



The Etymology of

punk



## Origin

Late 17th century (in punk (sense 3 of the noun)); perhaps, in some senses, related to archaic punk 'prostitute', also to spunk.

## Sounk

1530, blend of spark + funk (obsolete, "spark").





1575

Old Simon The King

Words anon. from D'Urfey's Wit and Mirth: or Pills to Purge Melancholy  
1719-1720. Tune anon. from The Division Violin 1685 and Humphry Salter's

The Genteel Companion 1683

In a humour I was of late,  
As many good fellows be;  
To think of no matters of State,  
But seek for good Company:  
That best contended me,  
I travell'd up and down;  
No Company could I find;  
Till I came to the sight of the Crown:  
My Hostess was sick of the Mumps,  
The Maid was ill at ease,  
The Tapster was drunk in his Dumps;  
They were all of one disease,  
Says old Simon the King,  
Considering in my mind,  
And thus I began to think;  
If a man be full to his throat,  
And cannot take off his drink,  
If his drink will not down,  
He may hang himself for shame;  
So may the Tapster at the Crown,  
Where all this reason I frame;  
Drink will make a Man Drunk,  
Drunk will make a Man dry;  
Dry will make a Man sick  
Sick will make a man die,  
Says old Simon the King

If a Man should be drunk to night,  
And laid in his grave to morrow;  
Will you or any man say,  
That he died of Care or Sorrow?  
Hang up sorrow and care,



'Tis able to kill a Cat,  
He that will drink all night,  
Is never afraid of that!

Drinking will make a man Quaff,  
Quaffing will make a man Sing;  
Singing will make a man Laugh,  
And laughing long life doth bring,  
Says old Simon the King,  
If a puritan Skinker cry,  
Dear Brother it is a Sin  
To drink unless you be dry,  
Then straight this tale I begin,  
A Puritan left his Cann,  
And took him to his Jugg,  
And there he play'd the man,  
As long as he could tugg:  
When that he was spy'd,  
What did he swear or rail;  
No, no truly, dear Brother he cry'd,  
Indeed all flesh is frail,  
Says old Simon the King.

So Fellows, if you'll be drunk,  
Of frailty it is a sin,  
Or for to keep a punk,  
Or play it In and In;  
For Drink and Dice and Drabs,  
Are all of one condition,  
And will breed want and Scabs,  
In spite of the Physician:  
Who so fears every Grass,  
Must never piss in a Meadow,  
And he that loves a pot and a Lass,  
Must never cry oh! my head oh!  
Says old Simon the King

1597

The Merry Wives of Windsor, William Shakespeare

PISTOL

This news distracts me!

This punk is one of Cupid's carriers;

Clap on more sails; pursue; up with your fights; 130

Give fire: she is my prize, or ocean whelm them all!

1604-1605

All's Well That Ends Well, William Shakespeare

LAVATCH

As fit as ten groats is for the hand of an attorney, as your French crown for your taffety punk, as Tib's rush for Tom's forefinger, as a pancake for Shrove Tuesday, a morris for May-day, as the nail to his hole, the cuckold to his horn, as a scolding quean to a wrangling knave, as the nun's lip to the friar's mouth, nay, as the pudding to his skin.

