Roughing It In Suburbia: Reading *Chatelaine* Magazine 1950-1969

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Chatelaine came to dominate its market in the two decades after 1950: roughly 1 in 3 English-Canadian women read the magazine regularly by 1969. Chatelaine was an unique cultural product because it created a community of female readers, editors and writers within the framework of a mass-produced, cultural commodity. The Chatelaine community was united by gender, nationalism and the periodical but was often divided along class, racial, religious and regional lines. This ‘community’ provided many services and acted as an advisor, friend, entertainer, educator and forum for correspondence. As well Chatelaine played an important role as a disseminator of feminist ideology and women’s issues in Canada. In short, Chatelaine was an atypical mass-market women’s magazine.

This dissertation marries current cultural analysis with social, gender and cultural history to provide a detailed examination of the magazine’s content, impact, and relationship with Canadian women. Unlike other studies of women’s magazines this work examines the history of the era, the corporate climate, the competitors, the creators, the readership demographics and the text to produce a comprehensive study. A summary and critique of the international historiographical and theoretical literature foregrounds the work.

The textual analysis provides a detailed examination of all the magazine’s components: editorials, articles, fiction, departmental features (food, fashion, etc.,), cover art and advertising. These sections explore the polysemic (or multiple) meanings and readings of the material. Readers’ letters form a core part of the study. Thus the voices and thoughts of “real” readers are given priority placement in the analysis of the magazine’s content. This correspondence reveals how and why people read Chatelaine.

“Roughing it in Suburbia” makes a key contribution to the study of Canadian popular culture, the study of women’s cultural products, and the history of second wave feminism in Canada. Equally important it illustrates how consumers of such material actively make meaning, re-fashion, ignore or criticize cultural products. Chatelaine’s readers were not passive pawns of Maclean Hunter’s plans for a profitable cultural commodity but instead, along with the primarily female staff who edited the magazine, were active participants in a Canadian women’s cultural community.
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"On the double, Daddy!"
"Safest Gun in the West!"
Chapter 1: Introduction

I have been reading Chatelaine with increasing interest and approval for several months now. I like your editorials and your recent urging to women to step into roles as citizens....It is so pleasing to have a Canadian magazine that gives a sense of unity. English magazines are most interesting but their concepts of living are different. The better American magazines have become too glossy, and seem to have left their readers behind. The improved Chatelaine has just arrived in time to fill an obvious gap. I hope you do not find my letter too enthusiastic since Chatelaine still has flaws. However, you cannot go far wrong with the intelligent woman in mind....  
--Anonymous, Vancouver (1962)

I was sorry to read the unkind comments one of your readers had made about your magazine. A lot of work is put into it, and it is not fair judgment. Maybe I would seem substandard to the reader, but I have found interest, helpful information, beauty, yes and inspiration in your articles through the years..... Friends of mine, too, look forward to your publications with pleasure. I do think you will find that most people do. Intelligent average people, like most Canadian women....  
--Mrs. Celia Wallace, Niagara Falls, Ontario (1962)

...I am not one of your regular readers so this is perhaps why I notice the difference. Your magazine has greatly improved in content and presentation over the last ten years and sustained interest from cover to cover. Keep up the good work and we might eventually evolve some decent Canadian magazines with which to battle the trash we must content ourselves with from South of the Border. (sic)  
--Mrs. Louis Trono, Banff, Alberta (1962)

First published in March 1928, Chatelaine consistently has been one of the most popular Canadian periodicals. In an industry dominated by American products, Chatelaine was the sole Canadian women's mass circulation magazine. Although it would be fair to say that much of the history of Canadian popular culture remains to be written, Chatelaine's history is overdue. Many Canadian women's historians have utilized Chatelaine to supply anecdotal information about women's social history throughout the twentieth century and yet no sustained analysis of the entire magazine has ever been attempted. The prevailing belief has been that Chatelaine presented one dominant message which reinforced the hegemony of English Canadian, suburban, middle-class women. This study of the 'glory years' of the magazine in the 1950s and 1960s redresses that historical misconception. During the fifties and sixties Chatelaine magazine was transformed from a thin magazine devoted primarily to fiction, departmental features and cheerful editorials into an important resource for Canadian women which placed an emphasis on general feature articles, opinionated (and often
feminist) editorial essays, and reader participation. As a result, Chatelaine came to dominate its market: by the sixties 1 in 3 English-Canadian women read the magazine regularly.

Chatelaine was a Canadian women's service magazine, dedicated to offering a variety of reading material: fiction, articles, editorials, household hints and recipes, fashion and beauty pages, gardening columns, and regular features on child raising comprised roughly half of the issue's content, while advertising pages filled the other fifty percent of space. It was created because Maclean Hunter saw a niche in the entirely American women's magazine market for a Canadian product. This description and motivation does not explain its popularity with Canadian women. Chatelaine was popular because it broke from the American model: it was not a glossy magazine devoted entirely to suburban living and affluent lifestyles but instead aimed the majority of its articles at the average Canadian woman, her family and her friends. It was proudly and identifiably Canadian, particularly in its attention to regional diversity. As well, the magazine had female editors (except for a brief period in the mid fifties) and the vast majority of columns, articles, and fiction were written by Canadian women. Finally, Chatelaine did not restrict itself to the world of the household but regularly ventured out in the public sphere. Many Canadian women thought of Chatelaine magazine as a friend, an advisor, an entertainer, and at times an educator.

This thesis examines the polysemic meanings (or multiple meanings) inherent in Chatelaine magazine. It recognizes that the magazine was a commercial product created by a dominant player in Canadian print media. However, it would be reductionist to conclude that the magazine only served corporate ends. Chatelaine was far more than just a mass cultural product intended to produce a profit. Chatelaine magazine created a cultural community of women. It provided a forum for female editors, writers, freelance journalists and readers. All of those groups had an active part in its success or failure. This was especially true during the 1950s and 1960s as new suburban developments removed women from extended family circles and isolated them within single family dwellings. The subscription figures of the magazine skyrocketed during that era. This 'community' provided many services and acted as an advisor, friend, companion, entertainer, educator and forum for correspondence. It often provided realistic portrayals of women's experiences and ones that challenged stereotypical images of women's magazines both past and present. "Roughing it in Suburbia" demonstrates that Chatelaine's editorial and supplementary staff were role models
for Canadian women. It was a significant periodical at a time when women’s ‘traditional’ and work related roles were in a state of flux. The administrative, or business side of the magazine, composed almost entirely of male managers and sales staff, were responsible for filling the advertising content. This advertising content stood in sharp contrast to the editorial material. The structure of production mimicked the doctrine of separate spheres ideology, because the editorial side of the periodical was primarily composed of women while the advertising department was primarily male. Finally, the gendered production of the magazine affected not only the content, but also the success of the various features in the magazine.

The title of this study, “Roughing It in Suburbia” both borrows from and pays tribute to Susanna Moodie’s classic Roughing it in the Bush (1852). Part prescriptive literature (or guidebook) about life in Upper Canada and part novel, Moodie’s book (and others of that genre) bear more than a passing resemblance to the material and tone often adopted by women’s magazines. In fact, some of the sections of Roughing it in the Bush and Life in the Clearings were published in “The Victoria Magazine” edited by Susanna Moodie and her husband J.W.D. Moodie. The Moodies launched their magazine with “the hope of inducing a taste for polite literature among the working classes,” and advertised it as “a cheap periodical for the Canadian people.”

Susanna Moodie had experience writing for journals and magazines in England and she had contributed to the Lady’s Magazine edited by her sisters Eliza and Agnes Strickland, both before and after her emigration to Upper Canada. Though the publishers of Canadian women’s magazines would draw most of their inspiration and impetus to publish from the success of the American women’s magazines, there are clear literary links between the indefatigable spirit, contradictory nature, and often bitterly humourous material published in Moodie’s work (and her classist and gendered account of life in Canada) with Chatelaine magazine in the mid-twentieth century. The “pioneering spirit” with which many Canadian women responded to life in their new suburban bungalows (despite the effusive praise bestowed upon these developments, they often remained poorly serviced, with little public transportation, and few amenities in the first few years) had a precursor in Susanna Moodie’s travails.

The first women’s journal, The Ladies Mercury originated in Britain in 1693. The first publication to refer to itself as a women’s magazine was The Ladies Magazine begun in
American journals devoted to women began publication in the 1790s and within a few years readers could choose any number of "Toilets, Miscellaneies, Caskets, and Repositories." An ever increasing number of American women's magazines flourished in the early nineteenth century but the grande-dame of them all was Godey's Ladies Book. Godey's was first published in 1830. Under the editorship of Mrs. Sarah Josepha Hale, (editor from 1837-1877) whom magazine historian James P. Woods describes as a "stalwart feminist," Godey's Ladies Book became an American institution. Godey's was also popular north of the border, and many small community and "pioneer" museums in Ontario have copies of Godey's in their collections. Godey's published "fashions...then moral stories...recipes, embroidery patterns and instructions, beauty and health hints, and elaborate illustrations." Although the precursor of the modern women's magazine formula is clear from the list of Godey's offerings, the magazine differed in two important ways from its later-day sisters. First, it did not have advertisements and thus the full cost was born by the subscription price. Second, the higher subscription cost meant that the magazine was reserved for the elites and not the masses. Godey's was eclipsed in its last few years of publication as a more affordable group of women's magazines grabbed the American women's consciousness and made magazine readers of a large, mass audience of women.

The new format was created by Cyrus and Louisa Knapp Curtis who in 1883 founded the Ladies' Home Journal (LHJ). The secret of LHJ's success was to forge what Helen Damon Moore referred to in her book Magazines for the Millions as "a powerful and mutually reinforcing mix of gender and commerce." The Curtis' combined editorial material of interest to women (food, fashions, fiction, advice columns, etc.) with national advertising for household products such as foodstuffs, cleaning supplies and toiletries. At a time when national forums for advertisers were limited, the LHJ provided a novel instrument for business to target consumers. Both James McCall's McCall's magazine, which originated as an advertising flyer of his patterns, and Clark Bryan's Good Housekeeping, which was primarily a mail order catalogue, soon followed the Curtis'. What all of these magazines shared, and would continue to promote well into the twentieth century, were very affordable subscription or single copy prices which resulted in a huge audience of women readers -- a mass audience demarcated by gender. The magazines recouped their costs, and made healthy profits, because of the huge quantity of advertising included in the periodical.
Canadian readers of women's magazines had to content themselves with the American, and less frequently, the British products, until 1905. That year, The Canadian Home Journal was founded and it continued to serve a mass audience of women readers until 1958. Other entries included the short-lived Everywoman's World (1914-1922), the upscale housing magazine Canadian Homes and Gardens (1925-1962) and the society magazine Mayfair (1927-1955). Both Canadian Homes and Gardens and Mayfair were Maclean magazines which catered to the upper and upper-middle class and to urban audiences.

The first issue of Chatelaine magazine hit the newsstands, drugstores and bookstores of the country in March 1928. The cover featured the title "The Chatelaine--A Magazine for Canadian Women" with an illustration of a lithe, elegantly dressed young mother reading to her two daughters. The woman's red evening dress, long elaborate earrings, well-coifed hair and the cherubic strawberry blond children all indicated the publisher's intended audience: the affluent woman reader and her middle-class sisters. The gestation time for the magazine had been very short. Only seven months had elapsed since H.V. Tyrrell, Vice President and Managing Director of The Maclean Hunter Publishing Company, had drafted a report entitled "General Plan for a Woman's Magazine of Large National Circulation." Tyrrell perceived a 'logical opening' for a woman's magazine since in his estimation Western Home Monthly and Canadian Home Journal did not fulfill their mandates as women's magazines, and were really only "second rate Canadian magazines". The motivations for the new magazine were strictly business oriented: "The more Canadian magazines there are of really creditable character, and the more magazine circulation there is available for advertisers, the more sure and rapid will be the growth of magazine advertising in this Country." Tyrrell believed that the creation of the new woman's magazine would serve to increase the prominence of the Maclean Hunter publishing company as a publisher of national magazines, and to attract new customers by providing business with more options for their advertising dollars. Tyrrell advised that the new periodical would not need a large influx of staff or capital expenditures, since the Maclean's staff "should be able to launch and to handle such a woman's magazine with comparatively few additions to the present staff."
Although financial considerations were the impetus for the creation of this new woman's magazine, Tyrrell proposed a mixture of offerings which he thought would attract the largest possible audience:

The name to be selected should be one that will indicate the distinctly feminine character of the magazine, and one that will appeal particularly to those interested in good housekeeping and home making. A well chosen name can have a strong appeal for reader and to advertisers alike. "Better Housekeeping" is one suggestion.... Articles should be published on Canadian women who have won prominence in various fields of endeavour such as politics, business, law, medicine, missions, domestic science, teaching, organizing, handling institutions and so on. From one-fourth to one-third of the editorial matter should be fiction of the best quality obtainable. This measure of entertainment is necessary to provide variety and to widen the appeal of the publication....The plan would be to print 60,000 copies right from the first issue.*21

Tyrell's suggestions were rather derivative: what he proposed was to emulate the format of the successful American women's magazines. Thus Tyrrell had only proposed that Maclean Hunter follow suit by adapting a venerable formula to the Canadian context. His suggested name "Better Housekeeping" was clearly an attempt to capitalize on the success of Good Housekeeping. Additionally, it marked the periodical as a 'woman only' journal and gave some indication of the topics he believed were of interest to Canadian women. It was noteworthy that Tyrell's topics of interest were wide-ranging, including the home service articles, fiction and general articles about women in the public sphere.

