



# YOU BE THE CURATOR! VMHC EDUCATION

## You Be the Curator! Example Exhibit

**Exhibit Title:** Women in Colonial Virginia

**About My Exhibit:** I chose my five objects to display a little about women's lives in Colonial Virginia. I tried to include object that represented wealthy women (portrait), poor or enslaved women (kettle), and typical duties of women such as child-care (portrait) and cooking (cookbook). I even included the gun, an object typically more associated with men, because of the specific story that links it to Sara Woodson, a colonial Virginia woman. My additional exhibit label can be found on the cookbook.

### Object Chosen:

	<p>Portrait of Lucy Randolph Burwell, 1773 (VMHC 1951.35)</p> <p>Object Info - Lucy Randolph was part of the Randolph family in central Virginia, one of the well-known wealthy and powerful "First Families of Virginia" that embodied the Planter Class ideals. When writing Moby Dick in 1851, Herman Melville cited the Randolphs as the quintessential "old established family in the land."</p>
	<p>Kettle, late 17<sup>th</sup> C (Virginia Department of Historic Resources)</p> <p>Object Info - The enslaved, poor farmers, and craftsmen left no portraits or expensive goods behind for historians to study. However, documents listing the names of tenants and archaeological excavation at domestic sites shed light on the lives of the "forgotten" families.</p>
	<p>Children Portrait, mid 1700s (VMHC 1893.3)</p> <p>Object Info - Children from Grymes family in Middlesex County. Children in colonial periods would have been expected to wear miniature versions of the clothes worn by their parents, which would have varied depending on wealth and status.</p>
	<p>The Prudent Housewife, 1750 (VMHC TX 705 F5 1750 Rare Books)</p> <p>Object Info - Colonial cookbooks contained more than just recipes. They included home remedies, instructions for managing a household, and navigating daily chores. Cookbooks were passed to friends and daughters, making them valuable sources of social history.</p> <p><b>Exhibit Label – Cooking was a job that generally fell to women and their role within the home, regardless of race, wealth, or status. However, cookbooks like this would have generally belonged only to wealthy white women, who could afford the purchase and had the education to read and write. For the wealthy planter class, enslaved workers often did most of the preparation and cooking under the supervision of the mistress of the house.</b></p>
	<p>Woodson Musket, mid-late 17<sup>th</sup> C (VMHC 1929.8)</p> <p>Object Info - Woodson family tradition says this gun was used to help Sara Woodson defend her Prince George County home from an Indian attack on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1644.</p>