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Selling the "Professional" Housewife: Editorial Strategy in

Ladies' Home Journal 1905 and 1955

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Masters Thesis Abstract
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This thesis compares the editorial strategies of the women's magazine *Ladies' Home Journal* in 1905 and 1955. Throughout the twentieth century, the *Journal* rapidly became one of the first mass circulation magazines offering a newly affluent middle class low subscription prices supported by the advertisement of consumer products. It both reflected and sought to shape its readers' values, interests, and attitudes.

Throughout its history, beginning with its founding in 1879, the *Journal* advocated a conservative view womanhood, maintaining that women should feel fulfilled through their relationships with others, their domestic responsibilities, and their duties of childcare. As the culture changed, however, the magazine was forced to develop new strategies to maintain and expand readership. Advancements in the rights of women to lead lives which included more of the outside world threatened the *Journal's* value system and its circulation. As women began to seek a larger sense of self through non-domestic activities, the *Journal* sought to keep and expand its readership by giving domestic duties a patina of progressivism and glamour.

In 1905, the *Journal* sought to reaffirm family life while simultaneously convincing readers that they were keeping up with cultural changes. The *Journal's* content was a basic how-to guide for the domestic woman. But the advent of the New Woman at the turn of the century challenged *Journal* editors, who wanted to appear to keep up with the times but did not want to endorse the New Woman's lifestyle. It did this by giving readers a sense of managerial professionalism in the home by incorporating current cultural trends such as home economics, sanitation, and child psychology into its domestic content and selling modern products to make women's duties seem progressive. The *Journal's* essential strategy reflects its double motive: both to both promote a conservative view of womanhood and to increase readership while selling consumer products.

By 1955 more women were going to college and working before marriage; some put off marriage indefinitely. Despite women's progress, the *Journal* continued its basic strategy of trying to keep readers in the home living traditionally by portraying their lives as modern. But it also modified this strategy by discussing more of the world beyond the home, such as celebrities, social issues, and worldwide events, while acknowledging some of the problems of family life. More than in 1905, many women in 1955 resented being constricted to domesticity. One sign of this growing restlessness in the *Journal* in 1955 was near perfection in personal appearance. But the *Journal* packaged this in a domestic and consumer context, promoting a perfect image that gave glamour to the traditional lifestyle. This new emphasis on personal glamour helped both to reconcile women to domesticity and to sell the *Journal* and the cosmetic products it advertised.

The fiction, advertisements, editorials, and columns in the *Ladies' Home Journal* are analyzed as reflections of its moral and commercial values and its editorial strategies for slowing the women's movement and keeping American women confined to the domestic sphere despite cultural change.

Chapter 1: *Journal* Origins, America in 1905, Bok's Editorial Strategy

Historically, and often even today, women have been expected to be content with a life defined by relationships with others and duties in the home. The first 50 years of the twentieth century may have been a time for great technological, social and political advancements, but fundamental change in ideals of womanhood was not one of them. In 1905 middle class women lived in their roles as mothers and wives largely without complaint. Fifty years later, in 1955, despite the succession of the New Woman, the flapper, the triumphant suffragist, and Rosie the Riveter, many women still defined their lives almost entirely by domesticity. But by 1955, cracks were beginning to show beneath the attractive exterior image of the happy housewife. Although most middle-class women were still housewives, there were signs of discontent with their roles. The *Ladies' Home Journal*, which spanned the whole of the twentieth century, reflected the evolving values and attitudes of middle class women across the United States. While it reflected some evolution of women's advancements, the *Journal* aimed at subverting the women's movement and limiting the number of choices women had in their lives.

In 1879 Mrs. Louisa Curtis began writing a supplement titled "Woman and the Home" to her husband's weekly newspaper, *Tribune and Farmer*. The *Ladies' Home Journal* was founded in 1883 when the "Woman and the Home" section became a separate monthly publication. Mr. And Mrs. Curtis edited the magazine until 1889, with Louisa using her maiden name, Knapp. The *Journal* rapidly became one of the first mass circulation magazines offering a newly affluent middle class low subscription prices supported by the advertisement of consumer products. The *Journal's* wide readership illustrated the growing number of women as an audience

for information and literature about the home. It reflected these women's values, interests, and attitudes. In addition, it sought to shape them.

In 1905 the general layout of the *Journal* was similar each month: many of the same columns appeared, informing readers and answering their questions on topics such as cleaning, housekeeping, child rearing, literature, music, and socializing. These domestic topics included in the *Journal* reflected its readers' lives and interests. The *Journal* was there to aid women in performing their roles as housewives while giving slight glimpses of a larger sphere to keep women content in the home. Also, several short stories about traditional, conservative women were featured in each issue, which averaged 120 pages.

By 1905, large circulation had increased advertising revenues and expanded the *Journal's* influence in favor of domestic values. The editors of the *Journal* believed that women should feel fulfilled through their relationships with others, their domestic responsibilities, and their duties of childcare. They wanted to reaffirm family life while at the same time assuring readers that they were keeping up with cultural changes. The *Journal's* essential strategy grew from both its moral and commercial motives: to promote a conservative view of womanhood and to increase readership while selling consumer products.

Over the next half century, the magazine's circulation grew substantially but its editorial strategy remained essentially the same. In 1905, more than 1,000,000 women each month and in 1955 over 5,200,000 women each month read the *Journal* as a reliable reflection of their lives and interests as well as a source of information on effectively handling domestic duties (Mott 545-54). But issues of the magazine from

1905 and 1955 reflect little advancement in the lives of middle class women readers. *Ladies' Home Journal* was not an advocate for achievement by women beyond the home. Instead of encouraging readers to be progressive and develop themselves through increased experience in the public world, *Ladies' Home Journal* in both 1905 and 1955 simply glamorized the lives of traditional women in an attempt to keep them in the home by encouraging them to think of themselves as professionals making careers of their domestic duties. The main difference between the *Journal* in 1905 and 1955 was that in 1955, features such as marital advice columns and romantic fiction indicated that women were beginning to consciously resist confinement to the domestic sphere.

During both periods, the *Journal* applied popular cultural ideas to domesticity. For example, Americans in 1905 embraced Progressivism, the forward movement of the culture in politics, social organization, business, technology, and science. Ellery Sedgwick, citing George Santayana, notes that in a time of Progressive spirit, many middle-class Americans felt the pull "between a retrospective, idealistic, timid, 'genteel tradition' that ruled in literature, manners, morals, and religion, and the forward-looking, pragmatic, often ruthless spirit of 'aggressive enterprise' that drove American industry, politics, technology, and social organization" (15). Another popular idea in 1905 that closely relates to the Progressive idea of moving forward in business and social organization was ergonomics. Ergonomics is the practice of efficient work habits. This could be achieved as new technological advances made workloads lighter and workdays shorter. The *Journal's* editors applied the ideas of Progressivism and ergonomics to women's domestic tasks. The newest

breakthroughs in science and technology gave housewives the latest appliances and knowledge to make a home run smoothly. Efficiency at work meant more leisure time at the end of the day. Progressive ideas and practices ensured Americans that they were at the forefront of everything new in America. The *Journal* made women feel progressive without changing their fundamental roles and activities.

In 1905, despite more than 50 years after the beginning of the women's movement in Seneca Falls, the activities of most middle-class women were limited to the home and its duties. Martha Banta describes the time as "An era that idealized the values of the virtuous, home-loving woman in her proper domestic sphere" (592). A middle class woman generally lived her life through relationships with her parents, her husband, and her children. She was expected to be a paragon of moral behavior and the teacher of moral values within the family. Traditional women did not question the life they were expected to lead; they believed it was their obligation to sacrifice themselves for their families through selflessness and service. They knew what was expected of them. Frederick Lewis Allen describes the traditional woman as late as the 1920s as a "sheltered lady, swathed not only in silk and muslin but in innocence and propriety" (37). Helen Damon-Moore states, "Women at the turn of the century, recognizing their lack of viable options in the work world, 'preferred' the role of dependent housewife" (96). Women were aware that there were few acceptable options outside the home, forcing many to embrace domesticity.

Because a traditional woman lived mainly in her family relationships, her activities were limited mainly to the domestic sphere. Many middle-class women in 1905 had some help from servants, but they still had to take an active role in the

home. The traditional woman was responsible for cleaning and cooking, child rearing, providing cultural education for her family, maintaining a neat and flawless personal appearance, and maintaining social relationships with friends whom she visited at their homes or who visited her home. In a typical day, she would spend most of her time at home, taking care of children and household management. When she went out, she might go shopping for her family or call on a friend for a visit. A traditional woman was content to define her life through domesticity. She knew that this role was safe, non-controversial, and rewarded by men with financial support.

By the turn of the twentieth century, women were increasingly becoming the primary consumers for the family. Damon-Moore quotes Elaine Tyler May as asserting that “as long as the economic system offered women satisfaction as consumers and frustration as producers, women would continue to look to the home for fulfillment and to men for support” (96). The middle class was growing and men were making more money. This gave many families the opportunity for upward mobility. The new middle class was a professional, management class, a group who held management and technologically oriented jobs and had more education, money, and opportunity than their parents.

Because of their husbands' financial success, women had extra money to spend on their families and themselves. The rapid rise in the *Journal's* circulation coincided with and was caused by an increase in the national marketing of consumer products. Ellen Gruber Garvey notes, “The real occupation of the middle-class *Journal* reader was shopping” (152). John Thomas notes of 1950s shopping: “the nation’s shelves [were] stocked with an incredible variety of goods” (569). A family's

status was determined by the wife's consumption and style. By purchasing new items for herself and her home, a woman could both fulfill her responsibility for her family's health and well-being and convey the lifestyle that her family could enjoy; proving that conspicuous consumption was spreading to the middle class. The *Journal* recognized and catered to this trend by providing a plethora of advertisements that brought shopping right into the home. This strategy allowed the *Journal* to profit from selling space to advertisers and encourage both shopping and domesticity. Garvey asserts: "The *Journal*'s strategy was both to discourage women's action in the public and entrepreneurial realms and to encourage lives that placed consumption at their center" (152). One way it did this was by dramatizing the critical consequences of purchasing certain products, such as those advertising sanitation and the prevention of disease. Glamorizing shopping and "home economics" instead of more progressive activities allowed the *Journal* to keep its readers focused on their homes and families.

At the turn of the century traditional middle-class women spent leisure time almost entirely in the home. Often they used their leisure to provide bonding time and culture for the family by playing music for them or reading with them. Theodore Peterson points out the increasing number of women readers at the turn of the century: "Another factor in the growth of the magazine market was an increase in the amount of leisure time resulting from [. . .] a lightening of household tasks by electrical appliances, improvements in transportation" (48). Traditional women spent leisure time reading about the home, just as working professionals spent leisure time reading about their profession. Traditional women read (often in magazines like the

Journal) about such activities as playing the piano or undertaking arts and crafts projects.

While these activities were satisfying enough for traditional women, some were beginning to break away from this lifestyle in favor of something less constricting. Around the turn of the century, the term "New Woman" was coined to designate women who embraced a controversial emerging lifestyle. Banta notes, "The new woman was very much a middle class figure," adding that she was "frank, outspoken, steely, passionate, irresistible" (Banta 592-4). The new woman "demanded attention [. . .] She both embodied new values and posed a critical challenge to the existing order" (Banta 589). A new woman did not use her relationships with others to define herself; rather, she was an individual in her own right. The new woman valued self-realization more than service and self-sacrifice. These women valued living for themselves and they took advantage of the extended period of time for education and being away from their families between childhood and marriage. More young middle class women saw fit to explore and experience life outside the home.

New women viewed dating and marriage very differently than traditional women. According to Banta, they were "Challenging the received wisdom on courtship, marriage, and the family, rejecting such 'truths' as the maternal instinct and the role of child-rearing as the highest duty of women" (590). New women often delayed or rejected marriage in favor of the single life, which allowed them to have careers, dating relationships with men, and a wider experience of life. In turn, shocked parents of new women hoped for a return to a traditional lifestyle. Grace

Abbott notes, "Fathers trusted that, with a little pressure and an appeal to affection and duty, daughters would yield to their mothers' insistence that they remain at home as companions in social and homemaking activities" (270).

Another issue for new women at the turn of the century was education. More women attended high school and college with hopes of becoming working professionals. Abbott notes, "By 1900, 35 percent of the total number of college students were women" (268). More women were working outside the home before marrying. Some chose work instead of marriage. Banta notes, "The new woman could resolve to earn her own living" (591). Instead of seeking personal fulfillment through matrimony, she sought fulfillment through work (Banta 591). In addition to working, she lived without restraint and with a carefree attitude and made her own happiness a top priority.

The new woman sought to fill her leisure time with exciting and entertaining activities aimed at self-realization. In the period of freedom between education and working and eventual marriage, these women dated men, entertained guests at home and sought entertainment outside of the home through the arts and socialization as well. They read widely, and what they read reflected their interests beyond the home. These women read not about making a home more comfortable for a husband and children, but about social issues or improving their career performance. New women spent their leisure time doing things to help them enjoy life to the fullest.

New women were also consumers, but they purchased items mainly for themselves. Conspicuous consumption still applied. These women shopped for

things that would make them look or feel better and show others the type of lifestyle they could provide for themselves.

