

A Course for Victory:
Gender, Class and Nation Depicted through Food in
Chatelaine Magazine

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral
Affairs in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

History

Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario

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Abstract

This thesis explores the Canadian experience of the Second World War on the home front through the discourse concerning food that appeared in *Chatelaine* magazine. It posits that the magazine's food content variously constructed, defined and contested class and gender identities, and that the war years present an ideal opportunity for understanding how this process took place. Proof of this argument includes analysis of advertisements, recipes, editorial and advice columns, and government propaganda that appeared in the magazine. This weight of textual and illustrative material demonstrates that during the war years an idealized depiction of women's food roles arose that encouraged the adoption and performative reproduction of food habits most consistently defined by conspicuous production and conspicuous non-consumption. The magazine's national reach made it the ideal medium for government and corporate actors to communicate to Canadians modern ideas about food that sought to destabilize culturally and geographically distinct local foodways.

Acknowledgements

This paper would not have been possible without the invaluable support of family, supervisors and teachers, all of whom have helped me along the way to writing this paper. Acknowledging my grandparents may seem a strange place to begin, but since the most lasting memories of the ones I knew are of the tastes and smells of Granny and Pappy's kitchen, it seems a fitting place to start. Even what I know of the grandparents I never met is rooted in the fruits of their garden. Thinking about the ways my grandparents' food habits differed from my parents' and my own, and the reasons for this immediate and tangible experience of history, is the origin-point of this work. It is for this reason that I thank them for their passion, which has found a way to live on in my work.

My parents' patient encouragement in learning naturally extends beyond my own memory, and ultimately any strengths of this work are a testament to their many longer years of work on me. I thank my brother, too, whose hard work doing what he loves has inspired me to follow my own passions. I would also like to thank my loving partner Sarah Quann, who has suffered through this writing process almost as much as I have, though certainly in different ways. The privilege of working alongside her exaggerated the pleasures of labour and alleviated its hardships.

My supervisors – Rod Phillips and Paul Litt – deserve credit for helping me to curtail, craft and refine this thesis. Their thoughtful observations, creatively constructive criticisms, and unceasingly encouraging advice allowed me to read, think, and write with new eyes. Rod's insights into the broader history and historiography of consumption, food and alcohol were indispensable. His enthusiasm for my project began well over two years ago now, leading me to work at Carleton University in the first place and ultimately

ensured that I followed the project through to a successful conclusion. Paul's insights into Canadian social history and especially into the historical reading and deconstruction of literary and visual sources has been equally necessary for enlivening this history of food to a proper sensitivity to the peoples and cultures that food interacted with. Using food to produce a unique reading of Canadian history was always my intent, and it is to Paul's credit that this focus on Canadian history was preserved and pursued to the extent that it was. Without Paul and Rod's aid, this work's strengths would undoubtedly have been far fewer and its blemishes far greater in number.

The generosity of Ian Mosby and Terry O'Reilly should also be noted, each of whom generously responded to my inquiries and openly shared their research with me.

Finally, this work could not have been done, let alone done with any sense of freedom or flexibility, without the generous financial support provided by a SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship. Combined with the support of Carleton University, these lifelines made my dedication both possible and humane.

While these people and institutions have enabled the work that follows, I take full responsibility for any errors or omissions which undoubtedly remain. Any who deign to read the following should know that future feedback is and will remain much appreciated (brennanmcconnell@gmail.com): there is no reason to stop talking about food.

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1. Introduction

This paper reveals the history of food culture as it appeared in the Canadian magazine *Chatelaine* during the Second World War. Specifically, it posits that discourses in it concerning food variously constructed or contested the identities and values of Canadians. In conversations about food, appeals to the interests of individuals, families, communities, corporations, nations and empires were each apparent. In texts and illustrations across forms as disparate as advertisements, advice columns and recipes, and with content ranging from the fanciful and the idealized to the practical and the necessary, food as it appeared in *Chatelaine* serves up revealing insights concerning the nature of the Canadian experience of the home front during the Second World War. These insights qualify popular notions of the war as a period of universal adoption of habits of thrift by showing that appeals for citizens to change their food habits were intended to be encountered in different ways depending on the social identifiers of difference, such as class or gender, which mediated each viewer's interpretive gaze. Food was used to define Canadians' various experiences of the war. It functioned as a discursive symbol through which an individuals' understanding of themselves and of others was constructed or made sense of, relations of power were made manifest between family members within the home and compliance or contravention of social norms was visibly enacted for members of the community, extended family, or friends to witness. Food encompassed all of this, through millions of individual acts and choices, some private and unrecorded and others communal and still remembered.

Not all of these food-choices, or habits (the latter term denotes that unconscious “acts” must also be recognized), can be explored in the account that follows, and undoubtedly the “extant” food culture found in *Chatelaine* is skewed toward the idealized representation of food by certain privileged classes of Canadians. However, *Chatelaine* does present an opportunity to explore the way food was discursively constructed, and further still, how through food, other aspects of Canadian historical experience were constructed, contested, or created. In both the case of the individual and of the collective use of food, the *right way* to use it – that is, to produce, serve, or consume it – was instructed, discussed, debated or sold by the contributors to *Chatelaine*, and the record of this literary conversation is the focus of the subsequent work. The crux of the narrative that follows is that the proper relationship of women to food was idealized by the depiction of women as *conspicuous producers*, and *conspicuous non-consumers* of food.¹ Often times the reality of Canadian experience, which saw industrial agribusiness and the state increasingly intervene into the food habits of individuals (both productive and consumptive) will be held in contrast to the ideal presented in this important national magazine.

Among the host of available historical themes, food has an uncanny ability to forge disparate elements of human experience into a single narrative account. At the same time, it can also be a difficult category of historical analysis to explore, with a propensity

¹ Thorstein Veblen’s idea of conspicuous consumption is of course antecedent to these modified uses of the term. The idea of conspicuousness in relation to food habits is of foundational importance in this thesis. Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, ed. Martha Banta (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007), 49.

to slip between the gap tenuously separating culture from nature.² Food can destabilize fundamental ideas that shape our understanding of human existence. Literary and environmental theorist Timothy Morton points out that notions of material, self, and other, all become suspect categories when questions of food are posed: “Where does the body stop – is food a part of it? When? In the hand? The mouth? The stomach? The toilet?”³ To Morton’s question can be added Jean-Paul Sartre’s formulation that “To eat is to appropriate by destruction,” with each theorist suggesting the value of examining food critically, not just as one noun but as a series of verbs that define human subjectivity through eating, growing, buying, cooking and preparing, serving and being served, and so forth. Thinking about food habits as acts of creative destruction, acts that both obliterate the object and generate (both literally and figuratively) new or altered subjects, alerts the scholar to its value as a point of valid and valuable historical focus. Thinking about the destructive and constitutive functions of food, especially culturally, provides insight into the Canadian experience of the Second World War on the home front.

Both individuals and societies are produced by the confluence of material and cultural forces. Food is a particularly useful site for understanding the process of individuation, and yet it remains a too-often neglected vantage point from which histories of class, gender and race, not to mention geopolitics, ideas, and economics can be better understood.⁴ Examining history through what Canadian historian Franca Iacovetta calls the “lens” of food history provides a flexible structure upon which several historical

² Helen Macbeth and Jeremy MacClancy, ed., “Introduction,” *Researching Food Habits: Methods and Problems* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004), 5.

³ Timothy Morton, “Afterword,” *Cultures of Taste / Theories of Appetite: Eating Romanticism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 265.

⁴ Or, if not always “better,” food at least offers an opportunity to understand these histories from unique (and often marginalized) ways. As the privilege of consuming food has often been divorced from the duty and labour of producing it, any narrative that unites consumptive and productive food habits harbours the potential to bring forth marginalized historical perspectives.

voices or narratives may be conjoined to speak to a single, experienced sequence of complementary and mutually-informative historical forces.⁵ Focusing on food grants simultaneous access to a variety of stories and voices, the power of which can be evoked by unpacking the image of a child bringing a spoonful of Campbell's tomato soup to her mouth (Figure 10). One such image can be composed of overlapping relations of power: maternal, paternal, literary, corporate, and government actors are all present in this idealized illustration of a child eating soup.

By using food as a medium that reveals historical meaning through stories, recipes, and editorials in *Chatelaine*, a new understanding of Canadians' experience of the home front during the Second World War is herein produced. While food discourse in *Chatelaine* illustrates the cultural dimensions of the lived historical experience of a variety of historical actors, it also situates several of those actors' voices in conversation with one another. While many perspectives and actors will be brought into focus during the examination of its pages, this study of *Chatelaine* cannot claim to grant equal access to every voice – nor should the claim to be presenting several voices be misinterpreted as seeking to represent *all* voices that produced or consumed Canadian food culture through *Chatelaine*.

Moreover, this account cannot claim to deal with all of Canadian food history during the Second World War. Such an account would be impossible or shallow in such a short study, but more importantly would be reaching well beyond the scope permitted by a source such as *Chatelaine*. As was mentioned earlier, food can be a slippery category for analysis, most especially because it bridges the gap between the constructed

⁵ Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek and Marlene Epp, ed., "Introduction," *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History* (Toronto: University of Toronto: 2012), 10.

categories of nature and culture. This account, largely because it is principally concerned with the one women's magazine, is necessarily skewed more toward the cultural dimensions of food. Food, in the case of this study, is therefore foremost recalled as a cultural medium of expression, communication, and thought. For this reason, I am most concerned with the way that ideas about food appear in *Chatelaine*, along with the ways that individuals and groups used food as a means of talking about themselves in relation to one another during the Second World War.

Upper-middle class Anglo-Canadian⁶ food culture experienced significant change during the period from 1939 to 1945, and this change had complicated implications for histories of gender, class, and governance. Many advertisers depicted women as being liberated from much of the work of producing food due to the introduction of modernity and the scientific method to food habits, products, and tools. However, the reality of women's relationship with food was far more complicated. One historian of food, Harvey Levenstein, speaks of the servant problem as having, for decades, placed pressure on upper-middle class Americans to adjust their expectations to compensate for decreased access to cheap domestic labour.⁷ Further, following from Ruth Roach Pierson's assertion that the Second World War was a period from which "the sexual division of labour [had] emerged stronger than ever," in Canada, it is my contention that food was a vital medium of cultural experience that was both under tremendous pressure to change but was also widely experienced as a bellwether of societal stability, invested with substantial symbolic power. Through it was imparted the

⁶ *Chatelaine*, more than a little ironically, did not issue a French edition until 1960. For this reason, this study will only treat with Anglo-Canadian food culture (along with further qualifications of class and race, to be discussed at greater length further into this introduction).

⁷ Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1988), 61-69.

discursive contest of a variety of actors, each seeking to alter, reform, or stabilize societal norms during a particularly turbulent time, especially those relating to class and gender.⁸

Just as food history often exists at a crossroads, so too have the theoretical foundations of this thesis been informed by a variety of “areas” of historical inquiry. Historical theories of consumption and food, class, gender, and material and literary culture each contribute to the analysis that follows. A brief outline of the nature and extent of these contributions will clarify the method and theory that are applied throughout.

1.1. The History and Historiography of Food

The first theoretical pillar that must be established, and perhaps the most important one, is that of food. The best way to explain how this thesis is grounded in its approach to food history is to explain in unison its roots in: (a) previous theoretical work; (b) the food-historical context of Canada in the Second World War; and (c), the review of the wide-ranging literature of food in human history. By framing this section around authors and works rather than the divisions of theory, method and literature review, what follows should provide a clearer understanding of how the three relate to and inform one another.

Food, similar to air or water, is almost ahistorical in its importance to human experience. Its imperative nature for our species can cause it to escape historical analysis because of its mundane continuity. History is, after all, about change, and if our species has always had to eat, what basis is there for historical narrative? Food historian Massimo Montanari poses this problem as follows: “Normality may not be the stuff of headlines;

⁸ Ruth Roach Pierson, *Canadian Women and the Second World War*, booklet (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1983), 27.

none the less we should not ignore the simple day-to-day aspects of survival, and perhaps hunger.”⁹ Hunger is perhaps the most important psychological aspect of food, and it is perhaps the best way to think of human relations to food. Historians are not even alone in noting its deep-rooted importance, with Canadian writer Robertson Davies writing, “You know, you can go for a lifetime without sex and come to no special harm. Hundreds of people do so. But you go for a day without food and the matter becomes imperative. In our society food is just the start for our craving.”¹⁰ Thinking about food is thinking about desire, hunger, and consumption, and therefore is quintessentially both psychological and historical at its core.

Perhaps the greatest impediment to the serious study of food was not the notion that it did not change enough to warrant study as a historical topic, but the idea that food is little more than an empty material means of sustenance, devoid of cultural or ideational content. This idea has been widely challenged throughout the twentieth century, from a variety of academic fields, including sociology and psychology,¹¹ history,¹² anthropology,¹³ and economics.¹⁴ Recent work in history has sought to bring together

⁹ Massimo Montanari, *The Culture of Food*. Trans. Carl Ipsen (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 3.

¹⁰ Robertson Davies, *The Manticore* (New York: Penguin Books, 2006), 58.

¹¹ Nickie Charles and Marion Kerr, *Women, food and families* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 4: “food is not simply nourishment for the body, it is weighted down with meanings and messages, its use is socially defined,” and again: “Clearly there *is* a physiological need for food, it would be absurd to claim otherwise. But the way this need is met and the cultural forms within which it is satisfied are socially constructed and determined.” Charles and Kerr, 113.

¹² Giovanni Rebora, trans. Albert Sonnenfeld, *Culture of the Fork* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 112: Rebora writes powerfully to the effect, akin to Montanari, that food should not just be understood as being changed by history, but conversely that food can determine or substantially define historical change. Harvey Levenstein’s *Revolution at the Table* is perhaps one of the most important contributions to the history of food in the North American context. In it, he links “considerations of class, status, religion, and, let us not forget, the physiology of taste” to his narrative account of the industrial revolution of food in the United States. His work emphasised that the modern shift in food culture introduced “deliberate attempts to change the food habits of large numbers of people for secular purposes.” Levenstein, viii.

¹³ Historical anthropologist Sydney Mintz’s work studies a specific food (sugar) in *Sweetness and Power* (New York: Penguin Books, 1985), discussed later with specific attention to his connection of class to conspicuous consumption.

many of the theoretical contributions that have been made across disciplines into a unified understanding of the deep significance of food as a multi-dimensional substance of experience. American food historian Amy Bentley is exemplary of this movement, eloquently writing that, “The consumption of food is thus an extraordinarily social activity laden with complex and shifting layers of meaning.”¹⁵ While the work done with food across these fields has by no means simplified the way food must be considered by historians, it nonetheless has inextricably dispelled the myth of food as the empty stuff of mere sustenance.

The social content of food practices extends beyond the relations of individuals with one another or their surroundings, to what Charles and Kerr describe as “the social reproduction of the family in both its nuclear and extended forms.” They argue that food practices “help to maintain and reinforce a coherent ideology of the family throughout the social structure. Meals can be seen as symbolising the important social relations of power and subordination that exist within the family.”¹⁶ Critical analysis of food habits during wartime can therefore speak to the structure and experience of power relations within the family, even though these relations were rarely *explicitly* communicated by food.

As academics have begun to turn to food, and in so doing established a theoretical case for its significance, the range of food-studies has expanded rapidly. On one end of this spectrum is the aforementioned Italian scholar Massimo Montanari, whose work largely addresses changing food habits across the historical *longue durée*, unlimited by

¹⁴ Thorstein Veblen’s *The Theory of the Leisure Class* remains a foundational sociological-economic text in this respect, due to its argument concerning the communicative and economic significance of conspicuous consumption. At its heart is the revelation that “People will undergo a very considerable degree of privation in the comforts or the necessities of life in order to afford what is considered a decent amount of wasteful consumption.” Quoted in Mark Kingwell’s, “Ways of Not Seeing,” *Harpers Magazine* (Nov. 2009), 77.

¹⁵ Amy Bentley, *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 85.

¹⁶ Charles and Kerr, 17.

restrictions of class, gender, nation, or even much by time.¹⁷ At the other end of food history's wide spectrum – which ranges from the *minūtus* to the *maximus* – is Mark Kurlansky's *Salt*, written unbound by chronology or geography, but nonetheless confining itself to tracing one substance.¹⁸ Finally, at the far end of the spectrum, one can find evidence of food histories with extremely narrow scope. For instance, Canadian historian Molly Pulver recently wrote about three meals that the British royals had while on tour in Canada in 1939.¹⁹ Historical investigations that seriously examine food have abounded over the last couple of generations of historical scholarship, and the scope and breadth of these studies has ranged as dramatically as from *the course of human history* to *the courses a couple of people had over a few days' time*. This study will fall comfortably between these two ends of the spectrum.

Having reviewed the scope of food history, it is next important to lay out the contributions that inform this study's understanding of the specific period under examination. Thankfully, the work of establishing food as an important part of the history of the Second World War has already been done. Four authors in particular – Harvey Levenstein and Amy Bentley (United States), Lizzie Collingham (Great Britain and the world), and Ian Mosby (Canada) – have already set out to detail how the transition from peacetime to wartime on the home front was reflected in food culture. Their studies confirm that food culture partially determined the way that both Allied and Axis

¹⁷ His work covers food culture (principally European, with tangents that also cross the Atlantic and into Asia at times) from Rome until the present, all within a slim but nonetheless academic monograph.

¹⁸ His work certainly follows in the footsteps of Mintz's *Sweetness and Power*, which was similarly limited to the history of sugar. Each also works from evolutionary pre-history all the way up to the present day, unbound by geographical scope (though each has a clear Eurocentric bias). Mark Kurlansky, *Salt: A World History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2002).

¹⁹ Molly Pulver, "Nationalism on the Menu: Three Banquets on the 1939 Royal Tour," *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: U of T Press, 2012), 351-358.

governments pursued victory on the home front and abroad.²⁰ Each author convincingly demonstrates how food habits played critical roles in the history of the war.

One example of this is found as Collingham points to the Japanese command during the Second World War as having acted based on their belief that their soldiers could be sustained by *bushido* (fighting spirit) alone. This belief about food led to military decisions which “contributed greatly to the fact that 60 per cent of the 1.74 million Japanese military losses were due to starvation, not combat.”²¹ The governments of all the belligerent nations knew that if food culture collapsed – if people were starving in either a literal or a cultural sense on the home front – the war would be lost. As Collingham writes, “Food was the fundamental basis for every wartime economy.” But, beyond economics, food carried cultural weight as a symbolic and motivational force. The US Department of Agriculture memorably framed its wartime efforts with the slogan, “*Food will win the war and write the peace,*” but Collingham proves that the Americans were by no means alone in acting on this belief.²²

Bentley stresses the difficulty of intentionally producing *voluntary* change in people’s food habits, particularly among certain classes. She recalls American Margaret Mead’s government-sponsored *Committee on Food Habits*, which found that attempts to

²⁰ Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1988); Amy Bentley, *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998); Lizzie Collingham, *The Taste of War: World War II and the Battle for Food* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2012); Ian Mosby, *Food Will Win the War: The Politics, Culture and Science of Food During Canada’s Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, forthcoming 2014). These historians are by no means alone, but are chosen as representative here because this study has most closely attempted to model itself on the methods contained in their works (especially Bentley’s which centred on a literary analysis of Baltimore newspapers during the war). For any interested in any particular aspect of specifically *Canadian* food histories, Ian Mosby’s website, <http://www.ianmosby.ca/resources/canadian-food-bibliography/> contains an excellent and well-updated bibliography of the field, with well over 200 sources and counting. It also serves to capture both the breadth and depth of this rapidly expanding field of historical inquiry.

²¹ Collingham, 10.

²² Collingham, 476.

alter popular disdain for meatless meals were unsuccessful, regardless of the rational reasons in their favour.²³ Mead discovered during wartime that in order to understand popular food culture, one must first account for “the complex connections between food habits and other aspects of culture.” While many nutritionists of the preceding periods had attempted to alter food habits by an appeal to “rational” or “scientific” arguments, it came to be understood that food habits were essentially “irrational” and “uneconomical,” contrary to the hopes and expectations of the period’s anthropologists, nutritionists, and bureaucrats. Instead of making food choices based on the current scientific opinion, most people based them on subjective notions of taste, stubbornly persistent traditions of culture and community, and frustratingly “illogical” considerations of class.²⁴

Having established the important part played by food in the war, it is next useful to clarify the historical context of how food had been changing leading up to the conflict. Food habits had been in flux during the generations leading up to the war, particularly in North America. The western expansion of railway networks had led to a massive extension of wheat cultivation across the continent, which had in turn resulted in lower prices for wheat and flour – still the caloric basis of the popular diet. From the 1870s onward, cities had begun receiving from greenhouse producers vegetables and fruits, whose shelf-lives were extended by the rapid travel permitted by rail connections between rural and urban areas.²⁵ As the supplies of wheat, fruits and vegetables were rapidly

²³ Bentley, 66.

²⁴ Levenstein, 201. Evidence of the use of science to establish credibility recur throughout the titles of many of *Chatelaine*’s regularly appearing sections, such as the “Baby Clinic,” “House Clinic,” and the “Fashion Clinic.” *Chatelaine* 1936-1945.

²⁵ Levenstein, 30. Though Levenstein (a Canadian by birth and affiliated with McMaster University) writes of the American experience, the Canadian experience had been largely parallel in most respects, though economic changes were slightly delayed in extending to Canada, up until the Second World War. As such, his American account can be safely extended as a rough outline of the Canadian experience from the mid-19th century up to 1939.

increasing, North Americans enjoyed staggering drops in the price of a variety of other foods as well, including, but not limited to, rice, beans, tea, coffee, sugar, mutton, pork, butter, and milk.²⁶ The railroad shortened the distance between farm and city just as factories allowed for the production of “items such as flour, biscuits, sugar, salt, and canned goods on a massive scale.” The standardization demanded by industrial production resulted in foods being produced “that were absolutely uniform in appearance, quality, and taste. Since most manufacturers used essentially the same technology, there was little to choose from among the products. This put a premium on advertising, promotion, and the brand names they created and touted.”²⁷ This account, a summary of Levenstein’s work, demonstrates that food culture was already defined by huge shifts in both its economic and cultural dimensions in the generations preceding the Second World War.

The North American food economy was by no means alone in experiencing these shifts. Ukraine also experienced huge increases in wheat output as land under cultivation expanded, causing the price of wheat to decrease. Europe had also been transformed by the speed and reliability of rail. Another historian of food, James Murton, points to Britain’s Empire Marketing Board and its campaigns – designed to entrench Imperial networks of trade in food through the promotion of imperial preference – as evidence that many of the changes being experienced were by no means *necessarily* the consequence of inalterable economic changes, but were in fact aggressively pursued by corporate and

²⁶ Levenstein, 32. In fact, the dropping out of “the bottom” on food prices was a vital contributor to the Great Depression.

²⁷ Levenstein, 35.

state actors' intervention into food systems.²⁸ In conjunction with Levenstein and Collingham, Murton contextualizes the unequal and imperial aspects of the global systems that Canadian food was a part of leading up to the Second World War.²⁹

For Collingham, the importance of food during the Second World War is paramount.³⁰ Collingham's description of the Second World War as a global imperial struggle builds on Murton's work, positing that global food systems of production and consumption were necessarily structured by imperial, competitive, and often racist ideologies.³¹ Britain exploited her colonial allies for food in a similar way as Nazi Germany *sought* to exploit occupied territories and peoples to sustain German industrial and urban growth.³² She clearly shows how the allocation of food was not determined during the Second World War according to need or tied to participation in combat, otherwise Soviet soldiers and civilians would not have so disproportionately experienced starvation while the Americans and (less so) the British got by on more food than required.³³ In this context, the over-abundance of particularly American army food rations served more than to simply establish troop morale or undermine the morale of the enemy.

²⁸ James Murton, "John Bull and Sons: The Empire Marketing Board and the Creation of a British Imperial Food System," *Edible Histories Cultural Practices: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: U of T Press, 2012).

²⁹ Murton, 242. Murton claims that while the Empire Marketing Board was dissolved by the time of the Second World War, the changes it wrought in the systems of imperial preference outlive it even to this day (citing the unequally-structured trade relationships between developed and developing countries as emblematic of the inheritance of this system).

³⁰ She opens her book with the claim that as many people died of starvation during the Second World War as did from military conflict (20 million in the first case compared to 19.5 million in the latter). With this in mind, she argues that "The impact of the war on food supplies was thus as deadly in its effect on the world population as military action." Collingham, 1. Grimmer still, she presents compelling evidence that directly implicates food in "the decision to speed up the Holocaust." Collingham, 7.

³¹ Collingham develops the case that the principal reason for German, Italian and Japanese aggression was due to these lesser imperialist powers feeling constrained by their exclusion from Anglo-American hegemony over global food systems.

³² Collingham, 156. Though she is careful to stress that a significant difference in tone distinguished British patriarchal colonial exploitation from Nazi relations to conquered populaces.

³³ Collingham, 270.

Abundance symbolized American superiority and power, and naturalized the persistence of Anglo-American imperial food systems.³⁴

Canadian consumers on the home front must be understood to have existed within this global structure of food. They enjoyed remarkably privileged access to food, both in quantity and quality, during one of the *hungriest* periods of human history (Collingham reminds us that an estimated twenty million people starved to death globally during the conflict).³⁵ Just as the century preceding the war had witnessed sharp decrease in food's cost for most people, so too was the war itself (and the depression which preceded it) experienced by many as a period of sharp dislocation from that plenty.

This brief exposition of the historical context of food in Canada heading into and through the war, in relation to global food history and the theoretical and methodological approaches of a few key food historians, details one supporting column framing the direction and rationale of my own analysis. While the scope of this thesis is nowhere near as ambitious as Collingham's, it owes much to the work she has done to provide global context to the period's food history. In my methodological and theoretical approach, this work is most closely modelled on Bentley's work in the American context. However, whereas her focus was geographically centred on Baltimore newspapers, the work that follows centres on the ascendant magazine *Chatelaine*, a publication explicitly conceived with a national, rather than metropolitan, scope.

While across Europe and Asia, millions starved, many Canadians, British, and Americans saw their diets become more stable and in certain foodstuffs even more abundant. Not all classes of people enjoyed this boon equally. Remarkably, there is even

³⁴ Collingham, 416.

³⁵ Collingham, 1.

evidence that the poor profited more, relative to middle and upper class citizens, because of the conflict.³⁶ To understand the reasons why food culture in Canada changed in such a counter-intuitive (and counter to historical precedent) ways, this thesis briefly explains the role that class plays in its analysis of changing food culture.

1.2. Analyzing Class through Food

As has already been discussed, it is widely agreed that food operates as a container with several dimensions besides sustenance.³⁷ Different foods have long been culturally coded, with the consumption or production of certain foods associated with certain classes of people or roles within society. Some of these associations have changed remarkably little over time, while others have shifted substantially. Giovanni Rebola details how, in Western European culture, there has been a long-standing association of meat with power, going back to at least the medieval period, when the noble and warrior classes were linked with land ownership, and by extension, access to large quantities of meat.³⁸ Further evidence of the variable cultural significance of different types of food can be found in the history of Europe's Middle Ages, when dramatic increases in fish catches resulted in the nobility coming to disdain fish as a food, even though it had previously been among the most prestigious.³⁹ Rebola is by no means the only theorist to

³⁶ This is contrary to many other conflicts in world history, where the first to lose access to food during times of scarcity have often been the lower classes.

³⁷ "Sustenance" continues to be used, rather than "nutrition" or some other descriptor because, while the latter seems perfectly common-place today, it is in fact a rather recent idea that specific foods are comprised of scientifically-discernible sub-categories like calories, vitamins, etc. (the process of spreading this scientific theory of "nutritionism" actually representing one of the central directives of Levenstein's thesis in *Revolution at the Table*).

³⁸ Rebola, 59-60. Rebola speculates that this association could have originated earlier, if the Latin word *pecunia* is any indication, as it refers to both livestock and money. Her conclusion is that it was the scarcity of meat that determined its cultural cache. In evidence of this, she points to the prestige the British attached to beef, which was easily raised in France but far less climatically well-suited to British soil than were sheep. Rebola, 48.

³⁹ Rebola, 60 and 73.

note the instability of cultural meanings attached to food. Mintz makes the same point by tracking the long history of sugar in the West. One of his central conclusions binds food and economics up with culture:

Unless we look at the intrinsic – the ‘culturally usable’ – character of a luxury, its meaning cannot be fully understood. As for sugar, it was *transformed* from a luxury of kings into the kingly luxury of commoners – a purchased luxury that could be detached from one status and transferred in use to another.⁴⁰

The pivotal point that Mintz makes with sugar, and Rebera reaffirms with meat and fish, is that food’s cultural value has often been tied closely not only to its economic cost, but more specifically to its accessibility.⁴¹ Whether tethered to cost or to accessibility, the act of consuming food has always been indicative of class, status, privilege and power.⁴²

Montanari suggests that as far back as the Renaissance, “membership in a social class implied a certain type of consumption, but was itself also a product of that consumption.”⁴³ While some scholars⁴⁴ may question whether this association is not in fact much older, it is safe to conclude that the connection between class and consumption

⁴⁰ Mintz, 96.

⁴¹ Rebera, 93.

⁴² Montanari also adds to this call for looking for inscriptions of class in food culture. In this context, he highlights the idea of “*differentiation*” as being central to understanding “the mechanisms regarding the procurement and preparation of food.” He further argues that types of consumption mark membership in specific classes. Montanari, 4 and 88; italics in original.

Another example of class being placed at the centre of an historical analysis of food habits is Canadian historian Julia Roberts’, who writes about the relationship between class and food consumption when discussing the demonstration of elite male privilege in colonial Canada through patterns of consumption: “the snipe supper at Smith’s saloon, then, affirmed ‘gentlemanly’ privilege in its multidimensional sense of a classed, gendered, and racialized identity. The elite supper party depended, for its realization, on the domestic labour of the very men and women against whom gentlemen defined themselves.” Instead of using crude quantity, these men differentiated the local birds they were consuming from peasant fair by embellishing them with inherently imperial food products like oriental spices and European methods of preparation and service. Julia Roberts, “‘The Snipe Were Good and the Wine Not Bad’: Enabling Public Life for Privileged Men,” *Edible Histories Cultural Practices: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: U of T Press, 2012), 61.

⁴³ Montanari, 88.

⁴⁴ Mintz, Rebera, and Kurlansky for instance.

is so long-standing as to have been naturalized as an unconscious part of cultural communication and experience by the twentieth century.

The idea of consumption as communication is developed by Thorstein Veblen's concept of "conspicuous consumption."⁴⁵ The idea that many food habits are conspicuously enacted is at the core of many histories of food. Its central claim is that whenever food is consumed within another's range of vision, the act of eating functions as a way to communicate the consumer's class privileges and other features of their social positioning. Extending this idea beyond consumption itself, conspicuousness has communicated class (or gender, nation, etc.) via food's production, service, and disposal as well. As will be the focus of chapters 2.4 and 3.4 especially, these food habits could even transcend mere conspicuousness and enter into the realm of social performance.

At this point, a brief digression from class is necessary to relate it to gender through performance and also to explain the theoretical significance of the term "performance." The idea of social performance is based on Judith Butler's theory of the performativity of gender, which asserts that gender roles, along with other aspects of identity (like food and class roles), are "instituted through a *stylized repetition of acts*."⁴⁶ Binding together the concept of conspicuous consumption with that of performance theory provides a means of understanding both class and gender through food habits. The performance of food habits was particularly evident when meals were marked by ritual – as at holidays or when entertaining friends – or when food habits like the saving of left-overs, bones, or cooking juice were done within plain site of potential observers, with the

⁴⁵ Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, ed. Martha Banta (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2007), 49.

⁴⁶ Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: an Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40.4 (December 1988): 519. Butler's theoretical understanding of the performative generation of identity also rests on the claim that identity is itself "a compelling illusion, an object of *belief*," – a useful insight in the context of the *idealized* and essentially *unattainable* depiction of women's roles in *Chatelaine*.

intension of their provoking emulation.⁴⁷ During wartime these performances of food habits carried with them the potential of defining the performer and their family in terms of both class and gender (and more besides), as frequently through conspicuous production or non-consumption as through conspicuous consumption.

Returning to class, evidence of meat having marked distinctions of class is provided by historian Ellen Ross, as she writes that in late Victorian England, “Meat was a particularly elegant signifier of class. The better-off ate much more of it than did their poorer neighbors.”⁴⁸ The connection between the consumption of food and class persists into this study’s period of interest, as was strikingly apparent in a reader submission to the *Globe and Mail* in May of 1938, in which a reader wrote asking about the line between extravagant and reasonable expenditures on food. The *Globe*’s columnist, who signed off simply as “The Homemaker,” responded that how much one spends on food is entirely dependent on their financial circumstance: the more money you make the more you should spend on food as, “You may be taking it out of a \$5,000 income, in which case you are justified in enjoying some culinary luxuries because you will still have a suitable sum left for apportioning among the other divisions of the budget – rent, clothing, personal allowances, equipment and upkeep, development.”⁴⁹ Just as in the more distant past kings were measured partially by their ability to indulge in scarce meat, expensive sugar or spices, and rare wines, so too was class inscribed upon each food consumed by Canadians in the early twentieth century.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ These performances are also clarified by another of Butler’s claims, that, “The personal is thus implicitly political inasmuch as it is conditioned by shared social structures, but the personal has also been immunized against political challenge to the extent that public/private distinctions endure.” Butler, 522-3.

⁴⁸ Ellen Ross, “There is Meat Ye Not Know Of”: Feeding a Family,” *Love and Toil: Motherhood in Outcast London, 1870-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 32.

⁴⁹ *Globe and Mail*, 4 May 1938, (“The Homemaker Kitchen Library” section), 13.

⁵⁰ Nor has this by any means ceased in the present day.

A cursory glance suggests that profound changes to the class-content of food had been under way in Canada, and Western nations more broadly, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Industrialization, massive agrarian expansion across the North American plains, and deregulation of economic markets had all factored into the economic depression experienced during the 1930s. Many families during the Great Depression found themselves without the ability to purchase foods, in spite of the fact that there was theoretically more food, being sold at lower costs, than ever before. Levenstein details that, as governments struggled to overcome over-abundance's economic fall-out, hungry families came face to face with the irony of "newspapers [which] carried pictures of protesting farmers pouring cans of milk on Midwestern roads, told of the slaughter of thousands of piglets in a New Deal attempt to reduce pork supplies, and reported that coffee had been burned as fuel in Brazilian railroad engines."⁵¹ Stories like these point to the way that food history can be decoupled from what at times seems a deterministic relationship between food culture and food supply.

Just as access to adequate food supplies became a challenge for middle and lower-class families across Canada and the United States moving from the 1920s into the 1930s, the *cultural experience* of hunger endured by Canadians and Americans differed from what may be deemed the *physiological experience* of hunger; this is to say that, while many perceived a want of specific foods whose cultural value elevated them into the realm of necessity, their nutritional value was not so irreplaceable as to threaten actual nutritional deficiencies, let alone starvation. In both countries, the influence of nutritionists had surged heading into the late 1920s, preaching what Levenstein calls the

⁵¹ Levenstein, 197.

“New New Nutritionism”⁵² by emphasising the quality of food (vitamins and minerals having recently been discovered though they were not yet fully understood) as being of greater significance than its quantity.⁵³ It is important to consider nutritionism’s impact on taste and the way people thought about food, as in essence it represented an alternative framework for understanding needs, and it was profoundly structured by class. While it did not entirely replace or supplant other ways of thinking about food, it often did significantly alter them. The long-standing association of masculinity, and power, with meat, for instance, would shift dramatically as a result of nutritionism, from emphasising quantity to quality. It also played a part in the dissolution of some gendered inscriptions on food. While Bentley details that in American food culture during the period there remained an association of meat with men, and fruits, vegetables, grain, and sugar with women, scientific nutritionism was providing a way of countering these associations, a

⁵² The distinction between “New Nutritionism” and “New New Nutritionism” is too insignificant to merit further explanation for this paper (thankfully). As I will not be seeking to differentiate between different schools of nutritionists, the term “nutritionist” will be used rather than either of the more subtle terms deployed by Levenstein: “new nutritionist” or “new new nutritionist.” This being said, it is also important to stress that whether “nutritionism” continued to operate during this period at all, as opposed to “nutrition” or “nutritional instruction” is a point which scholars since Levenstein have contested. For instance, Caroline Durand has written of “nutritionists” operating as late as the 1960s providing “nutritional instruction” in the Quebec school system and Ian Mosby has similarly used the term “nutrition” when describing this scientific thrust of the period’s food culture. My own work uses Levenstein’s earlier term as shorthand that serves to recognize the long-evolving history of nutritionist thought in North America, which certainly predates the Canadian experience of the Second World War and is connected to the various earlier instances of (increasingly professional) people thinking and talking about food in scientific and materialistic ways. Caroline Durand, “Rational Meals for the Traditional Family: Nutrition in Quebec School Manuals, 1900-1960,” *Edible Histories Cultural Practices: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 109-127; Ian Mosby, “Making and Breaking Canada’s Food Rules: Science, the State, and the Government of Nutrition, 1942-1949,” *Edible Histories Cultural Practices: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 409-432.

⁵³ Levenstein, 113 and 160. In the Canadian context, this trend is evident in *Chatelaine*, for instance much of the January 1943 issue was dedicated to the issue of malnutrition in Canada, headlined by an article by the Director of Nutrition Services for the Department of Pensions and National Health, in which he stressed that Canadian hunger had shifted from not getting “enough” to eat to “not eating enough of the right foods prepared in the right way.” He went on to tie nutrition to the war effort directly, claiming that total war demanded that economic production on the home front, and by extension nutrition, was now a pivotal battlefield. L. B. Pett, “Improving Canada’s Nutrition,” *Chatelaine*, January 1943, 14.

way used by both corporations and individuals, though often to disparate ends.⁵⁴ In this way, while nutritionism seemed to be erasing old inscriptions of class on foods, it at once justified new ways of ascribing class to food.

Nutritionists at first sought to change the food habits of the lower-class to conform to their new ways of thinking about food. However, when they faced resistance to the dietary changes they demanded, they concluded it was “ ‘useless’ to try to change the food habits of the ‘very poor’ at the outset of reform. Their tastes were already too ‘depraved’ and their prejudices in favor of high-priced flour and meat too fixed.” Instead, these privileged observers of food habits decided that the only way to change the habits of the poor was to change the habits of those they surely emulated: the middle class – who themselves emulated the upper class. By 1900 in the United States (and only a little later in Canada), the nutritionist movement was turning its sights to the modification of the middle-class’s diets through the spread of information with an “aura of science and professionalism” under the banner of home economics.⁵⁵

It is doubtful these professionals were right about the potential of shifting the food habits of the majority through changes to the habits of the supposedly more malleable, privileged classes.⁵⁶ Whether the upper classes were in reality more malleable, as they assumed, when presented with reasoned scientific arguments about why they should

⁵⁴ Bentley, 87.

⁵⁵ Levenstein, 53.

⁵⁶ That working class citizens’ habits are more or less malleable than those of middle and upper class citizens is also an extremely problematic claim, as it appears in retrospect that most nutritionists and home economists were writing off these class’s “seemingly-irrational” food preferences based on their own unscientific cultural assumptions. Many of the food preferences written off by these professionals as unhealthy – the mixing of foods into soups or stews, the preference for certain cuts of meat (often deemed inferior by the science of the time), or the use of legumes, lentils, or other meat substitutes, and the list goes on – have in fact been proven to be more healthful than the meals recommended by these early food-scientists. In the long run, it has gradually become apparent that middle and upper class commentators (whose opinions were portrayed as scientific and devoid of cultural bias) were in fact expressing ideas about food that were far more culturally-based than they presumed at the time.

change their food habits was about to be severely tested during the coming global conflict. What remains critical to understand for this study, however, is that “authorities” on food – advertisers and corporations, health agencies and governments, writers and editors (all of whom are prominent in *Chatelaine*) – in both Canada and the United States, made truth-claims about food that were intended to change food habits, create new desires, or supplant old ones, through the use of this ostensibly scientific set of assumptions about food.⁵⁷ The science they considered revolutionary at the time – keep in mind that it really was revolutionary – we would today, with the benefit of hindsight consider “half-baked” or insufficiently grounded in research.

Nutritionism was a brand new way of thinking about food, and the science around it, though critical for our modern understanding of food, was as yet far too new for many of its claims to have been sufficiently validated. Unfortunately, contemporary observers typically did not discern the limitations imposed by its scientific novelty. This allowed advertisers to make claims with an air of truthfulness, of scientific indisputability. Advertisers were quick to comprehend the power of nutritional claims in selling foods. It seems that regardless of who was deploying nutritionism, the common thread that defined it was that it operated as a tool for one-way conversation (dictation) about food practices, structured in a hierarchic fashion that invested the scientific actor (read: professionals, corporations, or governments) with more authority than the individual consumer or household producer. This unequal relationship reproduced and reinforced inequalities between classes. At the same time, the power dynamic it reinforced was not only a reflection of unequal relationships of class, but also of gender. To discuss the discourse

⁵⁷ Home economists espousing nutritionism became entangled in the interests of the food industry especially as were enlisted in increasing numbers during the late 1930s by companies seeking to lend to their products the selling-point of healthfulness. Levenstein, 198.

surrounding food habits in *Chatelaine* magazine, it is imperative that the foundations for a gendered historical analysis of food habits be expanded upon.

1.3. Analyzing Gender through Food

Food is inscribed with gender and ultimately is a cultural medium exposed like all others to historical change. Acceptance of this claim grants analytical access to a historical understanding of personal choices, desires, and “needs” through food discourse appearing in the past. Historical analysis of desires and needs should not avoid a gendered analysis, and in fact is much enlivened by its application. Before such an analysis is possible, however, it is first necessary to indicate how the term “gender” is herein deployed, why it is useful to this study of food, and which histories are being drawn upon as models for this study’s own methodological approach to a gendered analysis of Canadian food culture.

The gendered analytical turn in historical theory is often tied to the work of Joan Scott, particularly her 1986 essay, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis.”⁵⁸ In it, she makes a case for gender as a category of analysis, as significant as class and race for signalling “a scholar’s commitment to a history that included stories of the oppressed and an analysis of the meaning and nature of their oppression and, second, scholarly understanding that inequalities of power are organized along at least three axes.”⁵⁹ This history attempts to deploy gender as a means of accessing these stories of the oppressed in order to better understand the inequalities of power that structured the lives of Canadian women (and men) during the Second World War. In so doing, it is necessary to

⁵⁸ Joan Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” *American Historical Review* 91.5 (December 1986): 1053-1075.

⁵⁹ Scott, 1054.

acknowledge Scott's rejection of the notion of separate spheres and instead consider gender as "a way of denoting 'cultural constructions,'" that define individuals, relationships, cultural spaces and power. Scott's contention that gender is "a social category imposed on a sexed body,"⁶⁰ is critical to the way that I have interrogated *Chatelaine*, as it explains why attention to forms and images in advertisements, or literary narratives of domestic service, can be interpreted as carrying cultural information about relationships of power.⁶¹

Scott establishes the significance of paying attention to gender, declaring that it is "a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power."⁶² While this essay is ostensibly *about food*, to an equal measure it must be about power and about relationships, and Scott's foundational theoretical contribution cannot be overstated in importance in this matter. When thinking critically about changing human relationships to food, and especially about the *discourse* involving food during wartime, gender is inescapable. As Scott states, it "provides a way to decode meaning and to understand the complex connections among various forms of human interaction." Without a gendered analytical lens, much of the food scholarship done over the last generation would have

⁶⁰ Scott, 1056.

⁶¹ Gender had long been dismissed as mundane or written-off as "the way things are," much like food had long been dismissed or written-off as unchanging and pedestrian. Canadian historian Joy Parr discusses this in her argument for the utility of gendered historical analysis: "When insights from cultural and feminist studies make historical the once firmly forged fractures between the political and the social, make historical the once presumed natural markings of national, racial, ethnic, and sexual difference and the truths that sustain hierarchies of power, then alarm bells sound." Joy Parr, "Gender History and Historical Practice," *Canadian Historical Review* 76.3 (September 1995): 360.