In a more ingenious twist of marketing savvy, the Maclean Hunter Publishing Company decided to launch a national contest to name the new woman's magazine. Over 70,000 people responded to the Maclean's advertisement in the hopes of winning the $1000 prize. In the end a rancher's wife from Elbourne British Columbia, Mrs. Hilda Paine, pocketed the money for her suggestion of "The Chatelaine."22 The number of people anxious to win the prize money foretold the sales potential of the new magazine. From its December 1928 paid sales of slightly over 57,000, the magazine grew to boast an annual circulation of 378,866 in 1950. By the end of the decade this had almost doubled to 745,589.23 In September 1958 Chatelaine purchased the subscription list of the Canadian Home Journal and officially became the only national Canadian women's magazine until the seventies.

The remainder of this introductory chapter serves multiple purposes. First, it delineates the misconceptions about the women's magazine, or the myth of the women's magazine. Second, it seeks to summarize and briefly review the existing literature on
women's periodicals, both the international and Canadian historiography. Because "Roughing it in Suburbia" combines history, critical analysis, feminist theory and semiotics, in essence a historically-situated reading of the multiple meanings inherent in Chatelaine's components, the bulk of the chapter is devoted to summarizing and briefly explaining the analytical framework. Finally, a detailed description of the methodological approach is provided along with commentary about the major sources used for this work. The introduction closes with an overview of the structure, aims and goals of the thesis.

There is an analytical continuum running throughout the analysis of women's magazines from Betty Friedan to Naomi Wolf which contends that women's magazines are bad. These authors claim that they are pap for women, created by the machinations of male corporate executives, male editors and male advertising executives. Supposedly this masculine triumvirate operates one of the most widely known (and oddly successful) conspiracies of the twentieth century: they have encouraged hundreds of thousands of females to purchase or subscribe to magazines that advocate a narrow, purely domestic role for women. The world of the women's magazine, according to the analysis of Friedan and many others, is one that creates a state of unfulfilled desires and fosters insecurity about women's bodies, their appearance, their relationships with their husbands and children. Ultimately, all this insecurity is supposed to lead to increased consumption of the products advertised in the magazine and to the generalized belief that women's fulfillment lies in the realm of consumption and the home and not in the workplace, higher education or in the public sphere. This is the myth of the women's magazine, and indeed, a myth that informs much of what is designated as women's popular culture: soap operas, tabloid newspapers and romance fiction.

This feminist critique of male-produced popular culture aimed at women, particularly with respect to Friedan's work, was an important starting point for a examination of what passes for 'normal discourse' about women's roles in society. It focused the attention on a seemingly innocuous form of light entertainment for women and began to ask serious questions about popular culture, gender, consumption and American society. However, in the thirty years that have elapsed since the publication of The Feminine Mystique, this legacy has become extremely problematic. The first problem, and one of the largest issues that researchers of women's magazines must confront, is the enduring nature of Friedan's thesis.
It has become a presumption that women's magazines are backward, ultra-conservative periodicals whose only function is to encourage consumption.

A critical appraisal of the myth of the women's magazines raises questions about the assumptions and validity of this generalization. From both an historical and a Canadian perspective this myth, with respect to Chatelaine magazine in the 1950s and 1960s, is completely ahistorical. It claims, or its adherents have claimed, that the American situation represents reality. It does not question whether women's magazines in other countries or in other time periods fit this analysis. More problematic, particularly from a feminist perspective, is that this myth entirely negates women's agency. It positions the readers as helpless pawns of the editors and ultimately of big business. It does not acknowledge that reading a magazine, watching television, or consuming other types of popular culture involves the reader making a choice. The reader chooses to purchase or subscribe to the magazine and they also choose what they wish to read within the magazine. Furthermore, the magazine myth does not question the presumption that readers of women's magazines are not necessarily white, middle class, suburban heterosexual women—which negates the working class, rural, male, homosexual, black, native and immigrant experience with these magazines. Finally, this determinism skews the analysis of the motives of the publishing companies, corporations and the advertisers. It assumes one large, monolithic motivation for these periodicals for all advertisers, all companies and all publishing firms which, given the range of advertised products alone, is far too reductionist. For instance, while it is a truism to state that commercial women's magazines are created to make money—for publishers, advertisers and manufacturers—researchers very seldom explore whether or not they actually do make money or if they are consistent money-makers.

The historiography of women's magazines is small, uneven and focused almost exclusively on American and British women's periodicals. As mentioned, much of the work produced owes a debt to Betty Friedan's ground-breaking book *The Feminine Mystique*. Published in 1963 and an immediate bestseller, Friedan's thesis has become the starting point for all researchers of women's magazines. Friedan's examination of women's magazines, advertisers, housewives, other mass media, psychologists and other constructors and shapers of women's identities in the United States after the Second World War produced a book which claimed that the problem with American women was the feminine mystique. This
mystique produces the nebulous sense of unease, fatigue, depression and ennui that Friedan termed 'the problem that has no name.' Chief among the perpetrators of this crime were the women's magazines which depicted a world of gleaming households, happy children and pretty, contented wives and mothers:

The image of woman that emerges from this big, pretty magazine is young and frivolous, almost childlike, fluffy and feminine; passive; gaily content in a world of bedroom and kitchen, sex, babies, and home. The magazine surely does not leave out sex; the only passion, the only pursuit, the only goal a woman is permitted is the pursuit of a man. It is crammed full of food, clothing, cosmetics, furniture, and the physical bodies of young women, but where is the world of thought and ideas, the life of the mind and spirit? In the magazine image, women do no work except housework and work to keep their bodies beautiful and to get and keep a man.

Friedan's work was of course, much more than an examination of women's magazines, but it is important that in building her argument about the feminine mystique it is to the women's magazines that the former freelance magazine journalist turned her attention. One of the problems with Friedan's research on American women's magazines was that she relied primarily upon the fiction components of these magazines. A recent reappraisal of Friedan's work by historian Joanne Meyerowitz indicates that non-fiction articles in women's magazines of the era (the same magazines researched by Friedan) included women who had moved outside of the domestic realm or encouraged women to participate in the workforce or politics. Clearly, Meyerowitz's and Friedan's contradictory findings indicate the variety of material in women's magazines and serve as a caution to researchers to provide comprehensive portraits of the variety of material and messages mediated by readers.

The late seventies and early eighties produced a handful of books which sought to evaluate further the impact of and the relationship between women and women's magazines. These works, a product of second wave feminism and the increasing numbers of women in graduate programs, approached the topic from an academic perspective. While stylistically they differed from Friedan much of the content remained the same. Kathryn Weibel's Mirror Mirror focused on the relationship between images of women in popular culture and the roles of women in society, a relationship she categorized through her use of the metaphor of the mirror: "the image of women in popular culture has been a middle class image reflective of the role assigned women under the division of labour created by the industrial revolution." Similarly sweeping statements were to be found in the British historiography. Marjorie Ferguson's Forever Feminine explained the role of the women's
magazine as "about more than women and womanly things, they are about femininity itself--as a state, a condition, a craft, and an art form which comprise a set of practices and beliefs." Finally, Katherine Fishburn's *Women in Popular Culture*, a guidebook to the literature on women and popular culture, was a cogent and fresh interpretation of the state of this discipline circa 1980; and the first to admit, albeit cautiously, that Friedan had exaggerated the role of women's magazines with respect to the creation of the feminine mystique.

Janice Winship's *Inside Women's Magazines* was the first academic treatment of women's magazines that managed to combine the marxist-feminist analysis of the text with an acknowledgment of the pleasure many women derive from reading these magazines. By the late eighties the insight offered by cultural studies, particularly the importance of reader agency, was finally introduced to the analysis of women's magazines. While Winship is no fan of the women's magazines, her acknowledgment that for many women they form a key source of affordable entertainment allows that women's relationship with these magazines is more sophisticated and contradictory than previous analyses would have us believe. Winship's section 'Work and leisure' looks at the contradictory ways that women have taken a mass-produced, consumption-driven product and incorporated it into their lives, stating that "women themselves experience that merging--of work and leisure, of work and pleasure; and the tensions...that are embodied in women's magazines." Her delightful turn of phrase, "mental chocolate," succinctly summarizes her assessment of the effect of this product on most women.

In the early nineties, two very important academic works appeared which sought to incorporate all the critical analysis and cultural analysis into more sophisticated examinations of women's magazines in Britain and the United States. *Women's Worlds* provides an excellent theoretical overview of the historiography of women's magazines in Britain and a succinct summary of the theories which have been utilized in formulating an analytic structure for this work:

We focus, in this book, on the conflict between two 'dominant' analyses of women's magazines.... Broadly, the first represents the magazine as a 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, 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.
After they contextualized the debate concerning the deciphering of women's magazines, Ballaster et al. examined actual magazines and readers, with chapters devoted to the woman's magazine from the eighteenth century to the present. Their work is really the first treatment of these periodicals that manages to pull together the various strands of theory, analysis, reader responses, and historically specific magazines, together into one cogent, persuasive and important monograph.

The strength of Ellen McCracken's *Decoding Women's Magazines* is her analysis of the dual nature of a women's periodical, "as business enterprises and as cultural texts."36 Far too many of the works devoted to women's magazines are quick to offer anecdotal information about the relationship between the business of producing women's magazines and the magazine content but McCracken actually examines this relationship in the American context. Her work is informed by a Gramscian, marxist-feminist analysis in which decoding the content of advertisements is linked with the publishing business, with little emphasis on or concern with the readers. Her search for the "master narrative"37 produces a thought-provoking analysis but her disinclination to factor in the readers, or to fully develop the relationship between the editorial department, advertising, business and the readers results in a more traditional master reading.

A review of the literature on women's magazines would not be complete without some reference to the neo-Friedanists, Naomi Wolf and Susan Faludi, both of whom authored bestsellers in the early nineties which probed the many conspiracies against women's advancement.38 Wolf's *Beauty Myth*, in particular, has a lengthy section on the evils of the women's magazine empire, and its attempts to preserve market share at all costs. Admittedly, the simplistic conspiracy theory theses of these books make many academics cringe. However, their importance lies in their immense popularity with the general public, and they have once again restated, in a popular forum, the notion that women's magazines and women's popular culture in general are a web spun by the spider of big business interests in which gullible women readers become ensnared.

Finally, the most recent works on women's magazines illustrate some of the new shifts in academic interpretation or in methodological approach to women's magazines.39 Helen Damon-Moore's *Magazines for the Millions* examines the link between gender and
commerce at the *Ladies Home Journal* and *Saturday Evening Post*. Employing an interdisciplinary approach Damon-Moore contends:

... that the *Ladies Home Journal* and the *Saturday Evening Post* were prototypes that aided in the creation, development, and sustaining of the commercializing of gender and the gendering of commerce. They were conveyors of both gender messages and commercial messages, serving a new and central function in American popular culture.40

*Magazines for the Millions* concludes that the advertising component of women's magazines has limited the breadth of material included in the editorial material, that gender is a key component of pop cultural products and that the construction of femininity is far different from the construction of masculinity. Although limited by the dearth of material available on the Curtis Publishing Company, Damon-Moore's work is a useful comparison of "male" and "female" cultural products, their business and advertising imperatives and the variety of material included in the magazines.