Ladies' Home Journal generally opposed this new lifestyle for women. The new woman challenged the lifestyle that characterized the *Journal's* readership and its contents. According to Ellen Garvey, Edward Bok, *Journal* editor since 1889, wanted to "assure his readers that their current way of life was best" (152). He saw no reason for changing women's domestic existence. Frank Luther Mott notes that Bok "was inclined to idealize the average woman of his period" (540). Bok's ideal woman was one who was content in her confinement to the domestic sphere. He wanted to keep his readers in the home as satisfied housewives and mothers. But Bok also did not want the *Journal* to appear old-fashioned or dowdy to its readers. He had to find a way to deal with the new woman that did not blatantly reject nor reinforce the values and lifestyle that new women encompassed.

The *Journal* acknowledged the new woman's existence and chose to deal with her by creating its own version of her for its readers: the Progressive Traditional woman. Damon-Moore defines Edward Bok's "Progressive" Traditional Woman as a "sophisticated homemaker" and notes: "the ideal homemaker was dietician, financier, employer (of servants), teacher, artist, and 'social economist'" (159). Bok strategically appealed to his readers, who wanted to feel progressive, by glamorizing the traditional woman and using popular cultural ideas to make her look progressive and modern. He employed the use of science and technology to make readers feel that the *Journal* kept up with the newest studies. Mott adds that Bok's success could be due to the fact that he "made a magazine for what the women wished to be rather than

what they actually were" (540). He professionalized the job of housewife, turning it into science and home economics to enhance its stature. Damon-Moore says Bok supported the idea that "Women were to invest in housekeeping the same qualities that distinguished a man's profession from a plain job: education, planning, training, the management of others, and a sense of mission" (89). But, as Garvey notes, "The predominant conservatism [. . .] of the magazine reassured [. . .] that middle-class order would not be thereby challenged or disrupted" (155).

Bok maintained his reinvented definition of the modern new woman by drawing articles, fiction, literature and advertisements into his magazine that continuously supported this image. A close examination of the *Ladies' Home Journal* from 1905 demonstrates that most of the material he selected as editor focused on domestic activities, which he tried to give a professional gloss.

Chapter 2: 1905 *Journal* Content Supports the Progressive Traditional Woman

Bok's strategy was to sell the idea of the progressive traditional woman. His strategy for keeping women in the home as "professionals" is clearly reflected in the advertisements, columns, and fiction in the 1905 volume of *Ladies' Home Journal*. Bok focused on the use of science and technology to provide a progressive gloss to make readers believe that they were modern and performing a professional career in the home. Bok also tapped into his readers' newfound desire for upward mobility, glamour, and conspicuous consumption. Blending these ideas and values into the *Journal's* content allowed Bok to sell his new version of the old role to millions of readers each month.

Progressivism was spread throughout American culture in 1905. America was pushing forward in the areas of politics, social organization, business, technology, and science. As more industrial and managerial jobs became available for Americans, Frederick Taylor's idea of ergonomics tied into Americans' new work ethic by promoting a productive work environment. Ergonomics, defined as "The study of the relationship between individuals and their work or working environment, especially with regard to fitting jobs to the needs and abilities of workers," illustrates the desire for efficiency and professionalism in the workplace (1). Also, efficiency at work meant more leisure time for Americans. Bok made use of these ideas and attempted to maintain and increase readership by providing readers with a specialized education in modern ideas for home management. For example, a *Journal* ad for a kitchen cabinet told readers it: "Will give you more time out of the kitchen" and is said to be "Indispensable in the well-ordered kitchen" (41). This ad stressed the

importance of organization and efficiency in the home, as it was important that professionals stay organized. This concept was not only important to Bok but to many others in the fields of education and the newly coined "home economics." The world was newly technological in 1905. The ever-expanding pool of information on technology and household care needed to be taught and explained to women in reference to how it affected their lives. At the turn of the century, being a housewife was becoming a specialized and professional job that required its own special education just as many male-dominated careers required specific training and education.

"Home economics" was the term coined for women's domestic careers at the turn of the century. Its popularity was growing due to the large number of women whose lives were still confined mainly to the home but who had been educated and caught glimpses of the larger world. These women wanted to feel that they were using their education in their daily lives. Many women agreed with Eleanor Roosevelt's opinion that homemaking "should have a background of scientific training because only in this way can real efficiency be achieved" (Conklin 4). In 1905 the first course in home economics was taught at Cornell University in New York. The course was open to any woman in the state (Conklin 1). There were classrooms and laboratories that allowed students to test ironing boards, mattresses, ovens and refrigerators (Conklin 2). Instructors provided students with the latest information in all areas of domesticity. Liberty Bailey, a home economics supporter, stated that the development of home economics reflected the "evolution of women's work and place" (Conklin 3). Obtaining the newest information was important, as

Conklin notes: "Home economists in the Progressive Era advocated for pure food and safety standards, and promoted the idea that women needed to be educated about purchasing decisions" (2). Professionals in this area advocated for the acceptance of home economics as a valid area of study. Ellen Richards, a founder of the Home Economics Movement, asserted it stands for "the utilization of all the resources of modern science to improve life" (Conklin 3). The *Journal* took advantage of this fact by giving much of its contents an aura of science and professionalism.

This concern with science is also seen in the new interest in sanitation, germs, and the medicines that claimed to cure bacterial illness. In the latter half of the 19th century, Pasteur developed his germ theory of disease, and Lister researched how to prevent disease through sanitation. At the turn of the century, there was an increased interest in sanitation. William Radam, a Prussian gardener-turned-scientist who emigrated to Texas, studied the origins of his own illnesses (which included malaria, sciatica, and rheumatism) and discovered that germs and bacteria were the cause of many diseases. Now that Americans knew what caused their illnesses, they wanted to know what helped prevent and cure them. Thousands of remedies were sold for curing almost every disease known; however, many of the patent medicines were simply full of alcohol or cocaine, making their "healing" effect only temporary. Almost anyone could sell patent medicine claiming to have the cure for ailments such as cancer and tuberculosis. The late 1880's saw Senate action against the false claims of most patent medicines. Americans wanted valid current information, and the *Journal* wanted to convince readers that it delivered only that. Mott notes the *Journal's* decision that "Patent medicine advertising was excluded in 1893" (543).

This decision showed the *Journal's* early and continuing commitment to bringing them only proven scientific facts on the important topic of germs, medicine, and preventative sanitation.

The *Journal* applied science and technology to the domestic setting. Readers could apply their specialized education to their careers in the home. One primary responsibility for traditional women was the nourishment and health of her family. In 1905, Bok's *Journal* gave this traditional activity a new gloss of professionalism, scientific study, and "home economics" by informing women of the healthiness and nutritional value of various foods. Women took their role as the family dietician seriously and turned to the *Journal* for advice on how to best perform this duty. An informative article gave ideas for packing lunches for school children and office men that are nutritious and balanced. Another 1905 article entitled "Foods that Are Enemies, and Why" discussed foods containing too much salt or starch, and their negative effect on the body. It stressed the importance of a "well balanced meal" (38) and what foods not to eat together and why.

Advertisements, too, supported a woman's professionalized duty of providing carefully planned, healthy meals for her family. Mentioning well-balanced meals and the use of healthy ingredients, both of which were important for adults and growing children, incorporated the use of science. One advertisement sold a "healthy" candy for children. An ad for Royal Baking Powder said, "A woman's work in preparing appetizing and wholesome food is lightened by this famous baking powder" (25). This ad promised women the capability to prepare a healthy meal without spending as much time in the kitchen; this added more family and leisure time to a woman's day.

dust a room" (40). According to Parloa, sweeping a certain way can rid a room of more dust and dirt, leaving a fresher environment for the family. An ad for Varno Liquid Glaze, a wood furniture polish, recommended its use, "for sanitary cleanliness" (30) and claims that it kills germs. Another ad sold rat poison to rid the home of the disease-carrying pests. These sections of the *Journal* aided women by informing them of the newest science and technology for achieving the highest level of cleanliness in their homes.

At the turn of the century childrearing was given new emphasis, with a focus on combining a traditional family atmosphere with progressive practices. Childcare historian Hugh Cunningham notes that many people felt that the "Women's role was emphatically to bring up children; they should prepare themselves for motherhood by a period of service 'devoting themselves to the care of children, hygiene, and sick nursing'" (163). Women were not placed in this role without any assistance. The requirements of the role meant that women now needed a period of special training to ensure their success at performing their roles in the home. Scientific information was shared among readers; themselves and society, including the *Journal*, considered them professionals. Cunningham asserts of the time:

The belief that science held the key to a better childhood for children
Was at its height [. . .] in the first half of the twentieth century.
Science, it was believed, could improve life chances for children,
[. . .] could tell mothers how to rear children, and could provide
guidance for children whose development or behaviour did not
conform to standard norms. (165)

Like America at large, the *Journal* applied this newfound interest in science to the topic of childrearing each month and published advice columns and articles to keep its readers informed of current ideas.

Bok also understood the evolving views on the education of children and its importance to mothers in 1905. John Wise notes that progressive school curriculums were becoming more well-rounded to perform both “a social function in addition to their traditionally academic one” (403). Wise also adds that in 1905, “The dichotomy of approach between subject-centered curriculum and child-centered curriculum led to the formation of evaluative committees whose purposes were to formulate aims for elementary education,” with the ultimate goal for a “provision of a program of content in the elementary school which would correlate all the studies of school and relate them to social and personal life” (403-4). Progressive school systems were expanding their goals to help children develop academically, socially, and emotionally. Mothers increasingly recognized their own roles in the holistic education of their children, and they wanted only the best education for their children. The *Journal* recognized its readers’ interest and included children’s poetry, information on culture such as musical instruments and artists for women to pass along to their children, and advertisements for children’s books to satisfy mothers each month.

The *Journal* devoted many pages to issues mothers faced while raising children. Doctors wrote columns for the magazine, which showed how seriously it encouraged women to take childcare. Mothers had to act as “Doctor Mom” for her children when they were ill. The *Journal* of 1905 ran a monthly column on childhood

illnesses and gave directions for avoiding and treating them. Another monthly column, "The Young Mother and Her Child" described the best types of baths for children with the benefits of and directions for giving each. Mothers with the health and safety of their children in mind wanted to have the very best modern products for them, and the *Journal* provided them with information and products to help them in their "career" of motherhood. Foster's Ideal Cribs advertised its promise to be "accident proof" and said that there should be "no worry for mother if baby is left" (49) in its crib. Another ad for radiators highlighted the improved health of children who have a morning bath in a warm room instead of a cold one. Conspicuous consumption mattered here. Through buying these products, mothers could fulfill their desire for their children to have the newest and safest products while also showing others that her family could afford them.

While science and progressivism interested readers, they were also concerned with upward mobility and class structure. One way the *Journal* addressed this concern was by offering advice to women on the importance of decorating a stylish home. Home decoration was an important activity for the modern, upwardly mobile housewife. Women who could afford the \$1.00 yearly subscription price of the *Journal* had the time and money necessary for home decoration. They usually did not work and they managed the money their husbands made each month. In this newly prosperous era, women looked to the styles of the wealthy to copy in their own homes. Upward mobility increased anxiety in women about the appearance of having money, and home decoration allowed women another way to illustrate their family's status.

The *Journal* covered home decoration by including advertisements for literature such as “The Alfred Peats Booklet on Home Decoration” and a monthly column entitled “How I Made My Home Pretty” in which women shared personal stories of successful decorating. One issue showed several pictures of elegantly set tables with tips about how to achieve the look at home. Having this look in their own homes could make readers feel modern, stylish, and prosperous. An article entitled “Good Taste and Bad Taste in Picture Framing” showed the before and after framing of pictures with an explanation of why each example does or does not work. Mail-order furniture ads also offer new and stylish home furnishings to women. These ads were a great way for women to buy expensive furniture to make a home beautiful and to show off to visitors, an example of conspicuous consumption. Advertisements in the *Journal* sold moderately priced items that helped readers decorate their homes in a similar fashion to the wealthy, only using less money. The *Journal's* advertisements also brought shopping right into the home, allowing readers to reach into the larger world of consumerism without ever stepping foot outside.

Upward mobility also promoted anxiety in women about using correct manners. Correct social behavior was not only an art to women at the turn of the century but also a reflection of upward mobility. Just as men worked to raise the economic status of the family, women worked to raise the social and cultural status. Woman needed to demonstrate the social etiquette that correlated with their family's aspirations to status.

Although many gatherings took place in the same locations (homes of friends, clubs, or restaurants) and included the same familiar people, the *Journal* fostered the

idea of socializing as an activity to be taken seriously and approached with an air of professionalism. One monthly advice column offered tips such as how to serve and eat certain foods, how to politely decline any part of the meal, and correct table etiquette. Another article gave the correct social forms for various occasions. The amount of *Journal* content focused on social situations reflected the new generation of upwardly mobile middle class women who placed great importance on social etiquette.

An important part of upward mobility in general and of attending social functions in particular was presenting a proper appearance. Though not as much as would be the case in 1955, even in 1905, much attention was focused on women's appearance. Traditional women were to dress conservatively with most of their skin covered. They were perfectly dressed all day and evening even if they did not leave the home; visitors could drop by at any point during the day and women had to be fit for receiving them. Their hair was always styled up and out of the face. The traditional woman's style reflected her domestic limitation and her focus on her duties there. Here, the *Journal* glamorized maintaining a traditional appearance by appealing to women's fondness for clothing, shoes, and makeup in a way that made women feel progressive, modern, and upwardly mobile. Just because a woman dressed conservatively did not mean that she could not wear the latest fashions. A woman's appearance was another indicator of her status and that of her family. Time a women spent on clothes and grooming was time spent away from chores such as cooking and cleaning; this indicated more leisure time for women. Also, maintaining

a neat and modern yet conservative appearance boosted women's confidence while they performed their "professional" traditional role in the home.