⁶² Scott, 1067. Parr again provides further clarity to Scott's original formulation: "The self-conscious move towards the study of gender, rather than woman, instead began from the post-structuralist premise that identities were made in relationships." Parr, "Gender History," 362.

been hollow or superficial.⁶³ Moreover, just as Scott argued that “politics constructs gender and gender constructs politics,” this paper demonstrates that food could be fittingly inserted into this theoretical equation. Once updated to include food, this equation captures the contingent nature of the relationship of food, politics and gender.⁶⁴

Another theoretical voice that contributes to the analysis of *Chatelaine* is the Canadian historian Joy Parr, whose *The Gender of Breadwinners* also influences my approach to gender.⁶⁵ She is careful, in her contrasting study of labourers in Ontario and English industrial areas, not to consider gender as a monolithic category of individuals’ experiences, instead arguing that the cultural construction of gender must be understood as activating in concert with other constructions, like class, ethnicity and race, and religion. Illustrative of this claim, she writes,

Any systemic approach that assumes that ‘everything falls into one category or another, but cannot belong to more than one category at the

⁶³ The timing of Mintz’s *Sweetness and Power*, only a year before Scott’s essay, demonstrates how both of these groundbreaking contributions were actually each connected to the broader “cultural turn” in history, each paying close attention to relationships of power and the ways in which human relationships are culturally constructed. They both gave special attention to the way that culture could not only signify (and therefore an analysis of it could reveal) hierarchies of power, but also to the ways they reinforced, challenged, or created these very structures. Two representative theoretical works that implicitly background any such discussion of how networks of power structure and define history, culture, sexuality (etc.) include: Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction, Volume 1*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990); Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995). Countless prior theoretical works, by Marcuse, Heidegger, Nietzsche, Freud, & co. could also be pointed to as contributive in this general reference to how the nature of human social and cultural experience is defined by technology, power, psychology, will, etc. However, for the purposes of this work, the reader’s detailed familiarity with these and antecedent thinkers, let alone their subscription to any of them, will be side-barred for forthcoming works of political theory. The important operative point is that the cultural turn happened and this thesis’s interest in discourse and the discursive construction of identities would be impossible, or at least incomprehensible, without it.

⁶⁴ Scott, 1070. Such an equation would read much more poorly: “politics constructs gender, gender constructs politics, politics constructs food, food constructs politics, food constructs gender, and gender constructs food.”

⁶⁵ While Parr and Scott are most foundational and mentioned explicitly for this reason, the work of Donica Belisle also contributed to this study’s understanding of the societal construction of the feminine consumer as essentially irrational: Donica Belisle, “Crazy for Bargains, Inventing the Irrational Female Shopper in Modernizing English Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review* 92.4 (December 2011): 581-606. Also providing substantial guidance to the operative conception of how gender could construct objects: Victoria de Grazia, “Introduction,” *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 11-25.

same time' belies the wholeness of consciousness and experience. Life as we live it is not subdivided sequentially. We exist simultaneously, rather than sequentially, in the social relations of class and gender.⁶⁶

In interrogating *Chatelaine* during the Second World War, food discourse will be used to produce evidence of the construction and contestation of the role of women and men on the Canadian home front. Because the verbs of evaluating, buying, preparing, and serving of food were coded as feminine – just as being served, “breadwinning,” and the consumption of many specific foods, like red meat, were coded as masculine – analysis of discourse regarding these food habits provides insight into the gendered roles ascribed to Canadians on the home front.

Using food as this kind of historical tool is not new. Historian Ellen Ross uses food as “a system of communication, a body of images,” to discuss the experience of class and gender identities in working-class Victorian London.⁶⁷ Nor are historians alone in thinking about gender in relation to food. Anthropologists⁶⁸ and sociologists,⁶⁹ for

⁶⁶ Joy Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 8. She expanded on this idea elsewhere to a similar effect, that “Because people historically have existed severally, holding within themselves different and contending conceptions of their place in the world, experience is formed dialectically, as the meanings made from these several parts collide.” Parr, “Gender History,” 366. The adoption of each of these scholars is also necessarily informed by an understanding of the historical trajectory of first, second, and third-wave feminist theorists, especially the pivotal importance of Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* for breaking thinking about women in society away from merely political and economic conceptions of emancipation and toward the consideration of social and cultural constructions, exemplified by her assertion that: “We must not believe, certainly, that a change is [sic] woman’s economic condition alone is enough to transform her, though this factor has been and remains the basic factor in her evolution; but until it has brought about the moral, social, cultural, and other consequences that it promises and requires, the new woman cannot appear [...] She must shed her old skin and cut her own new clothes. This she could do only through a social evolution.” Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, trans. and ed. H.M. Parshley (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), xv-xvi.

⁶⁷ Ellen Ross, “There is Meat Ye Know Not Of,” *Love and Toil: Motherhood in Outcast London, 1870-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993) 28. These words are consciously echoing those of French philosopher Ronald Barthes. In her study, Ross develops the idea that mushy foods, like oatmeal, could symbolize “social dependence and degradation” because of their connection to workhouses, whereas the consumption of meat could contrarily signal independence and masculinity, both because of its being consumed away from the workhouse but also because of the iniquitous distribution of it in favour of men as opposed to women and children. Ross, 32.

⁶⁸ In one such anthropological study, “Domestic units” were analyzed using comparative ethnography, as sites for “biological and social reproduction, where children are nurtured, fed, and taught and where, throughout their lives, people continue to learn and to refine their dietary ideas and practices in relation to

instance, have lent important insights and valuable perspectives from other disciplinary approaches to how gender and food habits can (and should) be analyzed as intertwined.

Using gender and food to speak to one another makes a great deal of sense in this specific historical context, as women were isolated as the principal targets of most wartime food campaigns by governments, civil-society organizations, and corporations. Nor should this be surprising, as gender norms had long dictated in western society that women bear the brunt of the responsibility for the preparation and service of food, especially in lower class families and often also amongst the middle-class.⁷⁰ It is for this reason that Bentley writes that women have acted throughout history as the gatekeepers of most family food habits; even when discussing food coded as destined for masculine-consumption, like meat, nutritionists found that “To change the kinds of meat families ate, for example, it was necessary to influence not men or children but women.”⁷¹ As various actors found it desirable to attempt widespread alterations of food habits, the gender of individuals and foods determined the arguments they were able to make.

their changing circumstances and experiences.” Anne Sharman, Janet Theophano, Karen Curtis, and Ellen Messer, ed., *Diet and Domestic Life in Society* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 4.

⁶⁹ Marjorie DeVault, for instance, extensively explores the responsibility of women as domestic providers and caretakers of dietary habits. Her assertion that, “The ‘iron cage’ of women’s responsibility becomes more visible when circumstances combine to exceed the ‘normal’ demands and difficulties of caring – when there are few resources, or family members have unusually pressing needs – when ‘women’s work’ is nearly impossible, and still required,” informs this study’s own understanding of the Second World War as one such moment when the “normal” demands of caring made many women’s work “nearly impossible” and is therefore representative of a moment where the “iron cage” is more readily identifiable than normal. Marjorie L. DeVault, *Feeding the Family: The Social Organization of Caring as Gendered Work* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 231.

⁷⁰ Depending on the time period and place, middle-upper class women have experienced varying degrees of involvement with food production. Generally speaking, however, the greater the affluence of a family the greater detachment that female members of that family have been permitted to have from the production of food. This distance from the act of production has often served as a kind of *conspicuous non-production*, akin to Veblen’s earlier-referenced idea of “conspicuous consumption.”

⁷¹ Bentley, 26. She also qualifies this claim: “women apparently were not considered the ultimate gatekeepers of family food consumption when it came to red meat.” Bentley, 98. This qualification indicates that attentiveness to the gendering of not only people, but inanimate foods, is instructive.

As Canadian society adjusted to wartime, Canadian food culture also changed. However, as Sociologist Alana Hermiston wrote, “while all Canadians were asked to join in the fight, it was women who were *expected* to rise to the challenge, and indeed, to demonstrate how to win this ‘other war.’”⁷² Initially, change on the home front, while often dictated from men in positions of authority, was to be implemented and adjusted to by women. Publicly, women demonstrated their solidarity with the war effort, as well as making tangible material contributions to its prosecution, by using pre-existing community organizations, like tea rooms, to raise funds for charities dedicated to war-related efforts.⁷³ These community efforts, while involving food, did not represent any notable *change* in food culture, but were instead an instance of it being redirected to wartime aims. For evidence of change, study of the home front must inevitably turn to the home – and this is where *Chatelaine* proves itself to be a particularly useful source of cultural memory, providing glimpses of a little-documented part of Canadian historical experience. Women’s roles were directly related to what has been described in another context as “the performances of gender that unfold at dinner tables and family gatherings within households.”⁷⁴ Success or failure in the provision of family meals contained “symbolic and social significance” that went well beyond the simple satisfaction of a full belly: a properly provided meal went hand in hand with an appropriate family life.⁷⁵

⁷² Alana J. Hermiston, “If it’s good for you, it’s good for the nation!’ The Moral Regulation of Nutrition in Canada, 1930-1945,” PhD Thesis, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University (11 February 2005), 101.

⁷³ Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada’s Second World War*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004), 24.

⁷⁴ Sonia Cancian, “‘*Tutti a Tavola!*’ Feeding the Family in Two Generations of Italian Immigrant Households in Montreal,” *Edible Histories Cultural Practices: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: U of T Press, 2012), 210.

⁷⁵ Cancian, 211.

The gendered expectations of motherhood did not singularly disempower or exploit women, though this certainly represented the most common and dominant lived experience. Examples of women wielding political power during this period through these roles also exist. Milk price campaigns in both Canada and the United States provide stirring examples of activism stemming from the responsibility to nurture familial health. According to labour historian Julie Guard, as a result of rising milk prices, women in Ontario collectively organized in the 1930s under the auspices of the Housewives Association and through it “transformed ordinary women from apolitical homemakers into citizen-consumers who demanded government accountability and called for reforms that were, in their essence, socialist.”⁷⁶ The nature of their demands directly challenged state and corporate authority and did so in ways that questioned the basic assumptions of the economic-political framework. In this instance, radical political and economic solutions were not dismissed as radical *per se*, because the gendered perception of female activism prevented women from being tarred with the “socialist” brush for protesting issues relating to motherhood (high milk prices).⁷⁷ Milk protests are just one example of food culture’s shifting relation to female power – sometimes granting authority and unique opportunities for action, though oftentimes entrenching exclusion and inequality.

In Levenstein’s narrative, the development of industrial food culture took place in unison with the liberation of women from oppressive domestic obligations, as first

⁷⁶ Julie Guard, “The Politics of Milk: Canadian Housewives Organize in the 1930s,” *Edible Histories Cultural Practices: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: U of T Press, 2012), 281.

⁷⁷ It should be stressed that at this time *female politics* was in itself radical, regardless of its agenda. Guard, 276.

Another instance of food granting women a unique avenue for asserting their voice, in opposition to patriarchal power, can be witnessed in the story of women in late-nineteenth century London who, following domestic disputes over the financially unrealistic demands of husbands for better or more plentiful food, would place in their lunch the next day “the rent book between two slices of bread.” Ross, 34.

domestic servants and finally housewives were gradually relieved of the burden to provide food for men first by economics, and secondly by the combined effect of technology and broader changes to food culture. Therefore, the spread of nutritionist concepts had ramifications for the empowerment of women, as through it women “managed to downgrade both the quantity and quality of what was expected from their kitchens.”⁷⁸ However, it is important to qualify that the application of nutritionism did not always lead to the emancipation of women. As nutritionism spread during the early half of the twentieth century, it did so within different contexts, and so its implementation could have radically different implications. In the French Canadian context, Caroline Durand writes of how it “was used to support a conservative and nationalistic conception of the family and French Canadian womanhood while simultaneously promoting a representation of the individual that was rational and tailored to the requirements of a liberal capitalist system.”⁷⁹ In light of the various ways it could be applied, nutritionism should not be understood to have been necessarily geared toward women’s empowerment.

During the Second World War, by and large gender norms served to reinforce male hegemony and undermine female authority.⁸⁰ At their core, these norms established women as gatekeepers to the food habits of their families, and so advertisers’ appeals increasingly fell on women’s ears and eyes, even when they were addressing the desires

⁷⁸ Levenstein, 83.

⁷⁹ Caroline Durand, “Rational Meals for the Traditional Family: Nutrition in Quebec School Manuals, 1900-1960,” *Edible Histories Cultural Practices: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: U of T Press, 2012), 109-10.

⁸⁰ Keshen, “Revisiting Canada’s Civilian Women During World War II,” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 30.6 (1997): 239-40. Keshen suggests that this view, established by Pierson, correctly remains the “standard interpretation” of the war, but also recommends that exceptions to this overarching trend likely exist and should be incorporated into the Canadian social history of the war.

and needs of their men and children.⁸¹ While in exceptional cases women used these roles to assert themselves beyond the kitchen, the overriding reality, according to Bentley, was that, “women’s real and most important battlefield was the kitchen. [...] Every meal served was a political act,” and with rare exceptions women’s agency was limited to the dinner table and the choices leading up to it.⁸²

This being said, feminine food consumption was itself significant, even outside of the context of the service of men and children. In the magazine, this was often a silenced consumption, with women’s roles as providers of food overriding depictions of women actually eating food themselves. In this sense, it is important to recall the idealized, and essentially unreal and unattainable, relationship of women to food appearing in the magazine. The reality is critically distorted in the magazine: whereas during essentially every meal women would necessarily have been eating the food they made, depictions and discussions of women and food distorted the nature of this relationship, at times making it appear that each and every meal was planned around, served to, and consumed (conspicuously or otherwise) by others.⁸³ Exceptions to this idealized depiction did appear in *Chatelaine*, and one such instance will be explored in chapter 4.3.

Wartime food culture was gendered down to the very food groups being created by nutritionists at the time: meat was associated with masculinity while fruits, vegetables, grain and sugar were tied to femininity.⁸⁴ The way food culture was organized and

⁸¹ Bentley, 26.

⁸² Bentley, 31.

⁸³ In this context I find a personal note evocative. At any meal served by my grandmother to her family, she would (to a point that seemed absurd to my brother, mother, father and myself) be *servicing* the meal well after family members had begun to eat it. We would have to coax, insist, and protest her continuing service until she would finally (and usually only briefly) sit down to eat *with* us. Whether this type of behaviour was learned, or was idiosyncratic, it could perhaps speak to, or at least illustrate, this idealized relationship. In any event, my French-Canadian grandfather (who loved to cook), displayed no similar habit.

⁸⁴ Bentley, 87.

gendered in people's minds more broadly structured their lived reality than has been widely historically appreciated. Ultimately, Levenstein's claim that the new food habits were gradually eroding the *necessity* of the old gender norms conflicts with Pierson's assertion that these norms nonetheless did not meaningfully change during wartime.⁸⁵ It is understandable that such contradictory conclusions have arisen from interpretations of the period, when governments' wartime messages could, for instance, at once assume that men and women would *share* in the labours of victory gardening, while also operating under the countervailing assumption of male leadership and authority within the same plot of earth.⁸⁶ By way of reconciling these two positions concerning the general trend of gender norms during the period, this paper posits that wherever women's agency was potentially increased in relation to the war effort, this agency should be understood to have increased *within* the confines of essentially rigid gender hierarchies.⁸⁷

1.4. Methods for Understanding Chatelaine

The iconic illustration *Freedom from Want* (Figure 2), by Norman Rockwell for the American *Evening Post*, endures as a visual representation of wartime experience on the home front in the United States. It calls to mind the centrality of food as a medium

⁸⁵ Levenstein, 164. To complicate matters further, Ian Mosby points to the Canadian Nutrition Program as having had the opposite effect than that claimed by Levenstein in the short term, actually reinforcing "a dominant male-breadwinner-centred domestic order." Home economists' research for the program pointed to the fact that gendered inequalities of food distribution existed within the majority of households irrespective of family income. Moreover, these inequalities persisted in spite of a scientific ideology that dictated men *should* eat better than women and children because their needs were greater. However, these researchers nonetheless did nothing to address these inequalities because of their own gendered reading of the scientific data in front of them. Ian Mosby, "Making and Breaking Canada's Food Rules: Science, the State, and the Government of Nutrition, 1942-1949," *Edible Histories Cultural Practices: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: U of T Press, 2012), 423.

⁸⁶ Bentley, 131. Victory gardening is one branch of the discourse concerning wartime food culture that has been regrettably, but necessarily, omitted from the study that follows, largely in order to keep to a manageable scope.

⁸⁷ This is akin to the middle-ground that Bentley proposes at the beginning of her own American history of food and gender during the Second World War. Bentley, 5.

through which society was both ordered and reinforced. Bentley highlights its significance, arguing that it “functioned as a visual metaphor for prescriptive notions about expectations of abundance, societal order and stability, and maintenance of the status quo.”⁸⁸ It is essential to highlight this point: Rockwell’s visual metaphor was not intended to serve a *descriptive*, but rather a *prescriptive* (or proscriptive) function. Gender hierarchies were under pressure across Canada, the United States, and Britain during World War Two, and while they would not be *reformulated* until the post-war years – historian Cheryl Krasnick Warsh argues as late as 1954 – the importance of war as a vehicle for initiating change should not be understated.⁸⁹ Though *Chatelaine* was a Canadian women’s magazine and therefore differed significantly from the *Evening Post*, food discourses appearing in it are similarly communicative of societal discord and efforts to preserve stability as was Rockwell’s illustration.

Having shown how histories of food, class, and gender will inform this study, the last theoretical crux to be explained is that of literary and cultural analysis. *Chatelaine* is, after all, not a person, but an evolving object of literary and commercial culture; as such, it only displays elements of class and gender through its readers’, writers’ and advertisers’ literary contributions. The method used to translate the words and images of the magazine into concepts, ideologies, and narratives, is one that was first laid out by art historian Erwin Panofsky. His method for organizing observations was useful for structuring the research of *Chatelaine*, and can be summarily defined by three steps: observation,

⁸⁸ Bentley, 60.

⁸⁹ Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, “Vim, Vigour and Vitality: ‘Power’ Foods for Kids in Canadian Popular Magazines, 1914-1954,” *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: U of T Press, 2012), 402.

decoding or interpreting records, and finally classifying or coordinating your analyzed materials into a “system that ‘makes sense’.”⁹⁰

A mindfulness of Panofsky’s theoretical approach to research and analysis directed my approach to “reading” images. Rather than limiting the interpretation of images to the subject matter explicitly contained within them, Panofsky asserts the importance of distinguishing between idea and form, each of which he contends is communicative of content that subject matter may not communicate. To this effect, he echoes philosopher Charles Peirce when he describes content “as that which a work betrays but does not parade. It is the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion – all this unconsciously qualified by one personality, and condensed into one work.”⁹¹ Whereas Panofsky is principally concerned with artwork, I seek to apply the same rationale to the evaluation of illustrations in advertisements and the magazine’s own editorial content. A study of the cultures of food *appearing* in *Chatelaine* necessarily deals a great deal with images, and for this reason Panofsky’s theoretical approach is informative. It allows for the appreciation of the multiple perspectives that illustrations and advertisements could encompass.

Another useful part of adopting Panofsky’s approach is the attention he demands of the reader/viewer/researcher with regard to the idea of objectivity. He insists on the

⁹⁰ Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), 7. Panofsky’s research and analytical methodology is in fact combined with Valerie Korinek’s, which is fairly similar, but not explained in full here. She describes her approach as embracing “a systematic content analysis designed to explore and manage the flow of the material over the twenty-year case study.” Her use of a two-step database survey approach, tracking “surface” qualitative information along with closer readings of relevant content for qualitative information proved critically useful for organizing my own research. Her decision to avoid religious and civic holidays in her readings was one I decided to reject, as these holidays were substantially more important to a study that centres on food habits than they were to her own project (in which she considered them to represent aberrations). Valerie J. Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 16-17.

⁹¹ Panofsky, 14.

impossibility of a “naïve beholder,” either in the past or the present, of art or historical objects. This insistence warns of the importance of my own perspective as filtering research findings and analysis, regardless of my own intended pursuit of objectivity.⁹² It also leads to the idea that readers themselves were by no means naïve, passive interpreters of the magazine’s content, but brought their own identities and perspectives to the interpretation (and let us not forget: enjoyment!) of the magazine.⁹³ Betty Friedan’s *Feminine Mystique* framed decades of thought regarding women’s magazines by articulating the myth of the women’s magazine as a one-way (producer-originating) cultural phenomenon in which women were without agency and bound to be controlled, altered, and influenced by the publication, which itself was necessarily male-dominated and constructed.⁹⁴ Panofsky’s theory suggests that Friedan’s understanding of the way magazines operate is incomplete; Canadian historian Valerie Korinek goes a step further and takes the rejection of this idea as one of her central argumentative thrusts.

Korinek’s *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties*, is certainly the most comprehensive study of *Chatelaine* conducted to date. Many of the methodological approaches that Korinek successfully applies have been adopted as part of this study’s method. Korinek’s work is important, not just for historians interested in *Chatelaine* or even those interested in Canadian social and cultural history, but for those interested in the media of the women’s magazine, for she successfully amends several previously “given” assumptions about the medium, often associated with

⁹² Panofsky 16-17.

⁹³ One especially useful source that has informed my reading of images in *Chatelaine* can be found in the somewhat dated, but still quite provocative documentary: John Berger, *Ways of Seeing: based on the BBC television series with John Berger* (London: BBC, 1972). In it, Berger extensively develops the idea that one could “use images like words” as well as the critical concept of perspective in relation to art and illustration in Western history. His plea to viewers in the first part of the series is one I consciously echo: “I hope you will consider what I arrange, but be skeptical of it.”

⁹⁴ Korinek, 10.

Friedan's work. She describes her approach as bridging the gap between Friedan's work and the rejection of it, prevalent among third-wave feminists of the last generation:

Within the literature, there are two primary scholarly approaches: the first represents the magazine as the bearer of pleasure, the second sees it as a purveyor of oppressive ideologies of sex, class and race difference. In academic criticism – literary, cultural, and sociological – these two alternative approaches are expounded by different theorists from different conceptual traditions, but of course for the actual reader of the magazine at the point of consumption, they can and do exist simultaneously.⁹⁵

Her argument instructs scholars working with magazines to read them as a media that operate in multiple directions, as manifesting instances of oppressive and emancipatory tendencies within the same issue (or even the same article or ad). Korinek thereby reconciles the critical divide that had previously fractured scholarship of women's magazines.

Another of her refutations is the inaccuracy of the idea that “the majority of subscribers were comfortable, middle-class urbanites.” In its place, she suggests that “Instead, the majority of *Chatelaine* readers were working class, of average or less than average incomes, and from both rural and urban locations.”⁹⁶ This is important for considerations of the magazine's readership and the extent of its influence, though it is limited in its usefulness for understanding how the magazine *conceived and constructed* itself, or how advertisers *perceived Chatelaine's* audience.

Two hints of its intended audience should suffice for now (though many more will follow) to gesture toward the class that the magazine and its advertisers explicitly addressed. The first is an ad for McClary Electric Ranges, which appeared in 1937, toward the tail end of the Depression, and which tied the purchase of a new range to

⁹⁵ Korinek, 31.

⁹⁶ Korinek, 31.

renovations of the house or its kitchen. In so doing, it clearly presumed the reader possessed surplus expendable income, surprising in the context of a Canadian society still in the midst of widespread economic depression.⁹⁷ This ad is representative of the target audience of many of *Chatelaine*'s advertisers.

Another indicator of the magazine's assumed class is the cover page (any one will do), which typically featured well-dressed upper-middle class white women, dressed in the latest "fall" or "spring" (or whatever) fashions. In such cover-pages, it was by no means uncommon for the cover-woman to be ornately adorned with a pearl necklace, elegant earrings, and precise application of make-up.⁹⁸ Such women were normally depicted posing in passive (leisurely) states of being, rather than in active states of labour. The cover page communicated its intended audience in another way, with the magazine's name, "*Chatelaine*," – which was chosen as the result of a national competition to name the magazine which received over 70,000 responses – meaning "mistress of the castle," and carrying clear connotations of both wealth and privilege.⁹⁹ The framing of the magazine by the motif of a castle can also be read as having defined the magazine as a structure by which privileged women were both defended from that which exists beyond its walls while being at once separated from active engagement with these exterior forces. The symbol of the castle encapsulates the idea that *Chatelaine* presented content that structured the way women related to their worlds, both within and without the home. Through the symbolic framing of it as a mistress within the walls of a castle, this

⁹⁷ McClary, *Chatelaine* May 1937, 32.

⁹⁸ *Chatelaine* October 1937, cover page.

⁹⁹ Korinek 34-35; Grove, 174.

relationship was to be a kind of idealized, privileged femininity, still rooted in fealty to a patriarchal power.¹⁰⁰

That the presumed audience of *Chatelaine* was divorced from its actual readership is not entirely surprising: as mentioned earlier in the context of nutritionism and household economy, it was by no means uncommon in the early twentieth century for middle- and upper-class women to perceive their lifestyle as a model for lower-class women to strive toward. The magazine would not have been unaware of its largely middling and lower-class readership, nor would its advertisers, but nonetheless both modelled their “target audience” as being socio-economically better-off than their actual audience.¹⁰¹

Korinek’s two principal theoretical contributions each are reinforced by Ellen McCracken’s appeal that women’s magazines should be viewed simultaneously as “business enterprises and cultural texts.”¹⁰² As texts that operated both as cultural and business enterprises, women’s magazines could be perceived rather differently depending

¹⁰⁰ The patriarchal roots of “*Chatelaine*” lies in the “mistress” aspect of its definition, as is readily apparent in a quick perusal of the Oxford English Dictionary’s entry for “mistress”: “I. A woman having control or authority. 1. A woman who has charge of a child or young person; a governess. 2.a. The female head of a family, household, or other establishment; a woman holding such a position in conjunction with a male counterpart [...] 3.a. A female patron or inspirer of an art, religion, way of life, etc. [...] 5.a. A woman loved and courted by a man; a female sweetheart. [...] II. A female teacher; a woman qualified to teach, or particularly accomplished in some subject, skill, etc.” *Oxford English Dictionary*. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002. Also available at <http://www.oed.com/>. This definition is also interesting for while containing plenty of reference to female authority and privilege that is nonetheless subjugated to masculine authority, it also denotes specific power with respect to culture, the household, art, etc. Indeed, the more the term *Chatelaine* is deconstructed, the more eloquently revealing a choice it appears to have been in 1928.

¹⁰¹ Though it would justly come to be understood as condescending and pretentious, this attitude of modelling an ideal *better other* for the audience bears an interesting resemblance to the still-current practice of advertisers and content-producers using older children than their target audience as figures for emulation – see almost every toy/game commercial ever produced. It should also be noted that Korinek points out that what was considered well-off differed between Canadian and American magazines, even into the sixties: “Census statistics and economists indicate that Canadians did not have the disposable wealth of Americans until well into the sixties, although the gap in earnings between the two countries was always in evidence. More modest, less glamorous than the American women’s magazines, *Chatelaine* employed a softer sell.” Korinek, 218.

¹⁰² Ellen McCracken, *Decoding Women’s Magazines: From Mademoiselle to Ms.* (London: Macmillan, 1993), 3.

on the household income and geographic region.¹⁰³ For this reason, particular attention will be paid throughout the study to the way *Chatelaine* operated at once as a text for selling products and also as a text for communicating cultural content – different functions that were by no means operationally distinct.

Ultimately, *Roughing*'s focus on *Chatelaine* as a text for examining issues of gender in the generation of Canadian society following the one I examine serves as an essential exemplar.¹⁰⁴ Korinek points to Barthes's semiotics as having liberated "the analyses of cultural products from strictly deterministic interpretations, allowing that any given text can have multiple meanings and is open to interpretation."¹⁰⁵ The multiplicity of meanings allowed by adopting claims similar to Korinek's provides room for the voices of a variety of historical actors to emerge from one text, but it also allows for a richer historical understanding of the text as a site of complex cultural exchange and debate. Her assertion that "reading *Chatelaine* contributes to our understanding of feminine resistance and acquiescence to 'gendered norms' in the fifties and sixties," is as central to the way this study proceeds as Bentley's work with food and gender in the American medium of daily newspapers.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ The urban/rural divide was also important for understanding reader's understanding of the magazine. Whether readers lived in the Maritimes, Prairies, Ontario, Quebec, etc., would also necessarily inform the applicability of certain messages as commercial messages. For instance, if an ad for an electric range was read in an area with limited electricity, it obviously communicated a different message than it otherwise would to an urban reader.

¹⁰⁴ Her theoretical approach to gender is similarly a marriage of several theoretical contributions. Though her theory-grab-bag differs from mine in composition, its attempt to marry several approaches was an inspiration for my own work: "This study marries three disparate, yet complementary, analytical approaches to analyze *Chatelaine* effectively in the fifties and sixties: critical theories; feminist cultural analysis; and Canadian social, gender, and cultural history." Korinek, 17.

¹⁰⁵ Korinek, 18.

¹⁰⁶ Korinek, 18-19.

In the article, “Sex, Lies & Advertising,” for *Ms. Magazine*, Gloria Steinem famously asked: “Suppose archaeologists of the future dug up women’s magazines and used them to judge American women. What would they think of us-and what can we do about it?”¹⁰⁷ It is doubtful that Steinem thought “the future” would come so quickly. This study embarks on the project of “digging up” *Chatelaine* magazine in accord with Steinem’s anticipated “future” archeological dig. With focuses on food, class, and gender outlined, and the method of approaching the magazine’s content outlined, it remains to be shown why *Chatelaine* was chosen and not some other women’s magazine from the period.¹⁰⁸

The choice of *Chatelaine* stems from several factors. First of all, it fell within the realm of print media, which Keshen argues is “now the most readily accessible barometer of mass opinion” of Second World War Canadian society.¹⁰⁹ The magazine stands apart from other print media, especially newspapers, because its market was national. Along with nascent public enterprises like the CBC radio network (1936) and the National Film Board (1939), magazines were one of the few media that could target the Canadian market as a whole and in so doing support the project of Canadian nation-building. Its national scope ensured that industrial food processors, rather than small-scale or localized ones, would form the bulk of its advertising partners. The modern mass consumer culture of food that *Chatelaine* promoted contended with entrenched regional and ethnic foodways, just as the nation building project more generally contended with Canada’s fabled geographical and cultural diversity. The nation and the consumer economy each

¹⁰⁷ Gloria Steinem, “Sex, Lies & Advertising,” *Ms. Magazine*, July/August 1990, 170.

¹⁰⁸ Alternately, several magazines could have been surveyed comparatively, to build a broader picture of the discourse appearing in women’s magazines during the period. However, given the limitations this study was necessarily confined to, I deemed it to be unproductive to opt for greater breadth at the expense of the depth afforded by focussing exclusively on *Chatelaine*.

¹⁰⁹ Keshen, “Revisiting,” 240.

pursued a mass appeal that a media like *Chatelaine* was uniquely well-positioned to produce. To this end, *Chatelaine* presented an aspirational middle class ideal that transcended Canada's diversity. It is in this light that Levenstein argues that women's magazines in North America were by far the most commonly national (and nationalizing) media in their scope and influence.¹¹⁰

Moreover, Keshen claims that *Chatelaine* was "Canada's most important women's publication."¹¹¹ His claim can be backed up by an evaluation of the magazine's circulation numbers, which grew rapidly over the first decade of its print run, that began in March 1928 under the MacLean Publishing Company.¹¹² *Chatelaine's* predisposition to speak to national food habits made it a natural medium of communications for the modern state bureaucracy to use when conditions of war necessitated wholesale modifications to Canadian food habits. This context lends weight to the fact that *Chatelaine* managed to quickly eclipse its competitors by the Second World War.¹¹³ Over the course of the war, *Chatelaine* had become Canada's most widely-circulating

¹¹⁰ Levenstein, 169. This national focus is both interesting and challenging in such a young, geographically and regionally distinctive nation as Canada. While a more regional scope would have been preferable for limiting the number of perspectives readers could presumably be bringing to their reading of the magazine, the national scope is uniquely wide-ranging in appeal and affective influence.

¹¹¹ Keshen, "Revisiting," 243.

¹¹² Jaleen Grove, "A Castle of One's Own: Interactivity in *Chatelaine* Magazine, 1928-35," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 45.3 (Fall 2011): 166.

¹¹³ From the first year its circulation was tracked (1929), circulation stood at 57,053, paid readership expanded markedly to 157,018 in 1933, 207,253 in 1936, and finally 231,997 in 1939. The Second World War would not prove any hurdle for the magazine either, as by 1942 distribution had reached 251,577. By means of comparison, the same figures for other magazines (while *CHJ* actually sold more, its growth was less precipitous, a trend that would continue through the postwar years and eventuate in declining readership, whereas *Chatelaine* has a continuous run until the present day, even offering a French edition in 1960): *Canadian Home Journal* sold 102,279 in 1929, 180,251 in 1933, 216,445 in 1936, 233,071 in 1939 and 277,033 in 1942; *Canadian Homes and Gardens* sold 7,000 in 1929 and had only increased sales to 8,106 by 1932; *MacLeans* (same parent company) had circulation of 133,280 in 1929, 174,841 in 1933, 250,157 in 1936, 264,838 in 1939, and 277,033 in 1942. A. McKim Ltd. Advertising Agency, *McKim's Directory of Canadian Publications*, 35th ed. (Montreal: A McKim) 1942. It should be further noted that these numbers were not absolutely or scientifically established, as other sources have slightly different figures: *Chatelaine* in 1933 at 150,161; *Canadian Home Journal* in 1933 at 173,389; *Canadian Homes and Gardens* in 1933 at 7,845 (vs. 7,894); *MacLeans* magazine in 1933 at 171,165 – all according to: *Directory: Newspapers and Periodicals*, J. Percy H. Johnson ed. (N.W. Ayer & Son Inc., Philadelphia) n.d.

women's magazine, as it surpassed *Canadian Home Journal* (henceforth, *CHJ*, or the *Journal*) – which had been in circulation since 1910 – and even challenged its parent company's flagship publication, *Macleans*, for predominance in the Canadian market at large.¹¹⁴

Further consideration of what the above-noted circulation numbers suggests can be informed by Jaleen Grove's argument that in the 1930s and 1940s, "stickiness" was an essential aspect of magazines as a media. Magazines of this period remained in the house longer and were used in multiple ways, over a longer time-span, than would be conventionally assumed today.¹¹⁵ Issues, or bits of issues (recipe clippings, illustrations, etc.), could become lasting facets of a reader's home, workplace, or recreational centres. One woman who subscribed to *Chatelaine* could share her monthly copy with several neighbours or family members, or else exchange it for their *Journal* or other periodicals.¹¹⁶ Magazines were literary documents with far longer shelf-lives than disposable newspapers. They commonly occupied prominent places within the home or business they were mailed to, often left on coffee tables, side tables, and kitchen tables for weeks or months before finally beginning their "shelf life" or being disposed of, according to readers' habits. Over the course of this life, not only mothers and wives but children and husbands too would undoubtedly peruse its pages. In this way, a circulation

¹¹⁴ *Chatelaine* circulated 258,015 copies in 1945 and 276,476 in 1947; *Canadian Home Journal* 256,998 in 1945 and 273,000 in 1947; *Canadian Homes and Gardens* 10,271 in 1945 and 20,533 in 1947; *MacLeans* 278,399 in 1945 and 304,635 in 1947. Therefore, of these representative and contrasting publications, *Chatelaine* was the fastest-growing over the course of the war, with an increase of 26,018, or 11.2 per cent (relative to *Canadian Home Journal*: 23,927 and 10.3 per cent; *MacLeans*: 13,561 and 5.1 per cent). Directory: Newspapers and Periodicals, J. Percy H. Johnson ed. (N.W. Ayer & Son Inc., Philadelphia) n.d..

¹¹⁵ Grove, 170.

¹¹⁶ Nor should any of these women's magazines be misconstrued as even limited to *women* in any absolute sense. Children and husbands, though perhaps more likely to skim issues, would have felt little inhibition to peruse their pages.

figure of over 200,000 copies can be extrapolated to represent a truly-substantial portion of what was a far more literary culture.

While this study could have more widely tracked both of the major women's magazines of the time, *Chatelaine* and *CHJ*, the latter was excluded both for practicality of scope and because, as Michelle Smith points out in her literary analysis of both magazine's fiction, "the *Journal* and *Chatelaine* were remarkably similar periodicals. They printed advertisements for the same businesses, they were structured in essentially the same manner and they addressed their intended readers with the same ingratiating tone."¹¹⁷ Moreover, both magazines marketed themselves as first and foremost representations to Canadians of Canadian culture, so as to distinguish themselves from their American competition.¹¹⁸ Further still, both *Chatelaine* and the *Journal* were constructed with the expectation that their audiences were "white, middle-class consumers."¹¹⁹ Their host of similarities, coupled with the *Journal*'s decline in prominence after the war, justifies the *Journal*'s exclusion and the selection of *Chatelaine* as the source most representative and relevant for this study.¹²⁰

Having explained the approach to *Chatelaine*, and the reasons for choosing it, a brief contextualization of the magazine is also warranted. Korinek aptly depicts *Chatelaine* as having developed its readership on the basis of an admixture of

¹¹⁷ Michelle Smith, "Fiction and the nation: the construction of Canadian identity in *Chatelaine* and *Canadian Home Journal* during the 1930s and 1940s," *British Journal of Canadian Studies*. 27.1 (2014): 38.

¹¹⁸ Smith, 38.

¹¹⁹ Smith, 37.

¹²⁰ Unfortunately, studies of *any* mass-market women's magazines in Canada have been few and far between, so further review of the literature must suffice with a gesture toward Dawn Currie's *Girl Talk* (looking at adolescent women's magazines in Canada) and a repeated emphasis of the landmark nature of Korinek's study. Korinek also notes the "dearth" of the field in the introduction to her own. Korinek, 14.

“incendiary, traditional, and commercial” tendencies displayed by its staff writers.¹²¹ Such an approach could at once engage without offending, and often sought to explore the boundaries of women’s place in society, but rarely challenged it. Women’s magazines experienced substantial increases in circulation across North America during both the First World War and the generation separating it from the Second, but leading up to this period of expansion the industry’s revenue-structures had shifted from a subscription-based model to one dependent on advertising – a significant portion of which came from the food industry.¹²² Women’s magazines’ increasing dependence on advertising revenue was framed by a shift in the way advertisers perceived their customer-base, which followed from the magazines’ own efforts to present the idea of what Smith calls “a consumer-based nationalism in which women – presumed to be the nation’s consumers – were the key participants.”¹²³ Advertisers’ bought into this idea, as demonstrated by the very ability of the magazines to shift from relying on subscriptions to advertising revenue in spite of increasing circulation numbers across the board.

Chatelaine’s active and explicit pursuit of advertisers is prevalent in its pages, along with its concurrent assertion to its readers that advertising represented more content, almost indecipherable from actual editorial content. For instance, its publishing company (Maclean Publishing Co.) printed ads at its own expense, entitled “Advertising is an economic necessity,” which made the case that, “Large production – which is economical production – makes advertising imperative. For its continuity, large scale production requires consumption equal to its own volume, and this huge and maintained

¹²¹ Korinek, 3.

¹²² Levenstein, 158.

¹²³ Smith, 38.

consumption must be of national extent.”¹²⁴ Moreover, in most issues was featured a section called “The Index of Advertisers,” providing a convenient means for readers to quickly recall advertisements for future reference.¹²⁵ This index lent authority and legitimacy to ad content, but also showed how it was not considered a break or distraction from the content; rather, ads were depicted *as content*.¹²⁶

As circulation and advertising revenues were taking off, they did so in the wake of the expanding cultural cache of nutritionism. Food advertisers were understandably at the forefront of this boom.¹²⁷ These scientific appeals were also flanked by appeals to the guilt of mothers, predicated on their presumed responsibility to nurture and provide for their families. Advertisers frequently put at the core of their messages, “worries about fussy eaters; whole families stalked by the spectre of irregularity; and fears about supplying sufficient brain food for future male leaders.”¹²⁸ This strategy successfully combined pseudo-scientific claims with emotional appeals to the gendered roles of women in the family structure.¹²⁹ The use of nutritionism and guilt were by no means the

¹²⁴ Maclean Publishing Company, *Chatelaine* January 1936, 4.

¹²⁵ “Index of Advertisers,” *Chatelaine* May 1937, 105.

¹²⁶ “Index of Advertisers,” *Chatelaine* January 1942, 48. This relationship of *Chatelaine* with its advertisers was nothing new either. Korinek writes of how the inspiration for its conception by Maclean Publishing Co. stemmed from the dearth of women-targeted magazines circulating in Canada that sold *Canadian products* to its readers. While many American women’s magazines were popular in Canada, none had a Canadian edition that could “offer advertisers a national market.” Korinek, 33-35. Regarding the idea of advertising being perceived as more similar to content than now, Grove wrote “Female advertising professionals of the day, however, saw no contradiction: in principle, advertising *could* be educational, and modern technology *did* emancipate and professionalize housekeepers, they thought.” Grove, 181. Into the war years, the synergy between advertisers, *Chatelaine*, and government and their mutual interest in nutrition reform was even explicitly defended in the magazine: “From the outset of the Nutrition campaign, as drawn up by Nutrition Services, Department of Pensions and Health, the Association of Canadian Advertisers and allied groups have worked in close association with the official planners, and have proffered their all-out support in this important national [sic] project. Their enthusiastic co-operation in a big job, designed to improve the eating habits of the Canadian people, and thus maintain health, speed production, and, finally, win the war, is yet another proof of advertising’s national consciousness and desire to serve.” Macpherson, “This Month With Our Advertisers,” *Chatelaine*, January 1943, 48.

¹²⁷ Levenstein, 158.

¹²⁸ Warsh, 404.

¹²⁹ Warsh, 405.

only tools at the disposal of advertisers. Women's magazines' structure was even informed by advertisers' desire to form positive associations between their products and the magazines' editorial content.

Steinem's insider exposition of the insidious relationship between advertisers and women's magazines highlighted food as having played an enduring organizational role, writing: "Food advertisers have always demanded that women's magazines publish recipes and articles on entertaining (preferably ones that name their products) in return for their ads."¹³⁰ Her thesis that advertisers had long based their decisions of where and how to advertise less on research and more on prejudice (even in 1990), constitutes an important guiding insight for this study.¹³¹ Ads should not be understood as representing reality, but rather as reflections of certain people's discourse that attempted to explain and structure said reality from their point of view. Often times in *Chatelaine*, advertisements represented nothing more than the idealizations of Canadian women and society deemed useful or compelling by advertisers, whether framed by commercial or ideological judgements. Steinem also argues that the structure of editorial content in relation to advertising content was by no means accidental. The layout of *Chatelaine* (Figure 1 provides an example), with single articles typically fragmented to cause the reader to bounce around two or even three times in one issue ("continued on page x...") lends itself to readers' gazes being exposed multiple times to the same ads. This bouncing around also pervasively knit together articles on love, marriage, women in parliament, cooking, setting up for a successful party, home economics and dieting within one unified, imbricated and mutually-reinforcing articulation of what it *ideally* meant to be a modern

¹³⁰ Steinem, 171.

¹³¹ Steinem, 176.

Canadian woman.¹³² Noting that the magazine regularly featured sections on fiction, general interest, beauty culture, housekeeping (which included, most prominently, food), children's features, a monthly calendar of suggested meals,¹³³ and health tips for nurturing babies and children, it is easy to see the breadth of products that could fit coherently into the magazine's theme of Canadian women's experience.¹³⁴

Heading into the Second World War, food could be found throughout the pages of *Chatelaine*. It was the principal subject of most of its advertisements, whether what was being sold was an ingredient like Magic Baking Soda, a processed meal like Kellogg's Corn Flakes, or a new model of fridge or electric range. In the period from 1938 through 1941, the magazine presented roughly between twenty-one and twenty-five aggregate pages of specifically food-product advertising, out of an issue that could vary in length from sixty to one hundred pages.¹³⁵ Over the same period, food-related appliances averaged an aggregate advertising space of between two and five pages. Following a cursory quantitative survey, Graph 1 shows the changing amounts of space being

¹³² It is critical to note that this idealized conception of the modern Canadian woman was intricately tied to notions of motherhood and sexual reproduction. While sex or sexual reproduction are marginalized from *Chatelaine*, the constitution of women as reproducers is implicitly on display throughout. De Beauvoir's insights into the way that women's sexuality imprisons them are indispensable in this respect, for instance: "Woman has ovaries, a uterus; these peculiarities imprison her in her subjectivity, circumscribe her within the limits of her own nature." De Beauvoir, xv-xvi.

¹³³ This section, entitled "Meals of the Month," appeared almost every month for the course of the period studied (with only a couple of exceptions). The feature was by no means unique to *Chatelaine*, as similar instances appeared in newspapers, like the *Globe and Mail's* "Today's Menus" section, which listed ideas for well-balanced meals. Korinek describes "Meals of the Month" as emphasizing "'Canadian' food, either contemporary or old-fashioned favourites, which used ingredients that would be available all across the country, were not very expensive, and appealed to all ages and appetites." Korinek, 191. This section could have easily formed the basis of another entire section of this study, but has been consciously (and unfortunately) excluded due to constraints of space and time.

¹³⁴ *Chatelaine*, January 1936, 2.

¹³⁵ These figures are based on a numerical average of advertising space dedicated to food products over the course of several sample months (January, April, July, September, December) from 1937 through 1941. The figures from 1937 should be disregarded due to insufficient sample depth (that year only two months, May and October, were used).

dedicated to various types of advertisement in the pages of *Chatelaine* from 1938-45.¹³⁶

The graph presented below illustrates two important trends.