In contrast, Joke Hermes' *Reading Women's Magazines: An Analysis of Everyday Media Use* is an ethnographic study of eighty women and men who read a variety of Dutch and British women's magazines. The readers' comments convinced Hermes that most academics of women's magazines, and of popular culture in general, presume that consuming, viewing or using these products is meaningful because they concentrate their analysis on the textual analysis or on research (through interviews, questionnaires or letters) with "fans" of these cultural products. Instead, based upon her own interviews with "average" users, she claims:

I wanted to know how women's magazines became meaningful for readers and readers told me that women's magazines have hardly any meaning at all. They are convenient, my informants said, easy to put down when other things need to be done, but of little cultural value and therefore not very meaningful. They would also point out that while women's magazines have little cultural value, they do have a practical value: all those tips, recipes, dress patterns.41

Hermes' monograph raises a number of worthwhile issues about researching and reading women's magazines but her "informants" are not representative of all women's magazine readers, anywhere, at anytime. The modern situation, as well as the situation outside of Canada where women have a wide variety of national women's magazines from which to choose, is not applicable to readers in the fifties and sixties. Modern readers have more variety and they are besieged by a glut of products from a variety of media sources. The
result is that they are close to the saturation point. That was not the case in Canada in the fifties and sixties.

There is a dearth of Canadian historiography on magazines and Chatelaine in particular. A general introduction may be obtained by reading any of the general overviews, most aimed at university students, which provide concise histories of the development of the mass media in Canada. The most recent work, Fraser Sutherland's The Monthly Epic, is a breezy, readable historical narrative of the magazine industry from its tentative beginnings in the late 1700s through to the late 1980s. Although an entire chapter and several smaller sections are devoted to Chatelaine, the attempt to cover the broad spectrum prevents Sutherland from providing sustained analytical commentary about the magazine. The other published works which include some analysis of Chatelaine magazine in the twentieth century are articles by Mary Vipond and Gertrude Joch Robinson. Finally, there are two theses, one which partially focused on Chatelaine while the other examined only one component of the magazine -- but given their dated methodological approaches, they are of limited use.

One of the defining features of the academic landscape in the later half of the twentieth century has been the growing fascination with discourse theory, semiotics, cultural 'texts', post-modernism, and the art of 'deconstructing' or 'unpacking' meaning from multi-layered, encoded textual and visual materials. All of this is a particularly academic exercise to try and understand what the rest of North America, and oftentimes the world, refers to as popular culture or popular entertainment. This thesis is part of a growing body of works that seek to understand what makes some forms of mass produced culture popular. What makes this study different is that it incorporates Canadian women's, social and cultural history, feminist and critical analysis, and reader responses in the study of a specific cultural product. Indeed, this thesis assumes that one cannot properly understand the complexity of any cultural product without situating the product within its historical milieu, nor can one overlook the competing elements involved in producing and consuming the product.

Given the burgeoning interest in cultural studies and its accompanying theoretical literature of critical analysis, there are numerous anthologies, articles and monographs which explain the art of 'doing' cultural studies. The act of constructing an analytical framework for cultural studies has best been described as a "bricolage," constructing an analytical
framework from whatever theories, disciplines and methodologies seem appropriate to the topic. Thus the summaries that follow are not intended to represent a thorough historiography of the developments in the field but were judiciously selected because of their value in constructing an adequate theoretical framework in which the polysemic nature of Chatelaine can be understood. Primarily, this thesis was informed by the work of Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, and John Fiske. Barthes’ pieces on semiotics, which views language and illustrations as textual and visual signs, are critical to any work in cultural analysis. According to Barthes, signs have both a literal meaning and a mythological meaning. The mythological level of interpretation depends on the situation, the textual references and, ultimately, upon the person who views or reads the sign. The importance of this for our purposes is that semiotics liberates the analyses of cultural products from strictly deterministic interpretations, allowing that any given 'text' can have multiple meanings and is open to interpretation. Furthermore, it prioritizes the act of reading, as opposed to the more traditional emphasis solely on the text and the authors. Thus, Chatelaine readers were considered active participants in constructing meaning as they read and interacted with the magazine.

The necessary counter to what, under Barthes, would be an unlimited number of interpretations of the magazine was provided by Michel Foucault and his theories of power/knowledge. For Foucault power is "a productive network which runs through the whole social body." He constructs a theory in which power is "capillary", and results in an examination of the "micropractices", the social practices that constitute everyday life in modern societies. One of the major strands in the perpetuation of this system of power is the link between power and knowledge. According to Foucault the status quo remains in power because they control the discursive, or knowledge producing, systems. Discourse theory, the product of Foucault's work, challenges researchers to search for the power relations in the system, i.e. to examine how Chatelaine was produced, the power dynamic of content choice, advertising choice, distribution, circulation and finally consumption. Foucault claims "that it is misleading to think of power as a property that could be possessed by some persons or classes and not by others; power is better conceived as a complex, shifting field of relations in which everyone is an element." Unlike Barthes' system of mythologies in which the reader has the power to make or decipher as many meanings from
the text as they wish, Foucault's theory of power/knowledge forces a reappraisal of how meanings are made or how culture is produced and consumed. While all components of the production and consumption chain have some degree of power and autonomy it nevertheless assumes that power is not dispersed equally.

John Fiske's work, draws heavily on the theories of Barthes, Foucault, Michel De Certeau, Umberto Eco, Pierre Bourdieu, Mikhail Bakhtin, as well as Gramscian and Marxist ideology. Fiske combines elements from the various theorists, adds his own musings and theorizing about popular culture and then actually puts the methodology through its paces.53 It is necessary to explain, briefly, what Fiske has adopted from de Certeau and Bourdieu since they are useful both to understanding Fiske's theoretical framework and in conceptualizing Chatelaine magazine. Michel de Certeau's contribution to critical analysis theory, The Practice of Everyday Life, is an intriguing study of the practice of consumption, the "art of making do" and "reading as poaching."54 De Certeau claims for the consumers or readers an active role and argues strenuously against any marxist, structuralist or feminist analysis which would negate the process of consumption:

The efficiency of production implies the inertia of consumption. It produces the ideology of consumption-as-a-receptacle. The result of class ideology and technical blindness, this legend is necessary for a system that distinguishes and privileges authors, educators, revolutionaries, in a word "producers', in contrast to those who do not produce. By challenging "consumption" as it is conceived and (of course) confirmed by these authorial enterprises, we may be able to discover creative activity where it has been denied that it exists....55

Similarly, Bourdieu's work seeks to challenge preconceived notions about the 'naturalness' of taste and thus casts another analytical eye onto the process of consumption and the relationship between social class and culture.56 In other words, highbrow disdain for commercial popular culture is an implicitly classist condemnation of the cultural forms admired by the "people.” Bourdieu neglects to comment on the gendered component of that highbrow disdain as all-too-often male critics have condemned female practitioners and consumers of novels, magazines, television, and movies for their choices.

The result of Fiske's own 'bricolage' is the creation of a theoretical framework which valorizes the study of popular culture as an academic pursuit. Fiske views popular culture as a site of contested meanings or struggles between the producers of the products and their consumers. He depicts popular culture as a site in which the people or the consumers are not merely the acted upon but the active participants. Ultimately, for Fiske, popular culture is
oppositional: "There can be no popular dominant culture, for popular culture is formed always in reaction to, and never as part of, the forces of domination." Two elements of Fiske's framework seem particularly germane to his methodology and to the approach selected for this study. The first is the concept of the 'producerly text' of popular culture. According to Fiske, and borrowing from Barthes, the 'producerly text' is accessible, easy to read, and:

[1] It offers itself up to popular production; it exposes, however reluctantly, the vulnerabilities, limitations, and weaknesses of its preferred meanings; it contains, while attempting to repress them, voices that contradict the ones it prefers; it has loose ends that escape its control, its meanings exceed its own power to discipline them, its gaps are wide enough for whole new texts to be produced in them--it is, in a very real sense, beyond its own control.58

What this passage means is that to understand popular culture one must abandon any attempts to impose a deterministic, monolithic structure instilled by marxism, feminism and academic contempt and systematically read the text, looking for both preferred and non-preferred meanings. It presumes that researchers will find contradictions. It presumes that popular culture cannot contain only the preferred reading desired by the advertisers or big business because it cannot determine what the consumers will purchase, nor can it determine how they will interact with the product. Fiske does believe very strongly in the notion of a preferred reading, regardless of how numerous the oppositional or non-preferred readings.

Finally, Fiske outlines a methodological approach to reading and understanding popular culture that seems to make the theoretical, the political and the ideological almost simple:

Analyzing popular texts, then, requires a double focus. On the one hand we need to focus upon the deep structure of the text in the ways that ideological, psychoanalytic analyses and structural or semiotic analyses have proved so effective...The complimentary focus is upon how the people cope with the system, how they read its texts, how they make popular culture out of its resources. It requires us to analyze texts in order to expose their contradictions, their meanings that escape control, their producerly invitations; to ask what it is within them that has attracted popular approval.59

This methodological approach would seem to sample the best components of the critical analysis theory but this is not the only tradition that informs this work on Chatelaine magazine. Largely absent from most of the critical analysis literature is the category of gender and, since much of this work was developed in sociological, literary and philosophical
traditions, historical specificity is seldom present. It is to those equally important areas that we must turn our attention.

Feminist cultural scholars are forging new paths in studying issues of gender inequity and the reproduction of that inequity, patriarchy, and the gendered images of popular culture. According to Tania Modleski, the introduction of gender to the field of inquiry can change the view of the reception and content of popular culture: "that women exist in a contradictory relation to mass culture--as well as to its theories--suggests the importance of foregrounding the issue of sexual difference in our analyses."60 Although the previous section on the historiography of women's magazines gave an overview of how the field has progressed, this section expands the focus to include all works on women and popular culture. In particular this section highlights the works of Tania Modleski, Janice Radway and Mary Ellen Brown.61

The work of Radway and Modleski both appeared in 1984 and proposed two very different approaches to feminist analysis of popular culture texts. Modleski's work, underpinned by a marxist-feminist analysis and employing the latest critical analysis theory, examined the world of Harlequin romances.62 Although critical of the subject matter and the repetitious narrative structure of these romances, Modleski claims "that even the contemporary mass produced narratives for women contained elements of protest and resistance underneath highly 'orthodox' plots."63 Similarly in her conclusions she did not denigrate the women who favoured this fiction or the experience of reading these paperbacks, claiming instead:

"It would be pointless to end with a resounding denunciation of popular novels and their readers--a conclusion encountered all too often in studies of popular fiction. An understanding of Harlequin Romances should lead one less to condemn the novels than the conditions which have made them necessary. Even though the novels can be said to intensify female tensions and conflicts, on balance the contradictions in women's lives are more responsible for the existence of Harlequins than Harlequins are for the contradictions."

Feminist analysis and an attention to the gendered images in popular culture, as well as a total condemnation of the Frankfurt school's critique of mass culture results in a more nuanced, and a more authentic understanding of how real people, in this case women, use and enjoy popular culture. In the introduction to her edited anthology of feminist critical analysis, Modleski outlined her art of understanding and researching popular culture: a study of audience responses to the text as well as the popular texts. Modleski was in agreement
with Raymond Williams' comment about the "danger of narrowing our notion of text too much, of analyzing 'the discrete single work' and by doing so missing the normal characteristic of mass culture...one of 'flow'." This concept of flow, one I have translated into the 'grand sweep', is employed in the approach to Chatelaine, as all 240 issues from the twenty year time span were sampled.

