, tangible personalty, and realty</i>	22.45% (11)	5.63% (4)		0.79% (1)
Total	100%	100%	100%	99.9%

\* Four of the nine are to receive this bequest only in the case of the death of the heir.

\*\* This group includes step-children and in-laws, nieces and nephews, friends, executors, public institutions, and church groups.

\*\*\* For this category, four women, Mary Russell, Elizabeth Sanders, Esther Wilson, and Susannah Worrlaw, gave their children or grandchildren, monetary bequests without specifying them by either name or sex. They are not included in my table because I do not know how many male versus female heirs they had. Thus the percentages for this category are in all probability slightly higher than recorded for both sexes.

† Many wills used the phrase "real and personal estate" when stating bequests to various heirs. I took this phrase to mean tangible personalty (goods and chattels) and realty, as opposed to intangible (money) *and* tangible personalty, and realty. I interpret this phrase this way because most testators seemed to specify monetary bequests in addition to "real and personal estate," when they wished an heir to have intangible personalty, or they asked that their estate be sold and turned into money. Thus, "real and personal estate," for the purposes of this table, signify tangible personalty and realty, and not all three types of property. Three women, Katherine Blaney, Elizabeth Green, and Susannah Elton, left their grandchildren either the "residue," "remainder," or the "rest" of the estate to be divided equally among them. None of them specified how many grandsons or granddaughters they had, thus they have not been counted in this table.

Table 5. Specific Object Bequests Given By Men Testators, 1682-1712

	Wife	Daughter/ Granddaughter	Son/ Grandson	Kin	Friend(s)
<b>John Parsons</b>				<i>Thomas Parsons (brother):</i> 1. 2 best broadcloth and camblet coats <i>Samuel Powell (wife's kinsman):</i> 1. remainder of his wearing apparel 2. all his working tools and implements	
<b>Charles Read</b>	<i>Amy Read:</i> 1. best bed and furniture 2. silver cup	<i>Rachel Read (daughter):</i> 1. silver tankard, marked CRA 2. her sealskin trunk <i>Sarah Read (daughter):</i> 1. small silver tankard 2. a French louis d'or 3. two of the largest silver spoons		<i>Elisabeth Buslill (sister-in- law):</i> 1. a pair of good gloves <i>Martha Dunier (sister-in- law):</i> 1. a pair of good gloves	<i>John Tomkins's wife (friend?):</i> 1. a pair of good gloves
<b>Joseph Walker</b>					<i>Thomaas Byer (friend?):</i> 1. all of his wearing apparel except what Joseph's wife chooses
<b>John White</b>			<i>James White (son):</i> 1. all his wearing apparel 2. silver buttons		
<b>Thomas Worrilaw</b>		<i>Jane Hoops (daughter):</i> 1. 1 Jack to turn the spit	<i>John Worrilaw (son):</i> 1. all his wearing clothes and apparel <i>William Beakes (grandson):</i> 1. 1 feather bed 2. 2 feather bolsters 3. 1 pillow 4. 1 rug 5. 2 blankets 6. 1 pair of sheets		

Table 6. Specific Object Bequests Given By Women Testators, 1682-1712\*

	Daughter/ Granddaughter	Son/ Grandson	Kin	Friend(s)
<b>Margaret Beardsley</b>		<i>George Gray (eldest grandson):</i> 1. best silver tankard 2. best silver porringer 3. [ ] silver spoons  <i>Joseph Gray (grandson):</i> 1. lesser silver tankard 2. 2 silver porringers 3. 6 silver spoons  <i>Samuel Gray (grandson):</i> 1. the other plate under her or her daughter's mark		All her clothes and wearing apparel to be divided by Hannah Carpenter and Hannah DeLavall
<b>Mary Cresson</b>	<i>Rachel Shuyter (daughter):</i> 1. All her clothes 2. The chest and what is in it 3. The bed			
<b>Ruth Duckett</b>	<i>Sarah Usher (granddaughter):</i> 1. silver cup	<i>James's son (grandson):</i> 1. a silver spoon <i>Thomas Usher (grandson):</i> 1. other silver spoon		
<b>Susannah Elton</b>	<i>Jane Smout (daughter):</i> 1. [ ] riding hood		<i>Elizabeth Elton (daughter-in-law):</i> 1. Broadcloth [ ]	<i>James Morgan (friend?):</i> 1. 3 pewter plates 2. a pewter tankard 3. the largest pewter platters <i>Ann Kendall (friend?):</i> 1. Serge gown & petticoat