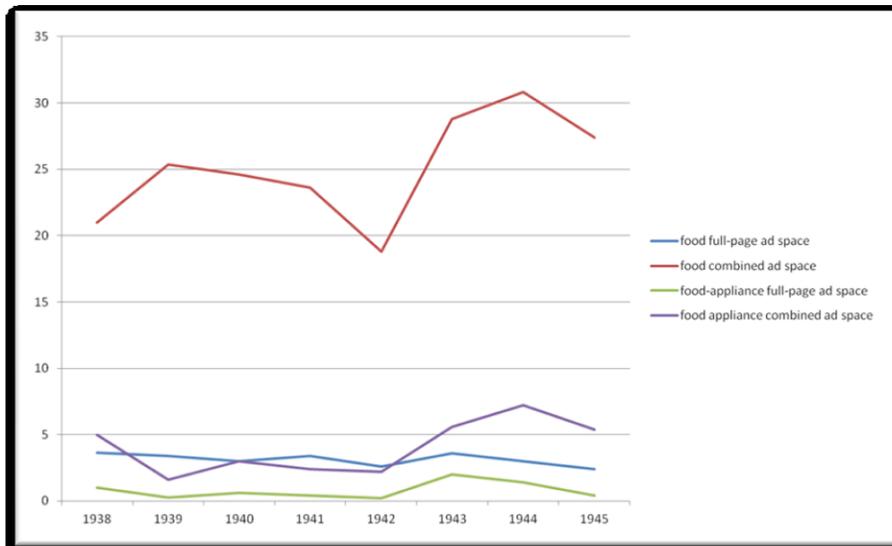


Table 1: Food-related advertising space in *Chatelaine*, 1938-45

The first of these trends is that from the outbreak of war in 1939 to the introduction of rationing in 1942, advertising space for food products declined fairly steadily. This decline in advertising space matches up with historical information on steadily rising inflation of food products during the period. As Mosby notes, during these early war years food shortages were prevalent across Canada, and lineups, for imported foods in particular, were a common shared experience of Canadian women in both urban and rural areas. Foods like tea, coffee, sugar and rice were all in short supply and without government intervention experienced marked rises in price.¹³⁷ With consumers already struggling to find enough available product to sate demand, producers were less motivated to invest on advertising their products.

¹³⁶ The figures are by no means absolute, as several issues are excluded from each year and admittedly some products walked the line between food-related product and non-food product. Many “medical” products, for instance, straddled the line between medicine, drug and food, meaning this graph provides only a “rough” outline of ad trends.

¹³⁷ Mosby, *Food Will Win the War*, 92-93 (in press).

The second trend relates to kitchen appliances, reflecting the conversion of industrial means of production to wartime needs and away from domestic consumables (fridges, stoves, cars, farm equipment, etc.) in Canada over the war's first years. This is shown by the average number of five aggregate pages of advertising content for kitchen appliances that was reached in 1938 dropping during the first year of the war to about half its previous level. A rebound in the quantity of ads for kitchen appliances did not occur until 1943, after stability and confidence were restored to the domestic market because of: (1) widespread government intervention into the economy through rationing and price ceilings, and (2) increased optimism regarding the likelihood of victory as American involvement was precipitated by the attacks on Pearl Harbor, on December 7th, 1941.¹³⁸

This cursory explanation of how advertising framed *Chatelaine* establishes the weight and importance of its ads, but conversely they should not be overstated. Korinek's conclusion that "*Chatelaine* was a polysemic product – a magazine that contained a variety of messages and meanings for its readers," correctly limits the reading of the magazine as a strictly commercial product.¹³⁹ In spite of the evidence supporting Steinem's assertion that advertisers generate women's magazines in content and structure, an understanding of *Chatelaine* would be incomplete without also being attentive to its editorial staff, who exhibited at least equal control.

To understand *Chatelaine*'s writers, it is useful to compare it briefly to another popular form of literary culture: newspapers. Major Canadian newspapers' editors-in-

¹³⁸ This being said, even as late as 1945, as a host of restrictions that had been effect curtailing the production and sale of household equipment were removed, voices in *Chatelaine* continued to argue that "needs and wants for our homes must take second place" to the war effort, supporting production quotas that remained in place over a wide range of household devices, such as, refrigerators, stoves, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, radios, ironers, food mixers, small electrical appliances, flatware, pressure cookers, pots and pans, and "all the little things." Campbell, "*What's Ahead?* In *Housekeeping Equipment*," *Chatelaine*, January 1945, 49.

¹³⁹ Korinek, 71-2.

chief were all men, and the writers of these papers' women's sections (when they were not also men, which was surprisingly common) were often prevented from commenting on political subjects or even subjects not coded as fittingly feminine by their bosses. For this reason, another way to understand *Chatelaine* is to see it as Grove does, as having "performed a kind of expanded and improved women's page where topics of social, philosophical, and political import could be included using the 'sisterly' language that connoted feminist sympathies."¹⁴⁰ As shall be seen again and again, this "sisterly language" was often centred on food, though frequently deployed sub-textually – only rarely was food mentioned in the opening editorial pieces that explicitly set forth the theme and direction of the issue.

The opportunity the magazine presented to its writers was not initially seized for the cause of women's equality. Rather, the first two editors of *Chatelaine*, Anne Elizabeth Wilson and Byrne Hope Sanders, at first used the magazine as a platform for helping women with housekeeping and providing entertaining relief from their domestic labour. As the magazine took off, and particularly as the editorship transitioned, after seventeen years under Wilson, to Sanders, its purview expanded to apply the ideal of women as caretakers to the realms of civil society and politics, "through voting, social work, and club activity."¹⁴¹ Still, even as the nation went to war, the magazine continued to straddle the objectives of entertainment, housekeeping, family-nurturing, and participation in civil society. One of Sanders' "As an Editor Sees it –" columns expressed the difficulty its staff had deciding what the thrust of the magazine should be during wartime. Ultimately,

¹⁴⁰ Grove, 170.

¹⁴¹ Grove, 167. Writing in 1930, Sanders wrote that the magazine could, "be a definite factor in nation-building—in encouraging national thought on national problems." Grove, 177.

she concluded that while it must shift to address questions arising from women living in wartime, she also believed “We’ll all want more amusement than ever.”¹⁴²

During wartime, Sanders exercised unparalleled individual control over the magazine. Korinek sums up Sanders’ approach to her readers as follows:

She always knew better than the readers, and, because their only voice lay in writing her a letter, one she could discard or publish at will, the relationship was one sided. [...] She was a maternal feminist, convinced that the power of the household should have an impact on the nation and that wives and mothers were a force to be reckoned with [...] Consistent with her maternal feminism, she rarely paid any attention to issues of class or race, assuming that her readers shared her racial, class, and ethnic background.¹⁴³

Sanders’ characteristically maternal tone and condescending attitude to readers could easily extend to the other wartime editor of the magazine, Mary-Etta Macpherson, as well as “the Head of the Chatelaine Institute,” Helen G. Campbell. Their maternal feminist posture presented the illusion that the principal authorities of the magazine were speaking as from mother to daughter. In so doing, this posture produced a relationship that predicated the writers’ credibility, but it also suggested that the authority required to speak authoritatively as a woman was necessarily bound up with the traditional roles of mother and housewife.¹⁴⁴

Ironically, the traditional roles that its principal writers adopted were not quite as well-fitting as their personas might have implied. Korinek recalls a story provided from a freelance staff journalist who noted the clash between Sanders’ “polished and professional image” and the reality that her family was by no means financially secure. While Sanders’ husband was working as an artist, providing unreliable and limited

¹⁴² Byrne Hope Sanders, “As an Editor Sees it—,” *Chatelaine* November 1939, 72.

¹⁴³ Korinek, 260-1.

¹⁴⁴ As such, the personalities and tones adopted by these writers were representations of the magazine’s consummate adoption of maternal feminism, with all of its classist and racist exclusive proclivities.

income, she was actually her family's main breadwinner.¹⁴⁵ Sanders would go on to further break the mould of her maternal persona during wartime, accepting the invitation of the government to become the head of the Consumer Division of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board (WPTB), responsible for serving as a go-between communicating the concerns of Canadian women to the government and the needs of the government to Canadian women – a job that she was deemed to be already experienced with, having been voluntarily doing it during the first years of the war as editor of *Chatelaine*.¹⁴⁶

Ultimately, the writers and editors of *Chatelaine* are an important part of understanding the discourse that arose within it. However, here too Korinek suggests “that importance has been overstated. The readers were also key contributors to making *Chatelaine* a Canadian periodical success story,” in addition to the advertisers already mentioned.¹⁴⁷ Its writers produced content that must be understood as multi-vocal, perhaps just as representative of their individual inclinations as the interests of their paying sponsors: ad men and Canadian women. At the same time, the content ostensibly produced by writers and editors in *Chatelaine* should be understood to have been

¹⁴⁵ Korinek, 44. Korinek also contests the notion that Sanders was a member of the “chattering classes” from central Ontario, pointing to her striving throughout her work with *Chatelaine* to include stories that presented “a national picture when their budgets permitted, avoiding the misconception that Toronto represents Canada.” Korinek, 47. These insights into Sander’s domestic life are further grounded in an article appearing in the later years of the war, in which her living situation was described as “rather unorthodox,” and her marriage is described in practically-revolutionary terms: “she and her husband work as a team, each doing a share as parent and housekeeper.” The description goes on to state that “Frank is the cook of the household” and “The children, too, do their share, setting the table, making the toast, doing the dishes, and because each of the Sperrys has responsibilities, each one has privileges. At the table all are conversational equals.” Thelma Le Coco, “The Woman’s Voice in Price Control,” *Chatelaine*, November 1945, 57.

¹⁴⁶ *N.B.* In recognition for her unique contribution to the war effort, she was made a Commander of the British Empire in July of 1946. Korinek, 43-44.

¹⁴⁷ Korinek, 101.

mutually informed by its readers, following from the concept of a “circuit of communication,” as detailed by Stuart Hall in his essay, “Encoding/decoding.”¹⁴⁸

1.5. Limitations of Approach

The writing process has necessarily been defined by finite quantities of space and time. The approach outlined above, in theory and in method, is therefore limited in several respects regarding the types of claims and the extent of analysis that is possible. Regrettably, the potential symbolic and cultural significances of colour in *Chatelaine* were necessarily neglected, leaving unexamined the focus on brands that historian Charlene Elliott has made across much of her work in food history. In food advertising, editorial content, or government propaganda, colour presumably constituted an important element of communication that has been excluded in this study due to a restriction of access to only black and white (microfilm) copies of *Chatelaine*'s content during the war years.¹⁴⁹

Another notable omission is that of fiction. Fiction comprised a substantial part of each and every issue of *Chatelaine*, but it more often than not was also the section of the magazine that least-concerned food. While the fact that in the narrative imagining of

¹⁴⁸Stuart Hall, “Encoding/decoding,” ed. The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies* (London: Hutchinson, 1980) 128. In this way, the analysis which follows throughout this paper shall draw on Hall’s suggestion that texts can be decoded differently based on the social position of the reader. His further categorization of readers’ decoding into “dominant readings,” “negotiated readings,” and “oppositional readings” informs the analysis that follows, though it is not directly employed. In the same vein, Roland Barthes’ deconstruction of the cover of *Paris Match* magazine is equally instructive, illuminating how my own reading (and historical readers’ reading) of pictures and text appearing in *Chatelaine* is informed by “a greater semiological system” comprised of the signifier (meaning or form), the signified (concept), and the correlation of the signified and signifier within a linguistic system (sign). Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, trans. Annette Lavers (New York: Hill and Wang, 1972) 115-117.

¹⁴⁹ Indeed, Elliott’s assertion that “Food, color, and the law intersect, both literally and symbolically,” and further that, “the sight of a color within a particular product category brings individuals to the same set of associations,” could have lent a great deal to this study. Particularly in the advertising of British and Canadian foods during the early war years, it would have been interesting to find whether colour-palettes united these products with colours associated with patriotism. Charlene Elliott, “Taste™: Interrogating Food, Law, and Color,” *The Senses and Society*. 7.3 (November 2012): 276-288.

woman's life food seems to have been side-barred is itself provocative, further pursuit of it has been excluded so as to constrain the burden of research. While not all fiction was excluded, so little was analyzed in depth that no conclusive findings can justifiably be made here. Another justification for the exclusion of *Chatelaine's* fiction is that, contrary to other aspects of the magazine during this period, fiction has already been investigated in depth by Smith in her comparative study of the fiction appearing in *Chatelaine* and the *Journal*.¹⁵⁰

With reference to food culture, this study is also exceptional for speaking a great deal about food but having nothing to say about alcohol. This is not accidental, but nor was it my desire or intent at the beginning of this project. This exclusion is purely the product of the magazine and its times: with prohibition only recently coming to a legal end in Canada and the United States, the movement for societal sobriety nonetheless remained a key feature of the period's upper-middle-class fixation on economy, scientific nutritionism and rationality within the home. No doubt, hints of alcohol's existence existed in popular print culture, as in a Canada Dry ad appearing in the *Evening Citizen* that described the soft drink as, "The Champagne of Ginger Ales."¹⁵¹ However, in *Chatelaine* these ads did not run, and the closest reference to alcohol across the period from 1936-1945, in December 1944 in an article entitled, "A Toast to Christmas," shows the extent and seeming absurdity of this exclusion. In it, nine recipes are provided for "holiday beverages," the names of which *suggested* alcoholic beverages – "flavoured eggnog," punches, "Grape-Grapefruit Cordial" – but not once in the article's detailed

¹⁵⁰ Smith's arguments show that fiction was deployed by both magazines to construct an "imagined community" along Benedict Anderson's conception of the term. Smith proposes that this community was defined as both "white and middle class," as I have already argued somewhat in opposition to Korinek, and that it was defined as such largely due to "the commercial demands of staying in print." Smith, 41 and 46.

¹⁵¹ *Evening Citizen*, 22 January 1938, 8.

recipes for each was a single alcoholic ingredient mentioned. What is more, the article was not even described explicitly in prohibitionist terms; no reason for alcohol's exclusion is given, and the reader is left simply with the impression of alcohol's non-existence.¹⁵² Simply the absence of alcohol is all that can be noted in relation to discourses regarding food appearing in *Chatelaine*, as nothing *appears* to definitively state the reasons for its exclusion.

This study's close reading of *Chatelaine* also came at the expense of a better understanding of readers' responses, akin to the work conducted by Korinek. This would have required a more extensive investigation of readers' letters to *Chatelaine*, or looking into the magazine's own internal communications.¹⁵³ So too could the motivations of advertisers or government agencies be more comprehensively understood by research into the archival records left by them. Part of the choice to exclude these aspects was again due to the finite nature of this project, but their exclusion also serves to highlight the importance of public discourse to this study, as opposed to communications presumed to be private.

1.6. *The Structure and Direction of What Follows*

The structure of what follows is based around three body chapters, each further divided into three subsections. In each chapter, the aim is to allow for the aforementioned theoretical contributions to be applied harmoniously, rather than treating with food, gender or class in isolation. The first subsection of each of the first two chapters examines food culture from the perspective of specific categories of food (meat, preserves, sweets,

¹⁵² Jane Monteith, "A Toast to Christmas," *Chatelaine* December 1944, 84.

¹⁵³ Further work along these lines would require a trip to the Maclean-Hunter Limited Fonds, stored at the Archives of Ontario, but more importantly would demand a substantial expansion of the scope of the paper.

etc.) and the symbolic and cultural values that were often invested in them. Chapters 2.3 and 3.3 each examine food service and responsibilities as embodiments of women's relations to their families and food itself. These sections assert that the roles of mother and of wife – their duties, responsibilities and obligations to other members of the family – were constructed to a large extent within the discourse of food preparation and service. Sections 2.4 and 3.4 each look to the social functions of food, whether on special occasions, while entertaining, or in discussions relating to the upper-middle-class performance of sacrifice. These latter chapters demonstrate that rituals of consumption practiced in the company of friends and extended family were vital means of socially affirming gender norms, hierarchies of power within the domestic sphere, and ultimately shoring up the increasingly insecure foundations of what it meant to be a part of – or to aspire to be a part of – upper-middle-class Canadian society.

The fourth chapter's structure diverges from the pattern set by the preceding two. It looks to the implementation of rationing policy in Canada as a way of binding together the three perspectives that are presented as divided threads in the earlier two chapters, namely: (1) specific foods; (2) food and the family; and, (3) food and society. The fourth chapter abandons this tripartite division so as to briefly engage with rationing through a more unified approach centred on specific foods.

The three body chapters follow a loosely chronological order. Chapter two ranges from 1936 and the lead up to the Second World War to 1939 and the first tentative changes being made to food culture as a result of its outbreak. Chapter three works through the first few years of the war, up until what I have characterized as a split in the trajectory of the Second World War in the way discourse framed state intervention into food culture on the home front. While this split was the product of a variety of policies –

including price ceilings and the regulation of industry's use of foodstuffs – the coupon rationing of five key foods that placed limits on individual's consumption, regardless of geography, will be highlighted to better isolate food's discursive relationship to class and gender.

Together, the three chapters provide an account of discourses belying the upper-middle-class's experience of food culture in Canada during the war years, as evinced by *Chatelaine* magazine. This account is based on the association of a variety of voices and perspectives across several of the most tumultuous years of Canadian history. The following narrative is the product of the analysis of various voices and shows the nature of food as a cultural medium through which dynamics of power and agency were exerted, constrained, debated, and defined for *all* members of Canadian society on the home front, though particularly women.

2. Gender and Food in the Lead-up to the Second World War

2.1. Introduction

War is often depicted as a catalyst for societal change. Technology, politics, society and economics are commonly depicted as having been compelled to change because of demands made on groups of people by wartime pressures. Heading into the war, the magazine was already discursively committed to the depiction of the ideal female relationship to food as characterized by conspicuous production and non-consumption; this ideal became even more prominent with the arrival of the war, as the interests of government and industrial food producers dictated its perpetuation. This part is concerned with looking at the way this discourse existed and began to shift from 1938 to the beginning of the war.

Writing at the close of 1938, *Chatelaine Magazine's* editor, Byrne Hope Sanders, reflected on the year that had passed and the new year approaching. As she set the stage for 1939, Sanders wrote that “hope is in the hearts of all of us. But with it, these days, walks a faint sense of fear.” The uncertainty of depression and the insecurity felt by many Canadian families in the years that had preceded 1939 was obviously in Sanders’ mind as she wrote, “If you had one wish – what would you ask for the coming year? Wouldn’t it be, I wonder, a sense of security?” For the *Chatelaine* reader heading into the Second World War, a sense of security would have felt in short supply for a variety of reasons. Sanders addressed a number of these in turn:

Can war be averted? Are our hopes for peace utterly futile? Will husbands and sons lose their jobs? Will the young people have a chance to find them? The question mark is rampant, as 1938 turns the cycle of the years. Whatever one may do through public organizations, every woman has the chance to achieve a triumph in building a sense of confidence in her own

home. The fundamentals of living are still simple – although their practice has become so complex.¹

The practice of living had indeed become quite complex of late, particularly for the Canadian women who had the time and disposable income to pay heed to the increasingly scientific discourses that with each passing issue of magazines like *Chatelaine* seemed to be changing the way their duties and responsibilities were considered. Nonetheless, the emphasis in this passage, as in so many others in Sanders' writing, is on women's agency within their roles as mothers, wives, daughters or sisters. In looking to food culture in *Chatelaine* during the early years of the war, we can better understand the complex and shifting nature of women's agency, as expressed in both private and public life. Food was a substance, a practice, and a medium of cultural and social meaning that was a major site of women's agency, too often obscured by the historical record. However, women were by no means alone in using food to communicate meaning or assert authority over matters political, economic, or socio-cultural. Corporations (often through advertisements), government bodies like the Wartime Prices and Trade Board (WPTB), and even specific economic classes emerge in *Chatelaine* as parties interested in the reformation of food culture. Women's agency was thereby contested and qualified by various historical actors and should not be remembered as by any means uniformly exercised by "Canadian women."

In an article entitled, "Women at War," appearing in *Chatelaine* in 1938, Lieutenant-Colonel F. Fraser Hunter posited that the face of war was undergoing a change and that women were increasingly becoming directly involved in military conflicts as soldiers in areas as diverse as Spain, China, and Cuba, and that this change could be on its

¹ Byrne Hope Sanders, "As an Editor Sees it--," *Chatelaine* January 1939, 1.

way to the Canadian military experience were the nation to become embroiled in another war.² While Hunter proved inaccurate in forecasting an increase in the participation of women in front-line military service commensurate with the increases experienced in the Spanish Civil War, he was nonetheless astute in predicting approaching changes to the engagement of women with wartime activities and an increase in the level of sacrifice expected of women for the war effort.

Between 1936 and late 1939, the discussion of food culture in *Chatelaine* is one defined by change, in much the same way as Hunter expected women's experience of future wars to be fundamentally different than what came before. There is a clear sense of anticipation of these changes to food culture. However, to set the table on changing food habits in the Second World War, it will first prove necessary to understand the pressures for their reform that predated the conflict. These pressures are best divided into three analytical perspectives, none of which fragment the multiplicity of voices presented by the interests of the various historical actors present in the magazine's pages. The first perspective is to look at changing food culture from the vantage of specific categories of foods. The second is to highlight the forces redefining food evinced in the discussions of women's responsibility to provide food for the family. The third category for analysis looks to pressures for reform of food habits that were apparent in conversations centering on the job of women as purveyors of food for social occasions – that is, while serving friends and extended family in less everyday and more ritualized settings. Investigating these three perspectives on food culture provides a method for breaking down into manageable portions the nature of changing upper-middle class food habits in Canada heading into the Second World War. For this chapter of the thesis, which lays the

² Lieutenant-Colonel F. Fraser Hunter, "Women at War", *Chatelaine* January 1938, 10.

groundwork for the wartime narratives in the later chapters, newspapers will also be used as a foil against which *Chatelaine's* unique positioning as a source can more readily be ascertained.

2.2. Food as a Cultural Container

The gendering of specific foods was common in *Chatelaine's* food advertisements in the late 1930s. Sometimes the connections made by advertisers used old associations – meat with masculinity or power, for instance – to sell their products. Other ads used new ideas, like nutritionist claims, as a way of altering old food associations which may otherwise have prevented the expansion of their market to new demographics. In either case, advertisers and consumers were both speaking and reading a language predicated on a shared understanding that certain foods were experienced differently depending on gender.

As has already been discussed, meat has a long history of being tied to masculine virility in western culture. Part of this history was a link between the consumption of meat and the possession of the characteristics of vigour, power, and strength.³ The implied flipside of this association was that a meal without meat would leave its participant, especially if they were a man, unprepared for his or her day's labours – in essence, incompletely constituted as a male and therefore weak and incapable as a breadwinner. A July 1939 Cream of Wheat ad (Figure 3) used cultural understandings of masculinity to sell its breakfast food, notably militating against the popular conception of a full breakfast being one that is based around eggs and animal fat. Half of the ad features an image of a father smiling and eating with his two year-old son, framed by the father's words,

³ Massimo Montanari, *The Culture of Food*. Trans. Carl Ipsen (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 14.

“HERE’S A MAN’S BREAKFAST EH, SON?” The print goes on to read, “one breakfast cereal that’s good for everybody – babies, growing children, husky he-men!”⁴ In this case, it is clear that the advertiser is using its ad space to promote its food as one that is filling and satisfying enough for anyone in the family, from the infant child to the working husband.⁵

Cream of Wheat was by no means alone among breakfast cereal companies, nor *Chatelaine* among print sources, in making such a universalist pitch, implicitly militating against heavier, protein-based breakfasts. A Kellogg’s Rice Krispies quarter-page ad appearing in Ottawa’s *Evening Citizen*⁶ in the same year similarly targeted the tastes of the whole family (Figure 4). Its push was framed around the idea that “FUN” should be consumed by every family member at breakfast, whether that member was the daughter, son, mother or father pictured sitting at the table, each revelling in the joy of noisily exploding cereal. The image depicting the father held a caption reading: “FUN FOR FATHERS: ‘Couldn’t imagine fun at breakfast,’ says substantial Bruce T. ‘But I’m certainly tickled by that pop-crackle-snap. Mighty pleasant tasting, too, these Kellogg Rice Krispies. I don’t wonder they’re so popular.’”⁷ While Kellogg’s strategy was

⁴ Cream of Wheat, Advertisement, *Chatelaine* July 1939, 17 (Bold and underline in original). See figure 2 in Appendix A.

⁵ This ad is also interesting for the dissonance conjured by the application of “husky he-men!” to the pictured white-collar father clearly not preparing for any variety of physical labour. This dissonance was one not uncommon in *Chatelaine*’s depiction of husbands who both the magazine and its advertisers at once expected were middle or upper-income breadwinners but also felt compelled to apply a masculinity based on the largely-irrelevant characteristics of physical strength and domineering authority. As in so many other instances, this ad aptly captures the dissonance that could exist at the crossroads between ideals of gender, class, and food – even the idea that “A MAN’S BREAKFAST” *could* be equally fit for both father and baby speaks to the destabilizing effect of nutritionism on old associations of masculinity with specific foods at breakfast-time, like meat.

⁶ Forerunner of today’s *Ottawa Citizen*.

⁷ Kellogg’s, *Evening Citizen*, 3 May 1939, 16. The order of “pop-crackle-snap” is not a typo here. The father does mix up the otherwise fixed ordering presented by the advertisement (“snap-crackle-pop”). In this case, the “error” appears to have been an attempt by the advertiser to suggest the authenticity of the ad’s characters.

obviously based on a different tack than Cream of Wheat's, each is notably working against a similar implied competitor: the idea that each member of the family required different foods based on their age and gender. Charles and Kerr are again instructive as to the significance of this dispute:

It seems then that the distribution and consumption of food, as well as reflecting gender status within families, reflect age status, most clearly between adults and children but also between children of different ages. The food eaten every day at home, therefore, marks social status and reflects social relations and divisions within families.⁸

Just as the previous inequalities of consumption marked inequalities between father, mother and children in families, so too were breakfast cereal companies compelled to reform food's gendered associations at the same time that they sought to revise the specific items contained on a families' daily breakfast menu. It was for this reason that Cream of Wheat attempted to extend the masculine privilege to a hearty breakfast beyond the purview of the father, transforming this privilege to even being the right of an infant; in a similar fashion, Kellogg's even more profoundly attempted to shift the language away from emphasising a "hearty" breakfast and towards emphasis on a "fun" one.

By comparing the approaches of advertisers for a similar category of product in the *Evening Citizen* and *Chatelaine* – the one skewed toward upper-middle class men, the other toward their wives – the associations of foods is also illustrated. The newspaper ad presented a more universally-applicable pitch based on the pleasure any family member could derive eating its product; in so doing, it hoped to sway consumers across lines of gender and age. Conversely, the magazine ad instead presented its case to the invisible (off-page) mother, whose responsibility it is assumed to be to feed both father and infant

⁸ Nickie Charles and Marion Kerr, *Women, food and families* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 107-8.

son. In this way, though each breakfast cereal sought to fill an identical nutritional and culinary niche (starch at breakfast), the two presented markedly different cultural information based on the context in which they appeared.

Coffee was another food product commonly advertised in such a way as to bring associations of gender to the fore. An ad for Sanka Coffee that appeared in the *Evening Citizen* on May 3rd, 1939, uses several pictures along with a textual narrative to tell the story of a bull-fighter who cannot drink coffee because it keeps him up at night, but is pleased to find Sanka coffee suits his preferences, as it was “97% caffeine free.”⁹ In this instance, Sanka was advertising directly to a male audience, a fact driven home by this ad not appearing in *Chatelaine* at all.¹⁰ The fact that the company chose the more male-oriented evening paper, as opposed to a women’s magazine, to make a case for its caffeine-free coffee is noteworthy. So too was its choice of theme: by using the narrative and imagery of the bull-fighter, a figure evocative of masculine virility and strength, the advertiser attempted to allay customer concerns that drinking a coffee without caffeine might be somehow construed as unmanly.¹¹ This Sanka ad points out some of the limitations of looking to *Chatelaine* exclusively for understanding of food culture during the period, as the ad was obviously not run in the magazine because it catered largely to women.

Looking to newspapers provides another opportunity for enhancing our understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of using *Chatelaine* to remember food

⁹ Sanka Coffee, *Evening Citizen*, 3 May 1939, 14.

¹⁰ Sanka ads commonly ran in both the *Citizen* and *Chatelaine*, though in this case it assumed a markedly different form depending on the medium, presumably reflecting the audience it presumed itself to be directed toward.

¹¹ Sanka was joined in selling its coffee on the strength of associations with masculine traits. Another instance of a similar sell can be found in an ad for BOKAR coffee by A&P grocer, which characterized its taste as “vigorous.” *Evening Citizen*, 18 May 1938, 7.

culture during the time. Due to its national scope, *Chatelaine* typically featured advertisements from national advertisers. Newspapers, however, were typically produced with a far more limited geographical advertising scope in mind. To this effect, looking to newspapers briefly can provide further evidence of some of the central organizing concepts in food culture during the time. For one, from consulting grocery store ads that appeared in the *Toronto Star* at the end of 1939, it is readily apparent that the two products most commonly featured front and centre (given the most space, the best page location, and the largest images) were meats and bread products.¹² In the *Globe and Mail* in 1939 this trend holds, with a Loblaw ad reading: “MEATS that make a Meal a Feast!”¹³

If meats and breads were widely considered the heart of every meal, sweets were considered to be a meal’s superfluous embellishment. They also possessed positive associations, as sweets evoked ideas of maternal comfort and youthful abandon. However, against the traditional association of sweets with extravagance, advertisers frequently and unironically attempted to tie sweet foods to ideas of economy and health. A Fry’s Cocoa ad appearing in *Chatelaine* in January 1936 read, “The taste of Fry’s Cocoa delights boys and girls from babyhood on. Every drop is full of health-giving, body-building qualities. A famous physician says: ‘There is no better food.’”¹⁴ This ad is noteworthy for several reasons. First of all, by limiting its appeal to the tastes of children, the ad clearly identifies itself as “children’s food” as opposed to staking out a claim for the tastes of all demographics. This stands in contrast to the earlier, universalist Cream of Wheat and Kellogg’s advertisements, and speaks to the cultural claims that are perceived

¹² Loblaw, *Toronto Star*, 20 Nov. 1939, 9.

¹³ Loblaw, *Globe and Mail*, 3 Nov 1939, 9.

¹⁴ Fry’s Cocoa, *Chatelaine*, January 1936, 52.

as being *possible* within the context of a sweet, as opposed to a cereal product. It is also noteworthy for its attempt to combine a pitch based on taste with a more nutritionist sell involving the “body-building qualities” of the cocoa. In conjunction with the ads already mentioned, this one contributes to our understanding of the gendering of foods by illustrating the fact that while what men and women ate was often highly gendered, children’s food was often less differentiated by gender. This also speaks to the target of the ad: it was almost always the case that the tastes of “the children” or “your husband” were isolated as important to cater to, while those of the wife were typically ignored.

One regular advertiser that appeared in *Chatelaine* through the 1930s and 1940s was Magic Baking Powder. A typical full-page ad appeared in the November 1939 issue, which emphasized associations of tradition, femininity and marital bliss with baking. Two thirds of the ad space was taken up with an image of a glowing bride and its caption, which read, “As traditional as a mother’s wedding veil.” The remainder of the ad featured text describing the brand’s ability to consistently provide “*LIGHT, TENDER TEXTURE*–” in addition to its cost effectiveness. However, the brand’s focus was clear in its division of its page space: by using two thirds of the whole-page ad to convey the image of the bride and the notion of a baking powder being as traditional as a wedding veil, the company sought to profit from what it knew would be familiar associations for its customers between baking and femininity.¹⁵ Just as other ads made clear that the consumption of certain foods were coded as being most proper for certain people, this ad drives home the message and the *production* of certain foods went hand in hand with certain (gendered) roles in society.

¹⁵ Magic Baking Powder, *Chatelaine*, November 1939, 1.

Magic Baking Powder's advertisements in *Chatelaine* were by no means the only demonstration of this relationship. In an *Evening Citizen* advertisement for Sheriff's Lushus, "a jelly dessert," sweets were overtly tied to femininity, and by extension the responsibilities of motherhood incumbent on the newlywed bride (Figure 5). In it, a cartoon image of a bride, either walking down the aisle with her father or standing at the altar with her husband (the man's role was actually unclear), was coupled with the thought-bubble arising behind the glowing bride of a perfectly symmetrical, tall jelly dessert. The cartoon was paired with what appeared to be a user-submitted poem that read:

*The month of June is drawing near,
When Wedding Bells ring loud and clear;
And modern brides, with minds alert,
Take note:—"Serve Lushus for dessert".*

The poem, written by one "Miss Grace Rock" of Toronto,¹⁶ associated happy, successful marriages with changing cultural norms in the realm of food.¹⁷ Lushus, and other jelly dessert companies besides, advertised with surprising frequency in both newspapers and *Chatelaine* during the time, likely because the novelty of jelly dessert compelled its producers to create consumer demand for their product. While both media, newspaper and magazine, commonly featured jelly desserts prior to the war, rationing in particular appears to have compelled a decrease in their prominence over the course of wartime. As we shall see in the following chapters, governments pushed for conservation of both plant and animal fats and sugar, thereby decreasing the prominence of these food products during wartime.

¹⁶ The implication is that it is a user-submitted poem, but without a clear indication of this the possibility remains that it was written by the advertiser themselves simply imitating the form of a user submission.

¹⁷ Sheriff's Lushus, *Evening Citizen*, 3 May 1939, 18.

Regardless of later shifts in the frequency of these ads, the commonality demonstrated by baking and dessert ingredients advertisements across Canadian newspapers and *Chatelaine* illustrates the consistent gendering of this element of food culture. Across mediums of communication oriented toward middle-class tastes, whether they were female-oriented like *Chatelaine* or not, it is clear that the production and consumption of sweet foods was heavily gendered, and moreover presumed to be associated directly with the responsibilities of marriage. This association was one dessert and baked goods manufacturers repeatedly predicated their advertising on, and that they did so in both types of print media indicates the pressure they intended to produce through their advertisements was not exclusively directed toward either women or men, but both.

Comparing the approach of Magic with that of Lushus is also instructive. Magic was framed around the traditionalism of both its product and the institution of marriage; conversely, Lushus was selling a new food product and therefore appeals to tradition were less practical, likely leading to the use of the idea of the “modern bride.” While a clash between traditional and modern ideas of marriage may at first appear to be occurring, what in fact is in evidence is the use of marriage as a metaphor for food culture, as in both cases the duties and responsibilities of husband and wife are not in any flux or dispute. It is rather the food that is experiencing – or in more accurate terms, being made to experience – change (in the case of Lushus). However, what remains an instructive constant is the fact that whether the food being sold was old or new, marriage in both cases operated as a convenient shorthand for the fixed domestic role and responsibilities of the wife and the mother to her husband and children. The idea that women were responsible for the preparation of desserts and baked goods was not all that was

communicated in the image of the smiling bride dreaming of perfect jelly desserts. More than this, a sense of taste, of a heightened feminine appetite for sweets, is conveyed in Lushus' ads.

It was toward this belief in a heightened feminine appetite for sweets that *Chatelaine's* editor, Byrne Hope Sanders, offered nutritional advice before the war, advising women to "Shun teas and late suppers with firm voice. If they are just too tempting, then omit a meal and take your cake." In this editorial piece, a conflict between scientific nutritionism and a stereotype of women as weak-willed and incapable of resisting temptation are brought into sharp contrast. While nutritionism predominantly emphasized women's agency and rational control over aspects of food within the domestic sphere, traditional notions of women's willpower clashed with these new scientific ways of thinking about food. Sanders provided further insight into the gendering of taste and appetite during the time, suggesting that women should resist their temptations and instead, "Take a page from the men and order cheese or fruit instead of a sweet."¹⁸

Attempting to take advantage of this shift in the way food was being considered, not all brands of jelly sold their products in a fashion identical to Lushus. For instance, Cox's Gelatine described its gelatine as "pure, wholesome, easily digested – the secret of exciting salads, entrees, desserts. One package makes 4 full pints of jelly."¹⁹ This description was in line with *Chatelaine's* editorial emphasis on women's agency and the nutritionist thrust of food culture: focussing on digestion, health, and economy as of central importance when planning meals, rather than taste or temptation. While at first

¹⁸ Sanders, *Chatelaine*, May 1936, 51.

¹⁹ Cox's Gelatine, *Chatelaine*, May 1938, 63.

glance this may appear to have been an insignificant difference in emphasis, the different approaches of Lushus and Cox highlight two disparate ways of thinking about women's work in the kitchen. Whereas Lushus underlined the responsibility of the wife *to please* through her cooking, Cox highlighted not only her responsibility but also her ability *to manage* the nutritional health and economic wellbeing of her family. In this way, changes to the way people evaluated food choices can be seen to have had ramifications to the way those people (as well as those they served) valued the work they did.

The idea that women, along with children, possessed a greater fondness for sweets (or at least enjoyed a lower capacity to resist the temptation to them) was not new. However, what had been experiencing change was the ideal standard of feminine beauty. Levenstein writes of this shift taking place mostly between the years 1917 and 1920 in the United States, with the predominant societal norm having shifted dramatically, from favouring girth to favouring slimness, by 1923.²⁰ Certainly in Canada a similar shift in aesthetic preferences had been replicated by the beginning of the Second World War and changing standards of beauty obviously entailed commensurate changes in food culture, the proof of which appeared in *Chatelaine*. By 1937, the magazine was selling subscriptions hand in hand with scales, using the one to enlist support for the other:

Something every family should have – that every woman needs – this beautifully designed bathroom scale that enables you to keep a careful check on your weight. A graceful figure can be retained indefinitely – if your weight does not get out of hand! [...] It's easy for you to have one of these handsomely designed, sturdily built scales. Get yours by securing a total of \$6.00 in subscriptions to *Chatelaine* (either new or renewed)[...]²¹

²⁰ Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1988), 166.

²¹ Macleans Publishing Company, *Chatelaine*, May 1937, 95.

Shifting standards of beauty were compatible with the nutritionist push away from focussing on ensuring people received *enough* food and toward paying attention to consumption of the correct quality and scientific mixture of foods. Advertisers of food were compelled to take into consideration these shifting standards of feminine beauty when advertising to women in *Chatelaine*. While selling bread products in 1936, Fleischmann's advocated what it called "The New Bread Diet!" as a way of ensuring "a steady flow of pep and vitality," guaranteed by "diet authorities" to "keep up strength and energy."²² However, this idea that women should be guarding against over-consuming was by no means universally well-accepted or applicable. That many families, particularly ones with lower incomes, still struggled to ensure enough quantity is overlooked by this message, serving as further indication of the upper-middle-class orientation of both the magazine and its advertisers.

Changes to standards of beauty occurred within a network of mutually-informing paradigms of class, food, and gender, each of which was also in a state of flux. Just as the consumption of certain foods was gendered, so too was the non-consumption of certain foods. This complicates the simplistic claim that women during the period were being liberated by changes in the kitchen – a trope often called upon by advertisers and editors alike to bolster confidence and enthusiasm for the reformation of food habits.

Surveying food advertising in the years leading up to Second World War and into the initial, pre-rationing years of the conflict, gender emerges as an important category of historical analysis of food culture. Looking comparatively at advertisements for different types of food, for instance meat and baking ingredients, it is clear that the relationships of men and women to food were fundamentally different and that companies and consumers

²² Fleischmann's, *Chatelaine*, May 1938, 21.

both spoke and read food advertisements with these roles implicitly understood (even if not always agreed upon). These ads indicate that not only was food invested with gendered meaning, but that companies were attentive to this cultural subtext of foods and advertised with full awareness of it, in the hopes that they could thereby more easily alter, reinforce, or create consumer habits. While the gendering of food was by no means new, new food products were nonetheless challenged to orient themselves within a culture of food that divided itself into gendered categories. As we shall see, these categories were themselves historically sensitive to dispute and change.

By developing an understanding of how gender configured food culture leading up to the Second World War, the lived experience of food on the home front is brought into sharper focus. An awareness of the symbolic weight of meat – representing, as Bentley reminds, the masculinity, virility, and capacity of the father to provide for his family – and of sugar – indicative of critical aspects of nurturing and femininity for mothers and wives – is critical for understanding the later wartime experience of rationing of these foodstuffs, from 1942 onward.²³ Following Bentley’s lead, paying attention to the “gender-casting” of meat and sugar in the wartime context will attune us to “the larger, more pervasive issues connecting the production and consumption of food with power and wartime sacrifices.”²⁴

2.3. Food and the Sinews of Domestic Power

Just as food spoke to individual tastes, preferences and responsibilities, so too was it bound up in individuals’ commitments to one another, especially within the family unit.

²³ Amy Bentley, *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 110.

²⁴ Bentley, 111.

Food could not only reflect, but reinforce or dispute hierarchies of power within the domestic sphere, as was apparent in *Chatelaine* heading into the Second World War. Women's responsibility for food preparation could function as both a source of empowerment and subjugation. It was often a woman's proficiency with respect to food preparation and service that determined whether she experienced her interaction with food as a positive one, earning her respect and authority, or a negative one, diminishing her social status and leading to the breakdown of her marriage or the diminishment of her domestic bliss. By observing the way women's culinary responsibilities were discussed in *Chatelaine* prior to the outbreak of war, the way these responsibilities shifted during wartime will be more readily discernible.

Sonia Cancian writes of how "performances of gender" in Italian immigrant women's homes in the postwar period were related to the roles these women took on more broadly in society.²⁵ When paying attention to "performances of gender" relating to food during this period, it is important to keep in mind their historical context. Levenstein recalls that less than a generation earlier, live-in servants had ceased to be a common part of middle-class food habits. Due largely to economic pressure, members of the American middle-class had been compelled to lower their expectations with regard to the amount of labour that could be devoted to food preparation and service. This drove a shift from extravagant dinner feasts tended to by a handful of servants to smaller social gatherings, commonly featuring "bridge, mah-jongg, dancing," capable of being prepared by a single housewife.²⁶ While certain expectations had changed to require less outside help, it is

²⁵ Sonia Cancian, "'Tutti a Tavola!' Feeding the Family in Two Generations of Italian Immigrant Households in Montreal," *Edible Histories Cultural Practices: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: U of T Press, 2012), 210.

²⁶ Levenstein, 162.

noteworthy that the emphasis remained that the hostess should be able to handle her dinner plans without the aid of her husband or other male family members. Moreover, as an editorial in *Chatelaine* from 1936 makes clear, the hostess was expected to be able to present food in such a way that “Service should be unhurried and smooth.”²⁷ Just as it is important to note the fact that food culture had changed when economic pressures had encouraged the diminishing employment of servants, so too is it important to note the standards that remained in place and demanded that a housewife’s time not be freed from domestic labour.

The level of expertise women were expected to possess in their roles as mothers and wives was illustrated in a column by Helen G. Campbell in 1939 entitled “Cookery Quiz,” which challenged housewives not only to evaluate their proficiency in the kitchen, but to perpetuate social pressure among their friends by openly discussing their success: “If you score over fifty you’re pretty good, around sixty, you can crow about it, at sixty-five you’re wonderful – or you peek!” The quiz’s questions revolve around a variety of concerns, including: knowledge of cooking methods, scientific measurements, ingredients for meals that ranged from common to rare or exotic (Shepherd’s pie, Borscht, canapé, caviar, squab), sanitary questions involving food storage and cooking, portion calculation, and quality control.²⁸ The level of knowledge expected by Campbell, and *Chatelaine* by extension, for a wife to be considered “pretty good” indicates the type and amount of knowledge regarding her responsibilities that a housewife was expected to possess or attain. While at first glance this type of quiz could be construed as “all in good fun,” and brushed off as being purely trivial in nature, considering it in the broader context of other

²⁷ Helen G. Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1936, 46.

²⁸ Campbell, “Cookery Quiz,” *Chatelaine*, March 1939, 46.

Chatelaine content draws attention to the fact this quiz represented but one instance of a regime of expectations that sought to normalize women's food habits and domestic responsibilities.