Janice Radway's work, *Reading the Romance*, is a major work of feminist critical analysis. Radway's study of romance readers in the midwestern town of Smithton focused on a small group of devoted and articulate women, seventeen in total, who read romance novels on a daily basis. Although her small survey sample (and the conclusions she makes about women's style of reading based upon that limited group) is a matter of some concern, Radway's work was, and continues to be, very influential. Contrary to the way other academics and critics have analyzed and scorned the content and themes of the romance novels, particularly their perpetuation of patriarchal ideas of women's roles and romanticized views of gender relations, Radway's 'average readers' provided a different perspective:

"ethnographic investigation for instance has led to the discovery that Dot and her customers see the act of reading as combative and compensatory." The women claimed that reading romances was a release from pressures and strains in their daily lives- all worked in the home and most had children. As well "it creates a time or space within which a woman can be entirely on her own, preoccupied with her personal needs, desires and pleasure..." Her focus on how and why the women read was very instructive for this analysis of Chatelaine because although the women were very specific about why they preferred certain romance novels and series over others, the act of reading itself (regardless of the content of what is read) carried an ideological (and social) meaning all of its own. Most of the women viewed reading novels as their time, time that they did not have to nurture their families or attend to their husbands, and by their admission time that was 'taken' from doing something else. For many, this act of 'resistance', passive though it seems, was not without commentary, and often criticism, from their husbands or their children. This focus on the reader, on her interpretation of what and why she read, and the interesting attention to the physical act of reading (as well as the creation of an ad hoc female community when these women discuss their favourite novels, writers etc.) is one that I have employed in this study of Chatelaine. Through the letters written and published in the
magazine, the sporadic visits of editors and writers, and in the variety of contests run by the periodical the editors, writers and readers created and participated in a cultural community of Canadian women: something Chatelaine's current editor, Rona Maynard, calls the "the biggest kitchen table in the country." The participatory pleasure fans derived from interacting with popular culture texts has been enumerated most recently in the work of Henry Jenkins and Lisa Lewis. 70

Mary Ellen Brown's work on television and women's culture examined the polysemic nature of the cultural products and, as with Modleski and Radway, looked at the way women have negotiated the terrain between the preferred meaning and their own ways of making meaning out of television viewing. Brown concentrated on soap opera, which like women's magazines is another debased and maligned form of popular culture associated with 'women's culture.' In the concluding section of her book, Brown examined the relationship between consumption and resistance as, like Radway, she sought to understand how women made sense of what they watched, how they mediated the various messages and why they enjoyed this form of entertainment so much. To this end, Brown explained her way of conceptualizing this dichotomy as 'feminine discourse' which:

...involves both empowerment as well as the requirement that its speakers and listeners understand feminine subordination. Yet they continue to speak. Feminine subjects, speaking feminine discourse, do not assume that the status quo in terms of gender roles is a natural, preordained condition. Hence they sometimes look for spaces in the system where they can speak from their own subject positions, admittedly limited by the options available in any given time and place. 71

This idea of 'feminine discourse' as a contradictory one, which involves the empowerment of both the speakers and in this case readers, is a very useful one for Chatelaine. Sufficient evidence exists to show that many women found the acknowledgment that their feelings and worries were shared by many young, suburban women in Canada reassuring and empowering. At the same time, while the articles and editorials could be empowering, and sometimes advocated changing the status quo, the other components of the magazine were always ready to provide more efficient ways to clean a house or decorate a recreation room. In the service articles, empowerment always happened after the lunch dishes were washed.

The third influence on the methodological framework is the historical perspective, largely representative of the social and cultural history fields. For this work to be properly understood and evaluated, it is critical that the contents of Chatelaine and the ways in which
women interacted with the magazine are situated in historical perspective. This work has tried to minimize the tendency to offer presentist analysis by focusing closely on Canadian society during the two decades under review. Along with an emphasis on the creators and distributors of the cultural product, this work also looks at the consumers and readers. It is a work that employs the convention (drawn from social history) of depicting history from the bottom up, as well as the more traditional "top down" approach.

This analysis pays particular attention to categories of race, class, gender, age and sexual orientation, particularly with respect to two issues: categories depicted or presented and categories which are absent. For example, although the issue of sexual orientation is not one that occurs frequently in the magazine in those decades, this work questions its absence, pays attention to the infrequent mention of sexual orientation and critically examines how it is dealt with, as well as employing the category of sexual orientation as a way to re-read some of the fare in the magazine from a different perspective. This work is also informed by an attention to region. Since the magazine repeatedly claimed to be a Canadian women's magazine, that claim is evaluated. Particularly, the work looks for a central Canadian bias, and the research was set up to categorize the regions from which stories, articles and letters originated or were located. To situate Chatelaine in its proper historical perspective much external research has been undertaken to ensure the magazine's claims to represent the average Canadian can be evaluated and so that one can judge just how representative and inclusive it was. As well, this work questions our stereotypes and assumptions about the 1950s and 1960s. Were the fifties really so affluent, so conservative and so concerned with suburbia? Similarly, how radical and swinging were the sixties? Some people might question using Chatelaine as the major source for evaluating Canadian social history but it is the popular culture that many people remember from those decades: the television shows, the crazes, the rock n' roll stars and perhaps, in a smaller, more specifically Canadian way, the periodicals.

Surprisingly, after such a lengthy overview of the three main components which determined this methodological approach, the actual structure of the methodology is simpler by comparison. The magazines were read and analyzed in a two-tiered approach: a general survey and an intensive reading sample. The general survey covered all of the 240 issues from the two decades examined, that is from January 1950 through December 1969. Every
issue had its ads, articles, fiction, and Chatelaine departments or "service" components of the magazine counted and tabulated. This meant that each issue was read, all the covers were categorized and specifics, like editors, price per issue, number of letters to editor, etc., were noted. A lengthy section followed these compulsory database fields, in which notes were taken on the outstanding, intriguing, hilarious or odd properties of the particular issue. This was important since popular culture is massive and repetitive, and without a general reading of the entire œuvre an assessment of the 'grand sweep' would hardly be possible. As well, it permitted the inclusion of all the articles, fiction, editorials, cover art or service department materials necessary to produce a truly comprehensive assessment of the magazine.

The second part of the research was the intensive reading sample. For this intensive sample, the January, May and September issues of each year were examined, making a total of sixty magazines which were read cover to cover. These databases were designed to categorize, evaluate and provide statistics on each of the magazines components: advertising, articles, fiction, editorials, letters to the editor, food, house and home, parenting, gardening, crafts, and beauty and fashion. Drawing on the works of cultural theorists outlined above, and others, this "intensive reading sample" included a combination of qualitative and quantitative material—discourses, thematic repetition, and stylistic comments along with quantitative categories of article length, authorial statistics and topical influences. Further information about the sampling and research procedure is found in the Appendix. The point of this intensive database series was to counter, as much as possible, biases on the part of the researcher with respect to which fiction, articles, ads or letters were found interesting or worthy of study. The intensive database ensured that everything was read, regardless of interest or content, and more importantly served as the base from which a variety of statistics were produced. Finally, since the database forced some degree of uniformity on the analysis it offered new perspectives on the analysis and enabled many intriguing questions and hypotheses to be examined in a more systematic way than a purely subjective reading would have generated.

Within the examination of the content of the magazine the letters which were printed in the magazine (or retained in the archival papers at the Public Archives of Ontario) were accorded a high degree of significance since they represented one of the few ways to judge the responses of the readers to the magazine. Admittedly, the letters were selected or
'screened' by the editors but those that were printed in the magazine were not just congratulatory fan letters -- there were many negative, sarcastic, and critical letters published. These letters evaluate the offerings of the magazine and in rare cases ask for feedback from other readers in different parts of Canada, and sometimes Britain and the United States. Additionally, a questionnaire for Chatelaine readers from this period was created to allow another forum for reader responses to the magazine. Twelve women and men completed the questionnaires. They were asked to comment on what they disliked or liked about the magazine, why they read the periodical and what were their lasting evaluations of what it meant to be a Chatelaine reader. Again, not all the responses were positive and many of the letters from fond readers contained critical or evaluative comments and were not purely the response of nostalgic fans.

Along with the research into reader responses and the focus of the research on the content and analysis of the magazine, another part of the methodology sought to understand Maclean Hunter's perspective, particularly the views of the editors, publishers and writers. To this end, Doris Anderson, the editor for much of the time period and June Callwood, one of their most successful and prolific freelance writers, were interviewed about their experiences. In addition, time was spent reading the appropriate files in the Maclean Hunter collection at the Archives of Ontario. Much of the advertising perspective comes from over twenty years of Canadian Advertising Rates and Data (CARD) and from specific Maclean Hunter files. Finally, additional readership figures were provided by firms which conducted semi-annual readership assessments of the magazine, namely Gruneau Research, Starch Research services and the Motivational Research Institute in New York City. This material, although very valuable, has not been systematically archived. Every attempt was made to find as many of these readership surveys as possible. The picture is far from complete although a rough assessment of the twenty year period is possible if various surveys, reports and tidbits of information released in the CARD are pieced together.

The structure of the thesis is both chronological and thematic. Chapter Two introduces the text itself and then provides an overview of Canada in the 1950s, a sampling of statistics, social history and cultural history, which is intended to situate the readings of the magazine more properly in their time period. A profile of the editors, the editorial and corporate climate, the financial imperatives and the American competitors provides an
examination of the way in which a mass market women’s periodical was created, assembled and marketed. A demographic portrait of the readership rounds out this profile of the creators, producers and consumers. Chapter Three focuses on the act of reading the magazine. Chapter Four, Five and Six analyze the editorials, articles, fiction, departmental features, cover art and advertisements from the fifties. This structure is repeated for the sixties. Finally, the last chapter of the thesis is a summary of the two decades of the magazines. Chapter Eleven examines how the two decades compare and offers conclusions about the role of Chatelaine in women’s lives during the 50’s and 60’s. As well, it explores the variety of messages (both covert and overt), the magazine’s contents, the readers of the magazine and finally, questions and examines the legacy of Chatelaine magazine in the 1950s and 1960s.

1 Public Archives of Ontario (PAO), Maclean Hunter Records Series (MIRS) F-4-4-a Box 442, Anonymous, Vancouver to Doris Anderson, 16 May 1962.

2 PAO MIRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Mrs. Celia Wallace, Niagara Falls, Ontario to Doris Anderson, April 3, 1962.

3 PAO MIRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs. Louis Trono, Banff, Alberta to Doris Anderson, 21 July 1962.


5 A number of factors account for this situation. We are, except for the Robinson article mentioned above, of any work related to the images, themes, production or readership of Chatelaine magazine in the post-war era. Secondly, the legacy of Betty Friedan’s influential book The Feminine Mystique which provided a damning portrait of American women’s magazines in the post-war era. Academics who followed in her wake, as Joanne Meyerowitz claims, “adopted wholesale her version of the postwar ideology.” See, Joanne Meyerowitz, “Beyond the Feminine Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946-1938,” in Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960, ed. Joanne Meyerowitz (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994): 230. Finally, Canadian historians have only recently begun to publish articles and monographs about Canadian social history in the fifties and sixties. Useful though these works are they make ample use of the more “traditional” articles from Chatelaine magazine without providing any commentary or context about the diversity of material printed in the magazine. For examples of this use of Chatelaine articles, see Veronica Strong-Boag, “‘Their Side of the Story’: Women’s Voices from Ontario Suburbs, 1945-60,” and Joan Sangster, “Doing Two Jobs: The Wage-Earning Mother, 1945-70,” in A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).

6 The majority of advertising executives and salespeople were men. In our interview Doris Anderson claimed that during her tenure there were no female ad salespeople at Chatelaine, but current publisher Lee Simpson disputes that claim, stating that the first female advertising salespeople were hired in the 1960s by publisher Lloyd Hodgkinson. Secondary sources confirm that while women in advertising were rare, they did exist; see


8 Susanna Moodie, Roughing It in the Bush or Life in Canada Edited and with a Introduction by Carl Ballstadt (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1988), xxi.


12 A broad range of Ontario museums have copies of Godsey's in their collection: Royal Ontario Museum, Upper Canada Village, and even small community museums such as Brockville Museum or The Jordan Historical Museum of the Twenty. My thanks to the members of the Museum-L e-mail list for this information.

13 Wood, 51-52.


16 For more information on the Canadian Home Journal, see Fraser Sutherland, The Monthly Epic (Markham: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1989), 156-157.

17 PAO, MHRSA-4-1 Box 38, Report by H.V. Tyrell, "General Plans for a Woman's Magazine of Large National Circulation", 25 August 1927.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., 3-4


23 Source is a Maclean Hunter photocopy entitled "ANNUAL CIRCULATION--June; December", undated but presumably from 1986 judging by the most recent figures included.