Many articles in each *Journal* issue offered patterns of new styles and tips for making clothes at home. Instead of simply giving patterns for clothing, the articles point out that each one is stylish and modern. Wearing the newest fashions was important for women, as it was a way of showing her family's status. Another section offers advice on dress and style. The column "Mrs. Ralston's Ideas for Using Last Year's Clothes," (55) gave tips on incorporating last year's (unstylish) clothes into a new, fashionable wardrobe by sewing the garment into a new one or sneaking an old piece into an outfit of newer ones. This way, women could imitate the wealthy (and show off to friends) by wearing each year's new fashions without spending a lot of money. These sections reinforced the idea that it was very important for women to keep up with each season's new fashions. Not doing so could reflect badly on a woman and her family's status.

The *Journal* appeared to support women's concern with maintaining a stylish appearance by publishing many pieces of information about maintaining a neat personal appearance. It ran many ads for corsets and shoes. One company had a shoe named "American Lady Shoe" and used the catch phrase "With the character of the Woman" (49). This advertisement exemplifies the pressure women put on themselves to both be attractively feminine and virtuously domestic. For example, the women shown in Appendix figures 1 and 2 are dressed conservatively yet in a feminine manner and are dutifully performing household duties. Advertisements also supported a virtuous and feminine look for women. Many companies sold maternity clothes and

corsets that hid curves and pictured women who did not look pregnant. This reinforced the traditional behavior of women not showing their state of pregnancy and trying to make their bodies appear regular for as long as possible, reflecting the 1900s' value of family but not sex. Wearing a corset was not healthy for a developing baby, but it was accepted because it hid the condition in which a woman who had had intercourse often ended up. One ad sold stylish glasses for women so that they could be attractive and see clearly. One ad for La Blache face powder claims it is "A beautifier and preserver of the complexion," and that "ladies of refinement [. . .] endorse and use it" (45). This clearly implied that everybody with sophistication and money used it; in this time of growing consumerism, advertisers knew this phrase was sure to help them sell products. Through the *Journal*, women could keep up with the latest glamorous fashion and beauty trends that they could wear while performing their glamorized career in the home. Performing modernized tasks while presenting a professional appearance completed the package for women who sought to conspicuously stay at the front of fashion and home economic trends.

Leisure time for middle class women at the turn of the century had greatly increased due to help from servants and the use of efficient, labor-saving devices. With their extra time, many women read the *Journal*. Having leisure was also a measure of a woman's status. Ironically, almost everything that traditional women read and did in their leisure time directly related to the domestic sphere in which they lived and worked.

Traditional women were expected to provide culture for the family through reading and music, and the *Journal* helped them do so while staying in the home.

Monthly columns in the *Journal* focused on women's questions about piano playing. Other sections provided pages of sheet music. Many piano ads appeared throughout the *Journal*. Columns offered advice on how to better play Beethoven and Chopin. This knowledge of music was not purely for readers' pleasure but for women to pass along to their children, as mothers were the transmitters of culture to the family. These sections of the *Journal* appealed to women by giving them updated and professionally backed information about literature and music. This information helped readers better perform their teacher role for their families.

Most of the information in the *Journal's* cultural columns related directly to a woman's duty as a mother and teacher. A monthly literary advice column, "Mr. Mabie Answers Some Questions," gave women tips on literature, writing style, books, and interpreting writing, all progressive and sophisticated topics of study, but well within the traditional woman's sphere. Another column, "Mr. Mabie Talks About Poetry and Tells Why It Is Worth While In Our Lives," specifically discussed the importance of poetry in women's lives. The February 1905 issue offered ideas of arts and crafts projects for mothers and children to complete on cold winter nights. It also listed several suggestions of activities for the month of February such as games, dinner menus, and fun holiday things to do with children.

Among the *Journal's* cultural contents, fiction offered women the most time for self-cultivation away from domestic duties, but in the *Journal*, it still emphasized the traditional woman. It did not challenge the norms of traditional behavior; it entertained women while reinforcing traditional behavior. Damon-Moore states, fiction in the *Journal* was "intended to provide a respite for women from the realities

of their work-filled days. They were also a conduit for gender norms" (37). None of the fiction was controversial nor did it encourage unconventional behavior. Jennifer Scanlon agrees, saying, "The *Journal*'s fiction is neither simply reactionary nor boldly feminist; instead, it looms uncertainly in the magazine's ambivalent and ambiguous attempts to both shape and please middle class readers" (138). Scanlon adds, "the fiction tries to express women's wrongs and rights, providing a socially acceptable means of both redressing the wrongs and keeping the rights in check" (139).

An example of "keeping the social rights in check" is the Feb. 1905 short story, "The Sharp Edge of Kindness," which reinforced women's use of polite social behavior. The story gave social interaction a life of its own and served as a lesson for women on the dangers of a rivalry with others in their social circles. It gave readers the simultaneous view of two socialites who despise one another. The two women maintain an almost cordial relationship in public, knowing the importance of courtesy in front of others. In private, the women think about their dislike for each other. The story shows the subtle competition between the women; they are always trying to outdo one another. The narrator of the story notes the "insidious code of women's warfare" (9) each character uses. Eventually the women fear the retaliation of the other, which takes enjoyment away from being catty. The appearance of this story in the *Journal* catered to traditional women's concern with approaching social behavior as an important job to be performed with finesse. It warned them that all things said and done in public should be proper and polite no matter what was said or done behind closed doors. Additionally, it reflected the social competition between women

that was made more intense by striving for upward mobility and the status conferred by conspicuous consumption. The fiction did not challenge the norms; it entertained women while reinforcing traditional behavior.

Journal fiction in 1905 was generally about traditional women's issues such as social competition between women, finding a man, marriage, and childbirth. But it also included stories such as "Ruth Endicott, School Mistress" and "Because Other Girls Were Free" that reinforced fundamental values of virtue and morality for women as they reached out into the larger world.

In literature about domesticity, one story, "The Inner Life of A Husband and Wife," warned women of the dangers of not showing enough interest in and not paying enough attention to their husbands. A couple's struggle over losing a child in infancy ignites the problems they experience. The wife falls into a depression and her husband's passion for her dies just as their fateful child. The story warned that the wife's lack of enthusiasm for their marriage drove a wedge between the couple.

Literature also showed women reaching beyond the home, reinforcing traditional behavior by warning women of the pitfalls of living in the larger world without the protection of family and friends. On the surface, *Journal* fiction entertains readers while underneath it reinforces traditional behaviors. One story, "The Dark Man In Her Life," presents a female college student as the protagonist who ends up looking like a fool when she mistakes an attractive older man she meets for a man a psychic tells her that she will meet. Another short story, "Because Other Girls Were Free" warned readers of the dangers of "loose" behavior in front of men. The story follows a girl named Alice and her love interest, Jack. Jack recounts his

numerous social relationships with girls who were very free in their behavior toward men; they cornered him and gave him a kiss. Several of these women were interested in Jack, but he chose the virtuous Alice as his girlfriend. Alice is horrified at the idea of a young man and woman kissing before they are in a binding relationship. Alice's moral behavior serves as a guide for young women who are looking for a man. In 1905, young men and women were to be very respectful of one another and not have much physical contact. Only after marriage could a couple become physically intimate in any way. The moral conveyed to readers is that well-behaved young women will be rewarded with a good boyfriend while "free" young women merely earn a bad reputation.

Just like old-fashioned morality tales such as Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* and *Clarissa*, *Journal* fiction illustrated the rewards of proper behavior and the consequences of behaving inappropriately. Grace Richmond's series of short stories, "Ruth Endicott, Schoolmistress" highlighted the daily mishaps and romantic developments of a young schoolmistress living without parental guidance. Ruth has an internal traditional value system that keeps her from giving in to temptation. Her morality is a model to readers and reinforces using correct behavior in the absence of an authority figure as readers move out into the larger world. The stories were entertaining but also told readers that conservative behavior was best. The *Journal* was able to reinforce traditional behaviors by disguising them as entertaining pieces of fiction each month.

While *Journal* fiction reinforced traditional behaviors, occasional references to a "new" idea for women added to the "progressive" veneer of the *Journal*. One

example of this is the idea of women going to college. In the opening page of the February 1905 issue Bok noted to readers, "More girls are going to college all the time, and more girls are interested in college life and doings" (1). Bok made the *Journal* appeal to this new readership by promoting a contest encouraging women to send in stories of college pranks and fun activities. The winners were awarded cash prizes but the format of the contest encouraged women to trivialize their educational experience. By presenting most of his material on college life in this light, Bok made women's college experience seem like an extended sleepover full of youthful high jinx in which education was a secondary reason for going to college. However, the contest made Bok appear open to the progressive behavior of higher education for women.

Bok also recognized the "new" idea of his readers' interest in making small amounts of their own money, and he facilitated this desire by offering safe, acceptable ways for women to make extra money in the home. One example is monthly contests for readers. He requested that readers send in funny stories, answer questions about past articles in the magazine, and submit before and after pictures of property defaced by advertising that readers reported and had corrected. The winners received cash prizes. The *Journal* also published a few ads that offered women an opportunity to make some extra money sewing pieces of clothing at home. There was a contest for women to design a shirtwaist advertisement. These options allowed the magazine to support the "new" idea of women making money while providing the least controversial options for doing so.

By 1900, women made up 18.1% of the workforce (Wilson 1). The *Journal* touched on the subject of women working outside of the home. For example, a regular two-column section about businesswomen, "In and After Business Hours: Little Chats With Business Girls," written by Judith Lloyd appeared near the back of the magazine. The column included Lloyd's advice on the "rules" of the women's working world. She discussed issues such as her personal experience in the working world, advice for a successful entry into the workforce, and the hierarchy of female employees found in many businesses (43). This column did give some attention to the fact that more women were working outside the home at the turn of the century. The monthly appearance of "Business Girls" showed Bok's recognition of the new, modern working girl and gave him credibility with readers for acknowledging her existence in the *Journal*, but at the same time the column included comments about the amount of time that a job takes away from a woman's family.

Just like the column on women working away from home, *Journal* fiction shows the progressive idea of women outside of the home. The fiction serves as moral guidance for women living apart from their families. The presence of these ideas shows the *Journal's* assumption that women needed guidance on how to properly act outside of the home, so that any embarrassing or immoral behavior could be avoided. The combination of the morals reinforced in the fiction and the acknowledgement of women working outside the home allowed the *Journal* to appear progressive while still reinforcing traditional behavior in women.

Bok also satisfied readers in his attempt to personalize the *Journal* despite its being a mass circulation magazine. He realized the isolation felt by many readers

who on many days only came into contact with their husbands and children. The *Journal* gave its readers contact with others for which they longed. Bok personalized the magazine by posting a message on the front page of each issue with a message encouraging readers to send in personal stories or comments to the magazine about a specific topic or idea. He encouraged interaction from readers, sending the message that the *Journal* cared about them individually. Bok also included many monthly advice columns and articles that included the words "chat" or "talk" in the title ("Little Chats With Business Girls," "Mrs. Sangster's Heart to Heart Talks With Girls"). These words and the informal dialogue used in the columns about personal topics such as love problems (how to behave in front of a love interest) or social situations (conversation starters, manners) made readers feel as if they had a confidante in its author.

Bok's *Ladies' Home Journal* generally encouraged women to focus their activities and ambitions on improving the domestic lives of their families by giving these activities a progressive gloss. However, in some modest ways it did support women in expanding the domestic sphere or developing themselves outside of the traditional sphere and exploring a larger world beyond the home. Bok's occasional reference to the wider sphere and the modern woman conveyed to readers that the *Journal* was in fact progressive and made them think that by reading it each month, they would be also.

Chapter 3: The *Journal* and America in 1955

In 1955 the *Journal* was still going strong. It was selling 5,200,000 issues a year at a cover price of \$.35 per issue (Frank Mott 554). Walter D. Fuller was the president of the publishing company in 1955. Bruce and Beatrice Blackmar Gould had been the editors since 1935. The Goulds, notes Mott, were "in touch with contemporary interests and ideas, but sympathetic with the traditions of the old magazine whose editorial course they were to direct successfully for many years" (552). They were young when they began editing the *Journal* in 1935, but by 1955 they had aged and were therefore inclined to continue the same formula for reinforcing the traditional way of life. Mott emphasizes the continuity of the *Journal's* strategy from the beginning of the century through the 1950s: "Intimacy, name writers, services, and advertising made up the Curtis-Bok formula in the early years; intimacy, name writers, services, and advertising do the job today under Fuller and the Goulds" (554). While the basic framework of the *Journal* was similar, color was a very noticeable difference in the 1955 issues. Other noticeable changes were "those that have been wrought by improved typography and layout, omnipresent color, and skillful art work wedded to clever editing" (Mott 554). Each issue was just over 200 pages with almost 40% of the magazine being advertisements; almost every page was partially if not wholly devoted to advertising. On many pages, advertisements were the borders around a column or short story. This allowed advertisers to sell to women while they read all sections of the *Journal*.

As in 1905, the general layout of the *Journal* was the same each month. There were regular features listed under categories titled "General Features,"

"Stories," "Fashion and Beauty," "Food and Homemaking," "Architecture and Interior Decoration," and "Poems." The monthly entries under these categories reflected the lives of readers; they were there to help women be the best housewives possible while giving slight reference to the world outside the home. There was also a monthly heading entitled "Special Features" under which were listed informational articles, advice columns, short stories, and personal narratives by a guest writer. Most of the content under this category was closely related to domesticity as well.