In an advice column from another issue, Campbell suggested that "Every man in the world, I think, would like to give a stag party once in a while, and every wife or sister worth her salt will help swing it." The importance of food in such an event, and women's relationship to it, was made crystal clear as she went on to write:

Let the table groan with the weight of the food, real food with flavor and savor which means something to a man. A roast of beef or a huge ham – or both, one at each end; a plate of bread sliced to a decent thickness – if they are thin slices, he will call them wafers and divorce you[...]²⁹

While construing the thickness of bread with a risk of divorce was obviously meant to be flippant and comical, the old adage that "behind every joke there is a grain of truth" should be observed here; this jest would not have resounded with readers if it did not mirror in some way their lived reality. The article concluded by making clear what success would look like in such a scenario: "For the final wind-up, a great pot of coffee with rich cream or tea with not-so-rich – and they will vote you a great little woman, when you go out and leave them alone."³⁰ In this snapshot of Canadian food culture in the 1930s, the ideal woman is depicted as being generous and skilled with regards to food preparation and service, subservient, and ultimately invisible during the physical enjoyment of the foods being served. The foods she serves – a large cut of meat, bread, coffee and/or tea – speak almost as much as the way that they are served. Each of these

²⁹ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1936, 46. Again, emphasis on meat and bread as substantial, masculine-coded foods is apparent. A useful study for further exploration of the relationship of masculinity and consumption can be found in: Mark Swiencicki, "Consuming Brotherhood: Men's Culture, Style and Recreation as Consumer Culture, 1880-1930," *Journal of Social History* 31.4 (Summer 1998): 773-808.

³⁰ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1936, 46.

foods had long and enduring associations with masculinity (meat and coffee), sustenance and virility (meat and bread), imperial exploitation (coffee and tea), and ultimately masculine privilege.

A woman's ability to cook for and serve her husband was not only linked on isolated occasions with the happiness and stability of her marriage. Rather, this proved to be a persistent theme in *Chatelaine*. Another column, this one by Anne B. Fisher, M.D. in 1938, entitled "Live with a man and love it," detailed how women should act, "Should your husband's affections drift elsewhere."³¹ The column at once normalized the phenomenon of husbands cheating on their wives while prescribing to wives the duty of earning back their husband's affection. The column displaced blame from the husband to either the wife or "the 'other woman,'" and in so doing put the onus on wives, writing that rather than seeking sympathy and acting "melodramatic [...] The modern woman faces life and facts, and uses her brain for thinking purposes. She keeps a stiff upper lip, even if she has to use extra lipstick to stiffen it and help her to put on a gay front."³²

Food lay at the core of Fisher's treatment of marital infidelity. Both in the way the woman would perceive the straying of her husband and in the remedy for his estrangement, Fisher used food as the principal means of facilitating communication between partners, and interestingly not sex or romance. In describing the wife's experience of her husband's infidelity, food service was how Fisher evoked the sensation of suspicion, betrayal, and neglect: "If there is one thing in the world that burns a woman up, it is getting a good dinner ready, and then waiting and waiting for hubby to come

³¹ Anne B. Fisher, "Live with a man and love it," *Chatelaine*, January 1938, 20.

³² Fisher, *Chatelaine*, 20.

home and eat it.”³³ In her depiction of how a wife could mend her marital difficulties, food again framed the proper reaction, writing: “When you find out where you’ve run off the track, prepare a specially good dinner, and talk things over sensibly with him.” Even in prescribing (keep in mind Fisher is a medical doctor!) preventative measures, Fisher writes, “If you serve the things he likes at dinner, he’ll think twice before he leaves home. Perhaps that’s your answer. Maybe the ‘Other Woman’ can’t cook. At least she doesn’t know his hates and likes the way you do.”³⁴ Articles like these demonstrate just how central food was as a medium of cultural experience and communication through which women were perceived to have a great deal of agency, but also responsibility. While the woman who “performed well” in the kitchen was perceived to be justly deserving of a happy marriage and a loyal husband, the inverse was also true, and “bad food” was shockingly used as a justification for a husband to engage in adultery or even abuse.

Fisher’s column was not alone in emphasising that wives should attempt to cater to, and even reform their own personalities to, their husband’s desires. Another article by James Wedgwood Drawbell, entitled “Men Don’t Want Clever Wives,” even suggested that, “In a world of conflicting opinions about politics, sport and money, the unanimity of the male sex on this one subject is so real and adamant that it obviously springs from

³³ Fisher, *Chatelaine*, 19.

³⁴ Fisher, *Chatelaine*, January 1938, 44. Articles attributed to medical doctors abounded in surprising number during the period, even on topics they would seem little more qualified to speak to. This aspect of *Chatelaine* alerts the modern reader to the general association of these kinds of authority figures with legitimacy, credibility, and respect. While precise statistics were not tracked, it also seemed more common for new female writers (as opposed to male ones) for the magazine to boast the title of medical doctor, as Fisher above and other instances will demonstrate later into this thesis. This can perhaps be construed as a means for women whose authorial voices were unfamiliar to attain the ability to speak authoritatively to the magazine’s readers – the inverse implication being that such an ability was naturally already invested in any man who wrote for it. Levenstein recalls that most physicians knew very little about the interaction between specific vitamins and minerals and health. In spite of this, their advice was nonetheless frequently solicited by women’s magazines in Canada and the United States to speak authoritatively about a field of science that was as yet mostly undefined. Levenstein, 159.

sound reasoning as well as from instinctive prudence.”³⁵ This passage indicates the importance of a perceived continuity in the norms surrounding food and gender in a culture that was otherwise perceived to be undergoing extreme stress and general upheaval. Even before wartime pressures were introduced, the place of women in the family, and most emphatically their relation to it through food, was considered a symbolically vital bellwether, indicative of the health and stability of privileged Canadian society.

Advertisements back up this reading of food culture. A Del Maiz Cream-style corn ad was framed around the slogan, “The New Way to Men’s Hearts . . . is through Del Maiz Cream-Style Corn,” emphasising both the thematic connection between new foods and the old necessity of food being prepared by women with men’s tastes front and centre. It goes on to read, “It’s fork food . . . man-style corn,” in an attempt to recast canned food so as to derive some of the gendered benefits that other foods, like meat, had enjoyed as a result of being coded as masculine.³⁶ Ads like these fed upon gendered associations of certain foods, but also correlated the act of the service of food by women to men with a stable and felicitous social order.

Another advertisement, this one occupying a full page of *Chatelaine* for Kellogg’s product line of breakfast cereals, stressed the darker side of women’s relationship with their families through food (Figure 6). In it, a husband and son were depicted angrily shouting at a frightened-looking mother, the father appearing to be in the act of either striking the table or his wife in rage, exclaiming “*GEE, I’M SICK OF THIS SAME OLD BREAKFAST!*” The son, rivalling his father in the aggressiveness of his demeanour

³⁵ James Wedgwood Drawbell, “Men Don’t Want Clever Wives,” *Chatelaine*, March 1939, 13.

³⁶ Del Maiz, *Chatelaine*, January 1936, 50.

(clenched fist on table, leaning in toward a cowering mother), exclaimed in support, “*SO AM I, MOM. I DON’T BLAME DAD.*” This “nightmare for Helen” was juxtaposed with a series of panels depicting the positive, glowing reactions of father, son and daughter to Helen’s breakfasts if she were to serve any of Kellogg’s breakfast cereals in the place of what is presumed to be the monotonous “old breakfast” food. The tag line, which appeared at the bottom of the ad, read “Modern days demand modern breakfasts,” and presents the idea that food preferences were shifting away from the “same old” and toward “modern” foods. The message communicated that an old-style breakfast would produce domestic abuse and alienation for the wife, while a “modern” one would provide “variety, “delicious food,” and help “avoid irregularity” – not to mention shift a husband away from teeth-baring and yelling, toward hugging and pet names (“Darling”).³⁷ This sell was one that had obvious appeal in a culture that framed the wife as responsible for not only ensuring her family’s physical sustenance through the food she served, but increasingly held her responsible for their deriving joy from her food.³⁸

Beyond the compulsion of the housewife to cater to her husband’s and children’s desires and needs, there were also instances of women exercising their own agency through food culture, even for their own pleasure. In an article by M. Francis Hucks,

³⁷ Kellogg’s, *Chatelaine*, March 1939, 49. Moreover, the ad’s guarantee of preventing digestive “irregularity” seems intentionally combined with its graphic depiction of the emotionally “irregular” outbursts by the father and son.

³⁸ Also of note is the fact that in the nightmare scene the daughter does not even exist, and all that surrounds the wife is masculine aggression; on the flip side, when fed Kellogg’s, a daughter is revealed not only to exist, but to be happy, well-groomed, and affectionate. Her interesting absence may speak to norms which held daughters as simply not possessing the aggressive tendencies of father or son, or may speak even more compellingly to an idea that to the daughter, mother “Helen” actually bore less responsibility than to her husband and son. It should also be noted that though this ad is nearly flippant in its depiction of domestic violence, and could therefore be interpreted as *parodying* the idea that violence could be deployed over breakfast, the fact that the advertiser felt comfortable using this graphical contrast reveals their assumption that their audience was familiar enough with the *underlying power dynamics* of patriarchal domesticity that this situation would on some level ring true (similar to the earlier instance of the joke about a husband divorcing his wife over the thickness of bread slices).

“Canning Time Is Here Again...,” household canning is recommended in spite of the availability of cheap, commercially-available products: “to add a personal touch to future meals.” Moreover, she argued, canning “satisfies some primeval instinct in most of us when we can look proudly on rows of neatly labelled jars whose contents represent our own thrifty housewifeliness.” This last mentioned reason to can introduces an interesting aspect of the period’s food culture. Though she represented the impulse as “primeval,”³⁹ many of the techniques and equipments used by housewives in this period were actually quite recently introduced, and rather than fitting in with a traditional casting of the husband as “breadwinner” for the family, canning in fact shifted the role of the woman from food server and preparer to one in which she was in essence “breadwinning” for the family’s winter and early-spring table. Canning would increase in importance as wartime pressures were introduced, but it is important to note that it was a habit prevalent within the period’s food culture, and that while it would rise in popularity throughout the war, it nonetheless predated the Second World War and had previously been conducted for reasons entirely separate from the needs of a national wartime economy. In this particular article, *Chatelaine*’s Hucks emphasized the importance of preserving local produce, including tomatoes, cucumbers, plums and peaches, in opposition to industrial interests’ push toward increasing globalization of food markets.⁴⁰ At the same time as Hucks pushed for local food consumption, her column was at once placed on the same page as a Certo fruit pectin ad – pectin being used in fruit preservation – speaking to the coordination of *Chatelaine*’s editorial and advertising content, and interests.⁴¹

³⁹ And thereby normalizing her labour as somehow a natural response to evolutionary precedent. M. Francis Hucks, “Canning Time Is Here Again...,” *Chatelaine*, August 1939, 41

⁴⁰ Hucks, *Chatelaine*, August 1939, 41.

⁴¹ Hucks, *Chatelaine*, August 1939, 43.

It is clear from the variety of prewar examples examined that food was intrinsically connected to gendered relations of power within the family. Wives were responsible to their husbands and children to provide reliable sustenance that transcended merely physical requirements. Food culture mirrored and reinforced gender norms at the same time that they could contradict them. Examining the years leading into the Second World War, the depth of cultural information being communicated during each meal service, or with every media depiction of a meal, becomes clear. Preserving this focus on women's food-service to their families through the war years, as rationing and other pressures of wartime were introduced, will further expose the intricate relationship of gender and food during the period.

2.4. Food and Social Performance

To better understand changes in women's performative roles as purveyors of food in "society" during wartime, first an idea of the performances expected of women heading into the war needs to be developed. Among the many facets of women's experience of food culture, their responsibility to serve as a hostess, preparing and serving both food and entertainment to guests, is perhaps one of the most public. Similar to how positive or negative experiences could follow from a woman's success or failure in her provision of food to her family, so too could both she and her family enjoy popularity or social prestige resulting from a successful dinner party for friends. Just as the work of women in kitchens enabled men to enact their masculinity at the family dinner table, so too did their labour with food make possible what Canadian historian Julia Roberts calls in another

context, “the public enactment of gentlemanliness.”⁴² When food culture was performed within groups larger or broader than the immediate nuclear family, its potential ability to reinforce or contest structures, definitions and relations of power was more profound. At the same time that entertaining could be a chance to demonstrate conformity, and thereby entrench pre-existing arrangements, it could also serve as opportunity for contesting the *status quo*. As it appeared in *Chatelaine*, this status quo was reflected in the idealized depiction of women conspicuously non-consuming certain foods, and conspicuously producing certain others. Which specific foods were to be demonstrably produced, or demonstrably not served, varied in accord with the specific associations of the given food.

Entertaining could itself take a variety of forms, and it is important to keep these in mind as in each setting there was likely a different tone and audience which both food and conversation would be geared toward. Judging from *Chatelaine*'s content, its readers were frequently charged with entertaining, informally or formally, among mixed-gender groups (for instance, dinner parties) or separately, for each other and away from men (for instance, afternoon tea). The level of formality was typically paired with increases in expectations regarding the labour and material effort committed by the hostess to the meal. Dinner parties, formal or semi-formal, were exemplary of this type of entertaining. As “Director of the Chatelaine Institute,” Campbell frequently wrote regarding the preparations that should go into the planning of a formal dinner party. The social importance of her instructions was commonly reinforced with by implicit referral to the consequences of success or failure as an entertainer, as in the title of one of her articles, “Do Folks like to come to your house? They will . . . if you know the secrets of giving all

⁴² Julia Roberts, “‘The Snipe Were Good and the Wine Not Bad’: Enabling Public Life for Privileged Men,” *Edible Histories Cultural Practices: Towards a Canadian Food History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta, Valerie J. Korinek, Marlene Epp (Toronto: U of T Press, 2012), 52.

kinds of late, informal suppers.” In this article she outlined the requirements for a successful formal or semi-formal dinner party. It included detailed planning and pre-cooking preparation. She stressed that, aesthetically, a dinner party should be lavishly adorned, most importantly featuring “your smartest cloth, your best or gayest china and the necessary silver all bright and shiny.” Moreover, decorations were to harmonize around a consistent theme or motif – one that worked with the food to “make your party an ‘occasion’ and have your table and your menu as original and special as possible.”⁴³ Each of these appeals provided the opportunity to clearly demonstrate both the ability of the hostess as well as the amount of surplus time and material the family could afford for her to commit to what essentially, at surface, appear to be frivolous entertainments.

The lengths taken to conspicuously and stylistically demonstrate consumption for a group in essence functioned as a family’s means of measuring their own success in relation to others. Therefore, whether friends would “like to come to your house” was a “matter of supplies in your cupboard, equipment in your kitchen and ideas in your head,” even more-so than whether they enjoyed your conversational ability or sense of humour (neither of which were discussed).⁴⁴ These material imperatives were coupled with a woman’s own faculties to cumulatively provide a reading of her merits as a wife – and this measurement could determine whether not only the wife, but her family at large, enjoyed social status, power within community organizations, a sense of belonging or even a sense of accomplishment.

⁴³ Campbell, “Do Folks like to come to your house?” *Chatelaine*, January 1936, 44.

⁴⁴ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1936, 50. That food displaced both intellect and humour in the determination of a successful hostess should perhaps not be surprising in the context of the earlier article, “Men Don’t Want Clever Wives.”

Bridge parties are perhaps the most prevalent example of a variety of other informal gatherings wherein friends could come together with food without feeling obliged to display fancy silverware or to don expensive dress. These gatherings were no less freighted with cultural meaning and significance, communicated through food habits, for their lack of ostentation. Part of the reason bridge parties enjoyed such popularity was their ability to fit within the realm of possibility allowed by the economic circumstances of many Canadian families in the late 1930s. They did not demand outside help or servants to execute, as simple food – like sandwiches, soups, preserves, desserts (which could be prepared far in advance and could keep well), tea or coffee, basic vegetable appetizers or nuts – were all that were expected. These requirements shifted the weight on the hostess away from onerous commitments of time and money demanded by formal dinner parties and toward activities that cost less and demanded less skill to prepare.⁴⁵ While food service was still expected to be the responsibility of the wife, the fact that so much less time and energy was needed to please guests meant that wives had more time to take part in the act of socializing, or in the case of a bridge party, *playing* cards.

Women's *access to play* has been an underappreciated aspect of this turn in food habits away from formality. As it was a common practice for these parties to be either mixed or divided in terms of gender, the host family was allotted an element of choice in terms of whether women and men should be playing together – that is, competing, interacting, and building relationships on a somewhat equal playing field in a setting wherein all obey similar “rules of play.” It was a shift in food habits, more specifically in food-expectations, that allowed for this concurrent shift in gendered norms of play and socialization. Studying economics or sexuality alone would not have revealed this shift,

⁴⁵ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1936, 43.

nor would a study that looked only at play, for it was the food habits – so often left out of focus in historical narratives of this period – that clarify the reasons for this shift.

Even as food requirements changed to be less demanding, room remained for a hostess to please or upset guests with her cooking. It therefore became increasingly common for food features in *Chatelaine* to emphasize both convenience and taste in their articles. These stresses were mirrored by many major advertisers, and the uniformity of content and ads in *Chatelaine* worked in both the magazine's and its advertisers' interests. In another article by Campbell, "Party Soups," she argued that soups should be focussed on closely by a hostess, particularly when entertaining for the first time, because, as they were typically served as the first course of a meal, their flavour would correspond to guests' first impressions of their hostess.

With the substantiality of soup established, Campbell went on to present the two options she perceived as before a hostess: "If you have the flair, and are willing to spend a long time exercising it, you can make a soup which will probably be a credit to you. Or you can use canned soups made by skilled chefs with a mastery of flavors and the best of ingredients to develop them." She went on to write further in favour of the canned option that, "Most of us will choose this easier, modern way; not that we couldn't start from scratch and make a good soup if we wanted to, but because we can't for the life of us see the sense of it." She described the effort of making soup from scratch as demanding skill, wasting time, and exposing readers to unreliable results, and even "senselessness," with only the *potential* of positive attention being paid to their personal accomplishment if the soup turned out well; on the other hand, she depicted canned soup as evocative of professional mastery, quality, and modernity. In this instance, Campbell placed a heavily "loaded" choice in front of *Chatelaine*'s readers. She proceeded to provide room for the

hostess to “get creative or demonstrate your mastery as a chef,” by simply mixing “(albeit prudently) two varieties [of canned soup] together!” Just so that her readers did not jump to the conclusion that this recommendation was low-brow, she stretched the class-applicability of this option by recommending serving vessels for the various types of soup that could be made for guests: “Bouillon cups are for clear soups,” “two handed bowls for cream soups,” “Large, shallow platters are smart for soups of a creamy nature,” “Covered crockery bowls [...] for chowder or onion soup.” The text of this article was accompanied by a half-page photograph of an elegantly appointed table with a fine porcelain dinner-setting, fresh flowers, etc., clearly indicating that her suggestions were not meant to have a ceiling of applicability based on class.⁴⁶

Campbell’s suggestion, that creativity be expressed by mixing different varieties of soup together, appears in retrospect to have been a rather hollow form of creative cooking. The extent of this mixing was illustrated as she provided short “recipes” for mixing, which included an “Indian chowder,” mixed from a can of corn chowder and a can of onion soup,⁴⁷ and a “Tomato and Celery Bisque” made from a can of tomato soup, a can of celery soup, and a can of milk.⁴⁸ Each of these recipes gesture to the fact that the “creativity” referred to by Campbell was of an extremely limited kind. That such recommendations could be made within a prominent, increasingly popular national women’s magazine testifies to a decline in what was expected of women within the kitchen. While women were still expected to be successful hostesses, what was required to be considered successful was shifting. Whereas success had previously been predicated

⁴⁶ Campbell, “Party Soups,” *Chatelaine*, January 1939, 35. Although conversely, the suggestion that various categories of canned soups should be served in specific types of bowls for maximum aesthetic appeal certainly suggests a “floor” in terms of class applicability.

⁴⁷ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1939, 37.

⁴⁸ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1939, 38.

on a woman's own individual prowess as a cook, increasingly industrial mass production of canned soups meant that at least the first course of a meal could be taken care of by "skilled chefs with a mastery of flavours," working in factories to produce consistent and uniformly palatable first impressions, economically accessible to all who could afford a subscription to *Chatelaine*, though not necessarily to all of its readers.⁴⁹

In this context, it is no surprise that accompanying articles that offered such glowing praise of canned soups were also advertisements that sold specific brands of canned soup or related products. On the opposite page of Campbell's piece, for instance, was a Bovril ad that read: "Whatever Soup you make or buy, *ALWAYS ADD* a little **BOVRIL.**"⁵⁰ A Campbell's soup ad from another issue nonetheless benefited from, or at least echoed, the chords struck by her article, stressing each soup was well suited for a variety of occasions, was convenient to prepare when entertaining, and guaranteed mass taste appeal to guests due to its widespread popularity.⁵¹ A recipe that rested on a woman's knowledge and ability to create soups from homemade broths and fresh ingredients would provide precious little in terms of space for advertisers such as Bovril (industrial broth) or Campbell's (industrial ready-to-serve soups). Campbell's appeal made room for these and other advertisers, but at the same time marginalized both the skills and the finished goods of skilled household artisans.

⁴⁹ This qualification is meant to recall the "stickiness" of the magazine and the fact of its wider distribution than its circulation figures may suggest. Whether in the barber shop or hair salon, the coffee shop, or the doctor's office, the magazine was sure to reach many more Canadians than necessarily could afford to subscribe to it.

⁵⁰ Bovril, *Chatelaine*, January 1939, 37. Bold and italics preserved from the original.

⁵¹ Campbell's Soup, *Chatelaine*, October 1939, 17. Mass taste appeal and popularity were often invoked by mass-producers of food as a reason to shun old-fashioned soups. This message implied that while old-fashioned dishes may be more pleasing to *certain* tastes, when entertaining one would be less likely to present an offensive taste if they opted for the food made for mass appeal.

Advertisers often assumed the perspective of the newly married, as-yet inexperienced wife because it was particularly well-suited to their dismissal of traditional food habits that were not easily acquired. However, it is difficult to imagine their appeals always found the same traction with older women who had learned through difficult trial and error to make the perfect soup for *her* family's or friends' tastes, and took pride in the unique recipes she had crafted from fresh ingredients. Perhaps, the best advertisers and magazine columnists could do to change the habits of these older women was to suggest the equality of these two products, homemade and canned soups, in order for the younger women to adopt habits that would in turn alter the standards deemed acceptable by the broader food culture.

Of course, not all social gatherings involving food were planned out long in advance of taking place. Women were also expected to be ready to serve at a moment's notice, were family or friends to drop by for a surprise visit. Given the weight of expectations placed on the housewife to be a skilled provider, such occasions could prove to be exceedingly stressful. The pressure placed on women to be successful hosts, even under these difficult circumstances, was not something from which advertisers shied away. This was evident in ads for Aunt Jemima pancakes, which used the scenario faced by the housewife as guests arrive by surprise for supper. In it, the racist caricature of Aunt Jemima proclaims, "Don' yo' fret none, honey, 'cause here's how to fix a reg'lar feast as easy as 1-2. Just follow dese directions . . . for de world's mos' delicious pancakes. [sic]" Key descriptors used in this ad emphasize exactly what the company believed women most aspired to provide in such a situation: "nourishing," "easy to digest," "quick to fix,"

“jiffy-quick,” and “delicious.”⁵² That such a range of expectations – from health, to convenience, to taste – still confronted women, when a group of unexpected mouths to feed appeared on her doorstep, elucidates what must of have been a central part of the lived experience of food for women in Canada during the period. Not only were regular family meals and scheduled social functions their responsibility to cater for, but further still they were expected to be *on call* as waitress, cook, and hostess at all times when in the house. Domestic, private household labour, unlike her husband’s job, was not only unpaid but also unbound by the pleasantries of regular or scheduled hours.

Beyond formal and informal dinner parties in which men and women consumed together the labour of the hostess, *Chatelaine* also featured advice for catering to gatherings exclusively comprised of women. Sanders’ opening editorial of May 1936 spoke to the idea that food habits were not merely handed down from literary or corporate authorities, but were also a topic of conversation, interpretation, and debate among women when they gathered together for tea or casual luncheons. She related what she described as a common claim made by women she spoke with, that “The two things that every group [of women] come to discussing sooner or later are diet and bridge!”⁵³ Not only does this highlight the importance to women of the previous discussion of the de-gendering of play, it also makes clear that food was not something women simply absorbed cultural information about, but rather that they regularly discussed it – that is to say, produced and distributed information about it – amongst themselves. Further still, the way that food was “discussed” was not merely verbal: in the simple act of hosting a tea, a luncheon, or a dinner party, women were clearly communicating their own thoughts about

⁵² Quaker Oats Company, *Chatelaine*, March 1939, 46.

⁵³ Sanders, “As an Editor Sees it –” *Chatelaine*, May 1936, 2.

food culture to one another and consuming the expression of those thoughts, often in shared company.

The unwritten pages of these conversations among women are much more difficult to document and discuss, but what is in evidence through *Chatelaine* is the fact that advertisers sought to influence these discursive cultural exchanges. Knowing that women so frequently and candidly discussed (or performed) family food habits, advertisers believed that by developing or altering the ideas of what constituted normalcy, they could influence the baseline terms of these discussions. For example, placed next to editorial content on babies' and infants' health were ads for St. Charles Milk that prominently presented the words of a fictional mother in vague conversation: "He is the picture of health – and I think St. Charles Milk deserves the credit." These words clarified the image of a plump, healthy-looking white baby. The ad went on to stress elements of safety, quality, and scientific nutritionism, but its most subtle thrust was the one mirrored on the same page in a regular *Chatelaine* feature appearing beside it, entitled "The Baby Clinic." In this feature an article appeared with the prominent subtitle "Is Your Child Normal?" in which a doctor responded to reader questions about the health of their babies; through the combined presentation of both article and ad, both the magazine and the product sold through it were linked as healthy, scientific, and most importantly: *normal*. The ad described its product as "PURE FRESH MILK evaporated a few hours after milking time, and irradiated for Sunshine Vitamin D by the finest method known to science," evoking science in conjunction with the doctor's responses to concerned readers about their sons and daughters. In so doing, St. Charles' Milk was inserting itself and its relatively new product (pasteurized, irradiated milk), into the

discourses of mothers with one another.⁵⁴ This advertising strategy would have been impractical were it not for the opportunity that informal teas and luncheons provided women to talk to one another about those issues that most interested them. In this instance, the histories of gender and food are so closely intertwined that neither makes sense without the other. Maternal feminism and scientific nutritionism are so thoroughly overlapping within these two pages contained in *Chatelaine* that they are spoken of, by both the magazine and one of its advertisers, as if in the same breath.

Peacetime Concludes and Wartime Processes Emerge

The variety of settings and audiences for which it was women's responsibility to cook, serve and entertain demonstrates some of the complexity of examining "food culture" during this period. It also provides an opportunity to witness some of the overarching themes that defined the experience of cooking and eating at this time. Heading into the Second World War, women's relationship to food could be generally expressed as one of subservience to other's general demands and preferences (those of her husband, her children, and her guests). Women's control over changes to food habits was variously contested or constrained both by the gender-infused "nature" of specific foods, by the structure and expectations of the family, and by women themselves, as they asserted their own voices to qualify or alter food culture. Their control over changing food habits was also variously courted or guided by corporate players. Some women, for instance those whose prowess as home cooks was already achieved, no doubt opposed new inroads being made by industrially mass-produced food products, though little evidence of this resistance remained in *Chatelaine* beyond vague reference to people

⁵⁴ St. Charles' Milk, *Chatelaine*, May 1937, 63.

whose food habits were variously described as stubborn, old-fashioned, risky, unscientific, expensive or unreliable.

Keeping in mind that *Chatelaine* was still making inroads in the magazine industry and that its focus was evidently on new or expectant mothers and wives, and not necessarily long-established ones, its siding with “modern” food-ways makes some sense. That their choice of canned soup over home-made soup was one that made a great deal of financial sense for the magazine further clarifies the apparent one-sidedness of their position heading into the war.⁵⁵

Given the above series of observations pertaining to discourses connecting women and food in the lead up to the Second World War, it is tempting to concur with Charles and Kerr’s observations that “although women may have the day-to-day responsibility for food provision for their families, it is *men* who have the power and control.”⁵⁶ However, I would contend that this statement – while certainly true to a great extent as a description of women’s experience – was disputed in interesting ways during the period of total war that was to follow. As thousands of men left their homes and their jobs in Canada for war abroad, the power and control associated with their being the “head” of the household necessarily devolved to women, though tangible links to men’s authority also persisted across continents and oceans.

The first issue which had a substantial amount of war-related editorial content was the issue of November 1939. In it, an article by Campbell entitled “Learn More About Food,” argued the importance of women exercising their power over domestic food habits

⁵⁵ That their stance regarding the “modernization” of food habits was in consensus with their advertisers is also vital to recall. The historically persistent inflection of editorial content in women’s magazines with the desires of their advertisers is particularly well argued in: Steinem, 18-28.

⁵⁶ Charles and Kerr, 40.

in such a way as to be in line with the Allied war effort. It used vague references to the voice of the “authorities,” and clearly established women’s agency in matters of food as a negative one:

If they refuse to buy normally, the channels of trade are clogged. If they hoard necessities, there may be unwarranted food famines. If nerves crack under the strain, homes throughout the Dominion reverberate with discordant echoes; and morale is shattered. If war work means the neglect of community service, they let the enemy in the back door while they fight him on the field.⁵⁷

At least from the point of view of vague “authorities,” the command from on-high regarding women’s control over food seemed, at its most essential, to boil down to “don’t get in the way of war’s demands.” If the status quo was preserved, war could run smoothly; if agency was exercised to *change anything* in response to wartime, it would cause Canada’s machine of war to grind to a halt. Charles and Kerr argue that food is given added significance during times of social instability, as the provision of proper or improper food to family, friends, or business has been tied directly to a perceived “breakdown of the social relations constituting the family.”⁵⁸ During the first months of the war, Canadian food culture, if it had changed at all, seems to have reacted defensively in response to the possibility of just this type of breakdown. If “the authorities” were asking anything of *Chatelaine’s* readership, it was apparently that they not act in any way to affirmatively address the war’s existence – that is, to act *passive*.

In another article by Campbell from the November 1939 issue, entitled “Home Defense,” she reinforced the defensive tone of these appeals to women: “HOME DEFENSE begins in the kitchen, and Canada expects every housekeeper to do her duty there.” These appeals were directed exclusively at women, emphasizing their control over

⁵⁷ Campbell, “Learn More About Food,” *Chatelaine*, November 1939, 68.

⁵⁸ Charles and Kerr, 215.

domestic food habits; however, the implication made by this first barrage of patriotic home-front messages was that government and civil society were afraid of the possible effects of female hysteria on the rational functioning of Canadian food markets. This fear rested on old stereotypes of women as prone to irrationality, hysterical overreaction, and emotional indulgence, and in so doing undervalued the potential for women to contribute positively to the war effort in other meaningful ways. Moreover, its emphasis that “every housekeeper do her duty *there*,”⁵⁹ was issued as an implicit pleading that women avoid potentially destabilizing forays beyond the boundaries of domesticity to aid the war effort.

Conversely, Campbell’s “Home Defence” also rested on a culture of food born of depression-era prudence and household economy, centred on avoiding waste, the use of seasonal foods, and the rational, scientific management of scarce resources within the home. In stressing women’s ability to efficiently and intelligently manage their homes, these early messages regarding “patriotic food practices” also communicated positive messages regarding female agency. She went on to advise against overcooking, a common plank of nutritionist food policy during the period, and suggested saving cooking-water, which was vitamin-rich, for other uses. Finally, long before meat shortages or rationing were being experienced, she recommended beans and peas as a substitute for meat, based on a combination of nutritional benefit and household economy (they were much cheaper).⁶⁰ Her logic for these recommendations was by no means novel, in fact in each case these were appeals nutritionists had been making for at least a

⁵⁹ Campbell, “Home Defense,” *Chatelaine*, November 1939, 57. Italics added to the original for emphasis. The use of the American spelling of “defence” appeared in original.

⁶⁰ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, November 1939, 57.

decade based on arguments of economy and health. However, the wartime context added new weight and cause to Campbell's and others' nutritionist campaigns.

In the American context, Bentley argued that the war demanded the shift of traditional gender roles, and that Rockwell's famous painting was an instance of reactionary resistance to this shift in American society.⁶¹ In the Canadian context, countless instances of this shift and the resistance to it are prevalent in *Chatelaine* during the war years. Already in November of 1939, the magazine was publishing widely on the subject of how women should change their lifestyle to help the war effort. Space normally dedicated to short stories began to be turned toward the war effort. As war-related publication increased, women's responsibilities within society not only grew, but became notably more public and less passive. An article entitled, "What Can We Do Now?" by Lotta Dempsey challenged women to engage in the war effort both within the home and outside of it, with tasks as various as knitting and sewing, canning, home nursing and first aid, lorry and ambulance driving, overseas service, and fundraising through cooking and entertaining.⁶² As men left for the front lines, even at the beginning of the war it was clear that women did not simply lose their responsibility to provide for their partners, but that this very duty was *shifted* from providing for husband to providing for his surrogate: country. Dempsey evokes this shift clearly when writing of how women were to decide what exactly to do to help the war effort: "With thousands of Canadian women offering themselves for service today, the answer depends on two things. What the country needs . . . and what you are capable of doing."⁶³

⁶¹ Bentley, 72.

⁶² Lotta Dempsey, "What Can We Do Now?" *Chatelaine*, November 1939, 10-11.

⁶³ Dempsey, *Chatelaine*, November 1939, 10.

As new responsibilities emerged, or old ones were shifted in orientation from husband to nation-state, the culture at large drew on gendered assumptions of women's natural abilities to justify the demands being made of them. Cultural habits of domestic productivity, practiced widely both during the First World War and during the Depression, were given new life as "Women's Institute members, forty thousand strong," were instructed toward tasks as diverse as "gathering vegetables, selling farm produce, cooking, sewing and even, probably, gathering tons of waste paper and selling it."⁶⁴ This took place in contradistinction to a generation-long push from industrial food producers for the domestic sphere to shift from being a site of production to one principally defined by consumption. At the same time, new food habits emerged as adaptations to wartime conditions, especially rationing and food shortage. Many of these habits would have lasting impacts not only on the history of the Second World War but also on the food history of the generations that followed it. That food habits could change history was not an idea foreign to the men and women who lived on the Canadian home front; rather, it was presented to them every day in the print media, and *Chatelaine* frequently published content emblematic of this notion. Just as articles like "Learn More About Food" discussed the importance of saving cooking water, it also was aware that small changes to daily cultural practice bore the possibility of lasting significance, and that women possessed, through these practices, a unique source of power. As Campbell put it: "What brave, new world may they not help to mold, one day, from this disaster?"⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Dempsey, *Chatelaine*, November 1939, 10-11.

⁶⁵ Campbell, "Learn About Food," *Chatelaine*, November 1939, 68.

3. Gender and Food until the Split in 1942

3.1. Introduction

As Canadian involvement in the Second World War deepened, changes to food culture – as evinced through *Chatelaine* – also intensified.¹ Specific foods were ascribed new cultural meanings as a result of the war, and old cultural meanings ascribed to foods were either harnessed or intensified to further the aims of government, corporate, or individual interests. Again, analysing the period’s food history with a gendered critical perspective is revealing. The same fundamental categorization of women’s experience with and of food culture will therefore be maintained. This categorization was in fact mirrored in an article entitled, “Fifth Columns in the Kitchen” (Figure 7), in which the Director of the *Chatelaine* Institute, Helen G. Campbell, outlined the principal challenges facing women on the home front under the subheadings: “Poor Buying,” “Poor Nutrition,” and “Waste.”² Roughly speaking, “Poor Buying” equates to the first argument of this chapter, involving specific foods and their wartime cultural associations; “Poor Nutrition” represents shifts in women’s responsibilities for the family’s food preparation; and finally, “Waste” corresponds to the performance of food practices and the social demonstration of shared sacrifice in wartime Canada.

¹ It should be briefly noted that the time needed by advertisers to transform an idea for a magazine ad from concept to ready-to-print product was about six weeks, and that in addition to this every ad had to be submitted to the magazine about four weeks prior its issue date. The latter rule also applied to the magazine’s own content, meaning that Canada’s declaration of war, and also any specific events that occurred during the war, could only be reflected in *Chatelaine* within these necessary operational parameters. This information about the intricacies of past advertising and magazine production were garnered thanks to the generous aid of Terry O’Reilly (of CBC radio’s *Under the Influence*) via email correspondence. Terry O’Reilly, “Print ad question,” personal email communication, 3 Dec. 2013.

² Helen G. Campbell, “Fifth Columns in the Kitchen,” *Chatelaine*, January 1942, 39. Figure 7 illustrates the article’s title illustration, with a stereotyped “Hun” rummaging through the fridge while female cartoon images caricature “old fashioned methods,” “poor nutrition,” “neglect,” and “careless buying.”

Campbell's article effectively encapsulated the pressure for change exerted by *Chatelaine* and by the Canadian government during the years leading up to the implementation of rationing. In it, she urged women, "You have to be on your toes to defend yourself and your family against the Fifth Column of poor nutrition and the best of all weapons is good food, well chosen, well balanced and properly prepared. We must be both good shoppers and good cooks, to win."³ Understanding the pressures placed on women to reform in their roles as both producers and consumers of food – and more particularly understanding how these pressures evolved through the middle years of the war – is pivotal for understanding the broader changes taking place in the experience of upper-middle class Canadian food culture from 1939-1945.

The first argument is that specific foods acquired either new cultural inscriptions as a result of war, or that old inscriptions were harnessed to new ends as a result of wartime pressures. Preserves (either pickled or sweet) represented one instructive instance of a specific foodstuff whose meaning shifted substantially during the Second World War. Other foods' association with national or imperial networks of culture and trade were exploited to push corporate or communal interests. This is evoked in Campbell's article, as she wrote under the heading "Poor Buying" that women must "Stress simple Canadian foods in season and let the luxuries go hang." The article further suggested that buying inexpensive foods⁴ like cheap meats, "home-grown fruit" and vegetables would further contribute to the war effort.⁵ Just as "Canadian foods" like lobster and apples took on new meanings as a result of their association with the "fruit of

³ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1942, 39.

⁴ Inexpensive foods were typically one and the same as foods not in short supply due to wartime industrial or military demand.

⁵ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1942, 39.

the [Canadian] land,” so too did British sauces, biscuits and teas, which were sold not on merely culinary or nutritional grounds, but rather due to their perceived connection with the sustenance of Britain’s imperial power. This first argument extends the previous chapter’s treatment of specific foodstuffs, like meat, coffee and sweets.

The second argument pertains to women’s gendered responsibilities within the family. Whether to children or to their husband – who could be at home or, as was increasingly likely, abroad – maternal bonds of affection and duties to domestic production continued to define many women’s lives even through the war years. Keshen details that during this period the numbers of women engaged in paid labour nearly doubled from 1939 to 1944, reaching 1.1 million workers. In jobs pertaining to the war industry alone, a peak of 300,000 women were paid for their work. The greatest proportion of this increase in women’s labour participation occurred “among married women and mothers,” highlighting the fact that women’s domestic responsibilities were increasing at the same time that their responsibilities beyond the home were becoming more onerous.⁶ While additional responsibilities to economic production outside of the home were expanding the range of female workplace participation, longstanding domestic responsibilities (particularly for the middle class wife) were by no means shirked to make time for these new duties.

Further still, Sanders clearly indicates that women’s responsibility for, “spending of the family income has assumed a deep significance. The economic front is reckoned as the fourth arm of our defense. It is a front on which women can do an impressive work.” Sanders further defined this work as the defence of “the infinitesimal part of Canadian life

⁶ Jeffrey A. Keshen, “Revisiting Canada’s Civilian Women During World War II,” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 30.6 (1997): 246.

which is your home. See that every meal is properly balanced for health and vitality. See that every dollar spent is a dollar spent for Canada and the Empire.”⁷ That passages of this sort could paradoxically describe women’s food labour so as to emphasise its importance while at once demeaning it as “infinitesimal,” all while remaining unaware of its own inconsistency, provides a clear indication of the ironic relation of female labour to Canadian society; during the Second World War, this labour was at once increasingly necessary and was expected to operate flexibly, ungrudgingly, and yet also for free (at least at home).

Sanders’ article also showed the increasing use of nutritionism as the principal logic for understanding how the household and the grocery store were defined as sites of scientific, rational and material productivity. By the application of this logic, both food and the human body were to be understood as substances and mediums akin to the materials and components used in factory production. In Campbell’s “Fifth Columns in the Kitchen” article, she argued that “Poor Nutrition” could result in productivity- and morale-compromising illness, writing that, “It’s a round for Hitler when the bills for sickness go up and when ‘time off’ reduces our war effort.” That is, due to the successful promulgation of nutritionist food culture during wartime, food was increasingly viewed less in terms of taste and more in terms of the pursuit of “a good balance of protein, minerals, vitamins, and all the dietary essentials.”⁸ This constituted a foundational claim regarding the nature of women’s domestic responsibilities.

At the same time as women’s responsibilities as household food providers were being redefined in nutritionist language, so too were their duties complicated by the

⁷ Byrne Hope Sanders, “As an Editor Sees it –,” *Chatelaine*, September 1940, 60.

⁸ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1942, 39.

thousands of Canadian men who were being stationed overseas. In some instances, these responsibilities were conveyed vaguely to women through *Chatelaine*, as in a full-page Department of Munitions and Supply for Canada propaganda message which commanded women to “Support your men!”⁹ However, presented in conjunction with these vague imperatives, more specific responsibilities were enacted as well. While at first glance the phenomenon of “one less mouth to feed” at the family dinner table would seem to imply a passing off of the responsibility for serving men’s hunger from being that of the mother to that of the motherland, the responsibility of individual women actually persisted or expanded, most explicitly through campaigns that encouraged the shipping of food to men and British citizens overseas. These food shipments were symbolically loaded cultural links, demonstrating Canadian women’s continuing fealty to their men, their nation, and their empire.

Finally, the third argument will pay heed to the ways that food service represented a means of performing (and thereby reinforcing) gender roles and domestic stability to friends, to the extended family, and to the community. The central change in this domain was the rise of the *performance of sacrifice* as a means of showing solidarity with not only soldiers on the frontlines but also with fellow housewives and food producers. This performance is represented by Campbell as the Fifth Columnist of “Waste,” against which she recommended women “will have to stop the little leaks which fritter away our resources and reduce the effectiveness of our war effort.”¹⁰ Economically speaking,¹¹ as

⁹ The Department of Munitions and Supply for Canada, “Support your men!,” *Chatelaine*, February 1942, 60.

¹⁰ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1942, 39.

¹¹ And therefore also speaking to a large degree in generality.

the war carried on Canadian household finances changed dramatically. Keshen explains this transformation as follows:

Even with record taxes, Victory Bond purchases, and war-related donations, Canadian households, which in wartime often had more than one wage earner, had far more available cash. Between 1939 and 1943 total grocery sales went up by 58.1 percent, rates that were two and a half to three times greater than cumulative inflation.¹²

Understanding that disposable income was rising at the same time that manufactured goods – toward which income could be expended – were becoming scarce,¹³ it is clear that the discourse regarding “waste” was not meant merely to preserve food resources for military ends, but also as a means of *redirecting* domestic expenditures toward national military financing. Therefore, understanding the development of a food culture that encouraged social performances of sacrifice actually enlightens the ways that the Canadian government prosecuted the war effort. It was by no means accidental that columns on waste in the kitchen or advertisements for food were frequently bookending propaganda advocating the purchase of Victory Bonds.¹⁴

In this context, holidays are particularly noteworthy as calendar occasions when ritualized food habits were forced to change by wartime circumstance, but also creatively adapted to demonstrate social, national, and cultural strength. It will be made clear that in the run-up to the implementation of rationing in Canada, these social performances of sacrifice by no means exercised absolute influence on Canadian food culture, but were also contrasted with counter-narratives of privilege, of desire, and of other attitudes that demanded the rationalization of divergent – which is to say, more indulgent – food habits.

¹² Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004), 55.

¹³ For instance, Keshen writes that “between 1940 and 1941 the output of household refrigerators plummeted from 53,161 to 2,137, and of washing machines from 117,512 to 13,200.” Keshen, 94.

¹⁴ Canadian Government, *Chatelaine*, February 1942, 64-65. In this case, a two full-page propaganda piece advertising victory bonds.

That these counter-narratives existed in spite of being marginalized in magazines like *Chatelaine* demonstrates their persistence; however, it also reveals the subtle way this counter-culture actually reinforced the trending of food culture toward the more hegemonic government and corporate control of food systems, as the fear that “fifth-columnists” were breaking voluntary food rules justified the implementation of more restrictive government control in the form of price controls and rationing.

3.2. *Preserving Gender, Nation, and Empire*

With the end of the “so-called phoney war,” the war escalated following Germany’s invasion of France, Scandinavia and the Low Countries. By the shocking fall of France in June of 1940, the British and Canadian governments and peoples felt a heightened sense of the necessity of engagement with the war effort.¹⁵ With Nazi aggression being met largely by Allied collapse, Canada had assumed a position of prominence as Britain’s strongest ally. At this time, the seriousness of the war increased and consequently the imperative of sacrifice on the home front became more sorely felt. In this context, pickled, preserved and canned foods were a category of food that assumed tremendous significance. Their production and consumption were widely believed to be contributing to the war effort. This is readily apparent in countless articles published by *Chatelaine*’s staff writers, as in the case of Campbell’s article, “Jamboree: Help strengthen our Home Defenses now by preserving Canadian fruits.” Through the first years of the war, these articles commonly provided recipes that focussed exclusively on the activity of canning as a food-saving exercise, but paid little attention to specific ingredients. Campbell’s article from 1940 is representative in this sense, with a

¹⁵ Peter Calvocoressi, Guy Wint and John Pritchard, *The Penguin History of the Second World War* (London: Penguin Books, 1999), 127.