25 Ibid., 36.

26 Meyerowitz, 231.


28 Weibel, xi.

29 Ferguson, 1.

30 Fishburn, 128.


32 Ibid., 55.

33 Ibid., 53.


35 Ballaster, Women's Worlds, 2.

36 McCracken, Decoding Women's Magazines, 3.

37 Ibid., 2.


40 Helen Damon-Moore, Magazines for the Millions, 3.


44 Mary Vipond "The Image of Women in Mass Circulation Magazines in the 1920s" in The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women History; ed by Susan Mann Trofimenkoff & Alison Prentice (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1977); Gertrude Joch Robin "The Media and Social Change: Thirty Years of Magazine Coverage of Women and Work (1950-1977)" Atlantis (Volume 8 No.2 Spring 1983) 87-111. Both of these articles merit attention. Both contend that the maternal emphasis in Canadian and American women's magazines reigned supreme, regardless of the era or the changing nature of women's roles. However, Robinson does distinguish Doris Anderson's Chatelaine from the rest of the women's periodicals at the time, noting that coverage of working women in Chatelaine were often quite enlightened.


46 For those interested in reviewing the development of the field and desirous of a brief introductory article on the key historiographical developments the article "Cultural Studies: An Introduction" by Cary Nelson, Paula A. Treichler and Lawrence Grossberg in Cultural Studies ed. by the same authors, (New York: Routledge, 1992) 1-16 is an extremely cogenent, concise introduction to cultural studies. The bibliography in the back of this anthology is an excellent source of critical and cultural analysis works. Michael Gurevitch, Tony Bennett, James Curran and Janet Woollacott eds. Culture, Society and the Media (London: Routledge, 1982) is also useful, although not as current as the previous article. Another very valuable, although idiosyncratic, source is John Fiske's Power Plays, Power Works. (London: Verso, 1993). Of specific interests to feminist academics is "Introduction 1 Feminism and cultural studies: pasts, presents, futures" by Sarah Franklin, Celia Lury & Jackie Stacey in Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies ed. by the same authors, (London: Harper Collins Academic, 1991) 1-19 as well as Tania Modleski ed. Studies in Entertainment: Critical Approaches to Mass Culture (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986).


49 Michel Foucault's work forms an extremely important component of modern critical analysis. A good introduction to the main components of his theoretical work can be obtained from the anthology Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977 (Brighton: The Harvester Press, 1980). Another useful introduction is the anthology edited by Paul Rabinow, The Foucault Reader (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984). Finally, a feminist analysis of Foucault's work, Nancy Fraser's, Untrue Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989) is a critique of the absence of gender in Foucault's work.

50 Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power" from Power/Knowledge, 119.

52 Ibid., 29.


55 Ibid., 167.


57 Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 43.

58 Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, 104.

59 Ibid., 105.


63 Ibid., 25.

64 Ibid., 57.


67 This study continues to be lauded as a critically important work in American studies of popular culture and a second edition was printed in 1991.

68 Ibid., 211.


72 Much of the work in cultural analysis examines contemporary cultural products and often assumes that readers will understand the social/contextual situation in which the product is produced and consumed. Hence many "textual analyses" offer little socio-historical commentary. Recently, a few academics have begun to call for a closer attention to this contextualizing, see: Helen Damon-Moore, "Introduction," in Magazines for the Millions, 1-13; and Angela McRobbie, "New Times in Cultural Studies," in postModernism and popular culture, Angela McRobbie ed., (London: Routledge, 1994) 39-41. For an example of a cultural history article which offers a firm socio-historical context to situate the "reading" see: Joy Parr, "Shopping for a Good Stove: A Parable about Gender, Design, and the Market," A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980 J. Parr ed., (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).


74 See the Appendix--"The Research Databases: Methodology and Results" for more detail.

75 It is a difficult process to locate people who are willing, and able, to fill out questionnaires about a popular magazine that they read 30-40 years ago. I placed an ad in the Globe and Mail, and was offered free space in the Branksome Hall Alumnae Newsletter and the Bell Canada Employee Newsletter. Those routes resulted in only 2 responses. Through word-of-mouth, familial and friendship networks another 10 questionnaires were completed. It should be noted that none of my family or friends have completed questionnaires. In the end, only readers from British Columbia, Ontario and Nova Scotia completed questionnaires. For an indication of the difficulties other researchers have in generating questionnaire participants, see Veronica Strong-Boag, "Their Side of the Story", Women's Voices From Ontario Suburbs, 1945-1960, in A Diversity of Women, p. 50.
Part One: The Fifties
Chapter Two: Context

"It could sit on your coffee table and no one would think that you had something subversive on it... because everybody had Chatelaine and men thought it was harmless—all about Easter hats. It was far from that. It was like lighting up a brush fire. It was wonderful."
--June Callwood, 1995

June Callwood's comment indicates what a paradoxical product Chatelaine magazine was in the fifties and sixties. As an insider, and as one of the most successful freelance journalists in Canada, she is amply qualified to make such a comment— one based upon her experiences in the era, her familiarity with the offerings of American women's magazines, and with the realization that despite what non-readers might think, this was not merely a traditional women's magazine. Chatelaine was a product of a specific time and place, as well as the product of a particular corporation. To fully understand the magazine one has to examine the history of the periodical, the process of production, the workplace culture of Maclean Hunter, the purpose and goals of the editors and the advertisers, the background of the editors, and compare it to the current American competition. Only then is it possible to understand how the banal, the commercial and the incendiary material could all exist in one affordable little Canadian women's magazine.

The Text:

Whether readers' subscribed to the magazine ($1.50-$2.00 per year) or bought individual issues (15-20 cents per issue) Chatelaine gave them good value for their money. Using May 1955 as a representative issue it is possible to provide an overview of the variety of material in any given issue, the images and the experience of reading, or leafing, through the magazine.

Dominating the cover is a photograph of a white, blue-eyed brunette wearing a jaunty sailor-suit dress, red straw hat and tasteful make-up (see illustration). She is a pretty, young woman— probably in her late teens or early twenties— and she smiles out at the reader in a friendly manner. Above her head, and running across the top of the cover is the title: Chatelaine: “For the Canadian Woman.” Running down the left-side of the cover (and to the left of her face and shoulders) are the top feature and department features in this issue: “REDUCE with Chatelaine’s New Calorie Counter.” “Give the Childless Couple a Break,”
REDUCE with Chatelaine’s New Calorie Counter

GIVE THE CHILDLESS COUPLE A BREAK

What We Think of the Suburbs after Eight Years

HOW TO GET READY FOR YOUR FIRST JOB
"What We Think of the Suburbs After Eight Years," and "How to Get Ready For Your First Job." The paper is slightly heavier stock than that found inside the magazine but it is not very glossy. The cover art, layout and the full colour photograph on a white background gives the cover an economical, almost dowdy, appearance. Chatelaine was a large, thin, magazine, measuring 11 by 14 inches, which made it awkward to hold and thus it was easier to lay it on some surface to read. This issue had 100 pages, but the magazine’s thickness varied, depending on the seasons, ranging from 54-159 pages during the decade. The average was 90 pages.

Immediately inside the front cover is a full colour ad for Terylene Polyester Fabric, by C.I.L., with the caption: "How to keep a husband in shape...even when his suit is out in the rain." On the facing page, is "Chatelaine Centre" containing a featured essay by managing editor Gerry Anglin entitled: "How to travel in butterboxes” describing his “first family holiday by car.” Usually “Chatelaine Centre” provided tid-bits of information on contributors and anecdotes about editing the magazine. “Chatelaine Centre” or the editorial had a choice placement, which in modern magazines is reserved for advertisements since its ‘front of the book’ location is always on view when the reader flips open the cover. Turning the page, one finds the Table of Contents, “You Were Asking Chatelaine” (a question and answer column) and two half page advertisements for Listerine Antiseptic and Metropolitan Life Insurance. “You were asking Chatelaine” finishes on the next page where it is sandwiched between an ad for Birks and for New Kotex.

More ads follow, for Barrymore Carpets and Playtex Girdles, and then the first Chatelaine Beauty feature: “Memo From Rosemary” instructs readers in the art of “good grooming for the office” a breezy piece on the effectiveness of daily baths, use of deodorants and recommends brushing your teeth “five times a day” to prevent bad-breath. The following page has Doris Thistlewood’s “Let’s Talk About Your House” part of the Chatelaine Home Planning Department. The short article has a number of budget-conscious tips for housewives, such as this suggestion for a child’s room:

If Johnny’s room has the droops and the budget just won’t stretch to complete a redo, try a pick-me-up treatment of polka dots, either in draperies or in the paper on one wall. Plaids and stripes are also good tonics for that drab little room that doesn’t seem to have a personality of its own.

After an eye-catching, yellow ad for Jell-O Pie Fillings, the next few pages were devoted to the general feature articles, their accompanying photographs, and the stories and
illustrations. All of them start here, either on one or two page spreads, and then conclude at the back of the book. A personal experience article about infertility, entitled “Give the Childless Couple a Break” by Eileen Morris, is accompanied by a black-and-white photograph of a despondent looking couple and their dog. It is followed by “Everyone Loves to Live in Wildwood” by Doris McCubbin (Anderson was her married name) which promises a lively story with this lead-in: “They’ve fought mosquitoes and floods together in this Winnipeg suburb, and after eight years they know how to be neighbourly without being nosy and get things done by pooling ideas and pulling together.”

Black and white photos of happy housewives, a family ice-skating, the houses, the flood and the friendly coffee shop waitress provide visual markers and images which reinforce the content of the article. If neither of those grabbed readers’ fancy, and compelled them to skip to the back of the book to finish the articles, they could choose: “I’ve Been Meaning to Call You,” a story with a dramatic black and red illustration. The fiction stories always had illustrations, never photographs. The illustrators strove to highlight climactic moments—whether romantic, humorous or mysterious. These were often reproduced in full colour, and added greatly to the otherwise limited visual appeal of the magazine. Another feature article, Kay Darcy’s “The Girl With a Hundred Home Towns,” profiled Canadian Pacific Airlines stewardess Dorothy Meyer who worked the northern-Canadian flights. Finally, two other stories round out the general features and fiction ‘front of the book’ starts: “The Cake That Made Aunt Lindsay Famous” by Vera Henry and “Honesty, it’s the greatest!” by Gina Allen.

The big departmental features usually followed the article and fiction leads. Here, Rosemary Boxer’s “Best looks forward on your first job,” profiled eighteen-year-old twins Nancy and Elaine Graf of Toronto as they started their “secretarial” careers. This was followed by “Chatty Chipmunk,” a page of puzzles, stories and game ideas for children. Opposite Chatty and just before the next departmental feature was a full-page, full colour ad for Campbell’s Soups which promised that “it tastes as good as it looks.” On the following four pages was the “Reduce with Chatelaine’s Take-Away Menus,” a simple diet which helped women prune calories out of their regular meals without having to resort to cooking separate meals for themselves and their families. This feature included a calorie wheel which readers’ were encouraged to assemble at home and a page of slimmed-down menu suggestions.
By this point, readers were into the second quarter of the magazine. In this section, most of the pages combined ad and editorial material. The stories and articles were continued, small departmental features, like crafts, were included (usually only 1/4 of a page in length) along with quarter, half and full page ads. The popular menu page, “Meals of the Month” was also in this section. In the middle of the magazine, on pages 50-51, was the “fashion feature” (in reality an advertisement for Simplicity) called “Crazy Pants: Chatelaine Says Make It From a Pattern” with wildly coloured illustrations of “long-legged trews,” “Harlequin pants,” “Pirate pants” and matching blouses. Advertisements continue for a variety of products: bed-sheets, beauty products, the Salvation Army Red Shield Appeal, pots and pans, Magic Baking Powder, Rose Brand Sweet Pickles, Peppler’s Furniture, and Harding Carpets. Generally, as one moves through the magazine, into the second, third and fourth quarters the number of advertisements increase.