\* Twelve women testators who were members of the Society of Friends did not leave specific object bequests. They are Sarah Cox, Elizabeth Cullcup, Katherine Deane, Mary Dean, Sarah Eckley, Margaret Lansdale, Margaret Leeds, Mary Morris, Amy Read, Elizabeth Sanders, Prudence West, and Sarah Willcox. Twelve women testators whose religious affiliation is either not known or who were definitely not members of the Society of Friends did not leave specific object bequests. They are Katherine Blaney, Ann Cox, Mary Goff, Katherine Howell, Ann Leakin, Mary Meareweather, Jane Peart, Ann Riggs, Elizabeth Robeson, Mary Russell, Sarah Welch, and Mary White.

<b>Mary Farmer</b>	<i>Sarah Farmer (daughter):</i> 1. 4 dozen Doulas napkins 2. 1 dozen damask napkins 3. 1 dozen diaper napkins 4. 6 table cloths (diaper?) 5. 6 pairs of fine sheets 6. 6 pillowbears 7. 1 silver sugar box 8. 4 silver spoons 9. all her wearing apparel 10. all her rings 11. all her [botkings?] 12. all her gold locket	<i>Edward Badsforsh (son):</i> 1. 2 pairs of fine sheets 2. 4 pairs of coarse sheets 3. 4 pillowbears 4. 2 beds 5. 2 bolsters 6. 2 pillows 7. the curtains 8. 6 pewter dishes of all sizes 9. 6 silver spoons 10. 2 silver porringers	<i>Katherine Farmer (stepdaughter):</i> 1. a bundle bound up in a trunk	
<b>Elizabeth Fox</b>	<i>Elizabeth (daughter):</i> 1. 6 of the best silver spoons 2. bed & furniture from lower room 3. 12 leather chairs from lower room 4. 1 table from lower room 5. 1 flock bed & furniture <i>Mary Fox (granddaughter):</i> 1. 1 silver salt	<i>Francis (son):</i> 1. 1 silver tankard 2. 6 silver spoons 3. 1 feather bed & furniture (larger bed from upper room) 4. 1 flock bed & furniture	<i>Susannah Fox (daughter-in-law):</i> 1. lesser bed & furniture from upper room 2. 1 flock bed & furniture	
<b>Elizabeth Green</b>	<i>[P] Wood (daughter):</i> 1. 1 of her best white [blankets?]	<i>John Green (grandson):</i> 1. All the rest of her books	<i>Thomas Asson (son-in-law):</i> 1. The Spanish Invasion--book	<i>Thomas Tresse (friend?):</i> 1. 1 feather pillow
<b>Alice Guest</b>		<i>George Guest (eldest son):</i> 1. her Great Bible <i>John Guest (son):</i> 1. silver tankard		
<b>Elizabeth Hammond</b>				<i>[ ] (friend):</i> 1. her husband's clothes <i>Sarah [Grisson] (friend):</i> 1. ½ a dozen wooden spoons <i>Hester Wood (friend):</i> 1. old serge gown of a light color 2. 2 blue aprons 3. 2 shifts 4. a pair of [bodices?] 5. a blanket
<b>Mary Jeffes</b>	<i>Mary (granddaughter):</i> 1. a silver spoon	<i>John (grandson):</i> 1. a silver spoon		