“Strawberry conserve” meant to “preserve Canadian fruits” that, besides its one quart of strawberries, included: “4 cups of sugar, 2 oranges, 1 lemon, ¼ to ½ pound seeded raisins, ¼ pound nuts.”¹⁶ While strawberries would have indeed been conserved for out-of-season consumption in Canada by this recipe, it also relied heavily on imported ingredients that were already in short supply due to the war. Nonetheless, through *Chatelaine* women were being instructed in the work of “Home Defense,” through food.

Within its own pages, *Chatelaine* was not alone in promoting the labour of food preservation. Campbell’s “Jamboree” article was complemented by a Certo fruit pectin ad on the previous page that gave its own advice as to a “short boil” method that conserved energy and was made possible by the use of their product.¹⁷ Certo and other fruit pectin companies were frequent advertisers within *Chatelaine*, and their products were almost always placed tactfully close to the editorial content that supported or instructed in preserving as a patriotic habit.

Editorial content that supported preserving, canning, and pickling was published frequently by *Chatelaine*. Campbell was often at the forefront of the magazine’s push to sell the food-preservation habit. Beyond the previously mentioned article, Campbell also published a piece in July of 1940 called “Be *Canny* This Year!” that instructed in a variety of canning methods. It was not overly concerned with the reasons for canning, operating on the assumption that women would be interested in preserving fresh Canadian fruits and vegetables both for the war and for household economy.¹⁸ These preservative food columns were typically focussed on the belt of months from June through October

¹⁶ Campbell, “Jamboree: Help strengthen our Home Defenses now by preserving Canadian fruits,” *Chatelaine*, July 1940, 43.

¹⁷ Certo, *Chatelaine*, July 1940, 47.

¹⁸ Campbell, “Be *Canny* This Year!,” *Chatelaine*, September 1940, 49.

when fresh local produce was available for cheap purchase by Canadian consumers, and therefore demonstrate the seasonality of women's yearly household food habits. The activity was commonly discussed as a means to accomplish three things: greater household economy, supplemented food supplies in response to shortages resulting from wartime, and to "extend the natural seasons." The idea of extending the seasons was one that corresponded more to the aesthetics of (fresh) taste than to what a modern reader may be inclined to incorrectly conclude was an impulse to consume locally or sustainably, in any environmental sense.¹⁹ Depression-era economic conditions had encouraged similar depictions of ideal female food habits as marked by limited household food production in the form of preserving. However, the war dictated that these habits' value be substantially increased within the discursive construction of idealized domestic femininity.

Some useful insight can be gained regarding industry's appeal to women for solutions to the problem of the general labour shortage resulting from the war by looking briefly to a source falling beyond the purview of *Chatelaine*: the letters of midtown Toronto housewife Marie Williamson to the mother of two British evacuees she was boarding during the war. Williamson's weekly letters were usefully edited and compiled by her daughter, Mary Williamson, in concert with one of the child evacuees, Tom Sharp. These letters are particularly useful because they provide a complementary parallel source to *Chatelaine*, while also being produced by a woman writing from (and to) a similar class perspective as is presumed by the magazine. In these letters, Marie detailed how canneries were asking housewives "to assist in saving the fruit and vegetable crop before it spoiled - particularly the tomatoes. They had to stop their contracts to the farmers and

¹⁹ Edith S. Coombs, *Chatelaine*, October 1941, 74. Both "local" and "sustainable" environmental readings obviously being anachronistic in this context.

leave hundreds of cars of tomatoes on the railway sidings while their plants operated at half production from lack of labour.”²⁰ Marie’s account, though anecdotal, nevertheless demonstrates the fact that women’s household labour was increasingly being drawn upon as a resource to support both industrial and agricultural food systems. “Preserves” therefore preserved more than just perishable foodstuffs: they provided a buffer of free labour for industrial and agricultural systems of production.

Taste was a significant part of *Chatelaine*’s discourse on preserving, especially as it pertained to preserves (jellies, jams, typically fruit-based and sweet tasting). Even though sugar was in short supply and badly needed for the war effort, Campbell wrote dismissively in one article in 1942 about new methods of canning without the use of sugar (using a longer boil, and likely without the use of products advertised in *Chatelaine*’s pages). She dismissed these methods not on either nutritional or economic grounds, but because, “the shape, color and flavor are not so good.”²¹ This shows both the limitations of wartime pressures on food culture and also *Chatelaine*’s own limitations as a purveyor of new food habits and a trendsetter for Canadian women. Whether Campbell’s resistance to sugarless preserves was the direct result of the pressure of advertisers, the author’s own resistance to changes in her food preferences, genuine issues of palatability, or some variety of these causes is difficult to discern with certainty. This being said, the presence and dismissal of alternative food habits does at least serve to qualify an understanding of the period’s food culture based solely around money, science and war. Women were also clearly concerned with the taste and experience of their laboriously preserved jams, jellies, pickles and cans of produce, which were produced

²⁰ Mary F. Williamson, “Just A Larger Family to Feed: Managing in Wartime,” online article in *Edible Toronto*, n.d.: ¶7.

²¹ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, July 1942, 44.

with a mind to preserving morale, sustaining the family through long winter months on the home front in both body and mind.

During these winter months, articles relating to preserves understandably shifted from focusing on how or why to preserve to what to do with preserves. At times, *Chatelaine's* staff could seem positively at a loss for what housewives should do with their cupboards full of preserves. As food culture increasingly stressed the productive activity of food preservation during the late summer and autumn months, so too did it expand to make room for new modes of preserve-based consumption during winter months. One article by Edith S. Coombs stretched this impulse to perhaps its greatest extent, promoting the various possible uses of jams, which included the bizarre suggestion that readers try making a “jelly omelet.”²² Just as taste could serve as a “line in the sand” at times to prevent what was considered undue or excessive alterations of food culture, so too could it be conspicuously absent from consideration in some of *Chatelaine's* suggestions.

While the bulk of the changes to the productive side of food culture during the Second World War were most directly experienced by women, preserves are one instance where children were also implicated in wartime change. In July 1942, Williamson's letters explained how the first day of school in Ontario was to be pushed back following the summer break in response to farmers' request that children be enlisted to help “on the land, until after the tomato, peach, plum, and apple crops are past their peak.”²³ Even a year earlier in the war, in the spring of 1941, Keshen wrote that schoolchildren were commonly engaging in “paid work on farms to compensate for the loss of agricultural

²² Coombs, *Chatelaine*, January 1942, 41.

²³ Williamson, ¶5.

labour.”²⁴ Williamson’s letters, often consumed with issues of food and childcare, provides interesting and unique insight into the lived household experience of this lower-middle-class family during wartime. Just as women were frequently being called upon to buy up and preserve the fruits of the motherland as crops were being harvested, so too was the labour of their children called upon to meet the needs of Canadian agriculture. While many of the suggested ways for women to pitch into the war on the home front appearing in *Chatelaine* demanded the expenditure of more of women’s time, the service of children as cheap agricultural labourers likely would have actually reduced women’s childcare burden at home. That no articles in *Chatelaine* dealt directly with this phenomenon further indicates some of the limitations of *Chatelaine* as a source that too often represented the interests of only upper-middle class urban women – regardless of how universal its editorial staff believed their prescriptions to be.

During the pre-rationing phase of the war, attention should also be drawn to the variety of foods which were increasingly ascribed imperial associations for either commercial or national benefit. Whereas products sold on the basis of imperial ties were rare to non-existent in the pages of *Chatelaine* prior to the war, during it a variety of products were sold, often exclusively on the basis of their imperial heritage or ties. HP sauce was an example of one such product. For instance, one series of ads featured iconic British images and the short, simple text blurb that read, “The English Relish . . . with the flavor that Canadians enjoy.”²⁵ This ad operated on the assumption that all that was needed to sell a product was an imperial connection and a vague positive reference to flavour. HP was obviously confident enough that consumers already knew and desired the

²⁴ Keshen, 203.

²⁵ HP, *Chatelaine*, December 1940, 60.

flavour of its product that the company believed an assertion of its English roots during wartime should serve as a sufficient additional incentive to consume the sauce.

A year later in 1941, HP's lead was followed by Huntley and Palmers biscuits, which were sold entirely on the foundation of their British origin and corresponding qualitative standards. The ad (Figure 8) similarly rested on a single central argument: "Have kept the flag flying and will continue to do so for **British quality** in biscuits." The text is flanked by a small map of Britain from which a huge "Huntley and Palmers" flag flies over the offset information that the brand was founded in 1826. Beyond the tenuous claim to quality and the imperial association, the most conspicuous part of the ad is the fact that the actual product – its biscuits – are neither pictured nor described in any specific way.²⁶ That an advertiser could rely so heavily on British origin, both in the case of HP and that of Huntley & Palmers,²⁷ provides clear evidence that the food people bought and consumed was loaded with more than simple nutritional or sensory information (i.e. taste). While certain foods may not have been regarded so explicitly by the average consumer as being imbued with "Imperial flavour," it is clear that advertisers did in fact draw such a connection – and did so with a great deal of confidence. The fact that such ads appeared in a women's magazine like *Chatelaine* indicates that advertisers believed women to be fully literate decoders of the cultural content carried by specific foods. Moreover, there is a desire implied by these ads' emphasis: they indicate that *not only* was an Imperial "flavour" a desirable attribute of a food, but it was implicitly expected that the readers of *Chatelaine* should desire to serve their families this Imperial association in the home through the medium of food.

²⁶ Huntley and Palmer's, *Chatelaine*, December 1941, 61.

²⁷ It is worth clarifying that these were in fact two separate corporations, in spite of the coincidence of the one's acronym to the other's name.

Chatelaine's own writers clarified the importance of purchasing and consuming British food during wartime in a pair of articles entitled, "Shopping to win the war." The series, appearing in the September 1940 issue, explicitly argued the importance of women's buying habits to Canadian and British wartime success. In each article, the British export market and Canadian domestic marketplace were depicted as reliant on the careful, rational shopping habits of Canadian women.²⁸ The British article, by Alice Sharples, urged the importance of "not to do without our tea but to serve more tea than ever, substituting British purchases for some other luxuries which we shall go without, because buying them will not aid our war effort." The Canadian article by Carolyn Damon took a similar tack, but emphasized the agency of women and their power as consumers during wartime, advising that "It's vital to make our dollars work for Canada. And because eighty-five cents of every dollar spent in the Dominion is spent by women, and because the Dominion Government expects to get about five hundred million dollars of its 680 millions revenue through our shopping this year, women are the key workers here." By depicting *spending* money (rather than thriftily stashing it away) as a virtue, this article stressed the positive aspects of middle-class women's habits of consumption and provides a noteworthy exception to the wartime cultural trend toward emphasizing economy and thrift over and against waste, excess, and opulence. Apparently, so long as it was tied to British networks of trade, there was no such thing as too much HP sauce, biscuits or tea at the kitchen table.

Of course, imperial ties could also result in constraints being placed on food habits, as was the case with pork. While consumption of many Canadian-produced foods was being encouraged, as shall shortly be demonstrated, the Dominion was also called

²⁸ Alice Sharples and Carolyn Damon, "Shopping to win the war," *Chatelaine*, September 1940, 10-11.

upon to make up for the shortfall in British food supplies during wartime. Keshen writes of how Canada's pork trade with Britain rapidly expanded during wartime as a result of the collapse of trade between Britain and Denmark – causing Canada to go from supplying 18.5 percent of British pork imports in 1938 to a staggering 83 percent of them by 1944.²⁹ Such a shift was obviously demanded by the cultural dimension of British food habits – otherwise, dried or canned legumes could have stood in far more economically to supply for a shortfall in protein – but it was also enabled by the colonial mentality that compelled Canadians to share in the suffering experienced by the British people. Obviously, across Canada a great many Canadians would have rejected the impulse to voluntarily constrain their pork consumption in order to aid “the motherland,” – whether divorced from such a mentality by class, region, religion, ethnicity, or ideology – but the fact remains that in *Chatelaine* and through many other mainstream media outlets, “menu-makers” were being encouraged to restrict their “use of bacon and ham” and instead make use of “such pork extras as tenderloin, spareribs, sausages (made from trimmings, pigs’ heads, jowls, etc.),” all in the name of solidarity with Britain.³⁰ Such a phenomenon sets Canadian cultural experience apart from those of both American and British experiences of the war. The cultural experience of this colonial obligation was directly experienced by all Canadians, but was realized through appeals to the control that specifically women had over household consumption.

During wartime certain foods were also ascribed national significance. The process of rewriting the cultural meaning of foods to include ideas of nationality was a part of the war effort and one prosecuted in *Chatelaine* by government, corporate and

²⁹ Keshen, 65.

³⁰ Department of Agriculture, “‘Eat it up . . . wear it out . . . make it do.’ That’s the wartime housekeeping slogan from Ottawa. Your co-operation is vital!,” *Chatelaine*, July 1942, 3.

editorial actors – with the notable cooperation and engagement of private citizens. The Dominion Department of Agriculture ran ads in the magazine promoting the consumption of apples, which they proclaimed to be “Canada’s national fruit.”³¹ Apples were easily grown across Canada, from the Maritimes to Central and Western Canada, as well as being well-suited to a variety of uses in baking, over-winter storage, and in preserves. Promoting their consumption was implicitly geared toward shifting Canadians’ fruit consumption toward domestic networks of trade and away from increasingly unreliable or expensive imperial or international ones.

The campaign to encourage wider consumption of Canada’s national fruit was directed toward women and aided by a *Chatelaine* prize contest that challenged Canada’s “good plain cooks as well as fancy ones,” to submit a “recipe you’re famous for—provided apples are the main or an important ingredient of the dish.” Just in case the wartime significance of this contest was not already implicitly understood by readers who had a month earlier seen the Department of Agriculture’s propaganda piece, the reward of a Five-Dollar War Savings Certificate clarified the connection.³² A few months later, Mrs. W. Redshaw was announced as the winner of the competition, with a recipe for a “Sausage Casserole” that the magazine glowingly described as “All-Canadian in its make-up too – a point that appeals to patriotic house-keepers these days.”³³ By using a less desirable cut of pork (see above) in conjunction with abundant apples, this housekeeper created a recipe that manifested twin geopolitical ideals of Canadian food: to be British and to be Canadian. A year later, the magazine continued to advocate apple consumption by dedicating one of its “*Chatelaine* Service bulletins” (small 15 cent

³¹ Department of Agriculture, “Canada’s national fruit,” *Chatelaine*, December 1940, 69.

³² *Chatelaine*, January 1941, 43.

³³ *Chatelaine*, April 1941, 79.

booklets dedicated to food recipes and tips) to different ways to make use of apples.³⁴

Apples were considered a national strength because of their plenty and their wide availability, but it was because of women's ability to shape family food habits that apples were harnessed to aid the war effort.

Another food that was infused with national qualities was wheat (especially in the form of bread). As with apples, wheat represented a strongpoint for Canadian agriculture during the war, so much so that Canada was able to ship surpluses of it abroad as aid to ally nations, particularly the USSR and Great Britain. Even given allied need, it was believed that increases in bread consumption would, like apples, fill the void made by voluntary decreases being urged in other areas of Canadians' diets, particularly meat and sugar. Moreover, food shortages abroad were featured in ads for bread products to encourage further consumption of bread in Canada.³⁵ Women were increasingly being instructed by *Chatelaine's* writers to adapt their household food habits to incorporate a greater amount of bread at the table. To this point, Campbell wrote an article entitled, "Wheat . . . *Decorated for Service*" in October of 1941, in which she told women that they could "eat wheat with a clear conscience from an economical, nutritive and patriotic point of view."³⁶ Not only could women serve wheat products with a clear conscience, but Campbell clearly intended to communicate that consuming wheat actually harnessed Canadian *strength*, as "Canada is one of the big four among wheat producers." Relative to newspapers, *Chatelaine's* being a national magazine better positioned it to take advantage of the Canadian government's objective of ensuring that national consumption was geared to the demands of wartime efficiency.

³⁴ Maclean Publishing Company, *Chatelaine*, January 1942, 42-43.

³⁵ Fleischmann's, *Chatelaine*, February 1942, 18.

³⁶ Campbell, "Wheat . . . *Decorated for Service*," *Chatelaine*, October 1941, 15.

Corporate interests also took advantage of the association of wheat with Canadian strength. Fleischmann's Yeast ran one of the most frequently-recurring series of ads in *Chatelaine* over the war on the theme of increasing consumption of bread. One of their full-page ads (Figure 9) led with the title "CANADA is STRONG" and mimicked the form of the government's propaganda to convincingly depict eating and serving bread as patriotic. With much of the page taken up by an image of a male factory worker, presumably making implements of war, the ad nonetheless targeted women as the providers and deciders of household food consumption. In this vein, it argues for increased consumption on what would have been the familiar language of household economics and nutritionism: "Bread is recognized as the best and cheapest basic food. It is extra-rich in energy-giving carbohydrates and with its modern milk formula provides important protein for muscle building and repair." In keeping with its patriotic theme, the only mention of the company behind the ad comes in a small footnote-sized text blurb at the bottom left of the page, which read: "Prepared by the makers of Fleischmann's Yeast as a contribution to the advancement of Canadian National Health."³⁷ Akin to the earlier-discussed ads for British foods, this ad signaled that simply the association of Fleischmann's Yeast with Canadian strength, patriotism, and the war effort was deemed sufficient cause for the repeated purchase of full-page ads to Canadian housewives. Another Fleischmann's ad, appearing a full year later, further developed this theme, clarifying that it was a patriotic *responsibility* for women to eat bread: "Do *your* bit for Canada's defense. Keep fit! Eat more wholesome, delicious Bakers' Bread with every

³⁷ Fleischmann's, *Chatelaine*, April 1941, 25.

meal!”³⁸ In the case of bread, it is evident that not only individuals’ bodily health, but also the health of the Canadian body politic was being sustained by every slice.

Beyond apples and bread, other foods attained *national* branding due to more seasonally and regionally confined surpluses. Asparagus and strawberries “brought home from market” were emblematic of this, appearing in the summer months of 1942.

Chatelaine provided recipes instructing their readers in how best to use these foods while explicitly linking their use to the protection and enhancement of national strength.³⁹

Consuming foods that were cheaply and abundantly available from local sources was a means of not only decreasing Canada’s reliance on international food systems (and thereby freeing up more food for British, Russian or military consumption) but also of simple household economics. In this way, women were implicated not only in the management of the household but also of the wartime state.

Another example of this theme in pre-rationing wartime food culture is the series of Department of Fisheries ads that appeared in *Chatelaine* that promoted canned lobster consumption. One such full-page ad (government propaganda rarely merited less than a full-page) from July of 1940 appealed to women’s agency: “help to solve the serious problem facing the Canadian lobster industry due to the loss of overseas markets. Each purchase you make will aid Canada ... it is a real opportunity for you to do something more to overcome the difficulties created by the war.” Again, the ad took the twin interests of household economy and patriotism to refashion a food, its purchase and its

³⁸ Fleischmann’s, *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 53.

³⁹ *Chatelaine*, June 1942, 54-55.

consumption, as being quintessentially Canadian, arguing that “every family can afford lobster,” and that in so doing they would “aid this basic Canadian industry.”⁴⁰

A year later an ad *for advertising* in magazines ran at the expense of the “Magazine Publishers Association of Canada,” representing *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Home Journal*, *National Home Monthly*, and *Maclean’s*. It used the campaign by the Department of Fisheries for increased domestic lobster consumption as representative of the potency of magazine-based advertising to alter consumer habits. The ad stated that while “Almost 85% of its annual pack had always been shipped to Europe,” because of the government advertising campaign, “With the 1940 pack entirely sold out, sales in Canada had reached an all-time high of 14,000 cases, up 467%”!⁴¹ While it is unlikely this advertising was entirely responsible for this marked shift, it is noteworthy for cementing the relationship between advertising, propaganda, female consumers/producers, and food habits in Canada. Each actor in this relationship possessed agency and it can be witnessed in a medium like *Chatelaine*, but in order to pursue each of their respective interests it was necessary for each actor to communicate in a language understandable by all consumers of the magazine. Food habits are not easily changed, but surprising change was nonetheless achieved in wartime Canada because of the successful deployment of a discourse centred on nutrition, nation, and economics coupled with an appreciation of the agency of housewives to aid in the prosecution of war.

Specific foodstuffs – from homemade preserves to “British” foods like tea and HP sauce and “Canadian” ones like apples, lobster, and bread – came to prominence for a variety of reasons during the war. Buying, producing, and eating these foods were ways

⁴⁰ Department of Fisheries, *Chatelaine*, July 1940, 54.

⁴¹ Maclean Publishing Company, *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 40.

for women to variously demonstrate their productivity as housewives, their understanding of “British” taste in food, or their prudence as shoppers when buying the cheapest locally available produce in season. Concurrently, these foods were invested with the ability to speak to women’s support of their family, of their empire, and of their nation. These foods functioned as a material symbol of the stability of gender norms, as the preparation, purchase, service and consumption of each of these foods by women, partially on the advice of *Chatelaine*, its advertisers, and the government, demonstrated the continuing readiness of housewives to ensure the health, nutrition, and economy of Canadian households. It also marked women’s responsiveness to what in essence were individualist, democratic appeals to women as agents of change, which spoke to women through a language which presumed the gender itself to be defined by characteristics of flexibility, rationality, self-sacrifice, and ingenuity. In essence, looking to the changing meaning of these foods illustrates the complicated ways that the gender of “the Canadian housewife” was in fact changing. While traditional gender norms could be preserved through her choice (or preservation) of foods, at once the period’s unstable food culture presented women with the opportunity to actively defend the home front through purchases made outside of the house, which were widely agreed to possess the power to guarantee the stability of national and imperial networks of trade.

Of course, just as there are many instances of Canadian government, corporate, and private or community interests that responded to pressures associated with the Second World War, between 1939 and the end of 1941 there are also notable exceptions to the “wartime shift” of food culture. While British and Canadian interests were practically universal in their adoption of a wartime discursive footing, American corporations

continued to advertise food products and equipment in *Chatelaine*, all the way up until the bombing of Pearl Harbour, as if wartime realities had no major implications for their products. These companies continued to advertise in the pages of *Chatelaine*, but did so while demonstrating a certain tone-deafness regarding the war. This draws attention to the fact that Canadian food habits continued to be influenced by some historical actors, even during wartime, irrespective of the war. Heinz's canned soup ads continued on as they had in the years leading up to the war, with pitches principally concerned with household economy and time-saving that would mean more "*hours of leisure!*" for women.⁴² Campbell's soup advertised using American cultural references as if they would be equally compelling to a Canadian wartime audience: "Roasted to a tempting brown, baked in a homey pot pie, fried Southern-style – whatever way it's fixed[...]"⁴³ These pressures indicate that by no means was Britain alone in playing a part in shaping Canadian food culture, nor in being interested in it.

The same trend held for breakfast cereals like Rice Krispies,⁴⁴ Grape:Nuts,[sic]⁴⁵ and Cream of Wheat,⁴⁶ each of which harped on the tastes of children and the need to supply them with convenient and nutritious foods at breakfast as the principal reasons to buy their product. Though surely American companies found themselves in a difficult position and some would have *liked* to be able to make the more compelling "wartime sell" to Canadians, the American government's continued neutrality meant that any advertising to the contrary could seem hypocritical to a Canadian audience.⁴⁷ Kellogg's

⁴² Heinz, *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 45.

⁴³ Campbell's, *Chatelaine*, September 1940, 17.

⁴⁴ Kellogg's, *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 39.

⁴⁵ Kellogg's, *Chatelaine*, December 1941, 70.

⁴⁶ Cream of Wheat, *Chatelaine*, October 1941, 21.

⁴⁷ Historian Leonard Kuffert writes of the eagerness of Canadian advertisers to seize the opportunity presented by war, which contrasts to the reticence of the American corporations that were essentially barred

attempted to subtly wed pitches based on children's entertainment with those based on war with tag lines like "Join the march to gayer breakfasts!" and by adding a brief encouragement to buy war savings certificates, but in neither case did their advertising approach the degree of *reliance* on patriotism that Canadian and British foodstuffs had assumed.⁴⁸

American companies' reticence to directly address the demands and pressures upon Canadian women in wartime clarifies the complicated nature of Canadian food culture during the time. In so many ways Canadian experience of the Second World War on the home front could be encapsulated as having been akin to "between" the much better documented American and British experiences of the war. However, such an explanation patently oversimplifies the historical experiences of Canadians during this period. While Canadians experienced the distance from the European and Asian theatres of war that Americans experienced (and the relative feeling of safety this distance entailed), they also felt tethered as a British dominion to the British people's experiences of wartime food shortages and loss of life resulting from the Battle of Britain. While they experienced the abundance of North American bumper crops and the relative stability of North American agricultural networks, many also felt the pinch of food shortages and price increases resulting from the government's wartime commitments. These macro-factors defining the experience of food on the home front were reflected in the pages of *Chatelaine*. The way in which specific foods' patterns of cultural use and representation

from doing so. "Advertisers, as might be expected, did not miss the opportunity to be topical in wartime. Augmenting the themes of pre-war campaigns pushing futuristic goods with new ads emphasizing the nation's military obligations, they strove to place would-be consumers in the vanguard of modernity and in the honourable company of Canada's armed forces." Leonard B. Kuffert, *A Great Duty: Canadian Responses to Modern Life and Mass Culture in Canada, 1939-67* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 2003), 37.

⁴⁸ Kellogg's, *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 39.

changed in the magazine shows how food was a site of gendered, national, and imperial significance during wartime.

3.3. *Food is Enlisted in Service to the Family*

Women's responsibility as producers and servers of food within the domestic sphere was changed by warfare, but these responsibilities were also responsible for reciprocally affecting the course of war. Using *Chatelaine* to understand some of the trends characterising the way people thought about women's relationship to food within the home – their duties to their children and husbands in particular – will shed light on the importance of understanding food history during wartime. As the war continued to exert on Canadian society pressure to reconfigure itself to a footing of “total” war, it is understandable that many aspects of culture changed. With escalating warfare as a backdrop, it is surprising to find that the recent turn by advertisers from utilitarian to pleasure-based advertising often continued apace. Though some advertisers discussed (and sold) food using a discourse centred on joy, delight, and fun, the general trend was to construe the household as an offshoot of industrial production, scientific efficiency, and capitalistic materialism. Through the preparation, production, and service of meals to family members, women were actively *producing* materials of war, using a relatively new set of ideas that structured how to think about food. In this new nutritionist framework, the aforementioned pitch to “fun” stood as a notable exception – a useful point of contrast harnessed by a few advertisers *in concert with* the more dominant nutritionist discourse. Finally, as the geographic boundary of the family expanded as husbands and sons were shipped overseas, women continued to use food, and their provision of it to their husbands, fathers, and sons, as a way of demonstrating social stability, physical and

psychological sustenance, and continuing marital faithfulness, filial devotion, or maternal care, both materially and aesthetically.

This exception to the wartime food narrative provides a useful point of entry. The popular historical memory of Second World War and Depression-era sacrifice and thrift, that of “the greatest generation” and their boundless wartime sacrifices, forgets that this period also witnessed the broad popularization of food as a form of fun. Food was to be fun for the whole family and was implicitly the responsibility of the mother to provide. Not only nutrition, but also the pleasure of children and fathers, was increasingly being cast as the responsibility of women to ensure. What is perhaps most surprising is that this responsibility even persisted during wartime. This amounted to a campaign to recast maternal responsibility to include not only the utilitarian nutritional aspects of sustenance and economy, but also pleasure, and therefore represents an important qualification to the general cultural trend in evidence through *Chatelaine*.

While food shortages affected the cost and availability of many foods during wartime in Canada, cereal and canned soup were never scarce. Had they been, it is questionable whether they could have been sold on the basis of fun, as an ad for Kellogg’s Rice Krispies cereal did in April of 1942. While its primary thrust remained one of convenience and thrift, it also cast the cereal as capable of producing marshmallow squares which were “Golden, toothsome morsels of sheer taste delight!” The ad also showed far greater concern with wartime concerns relating to the cost of sugar, explicitly noting that for the recipe provided “no sugar [is] needed.”⁴⁹ Coupled with its advocacy of purchasing “MORE WAR SAVINGS CERTIFICATES,” the ad demonstrated the shift that even American companies had made (after Pearl Harbour) toward wartime themes in

⁴⁹ Kellogg’s, *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 37.

food discourse, but also with its various focuses on thrift, taste, and “delight” it presented a clear image of the great variety of things women were expected to be considering when choosing what to serve at the dinner table.

Another Rice Krispies ad from only two months later appealed more directly to fun and taste to the exclusion of any concerns regarding economy, nutrition, or wartime concerns, marketing the cereal as “like a dish from some never-never land.”⁵⁰ The choices open to even just Kellogg’s, in terms of the ways they could *discuss* the reasons to buy their cereal, demonstrate the multiple ways that food itself was considered. By extension, certain women’s responsibility to provide food to family members was a complex choice that involved the consideration of a growing number of factors, some of which stood quite as far apart from one another as fun, economy, nutrition, and patriotism.

The recasting of food as something women should be considering for probative fun-value was often taking place with regards to cereals, but was not simply the work of advertisers; *Chatelaine*’s staff and its readership also played parts in this transformation. In January of 1942, the magazine launched a contest to create the best cookie from a breakfast cereal. The nature of the contest is itself revealing, given that, by objective measures, wartime and economic concerns should have dictated that less processed grain and oats be used for household baking. Despite this contradiction (which apparently passed unnoticed by the magazine), the contest was nonetheless tied to the war effort by offering to the top ten contestants “War Savings Stamps” and to the overall winner a “Five Dollar War Savings Certificate.”⁵¹ That this contest was launched in the same issue as the aforementioned contest for apple-based recipes was concluded shows the range,

⁵⁰ Kellogg’s, *Chatelaine*, June 1942, 36.

⁵¹ *Chatelaine*, January 1942, 45.

and even the duality, that the period's food culture could manifest. On the one hand there was a contest for the purpose of using to the greatest extent possible the seasonally abundant agricultural produce of the nation; on the other, a contest promoting the increased consumption of industrially-processed cereal products. Each contest was necessarily associated with the war effort, though the reasons for their being launched and the private interests they most clearly benefited were distinctly different. In the long process of Canada's food culture shifting from small-scale individual agricultural production to large-scale industrial and commercial production, the contrast of these two contests in *Chatelaine* provides an interesting milestone.⁵²

Cereal was by no means the only food product that was selling the idea of food for fun. Another one of the era's key mass-produced industrial food products, canned soup, was marketed similarly. In an ad for Campbell's Tomato Soup (Figure 10), the familiar pitch oriented around the nutritional properties of its product was augmented by the promise that the soup would also be so pleasant for children to eat that they would want to consume it simply on its own aesthetic basis. The heading for its text made this combined message clear: "*FOR HEALTH-AND PLEASURE, TOO! SERVE CAMPBELL'S TOMATO SOUP.*" With two separate images of a beaming daughter reveling in the provision of the soup by her mother, and the accompanying dialogue where she shouts out to the reader, "Hooray!", and, "Tomato Soup's My Favourite!," the ad clearly meant for its principal focus to be the pleasure that a mother could provide her

⁵² Such a long process as the shift from agricultural to industrial food production is not the topic of this essay, and so this thought is intentionally left abbreviated. However, it should be noted that this was by no means *the* moment of transition between these generalized models of food production, simple a notably punctuating one. Furthermore, my intention is not to suggest this process is even complete today, or even that any transition from *absolute* agrarianism to industrialism in food production is taking place (something more halting and complex would be my suggestion, were it the subject of this essay to explore these broader historical processes).

children by the purchase and service of this soup.⁵³ This approach represented a shift away from others which had often emphasized convenience and the resulting leisure time *mothers* would enjoy, and therefore spoke directly to mothers' sense of responsibility to their families, rather than their individual desires or ambitions – possibly a tactic following from the war's ubiquitous demand that culture be made to serve the war effort.

Of course, housewives in wartime Canada were not thinking exclusively of how to make meals to provide their families with fun. The principal ways in which food was thought about or discussed were through the scientific and utilitarian principles of nutritionism and household economy. These principles had been deployed with regularity in the years leading up to the war. This was particularly true of household economy, which articulated a way of thinking about food in terms of thrift and value that naturally appealed to many families struggling through the long years of the Depression. However, as the Second World War raged on, scientific nutritionism in particular gained cultural ground as a way of thinking about food choices. Through the war years, the discourse about women's responsibility to provide sustenance for their families was increasingly being predicated on the emerging scientific logic of nutritionism.

In her instructive doctoral study for Carleton University's Department of Sociology and Anthropology on "The Moral Regulation of Nutrition in Canada, 1930-1945," Alana Hermiston divides Canadian wartime food advertising during the war into having taken "one of three approaches: instilling fear, inspiring patriotism, or a 'soft-sell' approach which often drew upon the patriotic angle, particularly in its praise of

⁵³ Campbell's, *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 17.

women.”⁵⁴ Hermiston’s categorization is useful, as it reveals tonal differences that coloured the widespread shift in Canadian food culture toward talking about food in terms of nutrition. Hermiston argued that while nutritional issues were something that “clearly interested” a great many Canadian women before the war, “anyone who previously had not given it much thought was likely compelled to do so through an intense media campaign endorsed by the government and private business sector.”⁵⁵ By exploring *Chatelaine*’s food content during the war years, Hermiston’s argument shall be given new weight and another facet of the story of shifting Canadian food culture will be chronicled.

In 1941, the federal government, through the newly-created Division of Nutrition Services, established Canada’s Food Guide on the basis of regional food availability, scientific recommendations, and surveys of Canadians’ pre-existing eating habits.⁵⁶ The Food Guide codified a way of thinking about food that was above all else scientific and utilitarian in orientation. Certain foods groups were to be consumed in certain amounts by individuals, not because of taste, desire, or ritual, but instead because of basic physical requirements grounded in what was perceived to be hard science that spoke in an as yet indefinite language of vitamins, minerals, protein, food energy, and fat. The government adopted a food policy centred on nutrition for reasons of industrial productivity: nutritionists had been prominently arguing at least since the First World War that nutrition determined productivity and efficiency in the workplace, and so was a vital concern for a nation in either war or peace.⁵⁷ Even earlier, during the 1870s, studies had

⁵⁴ Alana J. Hermiston, “If it’s good for you, it’s good for the nation!’ The Moral Regulation of Nutrition in Canada, 1930-1945,” PhD Thesis, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University (11 February 2005), 124.

⁵⁵ Hermiston, 121.

⁵⁶ Hermiston, 104.

⁵⁷ Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1988), 138-9.

attributed differences in the productivity of American and European workers to the more complete diets of the Americans.⁵⁸ Levenstein argued that the idea of nutrition took a long time to permeate American food culture, and as it did went through several evolutions of its own as the science and the ideological foundations of “nutritionism” changed. During the Second World War, various interests appearing in *Chatelaine* clearly felt this new paradigm for understanding food had been sufficiently popularized. Housewives were expected to be well-enough versed in the new language of nutrition to understand that their jobs as family food providers had become a great deal more complicated. No longer was a full belly sufficient; each family member now needed sufficient quantities of carbohydrates, protein, and a host of vitamins and minerals so as not to succumb to low productivity or worse, illness.

Chatelaine's writers played their own part in the spread of a nutritionist food culture. For instance, one long feature written by Campbell on behalf of *Chatelaine*'s “Housekeeping . . . A Department of Home Management,” entitled “Serve Them Right,” outlined how a mother could best provide for her children even under a tight budget, and used scientific nutritionism as its argumentative crux. In it, she wrote to mothers that “‘Fill ’em up’ used to be the only rule to go by, but nowadays we know that the *kind* as well as the *amount* of food is vitally important.”⁵⁹ This argument mirrors Levenstein's summary of the “New Nutritionist” movement, which he depicts as having been centered on the “belief that it was the quality of food, rather than the quantity, that counted.”⁶⁰ Campbell outlined for her readers a basic way of categorizing food, one that was simultaneously being advocated by the federal government and was characterized by a

⁵⁸ Levenstein, 47.

⁵⁹ Campbell, “Serve Them Right,” *Chatelaine*, September 1941, 51.

⁶⁰ Levenstein, 113.

division between the categories of: milk, meat/fish/poultry, eggs, potatoes and two other vegetables, fruits, bread/cereal/starchy foods, and fat.⁶¹

Campbell's article proceeded to sketch out the "essential" component parts of foods using a more scientific categorization – listing proteins, carbohydrates, fats, minerals, vitamins A, B1, B2, C and D – and roughly correlated these elements to the previously mentioned Food Rules style of categories.⁶² In so doing, she provided a vague idea of what the different scientific names corresponded to and why they were believed to be important for health, but notably was mute on the point of how much was too much. This left plenty of room for advertisers to maneuver with their use of nutritional claims, as housewives were being broadly told what was important and why, but given no means of assessing how much of which foods was needed for good health. This scientific discourse also made no mention of surplus or detrimental foods, and in so doing posed no threat to advertisers as, presumably, only positive claims could be made through these ideas. "Fats," for instance, "are other heat and energy producers [...and] have good 'staying power'; they delay that hungry feeling and do well by us in lots of ways." This new way of thinking about food, not just being sold to women through advertisements but being instructed via neutral-appearing, authoritative scientific treatises, empowered advertisers to speak to women in a language that was, for a time, wholly one-sided.

Claims to nutritive power were not verifiable by the average housewife, but they nonetheless were being made aware of their vital importance. Among the conditions linked to deficiency in the various elements of food Campbell mentioned were: worn out muscles (proteins), "anaemia" and decreased "resistance to germs and ailments" (iron),

⁶¹ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, September 1941, 51.

⁶² Campbell, *Chatelaine*, September 1941, 58.

“goitre” (iodine), “eye trouble and a tendency to infection” and “night blindness” (Vitamin A), “neuritis and constipation” (Vitamin B1 and B2), “scurvy” (Vitamin C), and “rickets,” and “defective teeth and soft, malformed bones” (Vitamin D). While no doubt many of these links were correctly identified as possible outcomes of severe nutritional deprivation, this list placed a tremendous burden on a meal-planner ill-equipped to judge exactly which amounts of these elements were found in which foods.⁶³ That only the most abject or eccentric of diets was likely to produce any traces of most of these diseases, in children or adults, was misleadingly left unmentioned. Children and adults who were blind, rickety, anaemic, or suffering from scurvy represented an inversion of the type of raw human resources needed to defend Canada in war or on the home front. In this light, women’s work in the kitchen and shopping in the grocery store was coded as a civic duty of great importance.

Nutrition was changing the way women understood their roles as mothers. In a “Child Health Clinic” article entitled “The Best Kinds of Foods,” Elizabeth Chant Robertson, M.D., described the nutritional value of milk in the diet of children as due to its bone-strengthening properties, which in turn resulted from its high calcium. In a similar vein, she recommended cheese as “much like concentrated milk.”⁶⁴ She also echoed Campbell in describing protein as used for growth and muscle and organ repair and fruits and vegetables as abundant in vitamin C.⁶⁵ The youthfulness of the science was on full display in this article as well though, as Robertson referred to Dr. McCollum of Baltimore, who “is an eminent authority on nutrition,” and claimed that “Vitamin C helps to preserve the characteristics of youth.” While the legitimacy of these authoritative

⁶³ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, September 1941, 58.

⁶⁴ Elizabeth Chant Robertson, “The Best Kinds of Foods,” *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 53.

⁶⁵ Robertson, *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 53.

sources should perhaps have been questioned by *Chatelaine*'s editorial staff (particularly as Robertson was herself a medical doctor), other claims in this vein were made to readers as well, each under the auspices of nutrition:

Canned vegetables are as good foods as cooked fresh ones. The juice in canned vegetables contains useful amounts of Vitamin C as well as other minerals and vitamins. Don't throw it down the sink. If you have trouble using it up, chill it and serve it as a beverage.⁶⁶

The prevalence of nutritionist discourse in a range of features that appeared in *Chatelaine* during the war marked a significant shift in the expectations of middle- and upper-class women as providers for their families. It altered their relation to food, that most fundamental of material relationships, from being one principally oriented to experiential qualities like the sensation of fullness, taste, and familiarity or comfort to one that demanded that scientific measurement and rational accounting be part of planning meals. These demands were at once onerous and threatening – sickness and frailty was the supposed cost of ignoring them – while being vague and unqualified in so many cases.

The language of nutrition allowed for new thinking about foods. By reducing foods to authoritative-sounding scientific quantities it lent an air of objectivity to food advertisers' claims to healthfulness while operating within a scientific field new enough that claims could be easily or vaguely made without threat of being challenged for veracity. An ad selling corn starch and corn syrup used the patriotic theme in conjunction with a logic of nutrition to sell its product, writing to mothers as "Housoldiers!" and helpfully advising that, "you can help win the war by practical saving . . . and still treat the family to delicious nourishing foods."⁶⁷ Due to increasing shortages of sugar, these

⁶⁶ Robertson, *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 54. Surely, just as the holiday beverages mentioned in the introduction implied the consumption of alcohol, this article as well would seem to implicitly demand its use.

⁶⁷ The Canada Starch Company, *Chatelaine*, July 1942, 49.

products were seen as a nutritionally equivalent to sugar and therefore suitable as substitutes. Though taste and texture may have been markedly different, the language of nutritionism was advantageously channelled to paint them as parallel products and their purchase as a patriotic and productive choice.

All varieties of food products made claims to their nutritional value during the war years in *Chatelaine*. Cream of Wheat boasted of fortifying their product with “**added vitamin B1 and extra minerals**,” all at no extra cost to consumers.⁶⁸ Kraft advertised their “famous cheese food,” Velveeta, as not only providing “tempting Cheese flavour,” but also offering “milk-minerals, milk protein, Vitamin A and Vitamin G!”⁶⁹ Other appeals were less explicit with their claims to specific nutrients, but nonetheless used the new catchphrases to their advantage, as in the case of an ad for Kellogg’s Corn Flakes that mimicked the form of a *Chatelaine* food column (Figure 11), recording its authorship as “by Barbara B. Brooks, *noted nutritional authority*” before proceeding to a half-page text-based sell oriented to taste and popularity, before dedicating only its final two paragraphs to quasi-scientific claims about its nutritional benefit as if the person being fed were a vehicle in need of “fuel.” The precise-sounding claim that “the average serving with cream and sugar has a food value of 223.26 calories, as much as many ‘heavier’ alternatives,” exemplifies the superficiality of advertisers’ use of the new nutritionist culture of food.⁷⁰ While most ads were not so precise as this Kellogg’s one, and claims normally tended toward the use of more vague references to unspecified amounts of vitamins, minerals, or energy, the overriding message that can be garnered from the

⁶⁸ Cream of Wheat, *Chatelaine*, July 1940, 21.

⁶⁹ Kraft, *Chatelaine*, July 1940, 52. “Vitamin G” may sound unfamiliar because it would later be renamed Vitamin B2/Riboflavin.

⁷⁰ Barbara B. Brooks (Kellogg’s), *Chatelaine*, July 1940, 53.

pervasive use of nutritionist discourse is that women were well enough versed in these scientific-sounding reductions of food and actually seeking them out. Feeding the family had become a matter of not only traditional maternal duty, but also had taken on the trappings of a domestic science lab and had become widely understood to be some of the most important work in determining the industrial productivity of Canada.

The link between thinking about food's nutritive value and the war effort was clear across countless sources. This was perhaps most apparent in a Fleischmann's yeast ad for bread entitled, "National Strength Depends on Proper Diet," which impelled women to "Protect your family's health! Use bread freely in their diet – because bread is economical, quickly energizing – an important aid in the great national struggle for victory now being waged by all Canadians."⁷¹ Whether feeding workers for factory work or children for the work of the next generation, nutrition was obviously behind much of the thinking women were expected to do when preparing meals. An ad for Campbell's soup meshed the product's claims to being "a treat to the youngsters" with the claim that "whether *they* know it or not, Campbell's Tomato Soup gives them good sound nourishment, without being heavy."⁷² It is clear that many of the expectations being placed on women as providers were at times in tension, as increasing demands that meals be healthy and nourishing often came into conflict with demands that they be filling or pleasant tasting at once.

In response to a reader who wrote in asking for advice on how best to provide adequate food for her family on a tight budget, Campbell responded with a series of recommendations that capture this tension. In order to ensure her family's diets met

⁷¹ Fleischmann's, *Chatelaine*, September 1940, 4.