The placement of advertisements for furniture, carpets and other major household purchases always served as the lead-in to the Home-planning feature, sometimes called “Look What’s Happened to Living.” Doris Thistlewood’s three-page article profiled Gerry and Carol Clark, a married couple who received a $2,500 home improvement loan from the government to re-model their house. These pages were filled with pen and ink illustrations, usually accented in one or two colours, and were supposed to give readers’ ideas for their own homes. The service department material, particularly food and fashion features was emphatically visual, including many full page photographs and illustrations necessary to show how the completed products were supposed to look. However, due to financial limits most of these features used black and white photos, or two-tone illustrations which gave them a dull appearance. The pages that follow had more advertisements of home-products and smaller departmental features: “How to use Powdered Milk,” a Chatelaine Institute educational feature, which stressed the economic benefits of powdered milk and provided a thrifty recipe for “Tuna Fish Shortcake.”6 Helen O’Reilly’s gardening column “Set out your blooms in black and white” advised readers to plan their gardens early to avoid “jarring colour clashes and midsummer gaps.”7 Accompanying and following these two short, half page departmental features were an increased number of advertisements for ovens, mattresses, linoleum, carpet sweepers, fabric, wallpaper, perfume, moisturizing cream and soap.
In the last quarter of the magazine, the ads become even more numerous and considerably smaller. Except for the inside and back covers (and a few full page ads dotted amongst the smaller pages) the majority of these ads--primarily for medical products, baby products and an assortment of toiletries--were between 1/2 to 1/16th of a page in size. These pages look as cluttered as they sound. The story and general feature continuations were concluded (it was not uncommon for an article or story to run for 5-6 pages, occupying only a 1/4 page column on each page), and they were surrounded by this motley mixture of ads. A full page ad for Pontiac and a three-page ad for the National Industrial Design Council Awards break up the clutter. The second-last section of the magazine was always the Young Parents section. Here, a multiple-page article by Kate Aitken, entitled: "It's Fun Raising a Family!" bids "Farewell to Babyhood." In many instances, the Young Parents section only included the regular column (Child Health Clinic) written by Dr. Elizabeth Chant Robertson. Her topic in May 1955 was "What Swollen Glands Can Mean."

Usually, the final section of the magazine was the "Last Word is Yours" letters page, but since this issue contained "You Were Asking Chatelaine" at the beginning of the periodical it replaced the more general letters commentary page at the back. The inside back cover and outside back cover were, like the inside front cover, full page, full colour advertisements. In this issue, the inside cover page featured the "Take Time Out With Weston's" ad. A happy housewife sits at her kitchen table, taking a rest from ironing, to have a cup of tea and a plate of digestive cookies. The advertisement on the back cover reads "Together--you'll be proud of Community" and illustrates a recently married young couple happily serving dessert with their new cutlery.

Reading Chatelaine required readers to switch gears quickly--from ads to features to fiction to departmental material and back to advertisements--in the space of a few pages at the beginning of the magazine and often in composite jumbles at the back of the magazine. Through these different components they negotiated a variety of messages about women's roles, desires, problems and joys. The magazine did not promote "one vision" of Canadian women but a continuum that ranged from the stay-at-home mother with children, through to the working-wife, the childless couple, the single-career girl and even children. Ads pushed consumption for the family, home and individual. The visual appeal of the magazine was limited to the cover, colour ads and the few touches of colour applied to the stories and departmental features. This issue, taken from the most conservative, mid-decade issues of
the magazine, illustrates that at $1.50 a year this was an affordable periodical which offered entertainment, educational material, and service material created to provide readers with "new ideas" for themselves, their homes and their family.

Canada in the Fifties--Gender, Society and Culture:

For many people the term 'the fifties' summons up nostalgic images of the good life: a happy time, in contrast to the turmoil and dislocation of the Depression and World War II, of suburban housing developments, large families, affluence, new consumer durables (most importantly television) and contentedness. Sandwiched between two decades of sometimes troubling changes, the fifties seemed forever shrouded in the gentle golden glow of sunlight on a summer afternoon. However, recent historical works have begun to examine this previously sacrosanct decade and have discovered that there was more to the fifties than the stereotypical images of suburban affluence. The authors of these revisionist histories of the decade, including David Halberstam's *The Fifties*, Joanne Meyerowitz's *Not June Cleaver*, Wini Breines, *Young, White and Miserable* and Joy Parr's recent anthology *A Diversity of Women*, have begun to rethink the impression of a stultifying decade in which repression, conformity and sexism reigned. Halberstam's work revealed how many of the burning issues of the sixties were ignited in the fifties: the development of the birth control pill, the American civil rights movement, the growth and influence of television, and the Kinsey report on male sexuality, to name but a few. Meyerowitz's and Parr's collections, along with Breines monograph, seek to reclaim American and Canadian women's agency during the fifties. Suburban housewives, teenagers, working-mothers and working-class women were not, according to these historians, quiescent during the fifties.

In fact, change was the cornerstone of the decade. Economic, demographic, and political events would conclusively mark the fifties as the beginning of a new era. Wini Breines claims that "the period is characterized by shifts from production to consumption, from saving to spending, from an adult to a youth culture." After the Second World War, the Canadian economy expanded considerably, buoyed by the twin demands of a rapidly growing consumer economy and international and national demand for Canadian natural resources. According to Michael Bliss, Canada was the "resource cornucopia of the world" or more importantly of the United States, since the products from Canadian forests and mines were exported in great quantities to serve the ever-expanding American industrial and
European reconstruction also placed a premium on Canadian materials. All those new homes in suburbia stimulated real estate, retailing, automotive sales and just about everything else associated with building, furnishing and maintaining the household. As if all of this development were not enough, the decade witnessed the launch of many large infrastructure programs: the St. Lawrence Seaway project, the development of oil and gas fields in Alberta, a natural gas pipeline running from Alberta to Eastern Canada, the creation of the Trans-Canada Highway, and for the residents of Toronto, a new subway system.

If it was true that the prosperity of post-war Canadian society was unheralded, it would be inaccurate to describe the tenor of the decade as completely buoyant and optimistic. Although, there were large gains in real income between 1951 and 1961 “gains did not appear to be equally distributed, the elderly and other families whose members were outside the labour market...[lost]...ground relative to the working population.”11 While the impression that the fifties were an affluent decade still persists, Canadians did not fare as well as their American cousins. According to a 1961 Census monograph, “a middle class level of living required a family income of $7,000-$8,000 or more. In 1951 less than one tenth of families had incomes of approximately $7,000 or more in terms of 1961 purchasing power while in 1961 more than one fifth of families attained these income levels.”12 John Porter in his influential work The Vertical Mosaic has concluded that the majority of Canadians believed that they were as well off as Americans because they were “exposed to the same consumers’ magazines that chronicle patterns of American middle majority,” a group estimated to earn between $4,000-$7,000.13 In contrast, the middle range in Canadian incomes was considerably lower with “at least half of Canadian families in the mid 1950s [with] total family incomes of less than $4,000.”14 Still, for the first time white-collar employment surpassed blue-collar employment and Canadian men joined the ranks of the “Men in Gray Flannel.”15 Wage increases and better employment prospects were only part of the story. The federal and provincial governments had, since the early forties, been at work crocheting a new social welfare net. The implementation of Unemployment Insurance (1941), Family Allowances (1945), Old Age Security (1952) and the provincial medicare programs kept afloat many previously penurious Canadians. John Miron reports that Canadians used this new-found affluence to purchase “better clothing, food, health care, transportation, education and household appliances” and “improved and upgraded”
housing. Thus, rather than affluence, the decade was better characterized as one which witnessed a rising standard of living.

The country was also undergoing striking demographic changes. The racial and ethnic composition of Canada began to change because over 1.5 million immigrants entered the country. The vast majority were from Britain, Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, and Eastern Europe. As a result of immigration and the rise in the birth rate, the population of the country increased from 12 to 18 million people from the end of the war through to 1961.

As a self-proclaimed ‘middle power’ Canadians were both participants and concerned observers in NATO, the Korean War, NORAD and the escalating Cold War between the communist Soviet Union and the democratic West. The ideology of the Cold War was pervasive. The fears of spreading communist influence, and communists in our midst, touched Canadians as well as Americans. The hysteria fostered by McCarthyism in the U.S., and the media circus which ensued, provided a sobering counter to the so called ‘good life’ in suburbia. In Canada, the Gouzenko affair shortly after the war had brought the spectre of communist infiltration home. The climate of suspicion and “red-baiting” continued throughout the fifties. One of the many groups targeted for investigation by the federal government were homosexuals in the federal civil service.

For most Canadians, however, the fifties were characterized by marriage, home ownership, child-bearing and a higher standard of living than they had previously known. According to Doug Owram, “Years of turmoil and hardship caused by depression and war had created a generation that had a great desire for stability, security and family. Reinforcing that was a culture that put a tremendously high social value upon marriage.” Throughout the decade women and men married at progressively younger ages and produced those large baby boom families which would later form the impetus for suburban developments, new schools, and many expanded social, educational and governmental services in the fifties, sixties and early seventies. Veronica Strong-Boag’s research into suburban women’s experience in the post-war era concludes that “familism”: “a life-style placing a ‘high valuation on family living, marriage at younger ages, a short childless time span after marriage,” and “child-centredness” was an appealing ideology. Post-war marriages were partnerships in which husbands’ waged labour and wives’ unwaged labour in the home were combined to create an ideal environment for the nuclear family.21
In a section entitled, "The Canadian Woman Her Personal Philosophy and Needs," the comments and concerns of the Canadian women surveyed for the Dichter Study in 1958 provide first-hand accounts of the changes effecting Canadian women. The authors concluded that Canadian women were more "future-oriented" and had more broadly "widened horizons" than ever before. An improved economic status, greater independence, the increase in working wives and more outside interests--particularly culturally and politically--were all cited as part of the greater freedom of Canadian women. According to the authors, "thirty-nine percent of our respondents...spontaneously mentioned the growing number of wives and mothers who are full-time or part-time workers as a sign of the change in Canadian women's position." A Kingston woman, the wife of a school teacher, states: "Today if a woman does not get out and get a job before her family arrives, and helps her husband get a start it is unusual. People look at her as lazy or something." Political interests, as expressed by this Vancouver resident, the wife of a post office official, were also common: "There is much more real interest taken in politics now....Now, women do their own thinking, and vote as they see they should, regardless of what their husbands think or vote." The interviewers reported that throughout the conversations respondents made "frequent, emotionally charged, references to Canada's nationhood expressed in terms of pride, hope, concern and confidence." This national pride often took the form of an increased interest in cultural affairs as this comment from a Regina woman, the wife of a building supply salesman, explains: "Culture in our country is on the rise. It can be seen everywhere. Take for instance the ballet—it is now coming into its own....this would seem to be a turning point in our culture; a sign of progress and way of our country growing up."

Although the family ideal of the fifties consisted of the nuclear family, with a non-wage earning wife and mother and two to three children, this changed gradually throughout the decade. While male employment in all occupational categories increased 14.1% between 1951-1961, for women the increase was an astounding 51.8%. Women comprised 27.3% of the workforce in 1961. An ever increasing number of married women either continued working or returned to work, a fact which was rarely reflected in the cultural landmarks of the decade, such as the American situation comedies "I Love Lucy", "Leave it to Beaver" and "Father Knows Best". In 1951 only 10% of all women workers were married; by 1961 that figure had risen to 23%. According to Joan Sangster this lack of media role-models, and the correspondingly middle-class bias of media commentators who viewed working
wives and particularly working mothers as undesirable, created a situation in which women felt anxious about working (and for many women it was not a “choice”) and yet took pride in their financial contributions to their families and in their resilience.32 Women’s work pattern changed from a “two-phase cycle of work, and after a delayed marriage, childrearing...to a three-phase cycle of work, earlier marriage and childrearing, and then a return to permanent work.”33

For many Canadian families home ownership, particularly in urban areas, became affordable for the first time with the burgeoning number of suburban developments. Coupled with affordability suburbia promised a safe environment in which to raise children. Wives often contributed to the downpayment (money earned from their short work careers before the onset of children, or by juggling employment and motherhood). Once purchased, the housewives’ ability to “stretch” her husband’s pay-cheque (and sometimes hers as well) was critical to keeping the family budget out of the red. These developments were created by enterprising housebuilders, for example the Shipps of the Kingsway area in Toronto, whose “Applewood Acres” provides an example of the cost, design, and appeal of suburbia:

Within four years, 800 families were living in homes built from one of the eight architect-designed plans available on Macintosh Crescent, Russet Road, or Greening Drive. Their typical buyer was a 38-year-old salesman with an annual income of $6,600, a wife, and two children, aged 10 and 6 years. This was the second house they had owned; they made a downpayment of $55 and were carrying a $11,000 mortgage. They owned a car...and a television set. The house was designed to appeal to the wife. White, enameled-steel kitchen cupboards with a maple chopping block incorporated into the countertop, a stainless steel sink with a pull-out attachment for rinsing dishes, vinyl floor tiles, and the hood for the kitchen stove made these ‘state-of-the-art’ kitchens. The four-bedroom brick house had a full basement and an attached garage. The 18.3 metre wide lot had been sodded by the builder and came complete with an apple tree. The new owners were likely to build a patio and back yard barbecue. The back yard had become an outdoor summer living room. The suburbs’ two schools were jammed to bursting, and the one church had to conduct Sunday services on shifts. The suburban lifestyle was in place.34

Not all suburban developments were as grand, or as well-planned, but the concept, whether the “Riverview” depicted in Melinda McCracken’s memoirs of growing-up in a Winnipeg suburb, or “Applewood Acres” shared common features: similar housing styles, an emphasis on back-yards, garages (or car-ports), spaces for children to play (the ubiquitous do-it-yourself room, the basement rec-room), the latest in kitchen gadgetry, which could all be had for a small downpayment.
Children, and later teenagers, were the focus of much parental attention, one of the prime motivators for suburban developments and of course, given the baby boom, the largest population group in the country. McCracken describes the new-found phenomenon: “the teenager, complete with slang and casualness, could be nothing but an American concept. To be a real teenager, you had to drink Cokes, eat hamburgers...French fries...go to the Dairy Queen, listen to the Top Forty and neck.” School, comic books, movies, radio programmes and the “hit parade, with Patty Page, Teresa Brewer, Rosemary Clooney, the Ames brothers, The Mills Brothers, the Andrew Sisters, Les Paul and Mary Ford, Johnny Ray and Fats Domino” were the staples of teenage culture. The youth-market with its small, but steady, disposable income for records, clothes, food, magazines and movie tickets proved a bonanza for retailers and advertisers.