By 1955 more middle class women were going to college and starting careers; women made up approximately 35% of college students in the middle and late 1950s (Friedan 425). Women were marrying later in their twenties, becoming educated, and even working some before marriage. The *Journal* had to adjust and keep these women as readers. However, most were still marrying and living as wives and mothers confined to the domestic sphere. Often, women did both, with marriage ending the college experience prematurely. Betty Friedan notes that, "By the mid-fifties, 60 percent [of females] dropped out of college to marry, or because they were afraid too much education would be a marriage bar" (16). Even though it was more widely accepted for women to attend college, over half who did never finished, choosing the traditional path of marriage and motherhood instead. Stephanie Coontz notes that, "The 1950s was a pro-family period if there ever was one" (24). Naomi Wolf quotes Betty Friedan's comment of 1950s women's culture: "'There is no other way for a woman to be a heroine' than to 'keep on having babies'" (67). Marrying young and raising children was widely accepted as the appropriate path for women in 1955. In fact, in 1955 an even greater proportion of the *Journal's* readers were

married women than in 1905, when the age range of its readership was larger and its readers were married, engaged, maturing to the age of dating, in college, or pursuing a profession. The lack of a broader readership was due to the rise of more specialized competitors for younger readers over the 50 years between the decades.

Traditional women in 1955 were still responsible for raising children, being dutiful wives, cleaning, cooking, maintaining a flawless personal appearance, and keeping up social relationships; these activities consumed her time. Wolf quotes Ann Oakley's description of the expectations placed on women: "A good wife, a good mother, and an efficient homemaker. . . Women's expected role in society [was] to strive after perfection in all three roles" (64). Women who followed this path read *Ladies' Home Journal*. Women were surrounded by a society that felt, "The family is the center of your living. If it isn't, you've gone far astray" (Coontz 25). Carol Siegel and Ann Kibbey note of the decade that, "In a climate of strict gender roles and domesticity, women were encouraged to stay home and raise children" (5). Glenna Matthews says that the housewife, "was supposed to eradicate any vestige of personal ambition or independent thought in order to keep her family happy" (196). The traditional housewife of the 1950s, like her counterpart in 1905, was expected to be selfless.

While the 1950s saw the majority of women in the home, many women had held jobs during WWII because men were off at war. They had enjoyed making money and getting out of the house in addition to helping the war effort. Wolf asserts, "As women responded and undertook men's higher-paid work, a new sense of competence and confidence emboldened them" (63). However, when the men came

back, attitudes about women working changed. The social encouragement for women to work vanished as soon as there were men available to do the work. Wolf notes of post-war America, "When the male workforce came back from the trenches, the magazines retuned to the home" (63). Many women expressed a desire to continue working after the war, but forces such as the government and popular culture propaganda (including the *Journal*) urged women back into the home.

By the 1950s there had been a steep decline in the number of households employing servants, with the result being that women did more of the actual domestic labor themselves with the aid of 1950s advancing technology. Because of these technological advances, women's workload was lightened in some areas. But women still had considerable domestic work such as childcare, house cleaning, decorating, as well as maintaining their personal appearance and social relationships. These topics marked the narrow boundaries of their experience. Betty Friedan asserts that, "Many women no longer left their homes, except to shop, chauffeur their children, or attend a social engagement with their husbands" (17). Coontz quotes Mathews about the growing number of women who felt housework to be, "a medium of expression for [. . .] [their] femininity and individuality" (27). The general public and magazines like *Ladies' Home Journal* supported this opinion. Matthews points out the common opinion that "The 'normal,' feminine woman would be happy staying at home. One who was unhappy was, in fact, by definition not normal" (211). Like their grandmothers in 1905, women in the 1950s were expected to be content defining their lives through their relationships, primarily in their roles as wife and mother. Just as

in 1905, women in 1955 were confined to a domestic sphere that had not expanded much in the fifty years that passed between the decades.

After a decade of depression followed by the upheavals in American lives during World War II, the 1950s, like the 1900s, were seeing a reemphasis on traditional values of the home and family, a realization of the American Dream in the form of a single-family house in the suburbs, and a newfound, larger, prosperous middle class. The 1950s were a time of increasing economic prosperity for many families, with women serving as the family's main consumer. Coontz notes that, "many working-class families also moved into the middle class" and that "between 1945 and 1960, the gross national product grew by almost 250 percent and per capita income by 35 percent" (24). The average yearly income for a professional/technical/managerial position in 1955 was slightly above \$5,000.00, compared to less than \$500.00 in 1905 (U.S. Bureau of the Census 304). With this postwar prosperity came the booming of the suburbs. There was a steep rise in the number of single-family homes after World War II much like the ones of Levittown shown in Appendix figures 3 and 4. This made home ownership and management a larger responsibility for more women. Men were making decent amounts of money in the corporate world with managerial and professional jobs, and women were spending this money on items for their homes, their families, and themselves.

Many families could afford to buy nice things, since "the number of people with discretionary income doubled during the 1950s" (Coontz 25). Young couples in the 1950s had more money and education than their parents. They held higher paying, more professional jobs than many of their parents did. Even more broadly

than in 1905, the 1950s saw a new wave of prosperity among many families. With this new surplus of money came the privilege of spending it in view of others. Buying goods for the home was a way to show others just how much a family could afford to spend on items that were not necessities, such as gourmet food, toys, gadgets, and decorations for the home. As earlier, a woman's ability to buy for her family represented its status. Wolf quotes Betty Friedan as saying, "Why is it never said that the really crucial function . . . that women serve as housewives is to *buy more things for the house?*" (66). This trend mirrored the idea of conspicuous consumption from 1905. Women of the 1950s could buy items for the home and for themselves to show off how much money their husbands made. Using this extra money for shopping also makes sense, according to Siegel and Kibbey, who add, "The theme of shopping was a logical one for a culture infatuated with the abundance of material goods flooding consumer markets after World War II" (5). Most of these products were intended to provide a new level of living for the suburban family home.

Advertisers were not slow to notice the rising economic status of many 1950s families. Naomi Wolf notes, "In the 1950s, advertising revenues soared, shifting the balance between editorial and advertising departments. Women's magazines became of interest to 'the companies that, with the war about to end, were going to have to make consumer sales take the place of war contracts'" (64). Advertisers figured out a way to both make money and keep women confined to domesticity, notes Wolf: The marketers' reports described how to manipulate housewives into becoming insecure consumers of household products: "A transfer of guilt must be achieved,"

they said. "Capitalize over 'guilt over hidden dirt.'" [. . .] They urged giving the housewife "a sense of achievement" to compensate her for a task that was "endless" and "time-consuming." Give her, they urged manufacturers, "specialized products for specialized tasks"; and "make housework a matter of knowledge and skill, rather than a matter of brawn and dull, unremitting effort (65). Using this tactic, advertisers found a way to make money while supporting the popular idea that women belonged in the home.

The *Journal*, too, capitalized on its readers' growing pocketbooks and desire to spend. It was able to bring shopping right into the home. Unlike the small black and white ads in 1905, in 1955, most of the numerous ads in the *Journal* are very large and brightly colored to grab readers' attention. The *Journal* reinforced the attitude that women belonged in the home by surrounding readers with images of the happy housewife performing her professional duties with pride.

Most *Journal* readers had the time and money to spend on the magazine each month. Most of its readers could also afford to buy many of the products advertised in its pages. A housewife's leisure time was spent almost entirely in the home reading, gardening, sewing, or entertaining other housewives. The small amount of time she spent outside the house was usually spent doing errands for her family. When in the home, many-middle class women turned to the *Journal* not only for information, but for entertainment to fill the days in which they only came in contact with their husbands and children. Most of the *Journal*'s information related to cooking, cleaning, or raising children, so, as in 1905, even the housewife's leisure time was spent learning more about her "profession."

Journal editors the Goulds were aware of the advancements in the lives of women such as more freedom in the areas of work and education, but they chose to stay with the *Journal's* traditional content. In 1955, many Americans agreed that women should live their lives just as they did in 1905--in the domestic sphere. Wolf says that the *Journal* had the power to reinforce this idea in some of its content, since:

"Women's magazines for over a century have been one of the most powerful agents for changing women's roles, and [. . .] they have consistently glamorized whatever the economy, their advertisers, and, during wartime, the government, needed at that moment from women." (64)

As in 1905 with Bok, in 1955 the *Journal* was selling the traditional way of life to women. In order to pacify women and divert their dissatisfaction with the relatively narrow confines of their lives, the magazine once again glamorized the old jobs women did. It used science and technology to give the old a new, progressive sheen. Women were doing the same domestic tasks in the home after the war that they did before. The magazine continued to make these things seem more important, as if a professional career was being performed in the home. To appear modern, it also made occasional references to the world beyond the living room walls, touching on such topics as women working, going to school, and having a social life. It even had regular, monthly features on outside topics such as the gossip columns "What Are You Talking About? (The Sub-Deb)" and "Under-Cover Stuff" which included information on celebrities and their glamorous lives, party conversation starters, and what social groups around the world did for fun. These columns allowed middle class

readers to be transported out of their homes and into a world of glitz and excitement. These outside references in 1955 slightly outnumber those in 1905. This reflects readers' desire for living more of their lives outside the domestic world.

The *Journal's* advertisements sold products that helped a woman perform a specialized aspect of her "job" most effectively. Almost every ad showed a woman using the cooking or cleaning product with a huge satisfied smile on her face, reinforcing the idea that performing a professional job in the home as a housewife could fulfill women. The models in Appendix figures 5 and 6 wear the manic smile seen in most 1950s advertising. The *Journal* also played on the new status of women's families. Its readers were of a class of people who were avid for any form of self-improvement; along with new money came the opportunity for upward mobility and status. It published articles on correct manners and social behavior along with plenty of advertisements for products that claimed to be new, improved, and the perfect thing for the professional housewife. Articles reinforced proper social behavior, and advice columns allowed women to share success stories about homemaking.

In his book on American magazines, Frank Mott notes, "Intimacy has always been the trademark of the *Journal*" (554). Like Bok in 1905, the Goulds in 1955 attempted to make the *Journal* more personable to its readers. This move on their part probably resulted from their realization of the housewife's isolation. The *Journal* served its readers' need for contact with others outside of her family. Mott notes that the Goulds "had a series of polls made to discover what women were thinking about," and adds, "the intimacy of the appeal has made the magazine's hold on its readers

continuous" (553-5). The Goulds encouraged readers to write in and share personal stories and experiences with the millions of other monthly readers. They also published readers' letters to the editors each month. This idea helped bridge the distance between readers and made them feel that they not only had a friend in the *Journal*, but in all of its other readers as well.

While the 1950s was a conservative, in some sense retrogressive era, the New Woman, the flapper, Rosie the Riveter going to work to support the war effort, and other assertions of women's independence had occurred and their implications could not be entirely ignored. For all the emphasis on conformity in the Eisenhower era, there had been since 1905 an increased cultural emphasis on the woman as an individual. Part of the wider sphere for which women longed included women's development in the areas of their individuality, including their appearance. While the *Journal* primarily continued its traditional attitudes and editorial strategies, it sometimes reflected an increased emphasis on the well-being and self-esteem of the individual person. Unlike in 1905, the *Journal* of 1955 focused more on these ideas by including sections that dealt exclusively with women's issues, such as appearance, marriage troubles, and raising children. The idea of a woman's transition from service and self-sacrifice to being an individual in her own right had gained more acceptance since 1905. This trend indicated women's increased expectation of happiness in life.

If women were to achieve the goal of living a happy life, they were going to have to address certain unhappy aspects of the way things were. Additionally, society was going to have to be willing to hear what women had to say about their lives and

its problems. The *Journal* in 1955 understood what women were feeling and gave them a small outlet in which to vent. It understood the shift in the 1950s away from the Victorian ideas of repression and avoiding unpleasantness toward the idea of expressing feelings frankly; self-expression was more widely accepted in 1955 than in 1905. As Freud's followers had announced in the early twentieth century, repressing unhappiness could have damaging effects on a person. By the 1950s people were ready to acknowledge women's problems and give Freudian ideas some credence.

The *Journal* shed some light on the extent of women's problems in the 1950s and attempted to aid in the resolution of these troubles. First, the *Journal* made reference to the world beyond the home--it acknowledged that more women were going on to college after high school, that they often worked to support themselves, and that they had social lives and engagements not connected to their husband's corporate job. Mentioning life outside the home showed that women were interested in more than household duties. Second, the *Journal* placed a new and previously unseen emphasis on real problems that women faced. Its pages mentioned personal problems, marital problems, and childrearing problems. There were columns and articles that acknowledged real-life problems frankly and tried to help women find a way to cope.

The *Journal* also unconsciously reflected women's discontent with domesticity in its images of housewives dressed like fashion models. The desire to express themselves through their appearance controlled many 1950s women and it eventually became a trap and source of anxiety for many. By 1955, many women

presented a flawless appearance no matter what the time of day or the task they were performing. Women in advertisements, on magazine covers, in story or column illustrations, in movies, and on television always looked impeccable. Their hair and makeup were perfect and their neat outfits were accompanied with high-heeled shoes. The appearance of many women was too glamorous for the domestic setting; most of them looked like a fashion model who had wandered off the runway and into the kitchen. The models in Appendix figures 7, 8, and 9 portray the flawless way 1950s women wore their hair, makeup, and clothes. Women found that maintaining an extreme appearance gave them a greater sense of self, a new happiness, and it substituted for other forms of freedom and self-expression that as domestic women they could not show. Since women had control over their own appearance they could use it to express themselves any way they chose. This dramatic change in women's appearance indicated a change in their thinking: the obligation to children and their home was no longer enough to define their lives. Now, to feel good about themselves, women needed to be attractive. Defining themselves only as a wife and mother left a void in women's self-definition; presenting an impeccable appearance helped to fill this void and made women feel important and powerful.