⁷² Campbell's, *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 17.

nutritional standards at a low cost, she advised lower-grade quality fruits and meats be purchased for the home, along with recommending that the reader should “Learn to make the most of the cheaper cuts of meat.” Other recommendations included buying in bulk, using “dried peas, beans and lentils,” which she called “the ‘poor man’s meat,’” and buying evaporated milk instead of fresh.⁷³ While each of these recommendations was indeed useful for providing maximum nutrition at minimum cost, they also demanded in each case (except perhaps the recommendation to buy in bulk) an implicit sacrifice of taste. Also implicit in her recommendation is the presumption that the housewife could augment her cheaper purchases with her own time. As is made clear by cursory understanding of “cheaper cuts of meat” or dried legumes, each requires considerably more preparatory time in the kitchen to make edible, let alone palatable, relative to less demanding and more expensive cuts. That Campbell operates on the assumption this reader had the extra time to switch to dried legumes or stewing meats that required many long hours of cooking again indicates the presumed audience that *Chatelaine* addressed. Moreover, the suggestion to replace meat consumption with legume consumption strikingly stands apart from typical *Chatelaine* columns addressing how to deal with shortages resulting from the war. These commonly would suggest cheaper cuts, but in no other place are beans, lentils, or peas recommended as *replacements* for meat products.

Chatelaine’s common practice of silence regarding protein alternatives stood apart from the advice of the Canadian government issued in the first instance of “Canada’s Official Food Rules” in 1942 (Figure 12). In it, the government described, among one of six categories of “Health-Protective Foods,” “MEAT, FISH, etc.—One serving a day of

⁷³ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, October 1941, 69.

meat, fish, or meat substitutes.”⁷⁴ By 1944, with even greater pressure being placed on meat supplies than earlier in the war, the government had revised its Food Rules to explicitly outline these viable alternatives: “One serving of meat, fish, poultry or meat alternatives such as beans, peas, nuts, eggs or cheese” (Figure 13).⁷⁵ That government nutritionists and food policy experts were (increasingly) aware of the nutritional utility of non-meat and non-fish protein substitutes isolates *Chatelaine*’s editorial aversion to suggesting these foods be consumed in the place of meat or fish. That these foods were nutritionally suitable replacements, but culturally unsuitable for *Chatelaine*’s readers to consume in the place of animal-derived proteins speaks to the classist nature of the magazine’s advice relating to food habits. This illustrates the extent to which changes in food culture were in fact mediated by divisions of class or wealth, even during wartime and especially in a magazine that maintained a fairly consistent grasp of its target audience.

More typical of *Chatelaine*’s editorial approach to suggesting changes to food habits was another of Campbell’s articles that gave advice on how to best prepare salads to maximize their nutritive value.⁷⁶ Articles such as this one were defined by a tone-deafness to class, and presumed that all women reading the column would have equal access and ability to purchase and prepare a given food for their families. These columns operated in concert with corporate voices in the magazine, like Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, which produced a series of ads advising on “How to serve better meals— and help Canada’s War Effort.” These encouraged eating *more* of specific foods,

⁷⁴ Health Canada, *Canada’s Food Guide From 1942 to 1992*, online (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2007) §1942.

⁷⁵ Health Canada, §1944.

⁷⁶ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, July 1942, 47-8.

like wheat or locally available fresh produce, so as to “release shipping facilities [...] for shipment[s] to our armed forces and our allies.”⁷⁷ Metropolitan Life contributed just as food companies, *Chatelaine*, and the Canadian government were contributing to an effort to change Canadians’ food habits and the way they made food choices. This effort presumed a great deal of flexibility on the part of consumers, both in terms of the financial and the cultural ability to change their habits. This presumption of monetary and cultural flexibility seems, in retrospect, to be a clear indication of class bias on the part of each of these major actors. In so far as Campbell’s columns were written in response to the demand of the readership for methods to cope with wartime pressures on domestic responsibilities, they nonetheless presented advice that only certain women – those with the time and the means required – were able to adopt.

As Hermiston points out, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company acted in concert with Quaker Oats, Swift Canadian Company Limited, and other insurance companies in helping the Canadian government persuade consumers of the importance of “the successful functioning of the national nutrition program in Canada.”⁷⁸ Aiding the government in this nutritional program was mutually beneficial, as Swift, for instance, funded a series of nutritional research fellowships and in turn, “Nutrition Services promoted Swift meat products across the country.”⁷⁹ Even insurance companies, whose reason for concern with Canadian food habits may not seem directly tied to their business models, benefited from the new nutrition program. Hermiston argues that “the insurance companies offered a ‘back-up plan,’ just in case you failed to follow the

⁷⁷ Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, *Chatelaine*, July 1942, 22.

⁷⁸ Hermiston, 115-6.

⁷⁹ Hermiston, 118.

recommendations.’’⁸⁰ In the context of the vague nutritional claims and recommendations being made by nutritionists and advertisers in *Chatelaine*, it becomes clear why insurance companies came to be interested in the promotion of this new framework for understanding food. The more people thought of food in these materialistic terms, the more likely they would come to understand their own bodies or the bodies of family members in a similar light. Mothers were being instructed in both how to serve their family and nation to ensure health, and at the same time how to be prepared in case their food service fell short.

The responsibility to serve meals to family members did not end when members of that family were displaced from home by commitments to armed service. Articles and advertisements that extended the geographical borders of women’s culinary service beyond the “domestic sphere” were increasingly plentiful as the war escalated. In one article, entitled “For the boys in camp,” Margaret E. Smith outlined the items most requested and appreciated by men serving overseas. The majority of these items were consumable food items or food-related items (like can openers or cigarettes⁸¹), with only a few materials unrelated to food culture (books for instance). This highlights the importance of food as a cultural link to home and its potency as a symbol of love and support. Items that Smith emphasized should be avoided when sending “care packages” are also instructive: gum was essentially prohibited on Canadian bases; soft drinks, though enjoyed widely among the troops, were in fact so plentiful on bases that sending

⁸⁰ Hermiston, 119.

⁸¹ The important place of smoking, and cigarettes in particular, to Canadian (and Western) food culture during this period has been left largely unexplored, but it should be noted that cigarettes did, for many people, constitute an important part of their cultural experience of food. Like alcohol, its conspicuous absence from the magazine also encouraged its exclusion from this study.

them represented a wasted opportunity. The items recommended and cautioned against highlight the role of food as a cultural link to a home culture, but also its value as an item of exchange based largely on scarcity and demand. Certain food items that Smith recommended stand out as historical oddities: one of her strongest appeals was that women can their roast meats, roast chicken in particular, for shipping overseas – canning coupled with generous spicing was guaranteed to keep the meat against spoiling, while the taste of “home-cooked” meat from Mom was ensured to result in satisfaction.⁸² In another column appearing the next month on the same topic, the vast majority of the items recommended were foods, with the type of items recommended including everything from home-cooked meals and baked goods to canned foods, from store shelves or home-made.⁸³ While it is doubtful the *taste* of these canned roasts was particularly recommendable, the experience of having thoughtfully-packaged meat from home delivered by “care package” undoubtedly translated to a cultural experience of food whose value transcended that of mere sensory experience. In these types of cultural experiences of food, the significance of the wartime context cannot be overstated.

Serving the men overseas was not simply the role of stay-at-home mothers. An article in *Chatelaine* entitled “Young Canada Cooks” described a home economics competition that challenged high school students from across Ontario to compete to serve up satisfying meals to enlisted men training for overseas service. The menus prepared by the top two finalists were careful to stress the choice of menu items using the language of home economics and deployed the conventionally middle-class structure of an appetizer, a central protein (fish in both cases), two vegetables, a starch, and a dessert. After each

⁸² Margaret E. Smith, “For the boys in camp,” *Chatelaine*, December 1940, 63.

⁸³ Smith, “Packing a Box for a Soldier? This is what they’d like to get,” *Chatelaine*, January 1941, 45.

meal was prepared, the contestants summed up their work economically, the final touch to demonstrate their ultimate ability as homemakers: “Total cost of the meal, for four people . . . \$1.08” and “\$1.09.”⁸⁴ The judging was clearly done in such a way as to balance the dual interests of taste and economy. It also aptly captures one of the many processes by which food culture was transmitted from one generation to another. No doubt most young women learned food habits more directly from mothers and older siblings in the domestic sphere, but just as the government was about to intervene into domestic food habits with the publication of “Canada’s Official Food Rules” in 1942, so too did *Chatelaine* assume a more active role in the transmission of food culture to future generations. Through competitions like this one, and perhaps even more so *Chatelaine*’s reporting of it, women were presented with an ideal toward which food should aspire. That ideal centred on the economic use of food to satisfy the tastes of active, patriotic men.

The stress on this service being to *men* is not overdrawn. Were not women serving Canada and the British Empire overseas and were they not also shipped care packages containing food? Apparently not. While certainly exceptions must have existed (and no statistics exist to speak clearly to this point), in all instances of care packages being discussed in *Chatelaine*, there appears no instance of them being recommended for women serving in auxiliary capacities overseas. In some articles, this exclusion is markedly apparent, as in the case of one written by Campbell on the subject of sending

⁸⁴ “Young Canada Cooks,” *Chatelaine*, January 1941, 44. This prevalence of this tripartite division of the three meals of the day, along with the balance of each meal’s weighting between food groups, was also related in every month of *Chatelaine* (with only a couple of exceptions from 1939-45) by the *Meals of the Month* feature, which outlined an idealized, calendar-style menu of balanced breakfasts, lunches, and dinners for each day of the given month.

cookies to sailors, soldiers and airmen overseas.⁸⁵ Despite having mentioned all three branches of the military as meriting such support, women serving overseas were nonetheless overlooked. This exclusion, along with stresses on masculine-coded items of consumption such as cigarettes and roasted meats, shows that women's obligation to food service was clearly gender-coded. This fealty of service demonstrated love, continued support and also loyalty: as such, it was due to fathers, sons, and brothers but there was no expectation it be due to mothers, daughters or sisters. The meaning and function of "care packages," sent by women to men overseas, can be unpackaged by looking to Lewis Hyde's theoretical conception of "the gift" as an object-exchange productive of "an oppressive sense of obligation," and even the gift as a means to "establish and maintain hierarchies."⁸⁶

Women's responsibility to serve up food for men overseas extended beyond family ties. As the war raged on and increasing numbers of Canadian and allied troops were captured and made prisoners of war, governments asked women on the home front to take on some of the responsibility for them. One *Chatelaine* article, "Food for Our Prisoners of War," detailed the importance of changes to home-front food habits in the context of Canada's growing responsibility in this regard: "Canada now packs one quarter of all prisoner-of-war food parcels, Britain the rest. It will soon be 50-50."⁸⁷ While the article read like a general interest piece, it also implicated the actions and choices of women on the home front in the hunger and health of prisoners of war abroad.

⁸⁵ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, January 1941, 76.

⁸⁶ Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* (New York: Vintage Books, 1983) xvi.

⁸⁷ Lotta Dempsey, "Food for Our Prisoners of War," *Chatelaine*, February 1942, 8-9.

For Canadian women, meal service was a symbolic performance of great cultural value. Along the path that led up to the moment of laying plates in front of family members within the confines of the home, women faced a multitude of voices and choices that structured the foods and food habits they would select. Even the bones of animals were loaded up with cultural significance. National magazines went to great lengths to stress the importance of saving this debris from the ham, the turkey, or the pot roast and giving them to local salvage committees to convert to glue and explosives.⁸⁸ Through food, women were drawn out of the home and into the Second World War.

Women serving men food is the assumed standard operating across most of *Chatelaine*, in editorials, advertisements, government propaganda, and even reader feedback. However, even as women were called on to serve men with voices both loud and numerous, there were still opportunities for and instances of resistance. One striking example of this appeared in *Chatelaine* in February of 1942, as an article intended to highlight and strengthen the bonds between Canada and its new ally, the USSR, used the role of women as a reflection of the modernity and progressiveness of Soviet Society:

How can one generalize about 160 million people? But, on the whole, it has always seemed to me that it is the women who have benefitted most from Russia's revolution. They are completely free, even of domesticity, for there is no such thing as housekeeping in Soviet cities. Communal kitchens, laundries, nurseries, and so on, leave women with lots of time to read, to study, to keep minds and bodies fit. They have to work, of course. An industrial, scientific or agricultural job is a matter of course. An idler gets no food or doctoring or transport or holiday. But they work on a level with men, banking their own wages. They get every kind of free health service, although, alas, the six weeks rest before and after childbirth was – last June – reduced to two. They can marry and unmarry on their walk to and from their work. They can live, respected and respectable, with the

⁸⁸ Irene Todd, "The Salvage They Gather," *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 12.

comrade of their choice. They are in no way less considered or more considered than men.⁸⁹

As this writer expounded on the virtues of the Soviet system, explicitly modeling the USSR as both a worthy ally and a utopian society, she implicitly recommended its revolutionary model of gender norms as both possible and desirable. As war raged on, causes for hope and aspirations for future change began to arise in response to the inevitable question of “what are we fighting for?” This questioning and debating regarding the shape and the experience of postwar reconstruction would come to dominate the ruminations of Canadians on the home front, particularly after the turn of Allied fortunes in 1943. While cultural critics, politicians and everyday citizens all harboured and advocated differing notions of what this reconstruction should look like, so too did the women writing for, and reading, *Chatelaine*.⁹⁰ As women bought into the Second World War on the home front, and used food in support of men, nation-state, and empire, the nature of their relation to each was also questioned by many – though rarely so boldly in the pages of *Chatelaine*.

3.4. Food Ritual and the Performance of Sacrifice

Just as food culture served as a medium for transmitting cultural symbols relating to gender and nation between family members – whether the dinner table was a conventional one or was packed and shipped abroad in the condensed modern dress of a

⁸⁹ Rosita Forbes, “Russian Women and the War,” *Chatelaine*, February 1942, 19. The degree to which this article was removed from journalistic standards of evidence-based reporting is perhaps encapsulated best in the groundless claim that women in Second World War Soviet Russia supposedly received two weeks rest *before* childbirth – a strange claim when one considers the difficulty of guessing in advance the day on which childbirth will take place! As in so many other cases, the historically significant substance of this article rests not in what it definitely tells us about women’s lived experience during this period, but rather in the language it uses to explore women’s experience, as well as the set of ideas and expectations it both discusses and contests.

⁹⁰ Leonard B. Kuffert, *A Great Duty: Canadian Responses to Modern Life and Mass Culture in Canada, 1939-67* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s UP, 2003) 66.

“care package” – so too did it operate between members of a society in wider family gatherings and social occasions linking friends and neighbours. Holidays in particular served as densely loaded cultural occasions during which food was more than just served or consumed, but performed. In deploying the idea of performance to describe the way women interacted with food, intentional associations are drawn between Judith Butler’s idea of gender as performance and Timothy Morton’s notion of “Consumption as Performance,” the former of which was highlighted in the introduction.⁹¹ In the case of Butler, the performative act lay at the heart of the meaning of gender, which she defined as “a construction that regularly conceals its genesis; the tacit collective agreement to perform, produce, and sustain discrete and polar genders as cultural fictions [...]”⁹² Through the conjunction of Morton’s theoretical claim that performance is essential for understanding consumption and Butler’s insight into the integral role of performance in the constitution and perpetuation of gender, a more comprehensive understanding of the way food and gender were performed in unison during the Second World War is attainable.

While holidays operated as explanation points in the culinary calendar, everyday food habits also operated in such a way as to demand food habits be performed not only for the immediate family but also extended family members, friends and neighbours as a kind of communal communication of shared sacrifice and suffering. Traumatic experiences of suffering, privation, and monotony have long been a part of the popular memory of the lived experience of troops on frontlines during the Second World War;

⁹¹ Timothy Morton, “Afterword,” *Cultures of Taste / Theories of Appetite: Eating Romanticism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 1-2.

⁹² Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990) 140.

that suffering, privation and monotony similarly defined the experience of many Canadians on the home front, principally through the medium of food, is a story *Chatelaine* is uniquely capable of recalling. Investigating these shared experiences, and particularly their communal performance, reveals a network of performance tied to a culture, economy, and politics of food that directly influenced Canada's ability to prosecute the Second World War.

Returning briefly to the letters of Mrs. Williamson, she describes holidays to have already undergone substantial change by the second year of the war: "The traditional Christmas dinner had already been compromised by 1941, with no dried fruits or nuts in the stores, and no cheese."⁹³ As new constraints were placed on the buying and cooking habits of women substitute food items took the place of old standards. However, the new foods served at holidays were not simply "filling in the gaps" until traditional foods could be returned inexpensively to table. The need to adapt presented an opportunity for new foods, carrying new symbolic associations, to be prepared and presented in the context of the holidays.

Campbell wrote to this effect in the article, "A Patriotic Christmas Dinner." In it, she wrote of one housewife whose adaptation Campbell thought recommendable: "She decided on an all-British dinner to keep her money in the Empire and thus express her patriotism in a practical way. The meal starts off with a nibble of lobster in a tangy tomato sauce, partly because it has the Christmas color and partly because we're asked to use this good Canadian fish." For this Christmas dinner, Campbell's exemplary home cook chose a lobster cocktail for the first course, potentially in response to the government propaganda which appeared in earlier issues of *Chatelaine*. Later into the

⁹³ Williamson, ¶10.

meal, a triumvirate of colonial tastes were combined from “Canada, Australia and India” in the form of sweetmeats, and a “good old plum and apple combination” that was enlisted “to toast the Empire and the Christmas season.”⁹⁴ In the case of Canadian lobster, colonial sweetmeats, and British plum and apple desert, Campbell recommended that these foods not only be prepared and consumed, but presented and performed as acts symbolizing national and imperial loyalty and commitment to the war effort. A year later, another article by Campbell, “For a Merry Christmas,” provided recipes that featured lobster, beets, and cranberries, all foods that were plentifully available in Canada.⁹⁵ The larger audience that a holiday meal entailed presented an even greater opportunity to demonstrate the patriotic virtues of the housewife and, by extension, her family. The performative act of serving such a meal (indeed, even of reading about one) spread pressure to conform among other women and families, and thereby perpetuated the use of holidays and food as occasions and mediums for demonstrating patriotism.

Christmas dinner was by no means alone among holidays in being adapted to wartime. In another article from Campbell, “All Canadian Tables,” she outlined how to go about setting a table for Easter dinner or brunch. In it, she emphasized the aesthetic attractiveness and economy of buying Canadian or British manufactured goods for the table.⁹⁶ It is clear from this piece that adaptations to holiday practices extended beyond simply the food on offer, but even pressured women to demonstrate patriotism through the careful adornment of the kitchen table. In the menu, the decorations, the cutlery and plates, even in the candlesticks, Canadian and British associations could – and should – be on display. Holidays were considered special occasions when women could

⁹⁴ Campbell, “A Patriotic Christmas Dinner,” *Chatelaine*, December 1940, 58-9.

⁹⁵ Campbell, “For a Merry Christmas,” *Chatelaine*, December 1941, 63.

⁹⁶ Campbell, “All Canadian Tables,” *Chatelaine*, April 1941, 69.

legitimately spend extra time on seemingly frivolous decorative pursuits that in wartime might be at risk of being criticized as wasteful or insensitive to the suffering of the troops or allied peoples. Consequently they had to be recoded to be read as the conspicuous consumption of patriotic dedication and solidarity.

Some traditional holiday foods were ascribed new meanings during wartime. One Swift's Premium Meats ad recommended their lamb be served at Easter on nutritional grounds: "For health is vital to victory, and meat is an outstandingly healthful food. It is a good source not only of high quality proteins and minerals, but also of the valuable B vitamins."⁹⁷ Even though lamb had long been associated with Easter dinner, it appears in this case that traditions were assuming new associations in order to maintain their validity in wartime. The choice to serve lamb to guests at Easter gatherings therefore communicated more than the preservation of old associations with Spring or new life; this choice was made to communicate a housewife's thoughtful, scientific preparation of nutritious vitamins, proteins and minerals in an effort to increase productivity on the home front.

Beyond choices relating to ingredients and decoration, the labour of producing and serving a holiday meal had, particularly for many middle-class Canadians, become substantially more difficult than before due to the war. Campbell illustrated this in "My Maid's Gone Into Munitions," an article that advised housewives on how to make up for the loss of "the extra pair of hands" from so many domestic servants having taken the opportunity presented by better-paying factory jobs producing for wartime. Without hands to aid in the preparation and service of holiday feasts, Campbell suggested women should "Be content with a plainer, but still nice, scale of living—with fewer courses,

⁹⁷ Swift's Premium Meats, *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 20.

simpler dishes, and more informal service.” She went on to draw “dad” into the labour of serving, suggesting that “dad gets the roast and mother the vegetables” when bringing food to the table.⁹⁸ Campbell also suggested that the flight of domestic labour to industrial work legitimated the use of “short cuts,” like the use of canned tomato soup as “a ready-made sauce for fish, meat loaves and hamburgers.”⁹⁹ As food culture changed it brought about a host of consequent changes in the responsibilities, entitlements, and profitability of a range of historical actors, from husbands and mothers to canned food producers and munitions factories. The flip side of this change is the implicit understanding that if the culture had been more rigid, if upper and middle class families had not adapted but instead offered wage increases to counter the lure of factory work, munitions production in Canada could have been adversely affected.

The final act in the performance of any well-executed holiday meal during the Second World War was explored in an article entitled, “Left-overs – If any!: What to do with them after holiday dinners.”¹⁰⁰ In it, the next aspect of food performance, that of the performance of shared sacrifice, is revealed. During the war, waste became a catchword for food habits that did not use food materials as economically or as productively as possible. Bones and gristle, preservative juices from canned vegetables or fruits, bread crusts and spoiled milk are all instances of food or food-like materials that developed new cultural cachet as vehicles by which women could contribute to the war effort. By channelling left-overs to either individual consumptive or industrial productive processes,

⁹⁸ Campbell, “My Maid’s Gone Into Munitions,” *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 65.

⁹⁹ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 66.

¹⁰⁰ Campbell, “Left-overs – If any!: What to do with them after holiday dinners,” *Chatelaine*, January 1941, 45.

women publicly changed food habits in order to demonstrate to neighbours, friends, and family their commitment to sharing the burden of sacrifice. Waste was not simply avoided; preventing waste was not merely the negation of excess. The fight against waste demanded a performance of sacrifice that bonded Canadians together around shared experiences that bordered on ritualistic and indeed exerted communal pressure to conform to standards of total productivity with materials that passed through the kitchen and the dinner plate.¹⁰¹

In a complicated way, waste married the ideas of home economics and nutritionism together into a single wartime mantra, “Waste not, Want not.” This mantra encouraged the maximum productive use of food resources both to free up those resources *and to encourage spending*, with the monetary resources freed up from decreases in discretionary spending being redirected toward war savings certificates. These certificates begin to appear in advertisements and propaganda in July of 1940 in *Chatelaine*.¹⁰² The link between anti-waste food campaigns and war certificates that directly funded the government’s war effort was spelled out only two months later:

Don’t Waste Anything. In 1915 the official who was controller of food for Canada figured fifty million Canadian dollars went into the garbage can every year. That would buy a lot of war certificates without any hardship to anybody. It is a good plan, also, to make every member of the family share in the curtailment of family pleasures and the use of nonessentials, so that all may feel that they are doing their part in our war effort.¹⁰³

The last point this article brings up is an interesting one, in that it argues the importance of sharing the experience of sacrifice among family members so that each could

¹⁰¹ This cultural attitude was not limited to food products exclusively, but also manifested with respect to all manner of materials including clothing and fuel. However, more so than any other element of material culture, food could be said to have been the keystone material in this culture of sacrifice.

¹⁰² Government of Canada, *Chatelaine*, July 1940, 24.

¹⁰³ Carolyn Damon, “Shopping to win the war,” *Chatelaine*, September 1940, 39.

democratically consume or abstain from the goods available to the family, and in so doing share in the experience of patriotic participation in the war effort. While this article recommends shared sacrifice between family members, the more prevalent reality appearing throughout *Chatelaine* is that women were to bear the brunt of the responsibility for ensuring this sacrifice on the home front.

A full-page propaganda ad by the National War Finance Committee (Figure 14) suggested the best counter against wasteful habits lay in “THRIFT,” which it stressed “begins in the home, in the kitchen, in the clothes you wear. From now on, resolve that *needless* spending is out! *Your* personal war job is to save every cent you can . . . and invest those savings in War Savings Stamps!” While it also suggests “every woman, man and child in Canada” had a role in it, the obvious target of the ad was clear as the text appeared under the image of a woman with her hands literally on the purse-strings as Hitler whispered in her ear, “GO ON, SPEND IT... what’s the difference?”¹⁰⁴ This ad makes clear that while everyone on the home front was expected to share broadly in the experience of sacrifice, it was women who were to implement it on the domestic scale, and their choices that would ensure its success.

Campbell wrote several articles on stretching the usefulness of food in the home. In “Double Headers,” she explained that bread ends or trimmings could be saved to make crumbs, egg whites and yolks could be used in “roles [sic],” that bones left over from meat could be used to make soups and that cooking water from cooking vegetables should be saved to make “soups, sauces and gravies.”¹⁰⁵ Beyond simply avoiding waste, she argued that reusing the cooking water from vegetables, when used to cook rice or pasta in

¹⁰⁴ National War Finance Committee, *Chatelaine*, July 1942, 4.

¹⁰⁵ Campbell, “Double Headers,” *Chatelaine*, April 1941, 71 and 73.

other meals, would result in “more flavorsome and more nutritious” food. Suggestions even extended to foods conventionally perceived to be inedible, as in the case of using “turned” cream and soured milk.¹⁰⁶

Though these habits were often the labour of the housewife alone, it is critical to recall that their labour was by no means invisible and its implications extended well beyond them. Making stock, saving cooking water or stale bread, or using soured milk would each have been prominent and recognizable habits, particularly as they could not be hidden when family or friends were over for dinner. Entertaining would, for instance, yield the greatest mass of bones and the greatest volumes of cooking water, just as it would present the biggest opportunities to use the “fruits” of these byproductive labours to productive ends. The taste of meals cooked by those actively practicing “THRIFT” would have been apparent, just as the hours of labour required of its practitioners would have filled houses with the smells and tastes of simmering broth and souring cream. The times when guests were within eye- or ear-shot coincided with the opportunities where women would feel the greatest responsibility to practice, and thereby perform, patriotic thriftiness. In so demonstrating, the food habit would have been normalized and inculcated in both the young and any adults looking on. Even the careful packing away of leftovers for the next day represented a conscious, socio-cultural choice with political and economic implications easily recognizable to any witness.

Chatelaine's editorial approach to encouraging thrifty food choices went beyond advice columns explicitly dedicated to outlining habits or meals that combated the spectre of waste. They also used biography as a tool for linking patriotic thriftiness to female empowerment outside of the home. This was apparent in an article by Ruth Clendenan

¹⁰⁶ Campbell, *Chatelaine*, April 1941, 73.

Keith on “*Chatelaine*’s Personality of the Month,” Phyllis Gregory Turner. In December of 1941, Turner assumed the title of Oils and Fats Administrator for the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, and in so doing, “shattered Canadian tradition by becoming a full-fledged government administrator – the first woman ever to receive such an appointment.”¹⁰⁷ It should come as no surprise that this particular glass ceiling was shattered in the context of food, given the agency women were considered to exercise over food choices in the household. The way the magazine used her story as a model is nonetheless instructive. It depicted her administrative responsibility as that of balancing the needs of the home front with those of the war, charting a path between the needs of industry and those of Canada’s homemakers. Keith explained her responsibility as having to, “consider essential needs before luxuries, and give us soap before perfume.”¹⁰⁸ Her work in this role had resulted in the adoption of new industrial practices relating to cooking oil production, marrying the economic needs of industry to the nutritional needs of house-makers by enriching “practically all vegetable shortenings” with “a percentage of animal fat” to enrich its nutritional content. This effort entailed the construction of huge processing factories from the Maritimes to British Columbia, concentrating the economic landscape of oil in Canada and eventually resulting in a post-war inheritance of consolidated production, but also yielded immediate economic and nutritional benefits that were perceived as a tremendous success for wartime national production.¹⁰⁹

While Keith’s narration of Turner’s story focussed largely on her policy work and its successful wedding of industrial and domestic aims, it was also used as a means of

¹⁰⁷ Ruth Clendenan Keith, “*Chatelaine*’s Personality of the Month,” *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 3. It should be noted that Phyllis Gregory Turner was the mother of future Prime Minister John Turner and that she was enabled to not only assume, but succeed in, such a high-ranking bureaucratic position due largely to her being a widow and the sole breadwinner for her family.

¹⁰⁸ Keith, *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 2.

¹⁰⁹ Keith, *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 3.

exerting pressure on individual women in the domestic sphere, providing advice later in the column to “Canadian housewives” from Turner that read: “ ‘Save every ounce of fats and bones.’ Old bones yield oils and glue and fertilizer. Fats help to grease the wheels of industry.” Such advice obviously worked in conjunction with the biographical details of Turner’s professional success to inspire in Canadian women both admiration for her public efforts and, through it, rouse domestic participation in industrially-beneficial domestic food habits.¹¹⁰

Propaganda augmented these editorial efforts to encourage changes in domestic patterns of behaviour. As Keshen explains, the government went out of its way to inform “Canadians of the many ways in which their small sacrifices with clothing added up to major contributions to the war.”¹¹¹ Further still, many corporations publicly demonstrated their commitment to thrifty wartime production to strengthen their brand by conveying a sense that they too shared in the sacrifices being made by women at home. Swift’s Premium Meats is once again exemplary of this trend in *Chatelaine*, writing in one ad among its claims to nutrition, quality, and patriotism, that:

Our Company is pleased to do its part in conserving and developing supplies, in handling them with the greatest possible economy, in helping assure their efficient use. Conservation of some foods at home is a patriotic necessity. But there are still many healthful and delicious meat dishes, such as beef, lamb, and particularly poultry, which are not requested by Great Britain. These, we are glad to say, we can make available to your favourite dealer without interfering with the vital needs of the Motherland.¹¹²

This represents an instance of a corporation intentionally and publicly performing its share of sacrifice for its own commercial benefit. By vaguely linking its efficient,

¹¹⁰ Keith, *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 3.

¹¹¹ Keshen, 105.

¹¹² Swift’s Premium Meats, *Chatelaine*, December 1941, 20.

intentional and restrained productivity with British need and household conservation efforts, the brand associated itself with the government and editorial-sponsored adaptations to food habits occurring frequently throughout *Chatelaine*.

Sacrificial behaviour on the home front was further promoted by arguments contrasting the mildness of the sacrifices endured by Canadians to the hardships of those experienced by British civilians. In “The Parcels They Mail,” Elizabeth Chant Robertson, M.D. spoke to Canadian experiences of food shortages and voluntary curtailments of specific food items in just such a comparative light: “We in Canada don’t know how irksome rationing is. Certainly most of us would find these [British] amounts very low, especially the butter, bacon and meat.” After admonishing Canadian women by contrast, she proceeded to encourage shipping gifts of food to British civilian “friends” so as to relieve their suffering; in a sense, this argument was enlarging by association the communal loop that had already been geographically extended by the overseas service of Canadian men.¹¹³ That Britain was chosen as both the example to contextualize Canadian experiences of changes to food habits, as well as the target for Canadian aid is worth noting. The choice contains implicit cultural information, as neither other colonial dependencies of Britain that were experiencing far worse food shortage (i.e. Bangladesh or Australia) nor other allied nations experiencing famine to a greater degree (i.e. Russia or China) were chosen. This suggests that such nations, either because of perceived differences in their cultural food “needs” or because of perceived differences in Canadians’ geopolitical obligation to them, were somehow both less comparable and less deserving of Canadian aid.

¹¹³ Robertson, “The Parcels They Mail,” *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 13.

The suspicions that cultural bias was implicitly guiding this article's arguments was confirmed by Dr. Robertson's suggestions for the foods most dearly "needed" by British civilians and therefore best included in aid packages: "Chocolate bars are very scarce, and a few of them in your parcel would be welcome. Tea and sugar (which are best sent in cotton bags) are almost sure to be acceptable."¹¹⁴ It is noteworthy that foremost among the suggestions she makes are some of the most emblematic products of British imperial trade, and also that they are by no means plentiful products of *Canadian* agriculture. This suggests that more than just British nutrition was being sustained, but that Canadian aid was being directed toward the sustenance of a more ephemeral quality: a British cultural appetite and a sense of imperial continuity seems a more likely beneficiary to be sustained by chocolate, tea and sugar.

Of course, Robertson's list of foods to sustain the motherland went on to include other less luxurious products as well. Among the "best foods to send" she also included: meat, meat paste, butter, pasteurized cheese, and cured bacon.¹¹⁵ While certainly these foods were nutritionally rich, once again she encouraged support of a more than purely nutritional kind. What was not suggested is instructive, as foods that could more efficiently and inexpensively fill care packages with nutritional aid, all while being less likely to spoil in transit, like dried legumes, were not suggested as appropriate. This suggests that the void being addressed by Canadian aid was not one of a physiological experience of hunger in Britain (though that was undoubtedly experienced by some), but rather it was an experience of cultural famine instead.

¹¹⁴ Robertson, *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 34.

¹¹⁵ Robertson, *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 34.

Whether addressing British experiences of cultural famine as opposed to Bangladeshi or Russian experiences of physiological famine¹¹⁶ was the best way to enlist Canadian women's support in adopting new food practices at home is difficult to determine. To presume that different approaches that tackled famine in more life-threatening geographical contexts would necessarily have won over more Canadian women is to imagine an alternative history, beyond the scope provided by an historical analysis of *Chatelaine*. What remains self-evident is that this was the path chosen by the magazine's editors, at the very least highlighting that there was a *perception* that such a tack would resonate more strongly with upper-middle-class Canadians.

The effort to promote the habituation and performance of sacrifice, pursued by a variety of historical actors, was by no means universally accepted by Canadians. Instances of resistance and outright rebellion against the ascendant ideology of consumption took place across the country, and can even be glimpsed in the pages of *Chatelaine*, in spite of its editorial programme to marginalize such voices. Elaborate and highly decorative dinners continued to be prepared during the war years when entertaining, and especially during holidays, and *Chatelaine* suggested ways that such occasions should be recoded to exude patriotism and thereby stave off any criticism. In this way, middle and upper class food culture can be said to have undergone adaptive change to wartime circumstances by late 1941. This change was by no means revolutionary, nor did it threaten traditional gender norms or other economic and political relations of power that structured the way food was experienced or produced in Canada;

¹¹⁶ What might be more roughly or directly termed "real" famine.

in fact, by and large, the adaptations were quintessentially conservative and directed toward the *preservation* of the old societal order.

As has already been hinted at, late into 1941 the trajectory of Canadian food culture changed. Donald Gordon, who would serve as the Director of WPTB from 1941 to 1947, was appointed in the fall of 1941.¹¹⁷ Mosby underscores that his appointment signals the moment when government direction over food moved from a passive, “peripheral role,” to an active and interventionist one. Shortly following his appointment, on October 8th, 1941, the government moved to bring in controls over prices, rents, and wages in an effort to counter widespread, dramatic inflationary pressure.¹¹⁸ During 1941 and 1942, shoppers endured long line-ups and great scarcity of goods as the government shifted from voluntary to prescriptive approaches to rationing. Shopkeepers exercised unprecedented authority during the transitional period between these approaches, as many implemented all “kinds of informal and unfair rationing systems.” The voluntary rationing of sugar based on the “honour system” of self-policing was introduced for sugar in January of 1942, but proved unsatisfactory for both consumers and administrators. Public opinion reacted against it as an imperfect half-measure, and was catalyzed by experience of it into widespread support of government action to implement rationing cards in February of 1942.¹¹⁹

Keshen’s history of the Second World War qualifies the popular narrative of sacrifice and thrift, and it too hinges on the end of 1941 as pivotal. He refers to a 1941 poll that “showed that 18 percent of those surveyed admitted to accumulating some food

¹¹⁷ Ian Mosby, *Food Will Win the War: The Politics, Culture and Science of Food During Canada’s Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, forthcoming 2014), 91.

¹¹⁸ Mosby, 92.

¹¹⁹ Mosby, 93-5.

as a precaution against future shortages, and when asked about others, 56.5 percent said they were aware of ‘quite a few’ who hoarded.”¹²⁰ This poll evokes a society that was by no means universally trusting that the food policy being pushed by government and industry would ensure protection against hunger. More importantly, it highlights a lack of trust between neighbours and community members: though Canadians predominantly claimed to themselves be following the rules against hoarding scarce foods, more than half of them believed they *knew* others were ignoring these rules. Obviously, self-reporting and suspicions do not line up, and this discrepancy paints the picture of a society unprepared to follow through with a strict commitment to voluntary food rationing – the government’s official policy until the end of 1941. Voluntary rationing stemmed from an ideology of laissez-faire economic governance; however, the reality of its practical ineffectiveness compelled the official adoption of a more direct, centralized, and autocratic government intervention into the economy of food.

Almost as soon as voluntary rationing was brought into effect, the Canadian government was compelled to seek policy alternatives. As Keshen recalls, “The day after the voluntary rationing of sugar was introduced, several stores reported panic buying. By February 1942 only 29 percent of Canadians surveyed said that they believed voluntary rationing could work.”¹²¹ Canadians’ apparent readiness to embrace non-voluntary rationing of foods, combined with their lack of faith in the honesty of their fellow citizens, led to a situation wherein by the middle of the war “Polls consistently showed that three-quarters of Canadians or more supported rationing, and most newspapers

¹²⁰ Keshen, 106.

¹²¹ Keshen, 106.

printed strong endorsements.”¹²² Paradoxically, it was perhaps because of instances of resistance – or even simply the suspicion of resistance – that the shift in food culture toward thrift and against luxurious or “wasteful” food habits was given enough popular support to be enshrined in Canadian law in the form of compulsory rationing measures. Greater amounts of government intervention therefore followed not simply from Canadians’ lack of individual commitment to changes in food habits, but more specifically from their lack of faith that others’ would honestly change their own habits.

Summary of Change up to 1941

By the middle years of the war, particularly as 1941 came to a close, food habits on Canada’s home front had experienced considerable change. Though instances of resistance existed, a food culture characterized by thrift, household economy, and nutritionism gradually took hold of middle and upper-class discourse. This discourse was made-to-order for many of the corporate and government entities which were in fact key players in its creation and dispersal. The new discourse also fitted into a pre-existing set of gendered norms for behaviour that structured previous food cultures, while presenting new (though often fleeting) opportunities for women to express their resistance to these old hierarchies of power. Unconventional ways of thinking about women’s role in society were discussed in the context of a far-off, idealized reflection of gender in the USSR, and these changes were explicitly discussed as the possible by-products of a more industrialized food system. However, while these possibilities were obviously a part of the period’s discourse, the truth remains that they were a marginalized and unrepresentative aspect of it. By and large, the centralization and industrialization of

¹²² Keshen, 107.

Canadian food economies, coupled with the increasing intervention of the government through the WPTB, worked to harness and redirect women's agency in the kitchen and the supermarket toward reinforcing patriarchal power in the home, industrial-scale corporate power in the marketplace, and imperial power on the global stage.

Food culture was changing partially because economic and industrial pressures necessitated change, as agricultural methods of production were actually being forced into stasis, in spite of sky-rocketing demand, by the shift to wartime production. By the close of 1942, Keshen writes that "Canadian output of new farm machinery was only one-third its 1940 level, though as in the United States this decrease was offset to some extent by an authorized 50 percent increase in the production of repair and spare parts."¹²³ Whereas mostly lower class women were brought into the industrial workforce, middle and upper class women's labour was also enlisted within the domestic sphere. With this context in mind, Ruth Roach Pierson argues that "Women's increased job opportunities during the war were not a recognition of their right to work, but rather because women were a convenient source of labour both for private industry and public service. Women were still used mainly for tasks already designated as female, and hence not in competition with men."¹²⁴ The editor of *Chatelaine* was herself emblematic of the nature of this change, as Pierson maintains that even Byrne Hope Sanders was appointed to government positions, "because the work was seen as within women's domain."¹²⁵ On the home front, it seems, women continued to be relegated to an auxiliary role as *supporters* of men, even if their support was increasingly being recognized as valuable. While food was the

¹²³ Keshen, 67-8.

¹²⁴ Ruth Roach Pierson, *Canadian Women and the Second World War*, booklet (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1983), 25.

¹²⁵ Pierson, 18.

principal medium of women's empowerment during the war, it is critical to recall that their authority over it was intended and expected to serve as a means of reinforcing patriarchy and empire.

4. The Experience of Rationing in *Chatelaine*

4.1. Introduction

The appointment of Donald Gordon and the expression of popular opposition to voluntary rationing should each be understood as processes operating in concert with more traditionally-recognized “events of the Second World War,” like the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbour on December 7th, 1941, and the subsequent direct involvement of the American government in the war. These events, seemingly so distant from the dinner tables of Canadians on the home front, influenced the way Canadians interacted with, thought about, and experienced food, just as their food habits influenced those “larger events.” Not only American food, but also American heavy industry shifted to wartime production as a result of its government’s deepened involvement. A full-page ad purchased by Frigidaire in *Chatelaine* illustrated this change when it explained the coming shortage of refrigerators as the necessary result of its responsibility to supply for military rather than civilian demand. The ad went on to recommend that consumers shift their habits in order to provide greater care for their existing equipment rather than relying on replacements.¹

Women’s agency continued to define Canadians’ experience of food on the home front into the later years of the war. While it is easy to trace the influence of administrators and bureaucrats like Gordon through official documents and historical accounts, alternative historical sources, like *Chatelaine*, reveal the scope and depth of Canadian women as agents of change in these historical processes. The final aspect of the period’s food history that shall be explored is that of rationing. In this instance, the

¹ Frigidaire, *Chatelaine*, December 1941, 54.

previous two chapters' structural division of explaining food culture from the three viewpoints of specific foods, family interactions, and community performances, is abandoned in favour of an approach more concerned with understanding Canadian's changing relationships with a few key types of foods.

After Pearl Harbour, the last of the world's major industrial powers committed itself to total war. Economic pressure on specific foods grew as the need to supply American military and industry demand increased. American involvement tended to emphasize previous economic pressures, rather than create new ones; the nature of food scarcity deepened, while remaining fundamentally a scarcity of the same types of foods. Increased demand from the United States took place in a global food economy concurrently dealing with decreased supply from across Europe to South and East Asia.² As scarcity persisted or worsened, a few types of food in particular developed substantial cultural value, namely: the trinity of meat, sugar, and butter. These foods assumed heightened value and their use was adapted not only to cope with scarcity, but also in response to less obviously connected wartime priorities. The management of these foods, increasingly through direct government control, was geared not only toward the sustenance of troops and allies abroad, but also toward the preservation of stability at home. Choices were made involving these foods in particular that highlight, define and enliven the character of the Canadian wartime experience of food on the home front. By examining the discussion of the rationing of sugar, meat, tea, coffee, and butter in *Chatelaine*, the aims of government policy, the ambitions of corporations during wartime, and the vital role of women in the history of the Second World War is brought into focus.

² Lizzie Collingham, *The Taste of War: World War II and the Battle for Food* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2012), 164 (Germany), 221 (Ukraine), 232 (Japan), 266 ("The United States was the only country able to increase agricultural productivity[...]").

These five goods were the only foods rationed in Canada by coupon. Liquor was also rationed by coupon during the war, not because it was itself in high demand but because the products needed to produce beer and spirits (grains, sugars, metals) were considered wasted by the production of alcoholic beverages. Wine was rationed because of the shortage resulting from the devastation and isolation of European producers, coupled with the insufficiency of new-world producers to meet Canadian demand. In the case of wine, beer, and spirits, rationing was implemented differently based on the decisions of provincial control boards. Some provinces, like Ontario, used a coupon system to govern its citizens' consumption, whereas Prince Edward Island still had prohibition in effect. In this respect, the five federal coupon-rationed foods highlighted here were unique because they guaranteed identical levels of consumption regardless of geographical region of the Canadian citizen they were issued to.³ Whether the levels of consumption guaranteed by national coupon rationing were actually attainable remained a matter of individual financial means. However, coupled with price controls (which were applied to a far wider array of foods), the two policies did manage to greatly reduce the cost of foods and stave off inflation in Canada better than in any other belligerent nation.⁴ Rationing was the most important of a series of what Mosby describes as “unprecedented steps” taken by the Canadian government to intervene in Canadian kitchens.⁵

³ Fiona Lucas, “Questions and Answers on Rationing in Canada,” *Culinary Historians of Ontario* 18 (Autumn 1998) pp. 2. The rationing of alcoholic beverages in Canada will receive no further comment in this narrative because the focal text, *Chatelaine*, was literally silent on the topic, as has been mentioned in the introduction. Exceptions to the practicality of rationing obviously abound in a nation as large as Canada, particularly in the countless remote areas (for instance the north) that may not have been easily accessed by government agents.