One of the major changes for teenage girls and women was the shift from the tailored-style of the war years to the new, ultra-feminine look of the fifties. The shapeless suits were replaced by the “hourglass shapes of large breasts, small waists compressed by cinch belts, skirts made huge by enormous crinolines, and high-heeled and pointed-toe shoes.” Sexuality might have been on display in the clothing styles but teenagers and young women were forced to negotiate a tightrope of societal and parental rules: “never going (or appearing to go) too far sexually, but giving just enough of their bodies to keep boys interested and to receive, they hoped, affection and admiration.” The double standard of sexual relations was enforced—particularly in the teenage-set. Parents, and media commentators, worried about those who did not heed the warnings and became “juvenile delinquents”.

Culturally speaking one landmark study dominated the Canadian psyche after the war: officially called the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, it was almost always informally referred to as the Massey Commission, after its chairman Vincent Massey. Paul Litt’s The Muses, The Masses & The Massey Commission provides a valuable re-assessment of the aims, workings and accomplishments of the commission. His description of the symbolic significance of the Commission is particularly germane to this study because the Maclean Hunter company, and thus Chatelaine, regarded themselves as one of the major cultural industries in the country: The Massey Report is widely credited with ushering in a new era of significant government support for culture in Canada. As a result it has come to serve as something of a creationist myth for Canadian cultural nationalists in recent years.
The essentials of the parable are simple: before Massey, barbarism, after Massey, civilization and arts subsidies for all.40

While the academic commissioners, highbrow intellectuals all, regarded themselves as cultural emissaries, the reality, as Maria Tippett has aptly demonstrated in Making Culture was quite different.41 Some Canadians had always participated in cultural activities, and created cultural groups whether literary, artistic, theatrical or musical, although they were distinguished (in the experts' opinions) by their parochialism and their amateurism. Participants, however, had found them perfectly enjoyable. The Massey Commission set about to encourage Canadians to create, experience and learn about Culture, with a capital C, which would be amply funded by the federal government. This culture was supposed to re-affirm, some would claim it was to create, Canadian identity and nationalism. It also was to counter the American culture, largely popular, which flowed freely across the border and was eagerly consumed by its Canadian fans. This heightened awareness of Canadian cultural nationalism had a profound effect on Maclean Hunter’s own brand of pop cultural nationalism because the magazine division tirelessly promoted Canada and Canadian culture.

If the Commission’s legacy, the Canada Council, did encourage artists, writers, actors and musicians, the culture of choice was popular culture for many Canadians. On this front, the fifties are best remembered as the decade which witnessed the birth of television and the conversion of a form of Black American music, rhythm and blues, into the white dominated rock and roll, a term coined by Cleveland, Ohio disc-jockey Alan Freed in 1954.42 Paul Rutherford’s When Television Was Young provides an exhaustive examination of the cultural influences and images provided in the glory years of Canadian television programming.43 American popular culture, whether Elvis Presley, Buddy Holly, Chuck Berry or Little Richard’s music, Hollywood sitcoms or movies, TIME magazine or The Reader’s Digest, was tremendously popular in Canada and made it difficult for Canadian products to compete. Buying Canadian or watching Canadian television always seemed to be synonymous with something less glitzy or less exciting, unless it was the CBC Saturday night staple ‘Hockey Night in Canada.’

Canada in the fifties, the country’s demographic, economic, political, social and cultural changes are the backdrop upon which Chatelaine’s contents must be judged. A small coterie of editors, writers and business people were responsible for deciding how Chatelaine would interpret and relate these changes to their audience of Canadian women and teenagers.
The rapid changes which Canadian society was undergoing in the fifties were mirrored in the offices of Chatelaine as a revolving editorial door, a red balance sheet and a poor climate for large consumer magazines created a challenge and concerns about the magazine's future.

**Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties: The Gender of Production**

In her report to the Royal Commission on Publications Hearings in 1960, editor Doris Anderson explained the role of Chatelaine:

> First of all, Chatelaine is a kind of trade magazine for Canadian homemakers.... The services and guidance that is one of the main jobs of a woman's service magazine is only half of the story because we devotedly believe that Canadian women have a wide and growing interest in matters outside the home.*

This guarded brief was quite different from the more personal response Anderson had written to a dissatisfied subscriber the previous year: "A magazine should have a purpose in publishing and that is to point out problems that should be brought to the attention of the public. This is our purpose in publishing articles on marriage, divorce, drug addiction, etc." Before Anderson presented her brief to the Commissioners, the editor of Maclean's, Blair Fraser, had presented his statement. Although he sought to describe the role of his periodical within Canadian society and Canadian magazine publishing, his description of a typical Maclean's reader and the magazine was indicative of the difference between the two general interest periodicals:

> We think of a Maclean's reader as an intelligent person in a relaxed mood, and a great deal of what we offer is intended only for his entertainment and not for his improvement. However, we have serious purposes. We want to report Canada and the world to Canadians through Canadian eyes.*

Within the Maclean Hunter Consumer Magazines Division, Maclean's and Chatelaine were regarded as sibling publications. All the glamour, prestige, expensive talent, parental encouragement and pride went to Maclean's, the first born son. Chatelaine, as the younger sister, often got hand-me down writers and only one editor. She had to endure parental confusion about what she was doing and where she was going. Even more often she just suffered from a lack of attention. Doris Anderson laments: "We were always very much second fiddle to Maclean's. Much more money was spent on Maclean's and much more money was lost on Maclean's."
The structure of the magazine throughout the fifties remained fairly consistent, although in the later years of the decade a larger budget permitted the hiring of more staff. Magazine production at Chatelaine, and this system was employed at most mass market periodicals, was split into two different sections: the editorial and advertising (or business) departments. The editorial department included the editor, the managing editor (if any), the copy editor, the art director, the associate editors, staff writers and freelance journalists. The business department included the publisher or manager (depending on the situation), the advertising manager, the circulation manager, and the sales staff. These two departments, through the attendance of the Editor and the Publisher (or Manager) at Magazine Division meetings, reported to the Director of the Magazine Division, who was responsible for approving budgets, general planning and development. Former Chatelaine editor Doris Anderson recalls what those meetings were like: "I had to go to planning meetings, and these things were entirely male [except for her] with the Chairman of the Board and the President, and the Head of Advertising, and the Head of Magazine Division, my publisher, and the Circulation department." The responsibilities of the business department were twofold: to sell advertising space in the periodical and to handle the circulation promotions. There business imperatives were the order of the day: the constant search for a higher circulation, for more advertisers and for ways to keep the current group of advertisers happy. The department ran various promotions, including discounting or the traditional special Christmas rates, to encourage as many people as possible to subscribe to the magazine. Selling advertising was a similar process. The sales staff tried to encourage new custom, maintain current accounts and if the circulation rose, raised the advertising rates. In addition, they also worked on ways to support their advertisers through billboards and in-store promotional material which reminded customers that the product was "advertised in Chatelaine magazine." This department was also responsible for commissioning the various market research reports. In contrast, the editorial department was concerned solely with researching and writing editorial content. Their goal was to create exciting copy for the readers. To this end, this department had regular editorial meetings every couple of months. The editor was responsible for the vision of the magazine. June Callwood recalls, "the tone of the magazine is entirely hers. All those articles are her call." The managing editor concerned him or herself with plant schedules, production,
vetted editorial copy from the associate editors, selected letters from readers and generally performed the nuts and bolts jobs involved in putting out the magazine. It was the job of the associate editors to oversee the service department and fiction components. They were responsible for generating ideas and articles within their own sphere of influence, and assigning staff writers or freelance journalists to research and write these articles. The art director and copy editors were responsible for the visual appearance of the periodical and chose the layouts, art work, and proofed the finished copy for problems.

Although the editor and the publisher would meet to discuss the magazine, and they were both part of larger meetings within the Maclean Hunter company, otherwise there was no contact between the editorial and advertising departments. Both sides were often critical of the other--indeed this sort of binary organization created tensions between the two sides. Further compounding the separation and difference of the two departments was a very specific gender divide: the editorial department was primarily female while the business department was primarily male (secretaries excepted). The work culture at Maclean Hunter, and in those days Maclean's was on the same floor as Chatelaine, was fraught with sexual tensions:

Most of the women got hit on by the men...There were affairs...they didn’t call them affairs but they really were sexual harassment...That was just how life was. You could say no but you would be sure never to get any good assignments. I didn’t get hit on because I was married and that protected me.50

Callwood remembers that the “female staff complained” and that when the single-staffers got married, they usually quit their jobs (a situation “encouraged” by Maclean Hunter).51 When asked about the workplace culture at Chatelaine Anderson responded: “Well we had a good time and because we were women we all worked very hard, most people really liked the job and they put a lot of themselves into the magazine.”52 Problematic gender relations, competition between Maclean’s and Chatelaine, and the division between editorial and business sides of the periodical all worked to create a work-place culture in which the male editors and business staff occupied centre-stage in the corporation’s magazine division, while the largely female, editorial staff at Chatelaine toiled away in obscurity and at what was regarded, in-house, as a second-class periodical.

While Chatelaine was a commercial cultural product, which was intended to make money for the Maclean Hunter company by attracting a large compliment of advertisements
to the magazine, the editors and their staff were concerned with producing material of interest to readers. Admittedly, a large circulation and interested readers are not mutually exclusive concepts but the difference in tone, content and themes between the advertising copy and the editorial copy was often very striking. The female editors serviced the readers offering fact and fiction which they thought would be of interest to them and thus they did not intentionally produce material which reflected the consumer ethos of the advertising department. They did not regard the readers as merely a vast audience ripe for commercial profit. The advertising department was fixated on circulation figures, Starch readership reports, advertising lineage, and products consumed. Content was little more than the material in-between the advertisements. Not surprisingly, their main editorial focus was the Chatelaine Departments material (food, fashion, beauty, housekeeping, decorating, and childcare). For the editorial department, the articles and editorials received more prominent attention and the service department features rarely upstaged the general articles within the magazine. This paradoxical situation (where the business executives and Maclean Hunter directors had little knowledge of the material in the magazine) existed according to Doris Anderson because:

...the advertisers never read the magazine....They would look at the numbers, the number of readers, the circulation, the number of older women and younger women reading the magazine, the numbers game. I would get some complaints from the publisher and from the top brass on the ninth floor about turning this nice little women's magazine into a feminist rag. But as long as the circulation continued to go up and as long as the advertiser was there they couldn't argue with it very much.... They depended on those figures because they really didn't feel very secure themselves. They'd often quote their wife: "My wife didn't like this article" or "My wife wonders why you're doing this?"53

It is difficult to imagine that these business department and Maclean Hunter executives relied solely upon the numbers and impressions of others when it came to Maclean's. The executives responsible for charting the magazine's advertising and business success never read the periodical, because its "feminine" content was of little interest and thus they had little understanding or awareness of what the product they sold advertisers offered Canadian women. The only male intervention into the editorial material of the magazine was the Dichter Study in 1958 which was primarily commissioned because of the falling ad revenue at the end of John Clare's tenure as editor. Therefore as long as the magazine continued to be successful—increased subscription rates and increased advertising content— they did not question the format of the editorial material so it was very easy for an innovative editor, like
Anderson, to create a magazine that was about considerably more than ‘twelve different summer hairdos’ or ‘fifteen ways to serve hamburger’.54