Outwardly women's lives and their opinions of them were largely the same in 1955 as in 1905, but beneath the bland and attractive surface, sometimes veiled by humor and irony, were anxiety, self-doubt, and resentment. There was pressure on women to be completely fulfilled by their domestic duties, but, as Betty Friedan notes, not all women were. These feelings were starting to come out even in the *Journal*, even as it continued to glamorize women as housewives.

Chapter 4: 1955 *Journal* Content: Reinforces Traditional, Alludes to Problems

Beneath the Surface

The Goulds' strategy was to sell the idea of the housewife as a modern yet traditional woman with few problems in her life. Their strategy for encouraging women to stay in the home while feeling that they were performing a fulfilling, professional career is clearly reflected in the columns, fiction, and advertisements in the 1955 volume of *Ladies' Home Journal*. Like Bok, the Goulds used professionalization and technology as applied to domesticity to make women feel like managers in the home. They also played on their readers' newfound status, prosperity, and desire for conspicuous consumption as part of the middle class. But, unlike Bok's *Journal* in 1905, the Goulds in 1955 touched on the real-life problems women experienced as a result of their confinement to domesticity in a culture that even in the fifties increasingly emphasized the right of the individual to self-fulfillment. The *Journal*'s purpose in raising these problems, however, was generally to resolve them and reconcile women to their domestic lives. Blending the ideas of professionalism in the home with discussion of readers' realistic problems allowed the Goulds to sell their idea of the professional woman in the home to over five million readers each month.

The newly expanded middle class of 1955 was made up of men who held managerial or technical jobs and their stay-at-home wives. As in 1905, the members of the new middle class had more technically oriented jobs and made more money than their parents. Often, the jobs men held required a specialized education or training. Like the new middle class in 1905, in 1955 this was a professional, educated

class whose members embraced their new prosperity and status. Since men were able to perform a professional career at work each day, women needed to feel that they, too, performed a professional, specialized career. While their husbands' jobs were performed at the office, these women's jobs were performed in the home. The *Journal* realized that women needed to feel that the importance of their domestic jobs was understood and respected since, with the exception of World War II, women's lives and work had not changed much since 1905. By 1955 the number of families with servants had greatly declined, partly because of the rise of the 1950s appliance culture. While women's duties were made easier by new appliances, they still had the major responsibility in running a home. To recognize this importance, the *Journal* gave an aura of science, technology, progressivism, and glamour to the domestic duties women performed. Applying these ideas to women's work attempted to give women the satisfying feeling that their in-home careers were as important as their husbands' office careers.

The *Journal* of the 1950s reflected the rapid rise in electric appliances for the home. Anne Sexton's poem "Self in 1958," a scathing criticism of the kind of life idealized in the *Journal*, includes a description of a doll (woman) who says that someone (society, husbands) "Plants me in the all-electric kitchen" (Sexton 155). The poem epitomized the domestic technology women used in the 1950s but also illustrated their discontent at being confined to the home. The *Journal* included numerous advertisements for the newest kitchen appliances, such as the one in Appendix figure 10, aimed at showing women how satisfied they could be in a modern kitchen. These ads often accompanied many articles on the joy of cooking

and advertisements for other products with pictures of women happily cooking in modern kitchens. The May 1955 *Journal* touched on both technology and glamour with a two page spread about modern kitchens. It informed readers about how: "Glamour comes into the kitchen with appliances in colors to match walls and cabinets, and other revolutionary changes" in kitchen planning (130). A full-page advertisement in the June 1955 *Journal* advertised an all steel, "take it easy kitchen" where readers would find "a wonderful new world of efficiency and charm" (160). Both pieces included several pictures of women using their technologically advanced kitchens with pride and an almost manic smile.

While the appliances had changed, the focus of women's time and work had not. One of the most important jobs of a housewife in 1955 as in 1905 was cooking appetizing and healthy meals for her family. There was a monthly heading in the 1955 *Journal* table of contents called "Food and Homemaking." Cooking was still traditional, but unlike 200 years earlier, it was given a progressive patina through the development of home economics classes and the use of modern technology. Having a nightly family dinner was important to the family-oriented middle classes in 1905 and 1955. Mealtime gave families a chance to visit and share daily experiences. The *Journal's* abundance of food advertisements and recipes gave this job an extremely important air to readers. Cooking could also be a way to comfort housewives who felt that their jobs were less important. Pearl Buck noted that the housewife could, "comfort herself by having a good hot dinner ready at night" (Matthews 200). Finding ideas for this good dinner was as easy as flipping through the *Journal*. In 1955, more so than in 1905, it provided many recipe ideas to allow for the most important

ingredient, variety, and introduced women to the newest cooking appliances to allow readers to cook varied, healthy meals using modern technology. These sections of the *Journal* encouraged women to see themselves as professional, modern chefs whose culinary experience was vital to her personal happiness and her family's well being.

Advertisements for food often emphasized nutritional value, often in terms of children's needs, like Nucoa margarine with "62% of your children's daily needs of vitamins A and D" in every serving (85). Advertisements such as these reflected the *Journal's* strategy for making cooking seem progressive and making the reader approach it as such. For example, an ad for a coffee measure guaranteed that users would make, "perfect coffee [. . .] every time" (127). The word 'perfect' implied that housewives had to do everything perfectly in order to be the best at their "profession." These ads highlight the importance of cooking tasty, nutritious meals for the family. As in 1905, they also made women feel important as professional nutritionists making sure their families got all of the vitamins and nutrients they needed.

The abundance of food ads and recipes in the *Journal* reflected how seriously women took cooking in 1955. Not many of the recipes claimed to be quick or easy, but preparing meals for her family was something a housewife had to take time on, not rush through. Fast food was not popular in 1955 since women were expected to take pride in feeding their families home cooked meals. The May 1955 edition of the frequently published column "What's For Dinner?" gave tips to women on combining old favorite recipes with new recipes for a satisfying meal. This technique, said author Marian Tracy, will "keep the cook happy and fascinated with her job" (106).

These cooking sections sent the message to women that cooking varied, nutritious meals for her family and guests is a full time job in itself, especially since few middle class families in 1955 had servants to help with meals. If women now had to become experts on cooking and nutrition, too much involvement outside the home would impair her ability to successfully complete this vital task, so the *Journal* heavily supported the idea of cooking as an important occupation for women.

The *Journal* of 1955, like that of 1905, stressed sanitation throughout the home. Keeping a clean home was given an air of professionalism by the *Journal* through its many advertisements for cleaning supplies. It also mentioned cleanliness in its discussion of new cooking and cleaning appliances for the kitchen. The details in the advertisements proved to women that just like cooking, cleaning effectively was an important job and vital to the health of her family. Clorox was advertised as “the most efficient germ-killer of its time” (16), providing more health protection for the family. An advertisement for Brillo pads noted how wonderful pots would look after using a Brillo pad on them, since a woman would not want to cook for her family in anything but gleaming pots and pans. An ad for Lux liquid detergent promised to make plates and glasses sparkle with cleanliness. In the ad, a woman is pictured near a stack of clean dishes wearing a huge smile. These pictures in combination with the text of the ads showed women the immense satisfaction they should feel from cleaning their houses using their knowledge of germs and cleanliness and the most sanitary and advanced products available.

Another job of the traditional housewife made professional by the *Journal* in 1955 as in 1905 was childcare. By the mid-1950s, psychology had become an

academic and professional field. Fueled largely in part by Freud's work earlier in the century along with the pressure on psychologists to treat the trauma experienced by many World War II veterans, the field expanded to include child psychology. The field barely existed at the turn of the century but by 1955 many women accepted it as a valid area of study and sought advice on raising children from psychological specialists. While new work in child psychology was accepted, Freud's theories were influential, and many parents listened to his idea that claimed children's personalities were crystallized at a young age. Freud reported such findings as how parents' method for toilet training can have a lasting effect on a child's personality and that a person's behavior in future relationships was directly related to how much his/her parents cared for him/her as a child. The stress that Freud's theories caused in mothers about the limited time their children had to develop a personality precipitated much of the new interest in psychology.

The *Journal* catered to this new interest and helped reduce mothers' fears by including monthly columns such as "Dr. Spock Talks With Mothers" to address in-depth important issues of raising children. His monthly column calmed mothers' fears about their children being damaged by certain childhood events or family atmospheres. In his April 1955 column he addresses the issue of fathers who take little part in disciplining their children. He explains to readers that most fathers act this way for fear that their children will dislike them and tries to reassure both parents:

[. . .] the father who is reluctant to enter into the reasonable disciplining of his children, [. . .] need not fear their resentment, [. . .]

on the contrary they will love him better. [. . .] His wife can help him, not by prodding him when she thinks discipline is necessary but by not objecting when he feels his firmness is called for, and showing the children that she respects his judgment and position. (83)

The magazine made readers feel that they could be the best mothers possible by enlisting the help of a professional to answer questions about children. Calling in Dr. Spock and other experts also showed women that they should approach childcare with an attitude of professionalism. The article "Respect for Law Begins at Home" profiles a boy who began to disrespect his parents and throw tantrums during which he would cut and break things in the house. His parents are worried so a child psychiatrist visits the family to observe the problem and offer a solution. The story serves as a warning to parents that children who misbehaved needed proper reprimanding and knowledge of rules or they would grow into teenage delinquents. The doctor points out that, "Children learn self-control by initially being controlled" (127). Again, the appearance of a doctor in the magazine reinforces the seriousness and professionalism women should use when raising children.

Advertisers also knew ways to make women feel rewarded as mothers. They also knew that the 1950s housewife, though not wealthy, had an adequate amount of money for children's products and that she was willing to spend it in order to indulge her children. Many 1950s parents who grew up in the Depression wanted their children to have more than they did. Advertisers competed to win mothers' patronage by presenting their products as the most comfortable and healthy for their children. A Hanksraft baby bottle sterilizer and warmer kit professed to be, "Best for Baby!"

above all other brands (114). An ad for baby clothes appealed to mothers with promises of fewer illnesses for babies when it claimed to be “the gift mother wants” and promised “no more colds from kicked-off covers! [. . .] No tiny legs caught in crib bars” (125). With a large picture of a mother kissing her baby, an advertisement for Ivory Snow claimed to be the safest soap in which to wash baby’s things. A similar Scott Tissue ad informed mothers: “One way you can add to your baby’s daily comfort is by choosing a bathroom tissue that is gently soft” (89). These ads urged mothers to buy only the best for their children. Claiming their products were wonderful for children, the ads again reinforced the idea that childcare is both a woman’s sacred responsibility and a rewarding job which should be viewed as a profession requiring use of the most modern, advanced products available for their children.

While science and modern technology interested *Journal* readers, as in 1905, they were also concerned with upward mobility and conspicuous consumption. One way the *Journal* addressed this concern was by offering information to readers on home ownership and decoration, a topic important to the progressive housewife. By 1955 the dream of owning single family home was an increasing reality for many couples. William Levitt’s “Levittown” in the New York suburbs supplied families with affordable houses grouped in communities where young families were surrounded with neighbors much like themselves. Levitt’s suburban community idea thrilled young families and war veterans, and communities fashioned after Levittown sprung up all over America. Clearly, the 32,796,720 Americans who owned their own homes by 1960 were proud (Hobbs and Stoops 194). To satisfy readers’ desires for a

single family home, each month the *Journal* featured a picture of a house along with a copy of the blueprints for building it. As in 1905, readers who could afford the \$.35 each month for the *Journal* had the necessary time and money for decorating their homes. Usually, these women did not work and they managed their husbands' monthly salary. In this era where prosperity was new, women looked to the styles of the wealthy to copy and use in their own homes. As in 1905, upward mobility in 1955 increased women's anxiety to appear to have money, and decorating her home like the wealthy allowed a woman a way to show off her family's often new status.

As it did in 1905, the *Journal* in 1955 offered ideas and advice on decorating a home in the latest fashion. This was an important job to the modern housewife not only so that she could live in an aesthetically pleasing home but also so that she could show others how much she could afford to spend on interior decorating. Middle class women in 1955 could afford to buy things for the home that were fashioned after those of the wealthy. The *Journal* catered to readers' interest in home decorating by providing articles on picture framing tips ("Anyone Can Frame a Picture") with pictures of the completed frame. There is also a section in the January 1955 issue entitled "Reviving a Room With a Ten Year Slump," which provided readers with tips on redecorating a room whose old-fashioned style needed updating. It provided tips for modernizing the home complete with before and after pictures. Another column gave readers the tip on felt pillows, "the brightest of the new room-brightening accessories," so that their homes will be up-to-date on the latest decorating trend (24). Advertisements for sheets showed pictures of bright, attractive bedrooms throughout the house. These features of the magazine showed women that

the *Journal* was there to help them with the important job of maintaining a modernly decorated home for her family to enjoy and her guests to admire.

Correct social conduct was important to 1950s housewives' sense of middle class status. They approached socializing as an art that must be handled in a professional manner. As in 1905, social conduct was also a way of showing upward mobility. Women worked to raise the cultural and social status of their families just as men worked to raise its economic status. For readers, making a mistake in a social setting could be devastating.

The *Journal* helped women to avoid devastating social blunders such as incorrect table manners and conversation topics by giving them important advice. The monthly column, "What Are You Talking About?" gave examples of appropriate things to say in social situations. It gave advice for dealing with the opposite sex, adults, party circles, and difficult conversationalists and topics. Another column offered monthly advice for handling a variety of social situations. Another article showed how a military wife accommodated the weekly dinner parties she hosted. She gave tips for seating arrangements, food presentation, and menus for groups from eight to thirty. Clearly, these tips could be transferred into *Journal* readers' lives when their husbands invite business associates over for dinner. The *Journal* recognized that women took socializing in and out of the home very seriously and encouraged them to approach the subject with professionalism by offering helpful advice to make sure that they did not make a bad impression on others.