⁴ Ian Mosby, *Food Will Win the War: The Politics, Culture and Science of Food During Canada's Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, forthcoming 2014), 121.

⁵ Ian Mosby, “Food on the Home Front during the Second World War,” *Wartime Canada*, ¶1.

The previous chapter asserted the idea that the performance of sacrifice became an integral part of the domestic experience of food in wartime Canada. The way food was served, presented, or engaged with in social settings also continued to demonstrate important truths about Canadian society. Nellie McClung depicted it as a topic discussed openly and frequently in social settings, writing in a “Guest Editorial” for *Chatelaine* that, “There are two subjects in which everyone is interested. One is Security. The other one is Food.” Her editorial contribution stressed the importance of collective action and commitment to wartime food culture and made the food habits of Canadians a test of whether they were fit to be self-governing: “We belong to a mutual society. If I am selfish and slack, I endanger your safety as well as my own. So let us all pitch in, and show that we are capable and worthy of Self-Government.”⁶ This editorial was indicative of the performance of sacrifice that was being encouraged of Canadian women across the media and by a variety of powerful actors, but it is also instructive in its emphasis on women as themselves influential over one another’s habits and thoughts relating to food. In conversation, while entertaining, or even while gardening or taking the garbage out in view of the neighbours, Canadians were consciously practicing and spreading an ideal relationship to food. The cultivation of this ideal occurred in a space that merged public and private life, and asserted the role of women as historical actors inhabiting both.

However, while McClung’s guest editorial speaks to Canadian women as a collectivity, apparently undifferentiated by class or other aspects of difference, a critical analysis of the “performance of sacrifice” as an ideal advocated in *Chatelaine* reveals it to be of limited applicability beyond upper-middle class experience. In the ways rationing was defended, in the adaptations suggested for housewives to comply with it, and in the

⁶ Nellie McClung, “Guest Editorial,” *Chatelaine*, August 1943, 66.

assumed *experience* of rationing apparent in *Chatelaine*, rationing had a second function – preservation of class structure and labour stability at home – beyond that of overseas supply. By connecting the experiences and the functions of rationing to the ideal food habits exemplified by the performance of sacrifice, the argumentative rationale for connecting changing food habits with women’s agency is brought into clear focus. Food was a political, economic, and social medium of governance.⁷

In July of 1942, coupon-based sugar rationing that placed strict limitations on individuals’ sugar acquisition was implemented across Canada. Tea and coffee followed in August of the same year; butter was added in December; and finally meat was rationed in March of 1943.⁸ The below chart details the quantity and duration of individual, non-voluntary coupon food rationing in Canada:

Table 2: Canadian Per Person Weekly Ration, December 1942 to December 1946

	Sugar ^a	Butter	Meat	Tea ^b	Coffee ^b
1942	8 oz	8 oz	–	1 oz	4 oz
1943	8 oz	8 oz	1 to 2.5 lbs	1 1/3 oz	5 1/3 oz
1944	8 oz	7 oz	– ^c	– ^d	– ^d
1945	6 oz	7 oz	1 to 2.5 lbs	–	–
1946	7 oz	6 oz	1 to 2.5 lbs	–	–

^a Does not include preserves or canning rations, which varied between product and often by region.

^b Limited to only those over 12 years of age.

^c Temporarily suspended starting in March 1944, resumed in September 1945.

^d Suspended starting in September 1944.⁹

That coupon rationing was introduced for these specific foods is noteworthy. Meat, sugar and butter were all products of Canadian agriculture, normally produced in sufficient quantity to

⁷ This is hardly a novel argument. From the policy of *panem et circenses* in the context of Imperial Rome to the Parisian women who marched on the palace of Versailles for bread at the beginning of the French Revolution, food has often be recognized as having operated as a medium of governance (successful or failed). What is new is the contention that it was managed in this way during the Second World War, rather than having simply been managed with a mind to supplying for military and industrial demand.

⁸ Mosby, *Food*, 95.

⁹ Mosby, *Food*, 94. This chart has been reproduced with the generous permission of Ian Mosby, to be published in his forthcoming work, *Food Will Win the War*.

supply Canadian markets. While current discourse across western democracies often portrays direct government intervention into the economy as an infringement on “democratic rights,”¹⁰ the light in which citizens in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain during this period perceived rationing is most memorably evoked by the words of Franklin Roosevelt to the American Congress, “But where an important article becomes scarce, rationing is the democratic, equitable solution.”¹¹ Keeping in mind the great inequalities of access to food that many families across these three nations experienced during the Depression years, rationing was perceived by many as the best way to assure equitable access to a perceived baseline of food needs, both cultural and nutritional.

Byrne Hope Sanders’ departure as editor of *Chatelaine*, described in her replacement’s (Mary-Etta Macpherson) first editorial, evinced this popular support of government intervention into food economics. She wrote that the transition to rationing was a smooth one, as “Within the space of a few days 12,000,000 coupon ration cards were recorded and sent on their way from 106 centres across the Dominion [...]“The job was accomplished with such speed and with the minimum of hitches that it hardly made a good conversation topic.” Macpherson went on to write of how the transition was accomplished by the coordinated organizational efforts of the WPTB, local women’s organizations (which mustered over 70,000 volunteers) and individuals like Sanders herself, who had left *Chatelaine* to serve as Director of the Consumer Branch of the WPTB.¹²

¹⁰ Acknowledging that often times this phrase is a euphemism for what are in fact the “rights” of capital, not people.

¹¹ Amy Bentley, *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 14.

¹² Mary-Etta Macpherson, “As an Editor Sees it—” *Chatelaine*, August 1942, 52.

Chatelaine writers played an active and supportive role in their discussion of the government's application of rationing and price ceilings in food policy. One paradigmatic example of *Chatelaine's* stance, Adele White's article, "Living Under the Ceiling," detailed the hardships of obeying government policy while at once underlining its importance. In the article, she presented a surprisingly critical range of perspectives on the policy, giving voice to the concerns of "Mrs. Consumer," "The Retailer," "The Producer," and "Mr. Cynic From His Armchair." Far from dismissively characterizing the perspectives of those opposed to government policies, as her simplified titles for them at first suggested, White concisely and compellingly presented the case of each of these interested stake-holders in the debate surrounding food policy. She thereby illuminated the contours of the ideological battles defining the discourse regarding food policy in Canada, with "Mr. Cynic" speaking to capitalist concerns that government interventions constituted an undue infringement on civil liberties that would result in a market crash following the war; "The Producer" expressing populist concerns that industry was being awarded a share of war-related profit out of proportion to its contribution, and that small or medium-scale farmers were by relation being unduly restrained by price ceilings and rationed consumption; "The Retailer" complaining that small-scale stores were being made to sell under different price ceilings than the "big-box stores"; and finally, "Mrs. Consumer" worrying that government intervention would prove ineffective at curtailing the urges of hoarders and "shop-crawlers" who sought to circumvent the rules.¹³ Each of these perspectives illustrates the complexity of the debate taking place on the Canadian home front around food. It also makes clear that women's voices operated in conversation with those of a variety of other historical actors in *Chatelaine*, and that each opinion was

¹³ Adele White, "Living Under the Ceiling," *Chatelaine*, September 1942, 2-3.

accorded respect and valued in the determination of what was the most proper, effective, and fair way to allocate limited supplies of foodstuffs. Notably absent from this round-table account, however, was the perspective of the great many lower-income Canadians, for whom both price ceilings and rationing were assuredly less controversial.

4.2. Sugar: The Bittersweet Side of Canadians' Experience of Rationing

Sugar, popularly associated with sugar cane, actually saw its production in Canada from sugar beets¹⁴ increase dramatically during the war years, as demonstrated by the following chart tracking land use in Canada dedicated to sugar beet production:

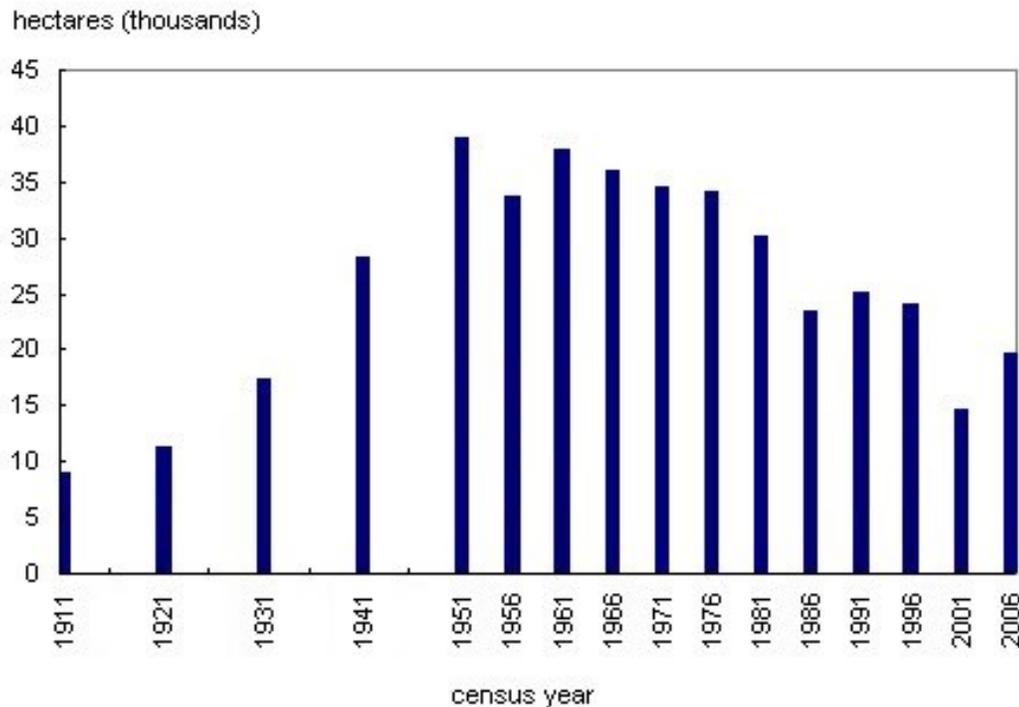


Table 3: Canadian Land Dedicated to Sugar Beet Production, *Census of Agriculture, 1911 to 2006*, Stats Canada

This chart shows that the highest levels of sugar beet production were actually established during (and immediately following) the war years, with more land dedicated by 1951 to its

¹⁴ The end product of both sugar cane and sugar beets, sucrose, is identical in taste and chemistry regardless of its original source.

production than there would be at any other point in the century.¹⁵ That sugar saw such dramatic increases in production in spite of the earlier-mentioned decreased access to agricultural machinery speaks to the importance of this food from a caloric (or nutritive) perspective, as well as a cultural one. That sugar was rationed along with tea and coffee on the one hand, and meat and butter on the other – the former two goods being nearly void of nutrients and the latter two being rich in them – speaks to the variable use of rationing as a tool of government policy aimed at ensuring supply not only of nutritionally necessary, but also culturally valued foods.

The way that sugar rationing was discussed in *Chatelaine* evinces much about the way Canadians perceived not only rationing, but their commitments to allied peoples and their commitment to other Canadians. The WPTB published propaganda in *Chatelaine* attempting to guide what Canadian women “**SHOULD KNOW AND DO ABOUT SUGAR RATIONING.**” In it, the cause of Canadians’ experience of sugar shortage is explained as stemming from Canadian dependence on international sugar markets, and specifically the direct result of the war in the Pacific and British losses there. It also portrayed sharing sugar between allies as a responsibility and a sign of loyalty to alliance that could not be shirked. Though published in July of 1942, well in advance of the implementation of compulsory coupon rationing of sugar, it also expressed government concern over the potential threat of hoarding: “**YOU NEED NOT HOARD – YOU MUST NOT HOARD.**” Interestingly enough, whereas allies’ needs are described as needs (in relation to a foodstuff that was by no means nutritionally “necessary”), the use of sugar by Canadians is conversely depicted as potentially “extravagant” and therefore “inexcusable.” If Canadians chose to hoard sugar to ensure their own consumptive habits

¹⁵ Statistics Canada, *Census of Agriculture, 1911 to 2006* (Ottawa: Government of Canada, 2006).

continue unabated, it warned that the penalties could include being “imprisoned for as long as two years and a fine up to \$5,000.00.”¹⁶ While exaggerating Canadians’ dependence on international markets for sugar production, this appeal is also memorable for the way it highlighted government concerns over the feasibility of rationing as plans for its implementation were being finalized.

Sugar rationing continued to be in effect even through the later war years and into the postwar era in Canada, but the way the WPTB defended it changed. That obeying sugar rationing played some small role in firming-up Canada’s alliances continued to be stressed, demonstrating the power of using diplomacy as a motivator for change in food habits. One WPTB notice from 1945 marked this continuity with an image (Figure 15) of five white hands, using spoons to draw sugar from a common bowl. On the cuff of three of these arms there were flags representing Canadian, American, and British consumption; on the other two, no specific nationality was represented. The tag line read, “There’s enough in the sugar bowl... *If we all share equally.*” One reading of this image suggests that only two fifths of Allied consumption were to be allotted to non-Anglo powers in August of 1945, even though so many occupied nations and the USSR were by this point in the most dire need of support. It also is noteworthy for linking ideas of fairness on the home front between citizens to fairness on the global stage. The principal change in WPTB advertising from 1942 to 1945 is captured in the shift from policing hoarders (unmentioned in the 1945 piece) to stressing the policy’s own fairness, as it stressed that “Industrial and quota users will also get less.”¹⁷ This signals the importance

¹⁶ Wartime Prices and Trade Board, *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 69.

¹⁷ Wartime Prices and Trade Board, *Chatelaine*, August 1945, 1. A racial reading of this image would take note that only white hands were depicted in this circle of sharing, implicitly suggesting the preservation of

of the government defending its own policies against critiques that families were bearing an inordinate share of the brunt of rationing, relative to industrial producers. This recalls to mind the critique presented under the guise of “The Producer” in White’s 1942 article, but also demonstrates that these kinds of populist concerns had not been exclusively voiced by farmers.

Mosby writes of how rationing was experienced by Canadian families as more or less of a shock depending on their income level and the specific food being rationed. Due to the great disparity of access to various foods during the Depression, wartime rationing of foods like meat and butter “required the greatest reductions in consumption from middle- and upper-income families,” as these foods were consumed in greater quality and quantity by wealthier families. Sugar alone was exceptional in this respect, as all Canadians felt its shortage, even among households with low incomes.¹⁸ As a foodstuff that provided cheap calories prior to the war, its rationing during the war compelled all Canadians to change their habits. By the WPTB’s estimation, sugar consumption was thought to be at over a pound per person per week prior to the war, and was being required to drop to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a pound per week by involuntary rationing measures and still further to only 8 ounces ($\frac{1}{2}$ pound) per person per week under coupon rationing.¹⁹ These reductions constituted significant pressure on Canadians’ food habits, compelling absolute reductions as well as substitution of other sweet-tasting products in sugar’s stead.

Anglo-imperialist global economic networks, as detailed by Collingham and Murton, even while commenting on the equality of distribution for those peoples protected by them.

¹⁸ Mosby, *Food*, 206-7.

¹⁹ Wartime Prices and Trade Board, *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 70-1.

The adaptations demanded by sugar rationing were a popular topic of discussion in the pages of *Chatelaine* from 1942 through to the end of the war years, and not only for its columnists. The WPTB obviously frequented its pages discussing the importance of sugar rationing, but it by no means stood alone. Only pages after the first WPTB sugar-related ad, Campbell wrote a complimentary article, “SUGAR – Eat Less and Like It.” Though nothing similar to today’s concerns about sugar’s deleterious health effects was raised, Campbell did suggest “four healthful substitutes,” corn syrup, maple syrup, honey and molasses – each of which was abundantly produced in Canada. In addition to substitution, she also suggested using less in some cases, and using none at all in others – for instance ceasing to sprinkling sugar on cereal. She even suggested that readers could diminish their cravings for the *taste* of sugar by reforming their food habits surrounding dessert, writing that by serving desserts at warmer temperatures they could amplify their sweetness.²⁰

As in many other cases, editorial advice worked in concert with the interests of its advertisers, recommending the substitution of sucrose with more plentiful foodstuffs. One company, Bee Hive Syrup, sold its *corn* syrup on the premise that it could be easily substituted for sugar in many recipes, while also subtly associating itself with honey, which would have been a markedly more expensive substitute, but one with more long-established cultural roots.²¹ The advertising of Bee Hive Syrup, which began in *Chatelaine* in the same month as sugar rationing was being introduced by the WPTB, demonstrates the opportunity that this moment presented to those who aspired to profit from the war’s compelling flexibility of certain food habits.

²⁰ Helen G. Campbell, “SUGAR – Eat Less and Like It,” *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 70-1.

²¹ Bee Hive Syrup, *Chatelaine*, April 1942, 73.

Other companies, companies whose sales were tied to baking especially, were forced to advertise in a more defensive fashion, showing that the sugar shortage had ramifications for not only sugar companies. Most frequent of these companies was Magic Baking Powder, which purchased ad space in *Chatelaine* later into the war that provided recipes for sugarless desserts.²² These commercial efforts were flanked by *Chatelaine*'s own editorial efforts to aid Canadian cooks, as it published its own "bulletin" (essentially a small, objective-oriented cookbook) with sugar-saving recipes that were "all tested and found delicious."²³ The effort by both the magazine and its advertisers to publish recipes that either saved, substituted, or eliminated sugar altogether displays the extent to which many Canadians were willing to adapt their food habits.

These recipes did not seek to overturn sugar-heavy dishes entirely, nor do away with the desire for sweetness itself. Substitution and reduction were by far the most frequently used approaches, whereas elimination of sweet-tasting ingredients was far less common, and the elimination of the course universally understood as the place for sweet-tasting fare, dessert, was never entertained in *Chatelaine*'s pages. This is clear in the Meals of the Month feature that appears in *Chatelaine* throughout the war, as well as across their variety of whole prepared menus that appear in its pages from 1942 through 1945.²⁴ The course itself is never considered to be something that either could or should be done away with for the war effort, even on weeknights where the obligation would seem to be extraneous. While *Chatelaine*, its advertisers, and the government were unified in their calls for reduction in Canadians' sugar consumption, all operated within

²² Magic Baking Powder, *Chatelaine*, June 1945, 41.

²³ Maclean Publishing Company, *Chatelaine*, October 1945, 90.

²⁴ "Meals of the Month," *Chatelaine*, 1939-1945. I have recorded and studied each month's "Meals of the Month" section over the course of *Chatelaine*'s wartime run for general trends or substantial changes. The results and analysis of this single feature of the magazine could provide for a substantial and lengthy study of its own, but goes beyond the scope of this study.

certain boundaries beyond which reform was not entertained. These boundaries were most often cultural, and often distinguish Canadians' limited wartime shift in food culture from some of the many other protagonist peoples' wartime experiences, most particularly those of the Japanese and Russians.²⁵ That suggestions for adaptation did not consider such a revolutionary approach as doing away with dessert altogether indicates the boundaries of *Chatelaine's* push to reform food habits, as well as suggesting the magazine's own class bias in approaching the problem of rationing. Whereas the taste for dessert following dinner may have been an easily-enough prepared luxury in the daily labours of a wife who did not have to work during the day, lower-class Canadian women likely found dispensing with the dessert course less onerous due to their having less spare time with which to prepare and serve it.

4.3. Rationing as Regularizing and Democratizing Access to Consumption: Meat, Butter, Coffee and Tea

The rationing of meat in Canada was also felt widely, though the distribution of the burden of its rationing was less evenly felt than sugar. Similar to sugar, the implied and associated meanings revealed in *Chatelaine's* discussions of meat rationing provide historical-cultural insight that extends well beyond the culinary realm. In the pages of *Chatelaine*, Canadian women are revealed actively adapting to meat's rationing, but their agency was not exercised in isolation. Government and corporate actors' interventions into these adaptive efforts clearly structured and informed the changes taking place in Canadian food culture, causing meat's rationing to be felt in specific ways that differed depending on gender and class.

²⁵ Collingham's book is the best point for comparatively exploring the protagonist nations differing cultures of food.

Whereas sugar was the most sorely-felt of the rationed goods by *all* classes, the way rationing was structured dictated that other goods' limited supply was felt more harshly by specific classes of Canadians. The middle-upper class Canadians *Chatelaine* considered its audience were most plainly missing meat above all other rationed foods. Keshen recalls that in the middle of 1943, one poll reported the majority of Canadians as having identified meat as the rationed product the consumption of which they found most difficult to limit.²⁶ However, this polling data projects a false uniformity onto the landscape of Canadian experience. Keshen points out that to many Canadians – particularly those Canadian families which had lower relative incomes heading into the war – the war had significantly increased their income and with it their ability to purchase meat. Following from their purchasing power, the majority of Canadians actually used their full rationing allocation, and thereby “*increased* the amount of meat they ate from 63.6 pounds of beef and 57.3 pounds of pork per capita in 1942 to 72.5 and 66.0 pounds respectively the next year.”²⁷

In accord with previous food history, meat was invested with rather different cultural meanings than was sugar. It was more explicitly tied to the war effort than sugar, which was often tied most directly toward the maintenance of international friendships and alliances, rather than explicitly for purposes of war. Bentley illustrates meat's cultural weight in a pamphlet produced in January of 1943 by the United States' Office of Price Administration, which detailed that “Meat from our farms and packing houses is playing

²⁶ Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004), 110. The source he quotes for this is a poll: *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 1943, 312.

²⁷ Keshen, 110.

a part almost on par with tanks, planes, and bullets.”²⁸ Bentley details the delicate balancing act that the American government played to ensure that enough high-status meat was provided to its military while also ensuring that American consumers did not feel to too great a degree the “slight” of their decreased access to these highly-symbolic foods. She points out that in each of the protagonist nations, abundance of high-status meat products acted as a representation to citizens of their own nation’s strength and bolstered their confidence in the war effort.²⁹

This consumptive-symbolic matrix operated differently in Canada than in the United States due to the nature of Canadian political and military sovereignty. Because of Canada’s persistent – though gradually deteriorating – imperial relationship with Britain, not only Canadian citizens’ experience of meat’s abundance but also their fellow British subjects’ experience of it served to define Canadian national strength and inspire confidence in the war effort. These geopolitical relationships may, oddly enough, serve to contextualize the differing reactions of Canadian and American consumers to the rationing of meat both during and after the war. A Swift ad shows that Canadian food culture invested meat with similar associations as did American culture, advising that, “MEAT is material of war, use it wisely!”³⁰ However, as these associations operated within a different political context, they were therefore experienced in a different way. This context provides some understanding for the greater extent of Canadian rationing efforts both during and after the war, along with the more widespread popular support of

²⁸ Bentley, 85.

²⁹ Bentley, 98.

³⁰ Swift Premium Meats, *Chatelaine*, November 1943, 57.

these efforts in Canada than the United States, where Bentley suggests a greater degree of popular resistance existed.³¹

The adaptation of food habits to meat rationing in *Chatelaine* also differed from sugar. Similar to sugar, there was obvious reluctance to substantially alter its role or weighting in the average middle-class meal. The “Meals of the Month” feature consistently suggested a meat be served at the vast majority of dinner settings in its idealized monthly program.³² Recommendations for coping with rationing typically focussed on limited substitution, extension, or the degradation of the quality of meat being used, and only rarely considered replacement. One article, “Stand-ins for Meat,” by Campbell can be read as a kind of “exception that proved the rule” as it suggested that “Fish, cheese, dried beans and peas are a match for it on all these scores and, given half a chance, are equally worthy of the platter and the spotlight.” In the article, Campbell described beans and peas as “full of nourishment” but offered no specific claims to their having “vitamins” or “minerals” – frequent claims she made for meat in her many other articles, advertisements for meat, and government nutrition-education.³³ With the science of nutrition so young, it is tempting to consider the possibility that these protein-rich alternatives to meat were not being recommended simply because studies were not being conducted on their nutritional contents to the same extent as they were on more profitable meat products. Regardless of the reason, it remains clear that overwhelmingly in *Chatelaine* the options presented for how to deal with the rationing of meat exclude the potential of turning to legumes or other non-meat protein alternatives, in anything approaching a habitual frequency, even though at least a rough knowledge of these

³¹ Bentley, 98.

³² “Meals of the Month,” *Chatelaine*, 1939-1945.

³³ Campbell, “Stand-ins for Meat,” *Chatelaine*, February 1943, 47.

alternatives' existence was available. This evidence of middle-class Canadians' limited willingness to substitute for meat speaks to its cultural value and the meaning that was attached to its consumption. Though meat was believed to be essential on the front lines for the strength of Allied troops, it was also apparently critical for the sustenance of Canadians on the home front – and for more than nutritional reasons.

The most common editorial response of *Chatelaine* to meat rationing is revealed in another of Campbell's articles on how to adapt to meat rationing. In it, she provided a series of recipes, none of which were without meat, that she suggested would "extend" meat by adding more of other filling ingredients that were unrationed, like cereal, milk, dumplings, and potatoes.³⁴ Columns like these suggest that meat's shortage was believed to be something which could be masked but not fully replaced by the use of non-meat products. This establishes the unique symbolic importance of meat as a food product, the rationing of which had far more than nutritional implications. Any perceived shortage of meat implied a parallel shortage of strength, and virility, and carried the symbolic message that not only the individual, but the Canadian *body politic* was no long supplied with what it needed "for growth and muscle building and repair."³⁵

While the substitution of meat products was far more limited than it was for sugar products, the adaptive method of extension was applied similarly to both products. Extension was adopted because it did not require meat's established cultural position be compromised while presenting the opportunity for a wide variety of commercial producers to benefit from the challenge presented by its rationing. Bovril positioned itself through its advertising to fill this niche, with one prominent ad appearing in 1943 reading,

³⁴ "S-T-R-E-T-C-H It," Campbell, *Chatelaine*, June 1943, 58.

³⁵ Elizabeth Chant Robertson, "The Best Kinds of Foods," *Chatelaine*, July 1941, 53.

“Bovril Helps Your Meat Ration!” and suggesting that a housewife could add a “meaty flavour to meatless dishes” by the addition of Bovril.³⁶

Other companies selling products that contained no trace of meat, like Heinz, also attempted to seize the opportunity presented by rationed meat. In one Heinz ad, presented as “A Bulletin On Meat-Extenders,” the company addressed the question of the “average housewife” looking to find out “How to make your Meat Supply go further.” The ad clearly emulated official government propaganda, sprawling across a full page and offering many helpful recommendations that echoed WPTB recommendations. The heart of Heinz’s *sell*, however, turned on making problematic the common recommendation that women should save and reuse leftovers in the days following meals, or what it recast as, “The problem of serving up left-overs in a palatable fashion.” Their response was that leftover meats should be saved to make one of two provided recipes for meat pie or beef stew, each of which actually hinged on Heinz canned vegetable products.³⁷ The way Heinz authoritatively inserted their products into the discourse regarding meat rationing effectively served to restructure left-overs from being a *solution* to being a *problem* that itself needed solving.

The final adaptive method prominently and repeatedly evinced in *Chatelaine* was that of intentional quality degradation. “One Coupon Meats,” an article by M. Lois Clipsham, outlined several meals, with recipes, that used only one meat ration coupon, and thereby provided “the highest return for your little piece of paper and combining these with unrationed foods you can make that weekly allowance go around.”³⁸ This adaptation was perhaps the most limited in its application across class lines, for it is clear

³⁶ Bovril, *Chatelaine*, October 1943, 72.

³⁷ Heinz, *Chatelaine*, November 1945, 3.

³⁸ M. Lois Clipsham, “One Coupon Meats,” *Chatelaine*, September 1943, 63-5.

that families for whom simple access to meat was a problem prior to wartime were unlikely to consider many of the one-coupon meats to be reductions from their prior standards of consumption. However, for *Chatelaine's* targeted upper-middle class readership, this suggestion is one that flew in the face of a previous food culture that disparaged cheaper cuts of meat as bad for digestion, less nourishing, time-consuming, and aesthetically undesirable. Rationing compelled alterations to food habits for those families that wished to ensure a cut of meat continue to be featured in each day's dinner, and the coupon system structured the ways that Canadians perceived various meats as being variously capable of filling the role of the meal's main feature.

The rationing of other foods like tea, coffee, and butter was also responded to in *Chatelaine* in a similar fashion. However, discussion of the shortage of these goods depicts their dearth as not as dearly felt by all Canadians as sugar was, nor as trying as the want that was experienced by many privileged Canadians in the case of meat. *Chatelaine* presented both substitution and extension as adaptations fit for responding to the rationing of tea. To preserve the important ritual and social occasion of afternoon tea – the hallmark of a younger British Empire – the magazine suggested substitutes that included consommé, broth, tomato consommé, cider, fruit juice, milk shakes, and hot cocoa.³⁹ For both tea and coffee, the magazine presented advice in a column entitled “Pot Luck” that specified the exact minimum proportions of grinds or leaves to use to extend supplies and to reduce the amount of energy used to prepare a pot, all while setting a minimum threshold below which wartime thrift would be justly deemed tasteless and cheap.⁴⁰ Articles like these, which expressed a dual-concern for at once practicing thrift and

³⁹ Campbell, “Tealess Teas,” *Chatelaine*, February 1943, 46.

⁴⁰ Campbell, “Pot Luck,” *Chatelaine*, July 1942, 45.

preserving social norms, class tastes, and leisurely consumptive rituals within Canadian food culture (afternoon tea), recall to mind the upper-middle class target audience of *Chatelaine* and the limitations of some of its advice. There is little doubt that many women in lower-income households would have found suggestions for ways to make tea-time more thrifty without offending the boundaries of taste rather tone-deaf, as their afternoons were spent – many in dangerous factories producing the munitions of war – accruing necessary wages for the sustenance of their families, not casually entertaining guests over tea.

For those Canadians who did practice the custom of afternoon tea, the magazine's discussion of it in the context of war encouraged women's conspicuous non-consumption (or altered consumption) at these events. Drinking tomato consommé or broth instead of the typical English tea setting would have been a readily-apparent departure from custom, one that communicated symbolic messages to all women present. It is worth underscoring that this discourse regarding afternoon tea was one of the few that depicted women, and women alone, both being served and eating food. Even if this consumption was made possible by the labour of the host, another woman, it does constitute a notable exception to the otherwise persistent idealization of women as producers, performers, and non-consumers of food in the magazine.

Another rationed food, butter, had two principal uses, and responses to its rationing seemed to be dependent on which of these uses was being considered. In one instance, butter was a common ingredient in recipes that ranged across meals and across courses; in the other instance, it could be used as a condiment, especially for spreading across baked goods. While elimination of its use as an ingredient was never presented as a solution in *Chatelaine*, by either advertiser or columnists, its elimination was able to be

entertained in its use as a condiment: “No BUTTER needed on these biscuits,” ran one exemplary Magic Baking Powder ad in 1944.⁴¹ Spreading butter on baked goods could be eliminated as a food habit that resonated as excessive: extra fat spread merely for reasons of taste being readily recognizable as a habit that could be curtailed. That a baking company was spreading this suggestion is itself instructive, as Magic did not go on to provide recipes *without* butter as an ingredient, therefore implying that the fat saved as condiment was being used to augment its supply for its more important use as a cooking ingredient. The necessity of butter as an ingredient was further illustrated by the positive reception of Mary Williamson to its rationing, which she recommended for finally “regularizing” access to one of the goods most commonly hoarded by consumers and for which, before rationing, she had been compelled “to trudge from store to store only to find the shelves bare.”⁴²

The predominant methods of adaptation to rationing, substitution and extension, each revealed the cultural boundaries that Canadians’ relationship with these foods operated within. While methods of adaptation demonstrated to some extent the flexibility of Canadian food culture to adapt to meet wartime demands, they also reveal the existence of absolute boundaries beyond which change was dismissed as impractical, unthinkable, or simply too undesirable to be worth entertaining. Food culture defined as operating within these boundaries represented a constitutive element, best captured in the title of Rockwell’s illustration for the *Evening Post*, *Freedom from Want*, along with democratic values like freedom of speech and thought, of the society that the Second World War was increasingly depicted across Allied nations as fighting to defend. In this

⁴¹ Magic Baking Powder, *Chatelaine*, January 1944, 24.

⁴² Mary F. Williamson, “*Just A Larger Family to Feed: Managing in Wartime*,” online article in *Edible Toronto*, n.d.: ¶8.

light, ensuring that any changes made to Canadian food culture in response to the material demands of war did not compel Canadians on the home front to transgress these boundaries appears to have been a vital consideration for those who sought to alter food habits. These boundaries also served to highlight consumptive practices essential to the enactment of class divisions in Canadian society, and therefore their preservation can be seen as mirroring the preservation of Canadian social structure on the home front during wartime. Food culture was bent to serve the interests of the war, but beyond extension and substitution, there was an absolute ideal of Canadian food culture – an unspoken baseline of cultural and nutritional sustenance – that could not be broken without ramifications for morale, national health, and cultural dignity.

4.4. The Experience, the Ideal, and the Application of Food Rationing

Implied by the prevalence of the adaptive habits of substitution and extension is the idea that commensurate quantities of other foods were increasingly being consumed to make up for the restraint of foods made scarce, either by rationing or other limitations. Discourses relating to wartime food culture, so often depicted in retrospect as a culture of restraint, of thrift, or simply of *less*, was more often discussed as a culture of difference, centrally focussed on the preservation of old norms in spite of material and social pressures for change. If there could be said to be a generalized, global taste of the Second World War, Collingham claims that it was blandness,⁴³ and no two foods are more responsible for the pervasiveness of this taste than what she calls “the staples of wartime: bread and potatoes.”⁴⁴ While great disparities of experience existed between the civilian “taste of war” in Canada and Russia or Japan, a near-universal trend away from the tastes of the rich, the sweet, and the meaty and

⁴³ Collingham, 337.

⁴⁴ Collingham, 501.

toward the cheaper, life-sustaining tastes of potatoes, bread and rice could be said to have taken place.

These starches' increasing prevalence is evident in one of Campbell's articles describing the "3 Squares" that food culture should be structured around. After weighting the importance of breakfast, lunch and dinner and framing them each as part of a military "campaign for health and fitness" against "entrenched" poor eating habits, she asserted the value of potatoes in the weekly meal plan: "Potatoes may be varied in different ways, though it's best to bake them or cook them in their jackets and serve whole at least three times a week."⁴⁵ Another 1943 article pushed the case for potatoes further still, arguing that "everybody – even the stylish stouts – stands to benefit from eating at least one a day."⁴⁶

Bread similarly appears to have assumed a central role during wartime, with interested advertisers like Fleischmann's yeast using quasi-scientific claims to support its recommendations that consumers increase their supposed levels of bread consumption from two slices of bread per meal during peacetime to three slices per meal during wartime!⁴⁷ While these supposed levels of consumption appear exaggerated and may be tied more to the corporations' *aspirations* than to actual food habits, that such recommendations were apparently made without fear of the ads being perceived as laughable suggests that, in the least, they represent an articulation of what was believed to be discursively possible in the given context. In this as in many other cases, the desired change to food habits and the changes that were actually experienced by Canadians can be difficult to distinguish in *Chatelaine*, though trends and pressures can nonetheless be

⁴⁵ Campbell, "3 Squares," *Chatelaine*, January 1943, 34.

⁴⁶ Clipsham, "Pass the Potatoes," *Chatelaine*, October 1943, 76.

⁴⁷ Fleischmann's, *Chatelaine*, March 1943, 4.

distilled from the assumptions advertisers evidently felt comfortable enough to operate on.

Just as food culture was structured by class, so too did food inform the construction and preservation of hierarchies of class during these years. After the Depression years during which disparities in food culture so clearly established distance between classes, wartime food culture presented a more democratic ethic as the solution to the need for class stability on the home front. Following the failure of attempts to implement more iniquitous controls, exemplified by voluntary rationing, coupon rationing emerged as the democratic essence of this shift in Canadian food culture. While rationing was implemented within an economic system the experience of which remained defined by class, there can be no denying the levelling effect entailed by the guarantee of individual minimum and maximum limits on the consumption of sugar, meat, coffee, tea and butter. Successful rationing policy worked as a corrective to the otherwise socially-destabilizing consequences of unmitigated free market food allocation during wartime.

The implementation of coupon rationing from 1942 onwards constituted a fundamental transformation of Canadian food culture that tied citizens' rights to certain foods to their individual needs rather than their economic status. The WPTB assumed a lead role in order to affect this transformation, growing to direct more than 6000 employees, 30 administrative divisions, and 16,000 volunteers (mostly women) across the country.⁴⁸ Once voluntary rationing was replaced with coupon rationing, Canadian public opinion began to shift to predominantly favour of its continuing efforts. Following the departure of Sanders as its editor, *Chatelaine's* new editor, Macpherson, wrote editorials that glowingly supported the work that her predecessor and the WPTB were doing and

⁴⁸ Keshen, 72.

attributed their efforts directly to the halting of “rampant and iniquitous inflation.”⁴⁹

Mosby argues that women viewed rationing as not necessarily temporary measures, but as a genuine alternatives to the “depression, unemployment, and poverty” of the 1930s.⁵⁰

Polls conducted even as late as March and July of 1945 indicated that, “more than 90 percent [of] Canadians agreed that rationing had done a good or fair job in achieving equitable distribution.”⁵¹

Widespread public support of rationing reflected not only the desire for democratic distribution of scarce food resources, but also Canadians’ willingness to curtail their food habits for international stability and peace. Keshen points to an opinion poll toward the end of the war that showed seventy percent of Canadians willing to endure food rationing “for a year or two” after the war had ended in order “to give food to people who need it in Europe.”⁵² Such apparent selflessness is put into perspective by the fact that rationing had in fact *raised* the amounts of rationed goods consumed by most Canadians. Many would not have perceived such a poll to be demanding sacrifice *per se*, so much as continued obedience to limited but ultimately equal levels of consumption between individuals.

Notwithstanding its successes and positive popular reception, the history of the WPTB’s coupon rationing program is not without its blemishes, and its efforts were not always met with universal applause. In 1943, for instance, the WPTB was forced to reconsider sugar rationing rules pertaining to additional allotments for canning that allowed for great disparities in individual allotments based on geographical region. These

⁴⁹ Mary Etta Macpherson, “As an Editor Sees it–,” *Chatelaine*, October 1943, 92.

⁵⁰ Mosby, *Food*, 89.

⁵¹ Ian Mosby, “Food on the Home Front during the Second World War,” *Wartime Canada*, ¶18. The source he cites for these polls: LAC, RG 36-31, vol. 27, WIB Information Brief No. 57, *The Home Front: Verdict on Wartime Controls*, 16 April 1945.

⁵² Keshen, 117. His source: *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 1944, 159.

rules met with nation-wide protests led by a coalition of women's, farmers' and labour organizations demanding the amendment of the policy so as to ensure what Mosby describes as "the importance of maintaining a sense of equality and sacrifice when it came to the distribution of scarce goods."⁵³ It seems that while government interventions into the economy of food were supported, Canadians would only support them so far as the sacrifices they demanded were equally borne.

Even as already-established rationing rules were supported by most, the public was by no means ready to extend government intervention into food economies beyond the limited scope the WPTB had established with regard to sugar, meat, coffee, tea and butter. Keshen underscores this point, recalling that "in mid-1943, with rationing in full swing, only 45 percent endorsed further WPTB restrictions." Enthusiasm for further intervention was so limited because most people thought that they had already contributed enough to the war and that further sacrifice was not needed.⁵⁴ This view was reinforced by the string of Allied victories that followed from the middle of 1943, though it conveniently ignored the pleas of those who realistically pointed to mounting global famine as a phenomenon that was independent of Allied success on the battlefield.

Finally, Keshen also suggests that the successes of rationing must be qualified by the fact that there were many who showed their opposition to the policy by engaging in "extensive cheating and black market activity."⁵⁵ As the war continued, and particularly as confidence of victory overseas spread, "a growing proportion of Canadians quietly condoned or participated in bending or breaking the rules to obtain a little extra luxury."⁵⁶

⁵³ Mosby, *Food*, 108-110.

⁵⁴ Keshen, 73.

⁵⁵ Keshen, 5.

⁵⁶ Keshen, 120.

These forms of resistance to official food policy included black market activity, coupon trading or selling and hoarding. Each of these forms of resistance shared the common attribute of being more easily engaged in by those with the money and time required to circumvent government edicts. While turning to black markets was never the choice of the majority of Canadians, it remains critical to consider that the choice did exist and must have strongly contrasted with the performance of sacrifice embraced by most Canadians on the home front. As such, the discursive prominence of equality in wartime food culture must be tempered by an understanding of the countervailing, often unspoken, and not necessarily mutually exclusive practice of taking advantage of class privileges to cheat the system for individual gain at the expense of communal well-being.⁵⁷

Rationing remains one of the most readily-identifiable aspects of wartime food culture in the popular historical memory of the Second World War in Canada. In its idealized form, it represented the intervention of the federal government into the buying habits of Canadians to ensure that all received their fair share while reducing overall consumption in an effort to shore up military supplies and support allied nations. The way that Canadians dealt with, or were instructed to deal with, each rationed food varied depending on the food in question. The cultural and symbolic value of the food determined which responses – extension, substitution, or elimination being the three most common – were appropriate. The rationing of different foods was experienced in markedly different ways, determined principally by family income. Some foods, like meat, were actually enjoyed in greater qualities and amounts by lower-income Canadians

⁵⁷ Indeed, one aspect of class privilege that should be considered is the opportunity it afforded to publicly perform sacrifice while privately engaging in individual practices of selfish indulgence that circumvented the system. Obviously, it would have been far easier to sacrifice meat, sugar, or butter at home if your family could afford multiple meals out at restaurants as a means of insulating the household pantry.

during the Second World War than in at least the generation that preceded it. This was the by-product of rationing, price ceilings, and the general increase in wages brought about across the Allied nations by the war's demand for industrial and agricultural labour.⁵⁸ Conversely, the rationing of sugar was more universally felt, as its inexpensiveness prior to the war meant that its rationing placed constraints on consumers, regardless of their household income.

By examining rationing, and reactions to it by the various historical actors evident in *Chatelaine*, the policy is elucidated as one with far-reaching consequences that could be experienced as an opportunity or a struggle; was met by both popular support and outrage; that citizens met with obedience and with rebellion. Perhaps more so than any other element of the Canadian experience of food during the war years, it defined Canadians' memory of their relationship to food because of the radical nature of the change it demanded. Whereas a woman may have walked into a grocery store in 1939 with near-total freedom of choice, governed only by the market's supply, her family's demand, and her ability to pay for said goods, by 1943 five foods that had enjoyed fundamental places in most Canadians' diets were allocated equally to citizens for household consumption irrespective of their wealth or desire.⁵⁹

Rationing was presented in the government, corporate, and editorial content of *Chatelaine* as a quintessentially democratic response to the wartime demands of the arsenals of Canada and the free peoples allied to it. The limitations it placed on consumption were presented as universally enjoyed; the sacrifices it demanded were to be

⁵⁸ Collingham, 394.

⁵⁹ It should be qualified that equality of access was still predicated on the presumption that the citizens in question were *working* citizens, and that those without jobs could still have experienced these goods as beyond their consumptive reach.

borne equally by each individual and family on the home front. The reality of rationing as being a government-imposed policy, the experience of which was heavily mediated by one's or one's family's class, is by no means explicitly apparent in *Chatelaine*. The pervasiveness of a language of sacrifice actually obscures the reality that most experienced rationing as an *increase* or *boon* to their weekly consumption of meat, and a stabilization of their access to butter, tea and coffee. Only in the case of sugar does the narrative of rationing as shared collective sacrifice appear to hold as truly universal.⁶⁰

While the narrative and the reality were indeed quite far apart in the experience of many, the *utility* of the narrative, regardless of its absolute veracity, should not be overlooked. More than working as a means of providing greater quantities of scarce goods to allies and troops overseas, rationing appears to have operated as a persuasive political tool for co-opting the labour of working class Canadians and especially women on the home front – not accidentally, the two groups that were being asked the most in terms of free or cheap labour. Women across all classes would have found the policy appealing – in spite of those in the upper-class being required to decrease their consumption the most – because it regularized access to key foodstuffs and promised to eliminate the fear of hoarding and the tedium and unpredictability of an unregulated food market. All working-class Canadians would have found the policy encouraging because it decoupled access to these five pivotal foodstuffs from income, decreasing the impact of wartime inflation on already-increasing working-class wages.