<b>Bridget Jennett</b>	<p><i>Margaret Fordham (granddaughter):</i> 1. feather bed, bolster, 2 pillows, a pair of blankets, 1 rug, a pair of sheets</p> <p><i>Hester's 2 daughters (granddaughters):</i> 1. a silver spoon apiece</p>			
<b>Ann Parsons</b>			<p><i>Thomas Parsons (husband's brother):</i> 1. 1 feather bed 2. 1 bolster</p> <p><i>Mary Parsons (sister-in-law):</i> 1. 1 silver spoon</p> <p><i>Mary Huholson (husband's sister's daughter):</i> 1. best gown &amp; petticoat 2. 1 tablecloth 3. 6 coarse diaper napkins 4. 1 pillowcase marked AP</p> <p><i>Jane Wadington (husband's sister's daughter):</i> 1. 2<sup>nd</sup> best diaper tablecloth (AP) 2. 1 pillowcase marked AP 3. best riding hood</p>	<p><i>Elizabeth Griffith (friend):</i> 1. 1 silver spoon</p> <p><i>Margaret Paul (friend):</i> 1. silver cup</p> <p><i>Ann Paul (friend's daughter):</i> 1. 1 silver spoon</p> <p><i>Rebecca Coleman (friend?):</i> 1. 1 shift 2. 1 silver spoon</p> <p><i>Hannah Reads (friend?):</i> 1. 1 shift 2. 2 caps 3. 2 pinners</p>
<b>Barbara Prichard</b>	<p><i>Ann Prichard (daughter):</i> 1. the best bed, curtains, and all the furnishings that belong to it 2. 1 chest of drawers 3. 2 black walnut chairs 4. 1 brass kettle</p> <p><i>Martha Prichard (daughter):</i> 1. 1 flock bed 2. 1 pair of sheets</p> <p><i>Jane Prichard (daughter):</i> 1. 1 iron kettle</p>	<p><i>Benjamin Prichard (son):</i> 1. 1 small bed and bolster 2. 1 pair of sheets 3. 1 old black walnut table</p>		
<b>Mary Richards</b>	<p><i>Mary (daughter):</i> 1. ½ of her gold buttons, buckles, &amp; clasps 2. all of her "child-bed things"</p>	<p><i>Joseph (son):</i> 1. ½ of her gold buttons, buckles, &amp; clasps</p>		

<b>Grace Thomas</b>	<p><i>Mary Snead (daughter):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ½ of her woolen and linen wearing apparel</li> <li>2. a large brass pan</li> <li>3. a pair of coarse sheets</li> <li>4. ½ the pewter (already at her house)</li> </ol> <p><i>Rachel Wharton (daughter):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ½ of her woolen and linen wearing apparel</li> <li>2. a great brass kettle</li> <li>3. ½ the pewter (at Mary's house)</li> </ol>	<p><i>Gabriel Thomas (son):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the best bed &amp; [bedding?]</li> <li>2. a white rug</li> <li>3. 1 blanket</li> <li>4. 1 sheet</li> <li>5. an iron pot</li> <li>6. the largest iron kettle</li> <li>7. [ ] brass pan</li> <li>8. a pair of curtains</li> <li>9. a chest and box</li> <li>10. 3 chairs</li> <li>11. ½ the pewter and iron ware currently at Mary Hilliors'</li> </ol> <p><i>James Thomas (son):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the second bed &amp; bolster</li> <li>2. 1 sad-colored rug</li> <li>3. 1 blanket</li> <li>4. 1 sheet</li> <li>5. a brass pot</li> <li>6. the small iron kettle</li> <li>7. the small brass kettle</li> <li>8. 1 new bedtick</li> <li>9. ½ the pewter and iron ware currently at Mary Hilliors'</li> </ol>		
<b>Elizabeth Walker</b>				<p><i>Samuel Carpenter (executor's son):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1 silver spoon</li> </ol> <p><i>John &amp; Hannah Carpenter (executor's children):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. a silver spoon apiece (only if daughter dies before coming of age)</li> </ol>
<b>Margaret Walker</b>	<p><i>Daughter:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. all her wearing apparel that is "suitable" for her</li> </ol>	<p><i>Son:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. his father's apparel fitted for him</li> </ol>	<p><i>Sister Naylor:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. all the wearing apparel that is not "suitable" for her daughter</li> </ol>	
<b>Hestar Watts</b>			<p><i>Elizabeth Alloway (brother's wife):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. best silver [locket?]</li> </ol>	
<b>Rebecca Williams</b>	<p><i>Rebecca Edwards (granddaughter):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1 gold ring</li> </ol> <p><i>Anne Schooly (granddaughter):</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 1 gold ring</li> </ol>			

<b>Esther Wilson</b>	<i>Esther Clay (daughter):</i> 1. all of her wearing apparel 2. 1 chest of drawers 3. 1 iron pot			
<b>Susannah Worrilaw</b>				<i>Jane Brintnall (friend?):</i> 1. 1 silver spoon <i>Ralph Jackson (friend?):</i> 1. [       ] jacks with 1 silver spoon <i>Mary Herberdinck (friend?):</i> 1. a green apron <i>Sarah Flower (friend?):</i> 1. her muff