Housewives of the 1950s, as in 1905, often spent their leisure time in the home reading about their domestic "profession" in the *Journal*. The monthly "Diary

of Domesticity” highlighted the domestic experience of a couple in New England. The column portrayed domesticity as a life of marital bliss, growth as a couple, and companionship in watching the world change. A column entitled “Making Marriage Work” basically gave women a list of instructions for being the perfect housewife. These ideas and others listed provided a checklist against which women were to compare themselves. The title of the column implied that much of the effort of making a marriage successful is the woman's responsibility. A good wife, suggested the March 1955 column, put “Her home and family [. . .] first,” “She cultivates homemaking skills,” “She is responsible,” and “She keeps up with her husband” (22). These guidelines sent the message to readers that they should be willing and able to assist their husbands or children whenever they might be needed, no matter what the occasion or how tired they may be. If her family needed her time or help, she should be willing to do whatever they asked of her. As in 1905, books sold in the *Journal* also related mainly to domesticity. An advertisement for mail-order books included some fiction, but the majority of the books advertised in January 1955 have titles such as, “Complete Book of Etiquette,” “The New Fannie Farmer Cookbook,” and “*Ladies' Home Journal* Interior Decoration” (9). Clearly these sections were intended to improve a woman's performance as a wife, cook, and socializer.

Fiction in 1955 largely followed the old *Journal* formula of offering an illusory or vicarious glamour but reassuring women that domesticity was the only source of real fulfillment. Unlike in 1905, however, much of the fiction in 1955 was romantic in nature. This trend was not seen in the *Journal* of 1905, when most fiction was didactic and lacked real adventure. The romance in these stories sometimes

reflected dissatisfaction with the very domesticity in which it culminated. Through the fiction, readers could escape real life and participate vicariously in the life of the female protagonist and follow her through exciting adventures of love and romance, but she always ended up in the domestic role. These stories mirrored many radio and television soap operas. Almost every short story in the *Journal* showed a woman swept off her feet by a perfect man, allowing readers to fulfill their longing for romance, mystery, and new love. But after indulging readers, the stories ended with a moral about marriage; the woman stayed with her fiancée or husband and became destined for satisfied domesticity. This constant placement of characters in the home by the story's end ironically reflected the source of readers' need for a vicarious experience outside domesticity.

"The Doctor Always Doodled" ends happily with Jane discovering that her boss, Dr. Palmer, has romantic feelings for her just as she does for him. Both had hidden their feelings for fear of seeming inappropriate or being rejected. As the story ends, the couple is still living the single life with romance, new love, and mystery, but they are clearly on the road to domesticity. Jane and Dr. Palmer's repression of romantic feelings reflected the traditional 1950s courtship where young men and women were chaste and respectful of one another. This story was uncharacteristic of 1905 fiction where romance and courtship were rarely mentioned.

John Marquand's "Sincerely—Willis Wayde" focuses on the developing relationship of a young couple. Willis and Sylvia are like most 1950s couples—the man with a corporate job with a chance to move up, a virginal woman, and plans for a home, car, and children. The problem lies in Sylvia's family. They invite Willis to go

camping one weekend. He has to endure long stares, whispers of his relationship with Sylvia, and a one-on-one canoe trip with her father that turns into a question marathon about Willis' salary, education, and his future work plans. Willis does not have an easy time gaining the family's approval, though he eventually does. After a proper courtship, Willis and Sylvia decide to give up their single lives and begin domestic living by marrying soon after Willis' promotion. Marrying after his promotion will allow the couple to more easily attain a single-family house and fit into middle class suburbia. The use of "sincerely" in the title reflected the pure and respectful courtship between many 1950s couples. Like 1905 fiction, the story supported the idea that courtship and marriage are best for young women. The romantic storyline hides a preachy, didactic message. Since most *Journal* readers were married and did not work, this story sent the message that they had made the right lifestyle choice.

"Maggie the Dazzler" reflects a new genre of writing not present in 1905, the fantasy of a married woman and her desire to dazzle someone outside of her marriage. The story introduces the reader to a woman who has already given up being single to marry and have children. In the beginning of the story, she informs the reader that the daydream she was about to tell them about herself and another man, "probably has a familiar ring, though it doesn't get as much publicity" (39). While she dreams of freedom, in the end she embraces her domestically bound existence. The protagonist is a housewife named Maggie. She does not express that she minded giving up her freedom to marry, but she constantly daydreams about a man she dated before she married her husband. Maggie loves her husband, but she still can't forget

her ex. She always dreams that they run into one another and, “go into a scene you would recognize from a certain perfume ad” (118). When they actually meet at a party he expresses interest in Maggie, but she refuses his advances because her “middle class morality” steps in, which makes her do the right thing, not what she thought she wanted to do (119). Immediately she runs to find her husband and is happy knowing that she is his wife. She feels safe with her husband and knows that domestic life is the acceptable, appropriate one for her.

“Maggie” acknowledged some readers’ dissatisfaction with their everyday lives and their longing for romance, but assured readers that the romance they long for was illusory. The story allowed Maggie to briefly experience romance again and then end up in domesticity at the end. The title of the story reflected Maggie’s aim to dazzle everyone in her life by giving the illusion that she is the perfect wife, mother, and entertainer. She also wanted to dazzle men by proving herself an attractive woman. This second type of dazzling made up for the lack of glitter in her domestic life. Just like the “model in the kitchen” look of many 1950s housewives, Maggie’s appearance reflected her longing for something beyond domesticity. “Maggie the Dazzler” told women that it was ok to dream about love, romance, and mystery as long as they continued to embrace their domestic roles. The *Journal*’s fiction allowed readers to experience romance and excitement through fictional characters but then ended with the message that marriage was the most fulfilling way of life for them.

As Maggie reflects, the *Journal* in the 1950s encouraged women to be satisfied as housewives and mothers. However, unlike in 1905, it did give hints that even *Journal* readers were not completely content staying at home. As writers and

sociologists have subsequently shown, many women were unhappy defining their lives solely through their occupation as housewife. Betty Friedan, one of the first to talk frankly of this, revealed that many women felt unfulfilled during the 1950s in a society that increasingly felt that self-esteem and individual identity were everyone's right: "I feel empty somehow. . . incomplete," Friedan writes; and "I'm desperate. I begin to feel I have no personality. I'm a server of food and a putter-on of pants and a bedmaker, somebody who can be called upon when you want something. But who am I?" (20-21). Perhaps the most striking comment Friedan includes is, "I just don't feel alive" (22). Robert Coughlin offers some insight into these women's feelings:

If there is such a thing as a 'suburban syndrome,' it might take this form: the wife, having worked before marriage, or at least having been educated and socially conditioned toward the idea that work (preferably some kind of intellectual work, in an office, among men) carries prestige, may well become depressed about being 'just a housewife.' (Mathews 211)

Freidan agrees, commenting of the educated housewife:

. . .once she wrote a paper on the Graveyard poets; now she writes notes to the milkman. Once she determined the boiling point of sulphuric acid; now she determines her boiling point with the overdue repairman. . . The housewife often is reduced to screams and tears. . . No one, it seems, is appreciative, least of all herself, of the kind of person she becomes in the process of turning from a poetess into a shrew. (23)

While it went unseen in the 1905 *Journal*, in 1955 some readers' need to participate in a larger world shows. One way women illustrated their need to feel interesting was through their appearance. Just as Maggie longed to dazzle outside of the home, so did many *Journal* readers in 1955. Housewives wore dresses, aprons, high heels, and styled hair, so their look was more polished than it was in 1905. They wore traditional clothing and did not show much of their bodies, but they were still stylishly dressed. Their look was distinctly out of place in the kitchen and reflected a desire to participate in a larger world that included jobs, outings, and freedom to live as men did.

The *Journal* both encouraged women to dress as if they were going to an actual job and helped them do so with style. It knew that women were attracted to clothing and beauty products so it provided information on modern fashion and makeup; it also knew that women had extra money to spend on these products. One *Journal* section showcased the newest spring fashions by famous designers. In 1955 almost every ad had a large picture of a beautiful woman and only minimal text. The opposite had been true for ads in 1905, when the women featured in the magazine did not stand out as being dressed in a way that called attention to itself. The 1955 magazine also provided patterns and instructions for making stylish clothes such as dresses with belts and sweater sets. Like longing for romance, women were dressed to dazzle in the world beyond the house.

Women used their appearance to express their resentment at being confined to a life of domesticity. They could not express themselves in some ways, so using their appearance as a form of expression allowed women to channel their feelings into a

safe outlet. The new emphasis on appearance also showed women's greater need for sense of self and for looking attractive. It also showed the increased consciousness about sexuality and sex appeal between 1905 and 1955. This increase was partly due to the rise in celebrities and their glamour, the more overtly sexy images portrayed by female film stars, the popularization of Freud's theories against repression, more freedom among the young with courtship customs, and the rise of the automobile as a private place for many couples. This new reason to be attractive indicates a change in the way women thought about their lives. In 1905, women looked presentable in case a visitor dropped by. By 1955 women dressed to dazzle to feel like part of a larger world and to feel attractive. In 1955 it was no longer enough to be a good mother and housewife; women also needed to look good in order to feel good about themselves.

Promoters and advertisers eager to sell beauty products and fashionable clothes, movies, and other products transformed women's desire to feel attractive into a compulsion to match a perfect image. What originated for women as a longing for a larger world eventually became a trap. The *Journal* saw that showing off this new appearance made women feel good and greatly expanded the market for beauty products so it supported the movement to satisfy its readers and keep up advertising and circulation numbers. It helped foster this movement by covering its pages with pictures of flawless models for readers to see. By 1955, pictures of stunning women were everywhere in the *Journal*. Placing svelte and sophisticated models like the one in figure 10 in the kitchen sent *Journal* readers decidedly mixed messages about self-image. Women were told to be happy doing their good deeds as mothers and wives, but that they should look perfect while doing so.

Through images portrayed by television and film stars, ~~magazine models, and~~ advertisers, housewives of the 1950s were held to a high standard of appearance. Every image of women in magazines or on television, and in the *Journal*, almost every single story illustration, advertisement, or article photo showed a woman wearing a nice outfit with flawless hair and makeup. Housewives were surrounded by beautiful images and felt forced to appear like the women in them did.

Just as the 1950s saw a forced conformity to wear perfect makeup, hair, and clothing, the decade promoted a new ideal body image. The decade increased women's anxiety about their bodies; a new emphasis unheard of in 1905 was placed on thinness, and the *Journal* supported women's new goal of being petite. The article, "I Was A Hopeless Fatty. . . Now I'm A Model," gives readers tips for weight loss, hygiene, and fashionable style. One column offers women a complete diet menu for a week. Advertisers too bought up every spare space to sell women products for improving their figure. These ads took up much more space than in 1905. Diet food ads promised to make women feel and look better. Knox Gelatin's diet plan said it was, "a successful, safe way to lose up to 5 pounds a week!" (77) while the Florida Citrus Commission pushed grapefruit to overweight women, claiming it would help them, "keep your weight in line" (77). Ironically such diet ads were often located on the same page with recipes containing lard and sugar.

The *Journal* made a lot of money selling space to advertisers of health and beauty products. In addition to weight loss advertisements, skin care ads were everywhere in the *Journal*. Pond's claims to, "'rebalance' your skin after washing in just one minute—at least 60 times faster than nature" (55). Cuticura soap promises to

get rid of acne, dryness, and shine, leaving skin, “fresh, clear, and radiant” (8).

Another ad for Pond’s Angel Skin lotion claimed to heal chapped dishpan hands, improving their appearance and feel. While perhaps sending mixed messages that domestic work was incompatible with glamour, these ads and articles made it seem vital to maintain a perfect appearance, and the happy women in the ads reinforced the satisfying feeling women would get from doing so using new, scientifically advanced products.

The number of ads for personal glamour had sharply increased from 1905 to 1955. In 1905 the *Journal* carried occasional ads for beauty products. But by 1955 ads were encouraging women to buy many more, both for themselves and to match the fashionable image of the times. Buying beauty products gave women a sense of power that went along with looking good and helped them in their expression of wanting a life outside of domesticity.

Another reflection in the *Journal* of 1955 of women’s desire for a life beyond domesticity was a frequently voiced criticism, even resentment, of husbands. Clearly women sometimes felt unappreciated by their husbands. A cartoon, for instance, showed a woman giving her husband an annoyed look as he sits watching television. The caption of the cartoon has the wife saying, “That’s a new kind of grunt for an answer. What does it mean?” (105). As Friedan mentioned, many housewives suffered from feelings of being taken for granted or having their work underappreciated by their families. This might lead to hostile feelings, since husbands were able to do the things housewives could not: work outside of the home, make money, and earn respect as businessmen. The *Journal* made mention of the fact that some

marriages were less than perfect and some wives were unhappy at the lack of attention and respect given by their husbands.