Women's agency was apparently critical for ensuring the success of rationing. This was more true for upper-middle class Canadian women than others, as their support

⁶⁰ For a better understanding of the cultural reasons (as opposed to the economic ones, already mentioned) for why sugar is the exception to this rule, see Mintz's *Sweetness and Power*.

of the policy was the least guaranteed by its inherent impacts on consumption. In this respect, *Chatelaine* was a crucial medium for distilling the reasons, assuring the fairness, and instructing ways to cope with government rationing. Its apparent tone-deafness to the fact that many lower-class Canadian women would have experienced rationing as a boon does not make the magazine any less valuable as a historical source; rather, it clarifies its class-bias toward the upper-middle class and thereby encourages the understanding of the period's food culture as being fundamentally delineated by – as well as itself reifying and redefining – class structure. Rationing policy was directed toward far more than the nutritional or logistical support of the war. It was preserving class stability on the home front, the regularity of food as much as labour, both during the war years and into the postwar period. From *Chatelaine*'s editors, Sanders and Macpherson, to its staff writers like Campbell and Clipsham, to *Chatelaine*'s readership, women were the actors most relied upon to produce the cultural change necessary to adapt to and thereby ensure the success of rationing policy in Canada, thus avoiding the need for more substantial cultural change in the form of more intrusive government control over the production and consumption of food.⁶¹

⁶¹ The fundamentally conservative orientation of the changes taking place in food culture, outlined above, not only mirrors but is in fact implicated in the conservatism directing changes to gender norms in Canada during the time, as outlined by Pierson's accounts of Canadian women and the Second World War.

5. Conclusion

Too often food has been ghettoized by historians as a matter of little weight next to the crash of explosives and the gravitas of law and public debate. Collingham demonstrates its grave seriousness when opening her recent book by emphasizing that as many people died from starvation (20 million) in World War Two as from military deaths (19.5 million): “The impact of the war on food supplies was thus as deadly in its effect on the world population as military action.”¹ Just as women and minorities have been repeatedly sidelined from so many histories, so too has food. Writing food histories provides an understanding of change that is relevant to the present day.² Rather than being antiquarian, studying these processes of change clarifies our understanding of the historical nature of not only the supermarket and the farmer’s market of today, but their deep-rooted relationships with Bay Street and Parliament Hill. This study has demonstrated the significance of food discourse in Second World War Canada as a medium of cultural exchange that defined individuals and societies in terms of gender, class, and ideology, and contributed to the construction, definition, contestation, and preservation of hierarchies of power within society. Analysis of this discourse in *Chatelaine* shows that food habits could stabilize ideas of gender, class, nation and empire in the face of challenges to each. Discussions of food commonly implied the nature of the family and relationships of power within the household. Food was also a

¹ Lizzie Collingham, *The Taste of War: World War II and the Battle for Food* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2012), 1.

² For evidence of the ascendance of food history today, one need only look to the entire industry of non-fiction publications detailing the need for a host of changes (albeit, sometimes contradictory ones) to food culture so as to amend its recent historical trajectory. This movement is exemplified by: Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2006).

social signifier, variously able to communicate stability, conformity, or resistance among friends, neighbours and extended family in ritualized gatherings, whether they be Christmas dinner or the weekly bridge party. Finally, these three dimensions of food discourse in *Chatelaine* – food and individual production or consumption, food and the family, and food and society – have been evinced in specific relation to the intervention of the federal government into food habits by the application of compulsory coupon-rationing to five keystone foodstuffs during the war.

The “revolution” of North American food culture between 1880-1930 established ideas that have been maintained almost identically to the present day. Therefore, the “economic, social, and ideological forces, the complex interplay among networks of reformers, scientists, industrialists, faddists, and hucksters,” speaks to a story not only of the past, but of the present.³ Montanari’s claim that “on a cultural level, our relationship with food has been overturned,” can be evinced in the gradual shift of productive control over food from individual (often female) actors to corporate, government, and professional ones.⁴ This study has confirmed the truism – “Tell me what you eat, and I shall tell you what you are” – which suggests that historians can look to the plates of the past to witness the act of creative destruction by which individuals and societies have produced their realities.⁵ The destruction wrought on the front lines and in the concentration camps of the Second World War have long, and no doubt justly, received a great deal of historical attention. On the other hand, the changing nature of the mundane,

³ Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1988), viii.

⁴ Massimo Montanari, *The Culture of Food*. Trans. Carl Ipsen (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 170. This is of course a process that has been underway for a far longer period of time than is covered in this narrative, though portions of the narrative nonetheless are particularly illustrative of it.

⁵ Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, *The Physiology of Taste* [1825], trans. Anne Drayton (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1970) 13.

everyday acts of creative destruction that defined the experience of the home front have only began to receive the attention they deserve. This study has sought to combine Rebora's assertion that "cuisine is above all communication,"⁶ with Korinek's work, which intentionally looked to "the more banal aspects of" *Chatelaine* in order to "illuminate the collective concerns of Canadian women."⁷ The struggle to preserve the social order that defined Canadian society before the war is evinced in numerous foods appearing in *Chatelaine*, from preserves and HP sauce to rationed sugar, meat, butter, tea, and coffee. By decoding these and other foods, and in particular the way they were discussed and depicted, this study has made manifest the invisible but authoritative sinews organizing Canadian society and culture.

Surveying the depiction of specific foods across nearly a decade of *Chatelaine's* monthly print run has established the claim that food preferences are mediated "by social factors such as gender, age and class." It has also grounded the related idea that identity was mediated by food preferences during the war.⁸ Wartime presented unique pressures for the societal reform of aspects of individual and group identities – class and gender in particular. Women were at once charged with greater responsibility within the household over finances and property⁹ and in the business world as labourers.¹⁰ Even though the

⁶ Giovanni Rebora, trans. Albert Sonnenfeld, *Culture of the Fork* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 167.

⁷ Valerie J. Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 3.

⁸ Nickie Charles and Marion Kerr, *Women, food and families* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), 1.

⁹ Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004), 147-8.

¹⁰ Keshen records that among the female noninstitutional labour force, aged fourteen and over, participation rates rose from the 22-23% range from 1939 to 1941, to the range of 32-33% between 1943 and 1945. This number would regress back to the 25-23% range between 1946 and 1950. Keshen, 150. These figures support Diana Forestell's related claim that, "women's labour force participation during WWII (both to meet Canada's military and civil commitments) reflected a cyclical pattern of response to crisis on the one hand, and economic exigencies on the other." Taken together, these numbers also support Pierson's

war's conclusion marked the transfer of these responsibilities from women to men and therefore the period should not be depicted as one of libratory change, it does not prevent the assertion that the *experience* of this change in women's responsibility acted as what Keshen calls a kind of "social accelerator, quickly thrusting people into situations that boldly challenged their moral and social conventions."¹¹ The wartime experience of the majority of Canadians was predominantly made up of a multitude of small things, mostly perceived as mundane at the time; often times it was the resistance of these aspects of daily life to change which can now be reflected on as particularly potent signifiers. That so many mothers preserved the rituals of family food service in spite of the unprecedented demands being made on them in other areas of their lives – or even just within other areas of food culture, like shipping food to men serving abroad or reorganizing meals around rationing and shortage – demonstrates the tremendous importance of that food culture to the perception of the stability and vitality of Canadian society. Even with almost seventy years for reflection, only now are we coming to an appreciation of just how true the wartime slogan, "*Food will win the war and write the peace,*" really was; nowhere was this more tangibly felt than in the confines of the family.¹²

While it is true that "every meal served was a political act,"¹³ perhaps the most overtly political meals were those served at special occasions. Meals served for the company of friends, extended family, or neighbours – whether for Christmas, Thanksgiving, the weekly bridge party or afternoon tea – were important moments when

contention that the Second World War as a whole represented a period of profound conservatism with regards to gender norms. Diane G. Forestell, "The Necessity of Sacrifice for the Nation at War: Women's Labour Force Participation, 1939-1946," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 22.44 (1989): 346.

¹¹ Keshen, *Saints*, 11.

¹² Slogan of The US Department of Agriculture, appearing in Collingham, 476.

¹³ Amy Bentley, *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 31.

food was invested with particularly potent communicative power. *Chatelaine's* discussions of these events contained overt messages that showed food habits could mark gender and class, but also communicated ideological messages about democracy, capitalism, and scientific nutritionism. As the war dragged on, these occasions became opportunities for women to perform their patriotism and their commitment to the war effort of the family, the nation, and the empire through publicly visible sacrifice. Performances of sacrifice operated as a kind of *conspicuous non-consumption* or even *conspicuous production* (as in the case of canning/preserving food). While these performances were most easily engaged in by those women with the requisite time and financial stability, the cultural discourses that encouraged these practices were by no means intended only for the well-off.

As the needs of the war effort began to wane, the cultural demand for performances of sacrifice subsided. Already by the first post-war Christmas, the magazine was proclaiming that, "Christmas is the lavish season, so let yourself go!"¹⁴ and that "May good digestion wait on appetite – and if it doesn't, who minds! It's Christmas!"¹⁵ The rapidity of this transition, and the fact that it coincided with the return home of Canadian men from overseas service, rather than the alleviation of global food shortages (these actually worsened immediately after the war's end), shows that this performance was as much about demonstrating the stability of family ties and national allegiances as it was about ensuring world peace and global stability (if not even more-so). As *Chatelaine* reverted to setting the table on, "An Old-Time [Christmas] Dinner," it also marked Canadian society's desire to revert in all respects to the way things used to be once war

¹⁴ M. Lois Clipsham, "Red and Green for Christmas," *Chatelaine*, December 1945, 86-7.

¹⁵ No authorship was attributed, *Chatelaine*, December 1945, 81.

ended – obviously in keeping with Pierson’s contention that the war hardly represents an instance of women’s liberation from oppressive gender norms.¹⁶ As Canadian culture disengaged from wartime concerns, food also decreased in prominence in *Chatelaine*’s pages, marked by an increase in the proportion of beauty products being advertised in the magazine from 1944 onward, as well as a corresponding decrease in food-related ads (see Table 1: Food-related advertising space in *Chatelaine*, 1938-45).¹⁷ Returning to the metaphor that frames the magazine: as the castle was no longer under siege, it was no longer quite so imperative that its mistress tend to its limited stores of food. Food remained an important discursive site for idealizing and defining Canadian women in society, though its prominence during wartime was partially supplanted.¹⁸

This narrative has also shown that the Canadian government’s food policy operated in keeping with a long-standing Western habit of using food as a lever for producing societal stability. Rationing and price controls were discussed most commonly as means of guaranteeing fairness in the marketplace and ensuring equality of access to food. However, the historical reality of these changes is that they appear to have been mediated by a desire not to ensure equality, but to guarantee social stability. Dialogues relating to rationing in *Chatelaine* ignored the ways that food habits differed widely based on class and gender; instead, they presumed that readers fit into the same mould as that of *Chatelaine*’s target audience: white, well-off, mothers, whose own tastes and needs were not differentiated from their husband’s. Mosby comes to a similar conclusion, arguing

¹⁶ Clipsham, “An Old-Time Dinner,” *Chatelaine*, December 1945, 89. This column, which provides a menu for an idealized pre-war Christmas dinner, is led by an image of a formally-dressed middle-aged white man sitting down to a large serving of meat (likely turkey) at the head of the family dinner table.

¹⁷ *Chatelaine*, January 1944-December 1945. Whether this signals a shift from needs to wants, or whether it is indicative of a move from the prioritization of serving the needs of children to serving the needs of husbands would make for an interesting future study.

¹⁸ At this point, Korinek’s study capably carries on the history of *Chatelaine* through the 50’s and 60’s.

that “ultimately, the language of sacrifice, austerity, and thrift that dominated much of the wartime discussions of food contradicted the reality of many Canadians [sic] wartime diets: that they were typically eating more, and better, than they had for more than a decade.”¹⁹

In the government’s intervention into food culture, it is readily apparent that women were courted as the historical agents of change whose consent and compliance was required for the government efforts to succeed. Even the fact that *Chatelaine’s* Sanders was chosen to be the Director of the Consumer Branch of the WPTB, charged with getting the direct feedback of women regarding policy implementation, speaks to the presumption of government that food habits were the exclusive concern of female consumers.²⁰ That government deemed it necessary to keep tabs on women’s reception of its policies, in spite of the fact that “per capita consumption of nearly every nutrient had increased during the war,” shows the nature of its concern was not general equality, but the staving off of class conflict stemming from the upper classes’ privileges being levelled down to ensure the lower class remain pliable sources of labour.²¹

The importance of government intervention into the national marketplace for food was of course more than merely cultural. As has been shown, substantial alterations of food habits were demanded by not only the Canadian armed forces, but also the British Empire. Had Canadian food habits not changed so dramatically, it is unlikely that Canada could have provided the “essential lifeline to Britain” that it did.²² As a result of

¹⁹ Ian Mosby, “Food on the Home Front during the Second World War” *Wartime Canada*, ¶12.

²⁰ Thelma Le Coco, “The Woman’s Voice in Price Control,” *Chatelaine*, November 1945, 16, 49, 57, 59.

²¹ Mosby, ¶12. Mosby further quantifies these nutritional claims: “Even as late as 1945, per capita consumption of dairy products, fruit, and meat were each up 23 percent over than [sic] 1939 levels, while poultry and egg consumption was up 12 percent.”

²² Mosby, ¶2. Specifically, Mosby cites numbers that in 1945 Canadians exported food representing about “57 per cent of British wheat and flour consumption – down from its 1941 peak of 77 per cent – as well as

government intervention and voluntary compliance with suggested changes to culinary practices, the peoples of the British Empire and its Dominions not only persevered through the Second World War, but Collingham shows they actually “ended the war with healthier populations and an expectation among the general population that the state was responsible for ensuring the health of its people.”²³ In this way, though the motivation of the Canadian government to act as a go-between mediating its peoples’ interactions with their food appears to have been stability and the preservation of pre-war social and imperial hierarchies of power, its long-term result may have been a shift in the expectations of its people regarding the role of government with respect to the regulation of food.

5.1. Closing Remarks: *Chatelaine* Imagines the Future, in 1945

Forty-five years after the war ended, in 1990, Gloria Steinam wrote provocatively to challenge the *status quo* of women’s magazines: “What could women’s magazines be like if they were as free as books? as realistic as newspapers? as creative as films? as diverse as women’s lives? We don’t know.”²⁴ These rhetorical questions imply that *Chatelaine* magazine was not an entirely cultural product, nor was it a product that pursued editorial objectivity, as might be expected of a newspaper. However, in spite of the long track-record of commercial intervention into its content and structure, readers nonetheless “exercised a degree of control and power” over *Chatelaine*, particularly through its editors and writers.²⁵ Because it was what Korinek calls a “producerly text,” existing at a crossroads of culture and commerce – between individuals, communities,

39 per cent of bacon, 15 per cent of eggs, and 24 per cent of cheese, and 11 per cent of evaporated milk consumed in Britain.”

²³ Collingham, 414.

²⁴ Gloria Steinam, “Sex, Lies & Advertising,” *Ms. Magazine*, July/August 1990, 178.

²⁵ Korinek, 366.

corporations and governments – it has represented an ideal source for examining discourses involving food in wartime Canada.²⁶

As the war came to a close in February of 1945, the magazine looked optimistically forward on the peacetime prospects for food in Canada. It forecasted many foods becoming plentiful, including: local bread, root vegetables, local fruit and fish; imported fruit; “unlimited” supplies of nine types of canned soups as well as coffee, tea and eggs; 200% of the baby food of 1941; and finally, an abundance of processed cheddar cheese.²⁷ While other foods remained scarce,²⁸ and appeals continued for women to can to free up food supplies to help stem the wave of global famine,²⁹ optimism and desire nonetheless characterized the magazine’s presumptions about post-war.³⁰ The operative presumption was that the end of war would bring a resumption of pre-war consumptive and productive norms, tied to the preservation of hierarchies of gender and class.³¹

Unfortunately, the expectation of a booming post-war Canadian economy would have to wait, especially as per capita food consumption proceeded to decline after 1945, not to return to wartime highs until the late 1950s.³² Famine conditions persisted across much of the globe until at least 1950; moreover, these were coupled with the government’s decision to lift price ceilings and food rationing before its food-export

²⁶ Korinek, 367.

²⁷ No authorship was attributed, “Forecast for Food,” *Chatelaine*, February 1945, 62.

²⁸ For instance, unprocessed cheddar cheese, many meats, canned beans, butter, seasonings, and spices. “Forecast for Food,” *Chatelaine*, February 1945, 66.

²⁹ No authorship was attributed, “Canning Your Fruit,” *Chatelaine*, July 1945, 61. In this respect, the appeal appearing in this article was particularly compelling: “Until there is freedom from hunger all over the world every speck of food is needed, and here is a way you can do your bit in preventing waste.”

³⁰ Exemplifying this optimism, Campbell imaginatively wrote to the effect that: “Foods and food products in all their variety and abundance will return to our grocers’ shelves, new forms and flavors will enliven our menus and save our time, a new high standard of quality and nutritive value will provide better return for the money we spend on our victuals.” Campbell, “We Asked You!,” *Chatelaine*, January 1945, 47.

³¹ As justification of this belief, the magazine presented the results of a survey by the organization “Canadian Facts” to judge public opinion relating to postwar expectations. Campbell, “We Asked You!,” *Chatelaine*, January 1945, 47-8.

³² Mosby, *Wartime*, ¶12.

commitments had eased. The confluence of these forces together determined that the majority of Canadians' experience of the Second World War – experiences of relative food security and price stability – was contrasted with a resumption of old inequalities in food distribution.

Chatelaine continued to evolve with the changing times. The magazine's maternal feminism was gradually supplanted until it came to resemble the "'closet' feminist magazine" of Korinek's focus by the 1950s, further distinguishing it from its more conservative American competitors.³³ The magazine's influence over food habits continued through the postwar years, only declining from its former importance with the advent of television leading to a shift in the preferences of advertisers, beginning with Standard Brands' first such televised ads appearing in the United States in 1946. Even with these first televised advertisements, the magazine maintained its place until televisions became "an indoor status symbol in the 1950s" in Canada.³⁴

Each of these changes are fragments of the history of Canadian food culture, which has continued, as it must, well after the guns of war had fallen silent and the Second World War had become a matter of reconstruction and, eventually, history. While food in Canada, and *Chatelaine's* unique place with respect to it, lived on past the war years, many of the changes experienced by Canadians and detailed here became parts of these other narratives. The way people talked about food during the war – that is, about science and nutrition, masculinity and childhood, women and families, nations and empires, service and patriotism, sacrifice and loss – all of these conversations would

³³ Korinek, 257.

³⁴ Dorothy Duncan, *Canadians at Table: A Culinary History of Canada* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2006) 177. Duncan is also useful for exploring immigration as a postwar force that would redefine Canadian food culture by providing an influx of population to both rural (farming) and urban areas. These "new Canadians" would carry with them new tastes, ingredients, and rituals of consumption that would actively change the food habits and tastes of all Canadians. Duncan, 176.

continue to change, by turns reflecting and producing an ongoing play of shifting relations between materials, ideas, and peoples that defines the multiplicity of Canadian cultural experience up until the present day.



Figure 2 Norman Rockwell's *Freedom From Want*, *Saturday Evening Post*, 1943. (reproduced from Amy Bentley's *Eating for Victory: Food Rationing and the Politics of Domesticity*.)

and was it in bed. I
 didn't see Helen until
 it was late.
 Helen, she doesn't
 You know that. I
 left her without con-
 tinu was missed.
 It isn't anybody,
 he. Like it too much
 me. It's good that
 he can take care of
 Helen didn't laugh
 at that, but she was
 or body rolling with
 her grow brighter
 dresser window and
 up. "Molly's old
 ex-husband, and Mark
 you, Jim. I'll get
 it for you and order
 it and see to the new
 set the work sheets."
 es, Helen, and you
 up?"
 to that night, but
 didn't understand.
 Helen didn't expect
 than she had Jim,
 at will we do with-
 outted. "We can't
 s. I'm changing the
 summer. You and
 e meals, under the
 at Minna. See and
 I wash and wipe the
 big children, now—"
 he tears gathered in
 had her first qualm.
 and said she had
 about going to the
 can't take care of
 Helen! This is my
 half an hour, but in
 same as it was in the
 wasn't going unless
 Helen didn't go, she
 e else, but she hated
 at a hotel, because
 buying some bonds.
 led, too, in person.
 had been cheated,
 or was a thief. She
 tting Josie go to the
 didn't go.
 heart set on going,
 last night, and she
 rying this morning.
 ven more indignant
 Mrs. Galer's sisters,
 either. Mrs. Galer
 leave her children
 six weeks at the
 be there, and Molly
 Brokaw. She'll be
 ther. Her friend,

"HERE'S A MAN'S BREAKFAST EH, SON?"



YOU don't often see a picture like this — father and two-year-old both enjoying the same food. But that's the remarkable thing about Cream of Wheat! For 44 years doctors have agreed that here's one breakfast cereal that's good for everybody—babies, growing children, husky he-men!

Why? Because Cream of Wheat is milled from the best part of the best wheat, with scratchy irritating particles removed. It gives you quick food energy, yet it is one of the easiest of all foods to digest. And what a delightfully smooth flavor! You can actually taste the goodness of Cream

Figure 3 Cream of Wheat ad, *Chatelaine*, July 1939, pp. 17.

FREE A surprise GIFT PACKAGE of Shirriff's Desserts, Marmalades and Jellies to the author of each Lushus Lyric selected for publication. Mail your lyric to Shirriff's Limited, Toronto.

Today's Lushus Lyric . . . by Miss Grace Rock, Toronto, Ont.

*The month of June is drawing near,
When Wedding Bells ring loud and clear;
And modern brides, with minds alert,
Take note—"Serve Lushus for dessert".*

● The twice-as-rich fruity flavour of Lushus Jelly dessert comes sealed in the Flavour Bud like milk in a cocoanut—and kept full strength until you use it.



THE
FLAVOUR BUD
GIVES LUSHUS
FLAVOUR TO

SHIRRIFF'S
Lushus
A JELLY DESSERT



Figure 5 Lushus jelly dessert ad from *Evening Citizen*, 3 May 1939, pg. 18.

LIFE WITH FATHER made Breakfast a nightmare for Helen

UNTIL it dawned on her that what her family needed was a "change of pace" in breakfast cereals! For months, summer and winter, Helen had been serving one breakfast cereal for all. No wonder father was grumpy over the morning paper . . . the children complaining, hard to please. What did Helen do? Let's look in on her family at breakfast the following day—



GEE, I'M SICK OF THIS SAME OLD BREAKFAST!

SO AM I, MOM. I DON'T BLAME DAD



BOY! ARE THESE GOOD!
CAN I HAVE A SECOND HELPING, MOM?

TASTY KRUMBLES by Kellogg taste better than any other shredded cereal you ever tried! In **KRUMBLES**, a secret Kellogg formula has added a new appetite-tickling flavour to the healthful nourishment of whole Canadian Wheat. What's more, **Krumbles** are *krumbled*—ready to eat.



DARLING THOSE KELLOGG'S BRAN FLAKES ARE A REAL TASTE THRILL!

AND MORE THAN A TASTE-THRILL! Certainly, these crunchy, mellow-flavoured flakes have won thousands on *taste* alone—but to other thousands, **KELLOGG'S BRAN FLAKES** are a gentle, sure way to avoid irregularity. They eat Kellogg's Bran Flakes, with other parts of wheat, every morning to *keep fit!*



MUMMY, WHY DON'T WE HAVE KELLOGG'S CORN FLAKES MORE OFTEN?

NO MID-MORNING "LET-DOWN" for children who eat crispy, nourishing **KELLOGG'S CORN FLAKES** with cream and sugar for breakfast. These crunchy, golden-brown flakes stimulate the appetite and gently waken "sleepy stomach." Off to school or play go your children, full of new life and energy.



MY WHOLE FAMILY IS BRIGHTER AT BREAKFAST SINCE I STARTED GIVING THEM VARIETY!

NUTRITION EXPERT BACKS HELEN
"Morning appetites need tempting," says Helen Campbell, famous authority on meal problems and director of the Chatelaine Institute. "Breakfast should not be the neglected meal. Variety—the spice of life—makes for brighter breakfasts, too."
Give your family *variety* at breakfast. Stock all Kellogg's delicious cereals. Made by Kellogg's in London, Canada.

Kellogg's

MODERN DAYS DEMAND MODERN BREAKFASTS

Figure 6 Kellogg's breakfast cereals and domestic abuse, *Chatelaine*, March 1939, pp. 49.

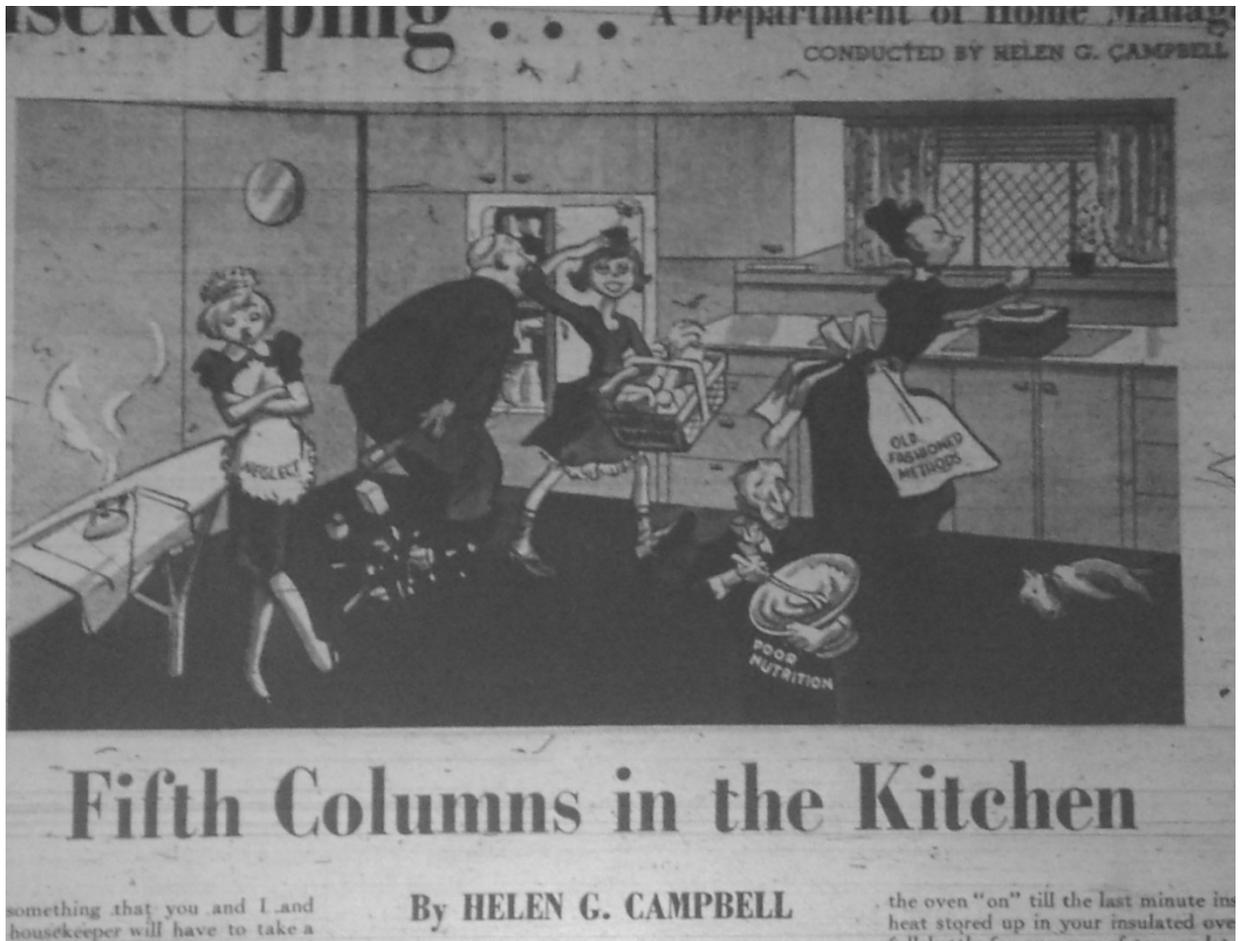


Figure 7 Helen G. Campbell's "Fifth Columns in the Kitchen," *Chatelaine*, January 1942, pp. 39.

HUNTLEY & PALMERS

Founded 1826

HAVE KEPT THE FLAG FLYING AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO FOR BRITISH QUALITY

IN

BISCUITS

READING ENGLAND

ALUMINUM
in Peace and in War

Now, in war-time, Aluminum is of vital importance in the

Once Upon a Time
Continued from page 13

night, I remember, with the frog whistling in the swamp by the river.

Long before we got to the Volunteers' hall we could hear the musket butts going *ker-ump!* on the plank floor when they grounded arms. It was a little hall that had been a chapel one time, and if you wanted to watch, you had to stand just inside the door where you wouldn't be in the way.

The Volunteers' captain was a fat young man named Ream, and he nodded and waved to us; rather pleased you could see. The militia always drew the best crowd, because of their red coats, and there were so many more of them.

But somehow it was Kirby Stevens I noticed, perhaps because he'd been a beau of mine, 'way back when I was sixteen. Kirby wasn't very tall, but he carried himself very straight, and he had dark eyes and a gentle face. He stopped coming to our house after Charlie and James came home from The War. It vexed me, somehow—dropping out so quickly, I mean—and I used to give him a little lift of my chin when I noticed him at all.

Well, this night, I don't know what got into me, but when fat Harry Ream hollered, "Dismiss!" and the Volunteers began to pick up their stuff and go home, I walked over to Kirby and said, "Kirby Stevens, I haven't been seeing much of you lately." Poor Kirby went pink right up to his green shako. He gave a big swallow and blurted, "No." Just that. No follow-up. Nothing. Well, I wouldn't let him go. I must have been possessed, that night. I held him with my eyes—you can do that to a man, Miss Marian, when you're nineteen—and made him talk to me, asking him all kinds of questions about his uniform, and his gun, and how he got his cross-belts so white, till Arthur Drehber, who was the company quartermaster, came around to blow out the lights.

Kirby walked home with me, with his rifle slung to his shoulder by the strap, and his shako tucked under his arm, and the air off the river ruffling his hair when we crossed the bridge. When we came to the big elm—it's gone now, but it used to stand by the street, where the carriage drive came in—Kirby saw the two red spots glowing on the verandah, Charlie Carson's cigar, and James

Figure 8 Huntley and Palmers biscuits ad, *Chatelaine*, December 1941, pp. 61.

CANADA is STRONG

BREAD SUPPLIES $\frac{1}{4}$ OF THE FOOD ENERGY OF CANADIANS

All over Canada men and women are harvesting bigger crops, cutting more lumber, hauling in more fish, building more machines. Canada is strong today! And $\frac{1}{4}$ of the food energy of Canadian men and women is supplied by bread!

Bread is recognized as the best and cheapest basic food. It is extra-rich in energy-giving carbohydrates and with its modern milk formula provides important protein for muscle building and repair. It is remarkably easy to digest.

In these days of supreme effort, calling for fullest energy and fitness — eat and serve more of this energizing, economical food. Win through with BREAD!

Prepared by the makers of Fleischmann's Yeast as a contribution to the advancement of Canadian National Health

BUY BREAD FROM YOUR BAKER

The finest bread that can be baked today is sold by your local baker. His skill, modern scientific equipment — and the finest ingredients — give you a loaf unsurpassed in wholesomeness and delicious flavor.

Figure 9 Fleischmann's Yeast's "Canada is Strong" bread ad, *Chatelaine*, April 1941, pp. 79.



"TOMATO SOUP'S MY FAVORITE! AND NOW WE HAVE IT LOTS OF TIMES!"



FOR HEALTH-AND PLEASURE, TOO! - SERVE CAMPBELL'S TOMATO SOUP

Canadian Tomatoes are in the news as an important health-protective food. Tip-top tomatoes go into Campbell's Tomato Soup. They're plump and red, vine-ripened and full of luscious flavor. Blended with these are fine table butter and a touch of seasoning, and the soup is made according to Campbell's exclusive recipe.

Good soup is good sense for all the family, and "Tomatoes for health" is the order of the day. It's no wonder that today more than ever Campbell's Tomato Soup is first choice with most people.



EXTRA-NOURISHING!

A nourishing soup becomes extra nourishing when you fix Campbell's Tomato Soup as cream of tomato! To the health benefits of tomatoes you add the nutriment of milk and there you have a dish to help make any meal fortifying and sustaining. (For cream of tomato, prepare with an equal quantity of milk instead of water.)

Campbell's TOMATO SOUP

MADE IN CAMPBELL'S MODERN CANADIAN KITCHENS

Figure 10 Campbell's tomato soup ad, Chatelaine, April 1942, pp. 17.

The Letters of Davina 27 Continued from page 10

APART FROM our ceaseless waiting for attack from the air, life in England is not so very different from your life just now. I mean that the much publicized rationing is not so very terrible after all. I've had such a flood of letters from friends in Canada, commiserating me on my hard lot, and it wasn't until we got snowed under with an avalanche of butter and sugar and biscuits from them, that I realized what they meant. Somehow a feeling has got about that we are starving. Mr. Mutch of the post office stores told me that young Bert Plender, home on leave from France, had scraped together some tins of bully beef to bring to his supposedly famished family. Mr. Mutch leaned over the counter of his little shop, which is bulging with the usual stock, "Have you been short of food?" he asked, and I, thinking of those kind but unnecessary tins of butter, those frightfully superfluous bags of sugar, had to answer, "Yes!"

"It's that Nazi propaganda getting over," said Mr. Mutch, and I suppose that's what it is. We truly haven't found the rationing at all irksome yet. The meat allowance is just our normal weekly amount, as a family we don't take sugar in tea or coffee, so the sugar ration is larger than we need, and the butter, often rationed most, needs augmenting with margarine, but for the most part we have had half a pound per person per week, and that's ample for anyone. So it isn't that as yet the rationing hasn't ridd our housekeeping at all.

DO miss our petrol though. But so many people have put their cars up for auction, that when you can scrape gallon or two of petrol, driving is an joy. You can skim along the by-roads, and London is no longer a traffic jam. You can swish roundly, shoot through Hammerwhirl across the Notting Hill tleneck, and park pretty nearly on choose. The crossings where d in interminable jams are breeding places. Never again in they will we be able to drive in tful circumstances, and when coupons are all used up, then ether to the rediscovery that t there too!

There is the paper shortage. e paper is a flat miserable eagerly devoured sheets. I t wad of paper in the cup- the stairs one day, and to recognize our pre-war in this sleek fat monster, of print, and all they had ot page was "TORSO TRUNK, HORRIBLE OTING." Oh, the pip- e! We carefully collect per and stack it up for

the dustmen to collect. In a frenzy of Was effort I've stacked up all my senti- mental past, letters, old programs, treasured but useless manuscripts, all stacked up to be carted away, and pulped down to make new paper. The dustmen are busy these days, as the County Council have started a Corporation Piggery, and along with the waste paper we have to save our potato peelings, etc., too, for the dustmen to carry off to the municipal pigs.

I AM still attending the shop of the Beaver Club once a week, where the coffee and doughnuts are still the best in London. The men are beginning to get a bit more used to English brands of cigarettes, and now they hand us out the proper money, and don't produce a handful of mixed change for us to take our pick from. The shop is in a very central position, and we see the men pass to and from the snack bar, and through the open door of the canteen we can hear the musicians who come to play to the men. Sometimes it is the men themselves who play. The men sit silent at their tables while a khaki figure softly plays a violin solo. They certainly appreciate good music.

London is packed with soldiers these days. As soon as you arrive at the station you get swept into a seething mass of khaki, and a soldier with full kit takes up so much room. Rifles dangle, kit bags sway, and gas masks obtrude. I got entangled with a platoon being en- trained in full marching order down the moving staircase by a very young officer, the agonized sergeant shouting from the top that they were going the wrong way. Whereupon, blushing with confusion the tiny officer commanded "Right about turn," and the staircase became jammed with the martial tramp of marching men trying to climb up the down-moving staircase, and I very hot and bothered bumping and slithering in the midst.

TODAY is a hot sunny day, surely even the sternest critic of our climate would be disarmed by weather like this. I am going into the garden now to finish painting the seats with pale green paint. There aren't so many cars parked on the towing path this summer, so we can enjoy the soft river scents from our garden wall, untainted by passing exhaust fumes. This year the nightingales were back in the willows on the opposite bank, they sang with crescendos of delight whenever the searchlights blazed out, as if they thought those pale columns of light fingering the clouds, were illuminating the night for their special benefit.

Nightingales singing in the War. Somehow I didn't expect that.

Yours sincerely,
Davina Craig.



"MAN'S FAVORITE DESSERT"

As you see the pie recipes in this Chatelaine you'll want to rush into the kitchen and set about making one of the house really happy. Chatelaine Service Bulletin No. 206 has 34 recipes for really interesting pies. Write to Service Bulletin Department, 481 University Avenue, Toronto.



"Kellogg's win on flavour" is the verdict of St. Maurice Aquarone, the distinguished Chief of Police of the famous Royal Corn neighbourhood, Hamilton. He said, "Judgment of five shades of flavour is my life work." Blindfolded, he sampled all four brands of corn flakes. He had no hesitation in choosing the sample which later proved to be Kellogg's. The famous Chief adds, "There is a subtle distinction in the Kellogg flavour which makes it especially appealing to a trained palate."

Flakes and Flavour OR THE EXPERTS CHOICE

by BARBARA B. BROOKS, noted nutritional authority

The title of this article reads like an old-time thriller, doesn't it? And it really was thrilling to us, when expert after expert confirmed our belief that trained palates would choose Kellogg's Corn Flakes for flavour!

Like M. Aquarone, whose statement is printed above, these trained taste-experts took the test under controlled conditions. When they sampled all four brands of corn flakes, they had absolutely no idea which sample was which. But, expert after expert discovered that his first choice was the sample which proved to be Kellogg's!

Housewives record 5-1 family vote!

Well, it would have been strange if trained palates had not supported the majority of Canadian families. In a recent coast-to-coast survey made by impartial research-workers, more than 2000 housewives from every province were asked this question: "What, ready-to-eat cereal is the favourite in your family?" The vote was Kellogg's, five-to-one over other brands of corn flakes!

And because Kellogg's win on flavour everywhere, they move faster, reach you fresher, crispier. And besides, these hectic days, you'll like a breakfast that's ready to serve in 30 seconds and leaves you with no messy pots or pans to clean afterwards. Be sure to get several packages of Canada's favourite breakfast cereal tomorrow!

No time these days to work up an appetite before breakfast. But Kellogg's Corn Flakes do it for you . . . make your mouth water.

Tempt your sleepy stomach awake!

1. Gently WAKE your sleepy stomach! The very sight of crisp, golden Kellogg's Corn Flakes wakes your mouth water, whets your appetite.
2. START you quick! Full of energizing carbohydrate "fuel," Kellogg's Corn Flakes help you start the day "in high."
3. Help KEEP you going! A breakfast with Kellogg's Corn Flakes served with cream and sugar keeps releasing energy for hours.



It's really surprising how much nourishment you get from tempting Kellogg's Corn Flakes. The average serving with cream and sugar has a food value of 223.26 calories, as much as many "heavier" alternatives. And they're so easy to digest, Kellogg's are just the thing for a bedtime snack. Try them tonight!

Kellogg's Corn Flakes are FIRST FOR FLAVOUR!



Jealously guarded is the secret of Kellogg's richer, more appetizing flavour. You'll enjoy it! Try the new economical family-size package today! When eating out, ask for the unwrapped individual package. Made by Kellogg's in London, Canada.

Figure 11 Corn Flakes ad shallowly deploys nutrition, Chatelaine, July 1940, pp. 53.

CANADA'S OFFICIAL FOOD RULES

These are the Health-Protective Foods

Be sure you eat them every day in at least these amounts.

(Use more if you can)

MILK—Adults— $\frac{1}{2}$ pint. Children—more than 1 pint. And some CHEESE, as available.

FRUITS—One serving of tomatoes daily, or of a citrus fruit, or of tomato or citrus fruit juices, and one serving of other fruits, fresh, canned or dried.

VEGETABLES (In addition to potatoes of which you need one serving daily)—Two servings daily of vegetables, preferably leafy green, or yellow, and frequently raw.

CEREALS AND BREAD—One serving of a whole-grain cereal and 4 to 6 slices of Canada Approved Bread, brown or white.

MEAT, FISH, etc.—One serving a day of meat, fish, or meat substitutes. Liver, heart or kidney once a week.

EGGS—At least 3 or 4 eggs weekly.

Eat these foods first, then add these and other foods you wish.

Some source of Vitamin D such as fish liver oils, is essential for children, and may be advisable for adults.

Figure 12 Canada's Official Food Rules, *Health Canada*, 1942

I. CANADA'S FOOD RULES

Approved by the Canadian Council on Nutrition

THESE ARE THE FOODS FOR HEALTH. EAT THEM EVERY DAY. DRINK PLENTY OF WATER



1. *Milk*—Adults, $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 pint. Children, $1\frac{1}{2}$ pints to 1 quart.
2. *Fruit*—One serving of citrus fruit or tomatoes or their juices; and one serving of other fruit.
3. *Vegetables*—At least one serving of potatoes; at least two servings of other vegetables, preferably leafy, green or yellow, and frequently raw.
4. *Cereals and Bread*—One serving of a whole-grain cereal and at least four slices of Canada Approved Vitamin B bread (whole wheat, brown or white) with butter.
5. *Meat and Fish*—One serving of meat, fish, poultry or meat alternates such as beans, peas, nuts, eggs or cheese. Also use eggs and cheese at least three times a week each, and liver frequently.

A fish liver oil, as a source of vitamin D, should be given to children and expectant women, and may be advisable for other adults.

Iodized salt is recommended.

Figure 13 Canada's Food Rules, *Health Canada*, 1944



**"GO ON, SPEND IT...
what's the difference?"**

CANADIANS . . . the time has come when every nickel, dime and quarter you spend *needlessly* is money spent in the cause of our enemies! NOW, more than any time since this war began, national THRIFT is essential.

And THRIFT begins with those little things you *needlessly* buy from day to day—THRIFT begins in the home, in the kitchen, in the clothes you wear. From now on, resolve that *needless* spending is out! *Your* personal war job is to save every cent you can . . . and invest those savings in War Savings Stamps!

Yes, saving to buy War Savings Stamps is a *vital* war job for every woman, man and child in Canada. War saving stamps are a protection NOW and an investment for the future which will bring you back \$5 for every \$4 you invest.

So remember—let THRIFT be your watchword! Every day, save a little—and invest those savings in War Savings Stamps.

Buy War Savings Stamps from banks, post offices, druggists, grocers and other retail stores—and buy them regularly.

Buy WAR SAVINGS STAMPS EVERY WEEK

SAVING IS SERVING

NATIONAL WAR FINANCE COMMITTEE

Figure 14 The National War Finance Committee praises thrift, *Chatelaine*, July 1942, pp. 4.

Chatelaine, August 1945

THERE'S NO SUGAR BOWL...
If we all share equally

We Canadians, together with the citizens of the United States and Great Britain, will eat less sugar during the balance of 1945.

To meet our own needs and the urgent requirements of our Allies and the liberated countries, our share of the reduction must total nearly 200,000,000 pounds of sugar during the rest of the year.

To assure fair distribution of what is left, the sugar ration is to be cut by five pounds during the next seven months by reducing the monthly allotment to one pound in June, July, August, October and December. In September and November, the allowance will remain unchanged at two pounds.

The ten pound sugar allotment for home canning, represented by twenty extra preserves coupons, remains unchanged. Two regular preserves coupons will continue to become valid each month.

ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT SUGAR

Q. How does Canada get its share of world sugar supplies?
A. World stocks are pooled by the Combined Food Board of the United Nations which allot sugar to Canada, United States and Great Britain on a uniform per capita basis.

Q. Where does the rest of the world sugar supply go?
A. To other claimants, including liberated areas, European neutrals, Russia, the Middle East, New Zealand and other sugar-importing countries. Approximately one-half of this total is destined for liberated areas.

Q. Is there less sugar in the world today?
A. Yes. Because needs are up and production is down, world sugar stocks reached a new low at the beginning of 1945. By the end of the year, they will be down again, this time to a dangerous minimum.

Q. Why is there more demand for sugar?
A. The rising demand largely reflects the needs of liberated areas.

Q. Why is there less production?
A. World sugar output is lower for three reasons:

1. Enemy occupation of some sources such as Java and the Philippines, loss, of course, to still in Japanese hands and, although the Philippines are liberated, production is not expected to be restored until late in 1945.
2. Other export countries have experienced serious shortages of labour and fertilizer.
3. Severe drought conditions and hurricanes have also cut into production in the important West Indian area.

INDUSTRIAL AND QUOTA USERS WILL ALSO GET LESS

Effective July 1, 1945, sugar made available to industrial users, such as beakers, blenders and breakfast cereal manufacturers, makers of soft drinks, confectionery and candy, and jam and wine manufacturers, will again be reduced.

A further cut is also being made in the allotment to quota users, such as public eating places, while similar reductions are being made by the Armed Forces in the sugar quotas for service personnel.

RATION ADMINISTRATION
THE WARTIME PRICES AND TRADE BOARD

SUGAR IS SCARCE - USE IT SPARINGLY

Figure 15 Sugar rationing at home tied to military alliances abroad, *Chatelaine*, August 1945, pp. 1.

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