1623

Measure for Measure, William Shakespeare

Lucio

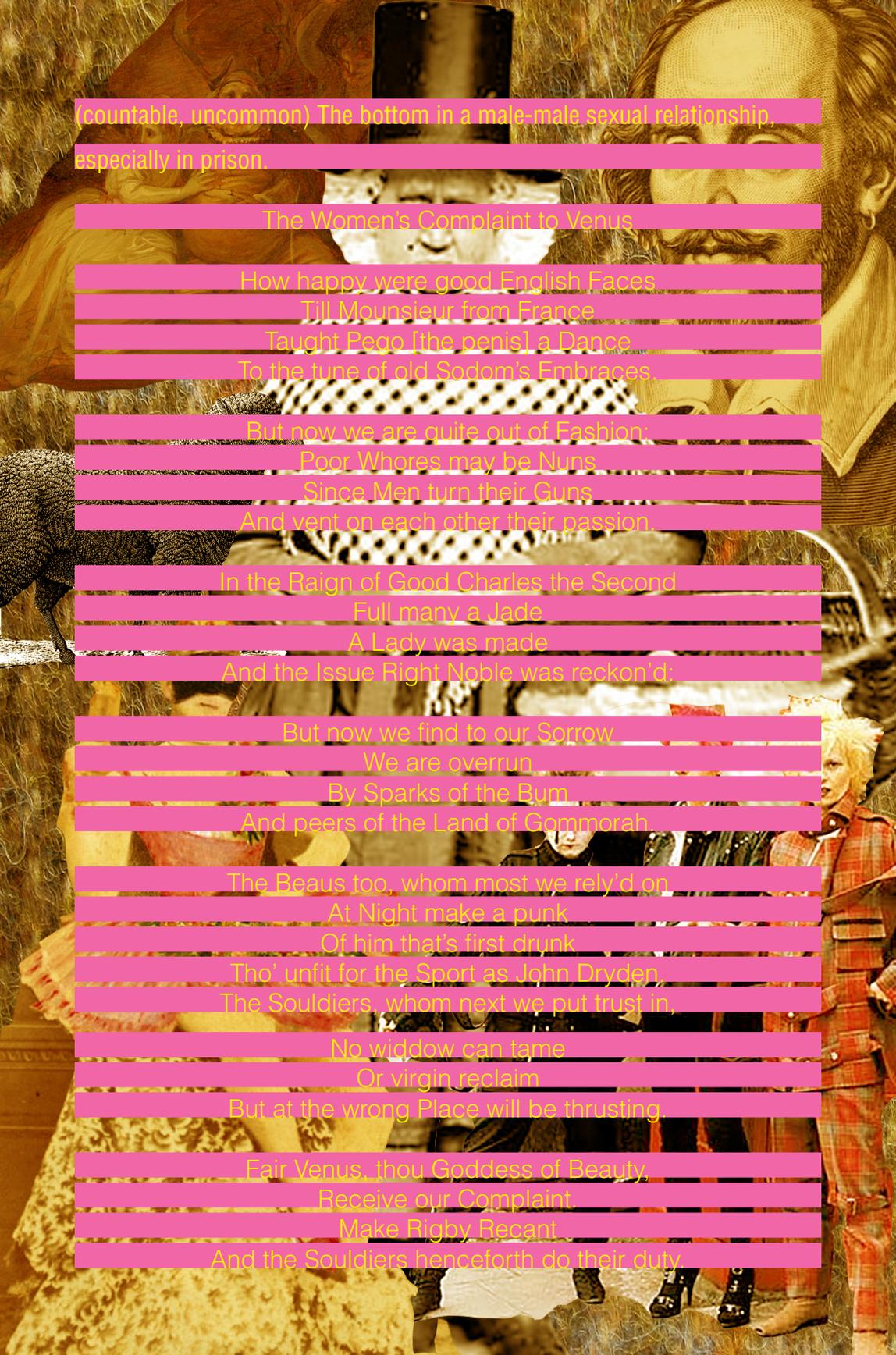
My lord, she may be a punk: for many of them are neither maid, widow, nor wife.

1648

Punk: Gunpowder

1698

In the late 17th century the word began to be used to describe a boy or young man being kept by an older man for sex.



(countable, uncommon) The bottom in a male-male sexual relationship,  
especially in prison.

### The Women's Complaint to Venus

How happy were good English Faces  
Till Mounsieur from France  
Taught Pego [the penis] a Dance  
To the tune of old Sodom's Embraces.

But now we are quite out of Fashion:  
Poor Whores may be Nuns  
Since Men turn their Guns  
And vent on each other their passion.

In the Raing of Good Charles the Second  
Full many a Jade  
A Lady was made  
And the Issue Right Noble was reckon'd:

But now we find to our Sorrow  
We are overrun  
By Sparks of the Bum  
And peers of the Land of Gommorah

The Beaus too, whom most we rely'd on  
At Night make a punk  
Of him that's first drunk,  
Tho' unfit for the Sport as John Dryden,  
The Souldiers, whom next we put trust in,  
No widdow can tame  
Or virgin reclaim  
But at the wrong Place will be thrusting.

Fair Venus, thou Goddess of Beauty,  
Receive our Complaint  
Make Rigby Recant  
And the Souldiers henceforth do their duty.