In 1955, almost 10 out of every 1,000 women became divorced (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services 9). Unlike 1905, marital problems were frankly discussed in the *Journal* of 1955. In "Can This Marriage Be Saved?" a column featured several times a year, a couple explained their problem to a counselor who gave advice. The doctor gave each person advice for understanding the other's feelings and actions to help resolve the problem. The June 1955 column featured a wife who cheated on her husband because he "has never been much fun" (68). Laura complained that her husband told her how to do everything, tried to think for her, and was too critical of her every move. She said she "had no life or identity of my own" (68). Eventually her affair ended and Laura felt so overwhelmed with guilt that she confessed to her husband Andy, who fell apart and blamed himself for being such a bad husband. He took full responsibility for causing his wife to turn to another man. The doctor blamed Andy's lack of parental attention in childhood for his controlling nature. He also explained that once Andy began to compliment his wife and listen to her thoughts and ideas, things took a turn for the better. Eventually they worked their problems out, made new friends, and Andy succeeded in business so he could provide a comfortable lifestyle for his family.

This column gave attention to real-life problems that many married couples could face, but few would talk about. In the *Journal* of 1905, a couple's struggle with infidelity or any other problems were never discussed. Discussing it openly in 1955 chronicles the degree to which women were both unhappy with their confinement to

domestic life and how unwilling they were to simply repress their unhappiness any longer. The magazine approached the topic of women cheating with a sympathetic tone, illustrating the change in times from the 1905 custom of repressing problems and unpleasant topics. The *Journal* tried to offer women solutions for resolving the problem in hopes of keeping them happy in the home despite the problems they faced in their marriages.

While *Journal* readers in 1955 were interested in fixing problems within the home, they were also interested in life beyond its walls. The *Journal* offered reading to satisfy women's interest in topics beyond domestic issues. This reading included many cartoons, gossip columns, and short stories not directly related to household duties. New sections that were not related to the home such as poems about nature, women, politics, and international affairs through women's perspective appear throughout the magazine. The rise in celebrity during the 1950s interested women and made them want vicarious participation in the glamorous lives celebrities led. The monthly feature "Journal About Town" offered women gossip about, "people you know, editors you like, and what goes on in New York" (29). This information made readers feel up to date on the important happenings of glamorous celebrities, fashion designers, and New York life--all topics that provided escape from domesticity.

The Goulds' *Ladies' Home Journal*, like Bok's, generally encouraged women to strive to improve the domestic lives of their families by giving domestic activities a modern, progressive aura. However, it did recognize some of the strain of domestic order and brought some attention to the confinement and resentment women felt in their domestic lives. Unlike Bok in 1905, the Goulds in 1955 were not afraid to shed

light on the fact that many women longed to define themselves as more than just professionals in the home. However, just like *Journal* fiction, the Goulds' purpose in raising the issues was to resolve them in order to reestablish domestic harmony.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

It is no coincidence that the *Ladies' Home Journal* became one of the first genuinely mass-circulated magazines around the turn of the century. At this time a new managerial-technical middle class was being created and expanded by American industrial capitalism with increased salaries for men, decreased need for women's labor, and an exponentially increased production of consumer products.

During the whole first half of the Twentieth century, the *Journal* emphasized traditionalism modified by minor vestiges of Progressivism that reflected current cultural interests to sell its issues. Readers in 1905 largely stayed in the home engaged in traditional domestic duties and reading the *Journal* for information about performing their roles in the house as wives, mothers, and cooks. But it also integrated into its traditionalism some modern ideas to make it seem modestly progressive and current. In 1905 it used ideas of Progressivism, home economics, ergonomics, and domestic applications of sciences to sell issues. In 1955 it used the themes of consumer technology, the new psychology, and the suburban American Dream to interest readers each month. Incorporating these modern American interests added to the gloss of "new" ideas including women going to college and working outside of the home to avoid appearing old-fashioned to readers. However, the *Journal's* strategy was slow the women's movement and limit the number of available choices for middle class women.

At the turn of the century, the middle class was expanding to include many new Americans and their families. The older Victorian model of the "angel in the house" still predominated for women while Americans moved forward progressively

in business and politics. Prosperity was widening, resulting in an increase in leisure and a decrease in labor for many women. As a result, most middle-class women, through their domestic roles as wives and mothers, became the primary consumers for their families. Through consumption and increased leisure, a woman could show her family's status to others.

Reflecting trends in American culture, the *Journal* was largely subsidized by advertisements selling consumer products, supporting women's domestic roles as caretaker, cook, and nurturer, as well as their desire to show status through home decoration and elegant entertaining. Many of the ads sold products through the mail, keeping the reader at home while shopping.

Both the *Journal*'s commercial interests and Bok's conservative ideology on womanhood made the magazine emphasize traditional roles for women in 1905. The magazine sought to educate as well as reflects its readers' tastes and values. The *Journal* became a "how-to" manual for the perfect housewife. It contained directions for cooking and housecleaning in its monthly columns and articles. It also provided readers with the latest information on child rearing by including tips and medical information in each issue. Another traditional function of the wife and mother was to bring culture to the home. The *Journal* supported this by providing sheet music and craft projects for parents and children to complete each month. Promoting the status of her family was another important duty of the traditional Victorian middle class woman. The *Journal* helped her do so by publishing articles on simple decorating projects and selling pamphlets on home decoration that imitated the styles of the wealthy. Middle class women needed to display proper manners and etiquette at

social functions. The *Journal* helped by giving readers tips on social behavior to avoid embarrassing social blunders.

To keep up with the times and appeal to women of the newly expanded, technologically oriented, managerial middle class, the *Journal* sought to give traditional tasks a progressive aura. It did this by giving its traditional content a patina of science, technology, and efficient management. It also brought in professionals to publish articles on childcare, cleaning, and literature. This made the *Journal* seem professional and up to date with modern practices, which satisfied its readers' need to feel themselves professional managers in the home.

In 1955, after almost twenty years of depression and war, the middle class was once again expanding to include many newly prosperous families. A rapidly expanding post-war consumer economy provided men with many technological and managerial jobs. Women's labor had not been in demand since the end of World War II, forcing many women back into the home to handle domestic duties. Once in the home, technology and lack of outside work gave many women leisure time in which they again undertook the role as their family's primary consumer. As in 1905, women used shopping to support their own roles as consumers and to reflect their family's financial and social status. The *Journal* in 1955 reflected women's function as consumers by using almost 40% of its space for advertisements and on many pages mixing text with ads, which were large with colorful pictures and short punch lines. The *Journal* provided plenty of products for women to buy to fulfill her roles as manager of the household and reflect her family's status in this newly prosperous era.

Despite advancements in the rights and roles of women throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the *Journal* in 1955 still supported traditional roles for women. Most women in 1955 were still responsible for cooking, cleaning, childrearing, and home decoration. As in 1905, the *Journal* wanted to reinforce this role and instruct women on how to be the most efficient managers of their households as well as nurturers of their families. To do this, it once again played off the ideas of science, technology, and professionalization of women's domestic duties. Many articles, columns, and advertisements mentioned the use of scientific research or the consulting of a professional on the specific topic discussed. This strategy supported women's opinions of themselves as professionals in the home and maintained the *Journal's* readership.

While traditional domestic activities occupied most *Journal* readers, there were also, as Betty Friedan was to point out, tensions brewing in many 1950s housewives. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, women increasingly enjoyed freedoms such as attending college, postponing marriage to enjoy being single, and pursuing a career. Because of these changes, many traditional women grew resentful at being confined to a life of domestic duty and longed for life outside the house that included a career, socializing, romance, and glamour. Women's tensions continued to build, and by 1955 women were voicing their discontent even in the *Journal*.

While a large part of the *Journal* reinforced traditional behavior by masking it behind illusions of technology, professionalization, and glamour as it did in 1905, the *Journal* did not completely shy away from the reality of women's longing for life

beyond domesticity. One way it acknowledged readers' unhappiness was by mentioning a wider sphere of activity through its columns on women taking on responsibilities outside of the home and Hollywood celebrities. The *Journal* also discussed real problems that women faced each month. It helped women by including the advice column "Can This Marriage Be Saved" to comfort women's fears about marital problems. It also ran several pieces of romantic fiction each month to fulfill women's desire for romance and dating.

Another, perhaps unconscious, reflection of women's restlessness in the *Journal* was its support of the new "supermodel in the home" look that women presented in the 1950s. This new look signaled women's resentment of domestic confinement. One thing women could control was their appearance, so they used it to reflect their discontent. In ads and illustrations, the result was a flawless, model-like housewife, with whom readers presumably identified, who looked strikingly out of place in the home. The *Journal* supported this new appearance by selling a plethora of consumer products that catered to women's desire for personal glamour. Buying and using the products sold in these ads made women feel as glamorous as they looked. Presenting a polished appearance gave women a sense of power that domestic confinement did not.

Eventually, all of the media's emphasis on a perfect appearance pressured women to keep up with the accepted images of models in magazines, movies, and television. This pressure created one more source of confinement, resentment, and discontent discussed in the *Journal*. Unlike in 1905, this and other sources of discontent were openly discussed in the 1955 *Journal*. But the *Journal's* reason for

bringing up women's problems was inevitably to resolve them in order to keep women content as housewives.

Largely due to the women's movement initiated in the 1960s by activists like Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinam and Ruth Bader Ginsberg, women in the twenty-first century have gained the freedoms that allow them to choose whether and when they want to marry and have children and not only *if* they want to attend college, but *which* college they will attend. Many women are waiting to marry at a later age; some put a career ahead of their desire for marriage. Many have completely discarded domestic confinement in favor of a wider range of activities and contacts. Many of the trends hinted at in the *Journal* of 1955 have become much more influential and prevalent in both the *Journal* and society at large. Women have maintained a polished, impressive appearance due to the increased sexualization of the culture. There is also an increase in marital problems, many of which include adulterous affairs and end in divorce. Women have also become increasingly involved in business and politics, where, despite the glass ceiling and being outnumbered by men, many rank equally with males. But despite the options women have achieved in the last half of the twentieth century, the *Ladies' Home Journal* continues with the same conservative emphasis implied in its title.

Since its beginnings in 1879, the *Journal* sought to support conservative roles for women. In both 1905 and 1955 it derived its mass-market success from giving women a sense of professional competence, self-esteem, and respect from others as they stayed in the home as traditional women. It did this while also selling them the products it convinced them they needed to carry out their domestic duties. Although

women have achieved more equality and rights since 1955, the same focus is still visible in the *Journal* of 2003.

The *Journal* today serves as support for one of the many options from which women may choose. True to its name and tradition, its goal, even today, is to support domestic life as the essential source of fulfillment for women and to sell them products to carry on serving as traditional housewives. It continues to provide self-help and self-esteem for women who act as professionals in the home by providing current information on childrearing, cooking, home decoration, and culture to pass along to children. It also raises women's self-esteem and allays their anxieties about their choice to stay at home in a world where more women than ever are working outside the home. True to its traditions, it portrays few women working outside the home and emphasizes women's role as consumer for the family rather than producer. It has almost no emphasis on women working outside the home. As it always has, the *Journal* still sells great volumes of beauty products for women, toys for children, and the latest gadgets for the home. Fortunately, as noticed in its early stages in the 1955 *Journal*, it still discusses women's problems, most clearly evidenced by the monthly appearance of "Can This Marriage Be Saved?"

While little of the *Journal's* content has changed in the last fifty years, women's options in life have greatly expanded, making the lifestyle portrayed in the *Journal* just one choice among many for women of the twenty-first century. These choices are represented by the multitude of magazines reflecting the pluralism of women's roles and interests. Women can read anything from *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Family Circle*, *Redbook*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Parents*, and *Woman's World*

to *Self*, *Glamour*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Playgirl*, *First-For Women on the Go*, *Newsweek*, and *Time*. Today women can, and many women do, read the *Wall Street Journal* or the *New England Journal of Medicine* rather than, or even in addition to, the *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Appendix

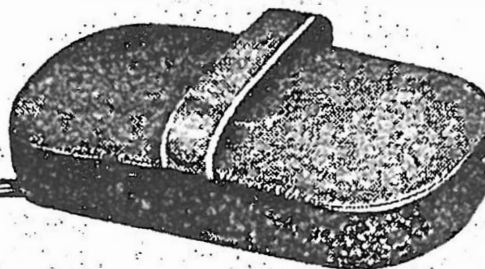


Be careful of your hands! Yellow soaps will make them red and coarse and hard—a source of never-ending humiliation and annoyance. Ivory Soap adds to their beauty; keeps them soft and sweet and dainty.

For washing dishes, as well as for the bath and toilet, it is the only soap the self-respecting housewife will use.

99 $\frac{1}{100}$ PER CENT. PURE.

Fig. 1. Ivory Soap Advertisement. Ladies' Home Journal Jan. 1905: 2.



A Beautiful Skin

can easily be obtained in a short time by gently massaging morning and night with a

Faultless Sponge Brush

made of pure rubber—a fine luxury for bath or toilet. Its delightful touch is soft as velvet—it massages gently yet firmly, is cleanly, removes all dead skin, dust, dirt and causes the skin to glow with health. **Price \$1.00** of all dealers or direct from factory, prepaid.



“Faultless”
Pure Rubber
Specialties

are made from the purest rubber and nothing “as good” is made. They are truly “Faultless” in every way.

Non-Pa-Reil Rubber Gloves

Keep the Hands Soft and White

when doing housework of any sort. They are soft, seamless, flexible and made from best quality rubber and fit perfectly.

Do not interfere with any use of hands or fingers, even for the most delicate work. They bleach the hands and keep them soft, white and beautiful. Invaluable for protecting the hands from dust, dirt, dishwater, stains, etc. Every pair guaranteed. **Price \$1.00** of dealers or from factory, prepaid.

In ordering by mail give size of glove worn and whether fingers are long or short.

Book about Faultless Specialties sent free.

**FAULTLESS
RUBBER CO.,
Akron, O., U.S.A.**



Fig. 2. Faultless Rubber Co. Advertisement.



Fig. 3. Aerial View of the First Stages of Levittown. Levittown: Documents of an Ideal American Suburb. Ed. Peter Bacon Hales. University Of Illinois at Chicago. 01 Nov. 2002. <http://tigger.uic.edu/~pbhales/Levittown.html>.

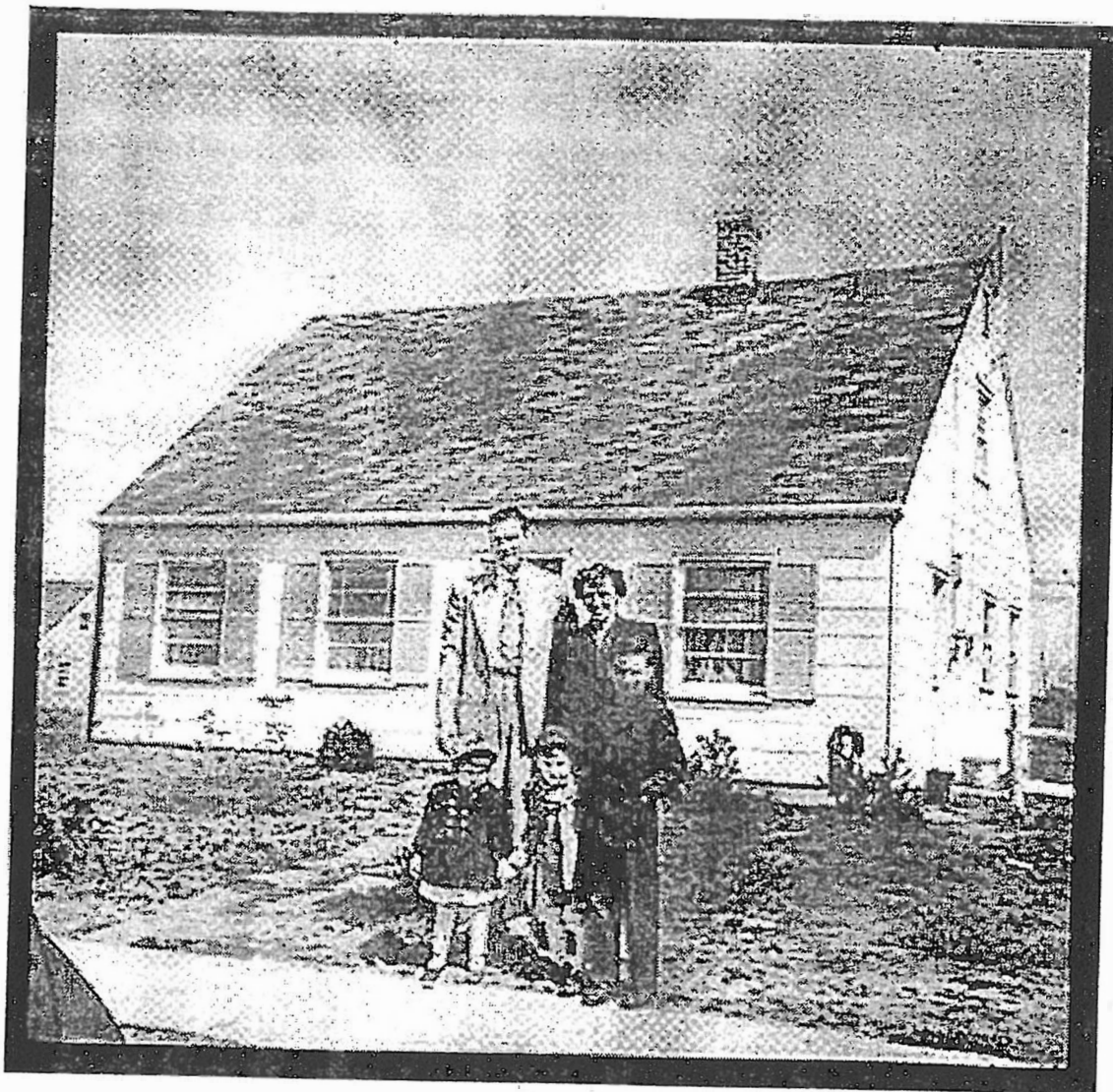


Fig. 4. A Family in Front of Their Levittown House. Levittown: Documents of an Ideal American Suburb. Ed. Peter Bacon Hales. University Of Illinois at Chicago. 01 Nov. 2002. <http://tiger.uic.edu/~pbhales/Levittown.html>.

One will do
what used to
take two!



wonderful new kind
of Dish Towel

KENDALL Dish Towel

The Kendall Dish Towel is super absorbent. No need to get "sogged down" anymore with dish towels never really suited to do a good drying job. Not when you use this new, wonder drying aid, made from an entirely different type of cotton-rayon fabric!

The Kendall Dish Towel shortens kitchen time — does dishes twice as fast. It leaves no lint and it is wonderfully soft — a joy to use! Its cham-
ois-like magic won't wash out because the secret of its success is in the unusual blending of the fibers.

Generous jumbo size Kendall Dish Towels come with red, green, blue or yellow border stripes.



Fig. 5. Kendall Dish Towel Advertisement. Ladies' Home Journal Jan. 1955: 95.

Nothing
shines
aluminum
like
BRILLO
Soap Pads



No soaking, no hard scrubbing! Sturdy, metal-fiber Brillo® Soap Pads whisk off scorch and crust. No need for scouring powders, brushes, dishrags . . . Brillo *polishes* as it cleans. One quick swish and aluminum gleams!

Brillo Soap Pads (red box) Soap-filled pads
Brillo Cleanser (green box) Pads plus cake soap

**There's polishing soap in
every BRILLO Soap Pad**



Fig. 6. Brillo Soap Pads
Advertisement. Ladies'
Home Journal Feb. 1955: 87.

New Revlon Liquid Makeup Beauty-treats Your Skin *as you wear it!*

SOFTENS AND PROTECTS YOUR SKIN WITH REVLON'S OWN SKIN-SOFTENER, LANOLITE!



Revlon 'Touch-and-Glow'

Looks natural, feels natural and actually

Fig. 7. Revlon Makeup Advertisement. Ladies' Home Journal Mar. 1955: 59.

New war-proved healing agent*
heals chapped skin
 up to **3 times faster!**



Only in *Revlon*
AQUAMARINE LOTION

...the luxury hand and body lotion!

A new concept in hand and body care! Never before a *luxury* lotion containing this war-proved magic* that heals up to three times faster!

Only healthy skin can look lovely. Have your hands been hurt by detergent? Now see them heal with never-before speed. Use this beautifying lotion all over... feel your elbows grow young and smooth, see "pump bumps" melt away.

Remember, *only* Revlon Aquamarine Lotion contains this *active* agent that heals, as it softens. Why not get this healing luxury lotion today?

* *Glyceryl Diacrylate* (pronounced glyox all dy) is a colorless, odorless ingredient whose effectiveness was proved during the war. It stimulates cell growth, turns healthy new skin in, unbelievably fast. The same is in medical journals... and now, on every bottle of Aquamarine Lotion.



Fig. 8. Revlon Lotion Advertisement. Ladies' Home Journal Apr. 1955: 32.

In these 3-hour danger periods YOUR SKIN *"DIES"* A LITTLE

There are 1- to 3-hour periods every day, doctors say, when your skin is in danger—open to such serious troubles as stretched pores . . . coarsened texture . . . cracking, "shriveling." These danger periods of skin "un-balance" are

immediately after you wash your face. In washing away dirt, you also remove natural skin protectors. Nature takes 1 to 3 hours to restore these vital protectors. Meanwhile, your defenseless skin "dies" a little . . .

great beauties of the social world
the damaging effects of skin "un-balance"

each washing—
"re-balance" your skin

you're in your teens or your forties, notice these little warning signals of "balance" after washing your face—
... a blotchy look
skin "burns" . . . feels dry, stretched tight
skin specialists advise? Should you
ing your face? Not at all. "Wash your
course," they say—"but after each
're-balance' your skin instantly . . ."
can afford to ignore this vital
ing skin care with the excuse: "Just
or "It's too late for results to show."
lancing" application of Pond's Cold
ill take you only a few seconds—far
than washing your face—and the
ults will show—right away!

60 times faster than Nature
lift-acting—Pond's Cold Cream "re-
your skin after washing in just one
at least 60 times faster than Nature
combats dryness, flaking, shriveling,
elasticity. Keeps pore-openings clear.
in texture fine and smooth.

ays—a deep clearing at bedtime
're-balancing" after each washing, your
is a thorough clearing with cream each
deep Pond's Cold Creaming dislodges
stant dirt from the pores. Keeps your
ing fresh, young, vibrant.

now! Begin this wonderfully simple,
beauty care with Pond's Cold Cream
fter each washing—a quick "re-balance."
t bedtime—a deep Pond's clearing,
astonished at how quickly you have a
lovelier complexion!



most famous beauty formula

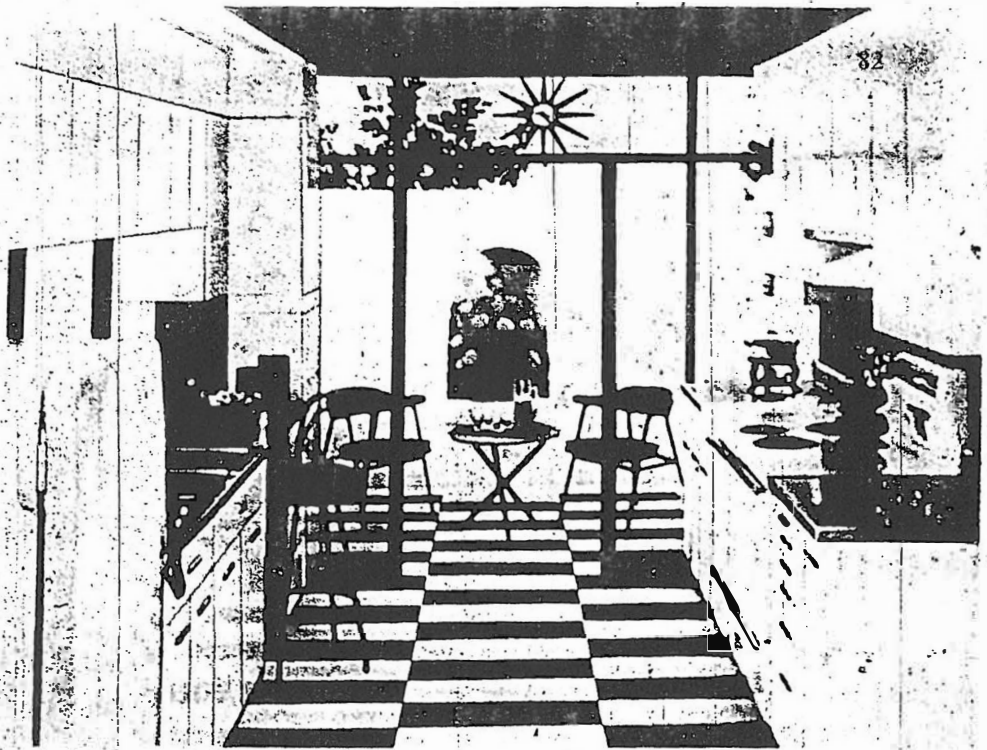


Romaine, Marchioness of Milford Haven

The lovely Marchioness, photographed in her charming Park Avenue apartment, is noted for her exquisite complexion. About her skin care, she says, "It's now second nature to me to reach for Pond's Cold Cream after each washing. And I never miss a night when Pond's clearing is bedtime."

Fig. 9. Pond's Advertisement. Ladies' Home Journal Jan. 1955: 16.

Take a
good look
and see
why...



This Republic Steel kitchen can be duplicated at moderate cost with a few...

Republic Steel Kitchens

give you the most for your money!

Right off, you're impressed with the fresh, modern beauty of a Republic Steel Kitchen. A closer look reveals the *extra benefits* you get when you choose this all-steel kitchen line, quality guaranteed from ore to store by Republic, world's largest producer of alloy and stainless steels.

Try a drawer. It opens smoothly and quietly on nylon glides. Look inside and see rounded bottoms that eliminate hard-to-clean crevices. A clever metal separator divides top drawers from counters, preventing jamming or sticking. See, too, how Republic caters to your own special storage needs with adjustable shelves, and unique sliding drawers designed for under-counter cupboard space. Priced with the lowest, Republic's long list of extra advantages—all contained in a wide selection of stock units—assures you the most for your kitchen dollar.

Visit Your Republic Kitchen Dealer—There you can prove to yourself you get the *most for your money!* See on Republic's Showdown Comparison chart the list of last-a-lifetime features that five other leading brands together don't give you, even as *extras*.

New Double-Bowl Stainless Steel Sink—Gives custom look; flanked with Formica counters. It's made of genuine, Enduro Stainless Steel, yet costs no more than porcelain.



Little Drawers, Big Space Savers—Ideal for cutlery, linens, small tools. Handy cutlery board can be switched to lower location if desired.

REPUBLIC STEEL
Kitchens

*The World's Most
Modern Kitchens*

BRAND-NEW, COLORFUL BOOK OF KITCHENS

Picture-Planning Kitchens takes the mystery out of kitchen planning.

If you're remodeling, you'll also want 101 Ways to Make Your Kitchen Better. Check and receive your free booklet 25 cents (plus 10 cents Address Republic Steel Kitchens, Department A, 101A Bellvue Avenue, Canton, Ohio 44705).

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____



Fig. 10. Republic Steel Kitchens Advertisement. Ladies' Home Journal Mar. 1955: 27.

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