Advertising Chatelaine:

For 25 years Chatelaine has served the Canadian consumer, the retailer, and the advertiser. The consumer, by making a higher standard of living desirable. The retailer, by sound merchandising policies and the creation of a local demand for goods and services wherever he may be. The advertiser, by sparking reader ideas which create wants which can only be satisfied by sales. Advertise in Chatelaine... be there when the sale is born.55

The publishers as businessmen were concerned with the bottom line. Thus the manner in which Maclean Hunter executives advertised and described Chatelaine in the advertiser's rate guide, Canadian Advertising Rates and Data (CARD), differed considerably from that of the editor's. The above excerpt is taken from a Chatelaine ad entitled, "Twenty Five Years of Service" which appeared in a 1953 issue of CARD. Although the advertisements for the magazine in CARD often repeated the refrain, "Please the reader first and serve the advertiser best!" it was clear that the business of Chatelaine was to promote consumption.56 The plan was to present a nicely packaged periodical which caught and held the reader's attention while she flipped through the pages and pages of advertising. The goal, outlined in countless ads in CARD, was ACTION:

Chatelaine editors create the 'mood to buy' by showing women what to do. Your advertising in Chatelaine shows them what to do it with. This combination 1-2 punch is a proven sales formula that gets consumer action! That's why we say...if it's action you want, use Chatelaine (Canada's leading home service magazine).57

To determine just how much 'action' they were stimulating, Chatelaine was constantly evaluating the magazine through reader surveys. Most of these surveys were done by the Gruneau Research Company of Canada. The reports, called Starch reports (named for their American founder Daniel Starch), claimed to measure the amount of action generated by the ad and editorial material. The following excerpt from a 1953 ad entitled "If It's ACTION You Want...Here it is!" aptly conveyed the overheated rhetoric of the CARD ads and of the Starch results:

"Thousands of women are spurred into Action with every issue of Chatelaine.... EXAMPLE: Three editorials and nineteen advertisements on home appliances in November '52 got Action! Eighty percent said they took some action on one or more....If all the Action could be visualized that Chatelaine starts in hundreds of thousands of homes across Canada, you would be convinced that advertising in
Chatelaine produces the biggest return for your dollar. The only magazine on the continent demonstrating the Action resulting from its service articles and advertisements, Chatelaine Action Studies stand ready for your inspection. Advertise in Chatelaine for Action—the magazine that gets Action—and proves Action!" 

Action was defined as a purchase, an interest in the product or feature, or acting on the suggestions provided in the magazine—action and purchase were not synonymous. Not surprisingly, Starch reports explained the finer details of what 'action' meant in fine print at the top of the reports but seldom printed this information in the CARD ads. When eighty percent of respondents told Gruneau ‘they took some action,’ all this really meant was that the magazine had some impact on the reader. This simplistic relationship benefited the advertisers and was, as far as they were concerned, the purpose of the magazine. As will be demonstrated later, reader action could be entirely counter to the goals of the advertisers.

Along with the advertisements extolling the virtues of advertising in specific periodicals there were general advertisements, usually placed by the Magazine Advertising Bureau of Canada (MAB) which offered more general comments about the desirability of magazine advertising. These ads usually took the form of a collection of rather vague phrases like: "Magazines, the good companions of the leisure hours, contribute to the better way of life, which is why they are popular with all members of the family." Other favourite tactics were to publish excerpts from the latest surveys of magazine readers. This excerpt, based upon audience surveys conducted in Toronto, Hamilton, London and Ottawa, unequivocally stated the effect magazines had on readers, and why magazine advertising was more effective than other forms:

"Magazine reading shows people how to act with others and teaches them what to expect.... Magazine reading permits people to get away temporarily from the anxieties, the provocations, and the problems of everyday life, and provides relaxing intervals when they are in a receptive frame of mind and can take the time to study advertising." 

Thus according to the 'experts' (the market research people) magazines were both prescriptive literature and entertainment. They relaxed the readers which put readers in the mood to languorously examine the colour advertisements. Because the magazine was semi-permanent it lay around the homes longer than newspaper advertising would. Each magazine was picked up and put down numerous times, was passed around amongst family members, friends and extended family. Therefore the actual numbers of readers was much higher than the sales figures. Like the Chatelaine ads which trumpeted the 'action' stimulated by reading
the magazine, many of these studies confirmed what the magazine publishers wanted to hear, or more importantly, what they wanted to tell advertisers, that advertising in periodicals was a sure bet.

Some of the later MAB advertisements featured testimonials from satisfied companies. This representative example from the Jergens Lotion company again demonstrated the advertisers' faith in the power of their medium and the passivity of the reader:

"Magazines have always been our principal advertising medium. We value them because they are literally held in the hands we want to reach. When a magazine reader sees our advertisement—Jergens Lotion stops 'Detergent Hands'—she will glance at her own hands as she reads. She will make up her mind to replenish her stock of Jergens Lotion. Her own hands have become a part of our advertisement"... Canadian magazine advertising sells in many ways: as a visitor to the home, with something new and vital to say each time it comes; as a companion for those quiet, receptive moments...when most decisions to buy are made...62

The other factor at work in all these ads was the gender divide between advertisers and consumers. The majority of advertisers were men. They did things: created studies, developed ad campaigns and, in effect, directed the 'action' of the consumers. Not surprisingly, the consumers were most likely to be constructed as female. Advertisers were careful not to belittle the consumers, or joke about their culpability but the end result was still the same, 'action' -- the 'acted upon' had a small role to play in the drama of consumption. It was a simple equation: magazine advertising equaled action, and action (often, though not always) equaled sales. The irony, of course, was that the rhetoric used to woo the advertising agencies and their clients to Chatelaine often employed the same tactics that the advertising companies used on the readers of the magazine.

The Balance Sheet

The Canadian magazine industry has always been a particularly treacherous one, given the relatively small, scattered population and the accessibility and affordability of American magazines. The fifties proved to be a particularly trying decade, as split-run Canadian editions of Time and Reader's Digest appeared on Canadian newsstands and took close to forty percent of all advertising dollars spent in magazines in Canada.63 As well, the growth of national advertising on television accounted for an even larger drain of money for
all periodicals, regardless of nationality. Thus, the realities of magazine publishing dictated that advertising pages determined the size of the magazine, if not the content.

The cost of advertising in Chatelaine had risen steadily throughout the decade. For a one-time insertion of a full-page, black and white advertisement, advertisers paid $2,230 in 1950 and $4,580 in 1959. A four colour advertisement, as expected, was more expensive, costing $3,100 in 1950 and $6,330 in 1959. By comparison the editorial costs per page were $528 in 1960. Magazine publishers strove to deliver an audience to the advertisers for the lowest CPM or Cost Per Thousand, a simple estimate which divided the cost of a full page advertisement by the number of thousands of circulation. Chatelaine's CPM for 1950 was $5.89 for black and white ads, and $8.18 for four colour ads; in 1959 the figures were $6.14 for black and white and $8.49 for colour. In contrast Maclean's CPM for 1950 was $5.78 (black and white) and $6.07 (black and white) in 1959, while Reader's Digest's English-language Canadian edition had a CPM of $3 (black and white) in 1950 and $3.95 (black and white) in 1959. Statistics available for the last five years of the 1950s show that net advertising revenue accounted for 77% of total revenue. The gross advertising revenues for the magazine had increased from $1,336,970 in 1950 to $4,375,850 in 1959. Yet despite the dramatic 227.3% increase in advertising revenues, the magazine's balance sheet showed an overall loss for the ten year period of $1,328,039. The magazine had turned a small profit in 1951 and 1952, sustaining losses in all other years until they absorbed Canadian Home Journal in 1958, which resulted in a small profit in 1959. Interestingly, the losses of 1953-1958 correspond with John Clare's tenure as Chatelaine's editor.

The Editors

One reason for the financial troubles may have been the parade of different editors. Until the 1950s Chatelaine had benefited from strong consistent editorial direction. Anne Elizabeth Wilson was the first editor of The Chatelaine but her double load of editing another Maclean Hunter Publication, Mayfair, soon resulted in an editorial change and Byrne Hope Sanders was hired in 1928. Sanders had emigrated from South Africa as a young girl to attend St. Mildred's College in Toronto. After graduation she started as a reporter for the Sentinel Review in Woodstock, Ontario. From 1923-1926, she worked for the T. Eaton Company as a member of the advertising staff. In 1926 she was hired as the editor for
Business Woman, which she left in 1929 to assume the editorship of Chatelaine. During the Second World War, Sanders was invited to Ottawa to head the Consumer Division of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board. As a "dollar a year" woman she left the magazine in the hands of managing editor Mary Etta Macpherson. While in this position, Sanders created a consumer council of women and was responsible for overseeing the implementation of food rationing. The government selected Sanders both for the leadership she had demonstrated as editor of Chatelaine, and because she was regarded as having the trust and confidence of many Canadian women. For her efforts, in July 1946, she was awarded a CBE (Commander of the British Empire). She resumed her editorial responsibilities in 1947 fresh from her Ottawa experience and launched the Chatelaine Department of Consumer Relations. Sanders retired from the magazine in 1952, eventually becoming the Director of the Canadian Institute for Public Opinion (Gallop). By all accounts, Sanders' tenure as editor of the magazine, was both long-lived and successful. Anderson was hired by Sanders and she recalls her as a "very ladylike" editor who "would go around and look in everybody's office and make sure all of her children were there, smiling and happy." June Callwood remembers her as a women who wore a "hat and gloves" and was "regal, domineering and pretentious."

In Sanders' farewell editorial in the January 1952 edition, she introduced the next editor of Chatelaine, Lotta Dempsey, to the readers. Sanders wrote, "Many of you know her well for she was a Chatelaine staffer for some time and has written often for the magazine. She's a fine person, a distinguished writer. She is what most of you are--a Canadian wife and mother." Dempsey had been a reluctant conscript as editor, but Floyd Chalmers, Vice President of Maclean Hunter, had been convinced that she was both the logical and best successor to Sanders. Unlike Sanders, Dempsey's tenure at Chatelaine was very brief--lasting less than a year. In her autobiography, No Life for a Lady, she described her experience at Chatelaine as follows: "I defected for a considerable spell to a magazine, becoming for a stranger-than-fiction period editor-in-chief of Chatelaine." Dempsey was originally from Alberta, and had got her start at the Edmonton Journal, and the Edmonton Bulletin. She had written for the magazine since 1935, and by her count had authored 316 articles. No formal acknowledgment was made in the magazine about why she had left and judging by the printed reader responses she had been well liked. Dempsey herself claimed in
other sources that she felt much more comfortable with the newspaper environment, and that "She preferred to do the writing herself to buying manuscripts from others."81 According to Doris Anderson, there were other reasons why Dempsey vacated the editor's office so quickly. Not only did she dislike the administrative side of editing a major magazine, she suffered the animosity of her managing editor Gerry Anglin, who had wanted the editorship of the magazine for himself, and thus was "undermining" Dempsey.82 After she left Chatelaine Dempsey worked for a time at the Toronto Globe and Mail, before she settled in as a columnist with the Toronto Star.

Her successor, John Clare, held the distinction of being the only male editor of Chatelaine, when he took over after Dempsey's hasty departure.83 Born in New Brunswick, but raised in Saskatchewan, Clare attended the University of Saskatoon.84 After graduation he held a variety of newspaper positions, at the Saskatoon Star Phoenix, the Toronto Globe and the Toronto Star, and had been a war correspondent during the Second World War.85 After the war, Clare joined the staff of Maclean's magazine. At the time of Dempsey's departure in 1952 Clare had risen to the level of managing editor. Chalmers brought Clare over to Chatelaine to fill the void at the magazine in the wake of Dempsey's hasty departure, apparently promising him that once the magazine was in order he could return to Maclean's.86 Described as a "good administrator and a good editor" who brought "more polish to the writing than there had been before," he nevertheless "was not interested in making that a wonderful magazine."87 He rarely wrote any editorial essays and preferred to devote his editorial space to anecdotes about publishing a women's magazine. For this reason, although his name was listed in the masthead, most readers continued to think that the editor was a woman. Clare remarked in one of his few editorials: "We don't suppose we shall ever become completely accustomed to being addressed by letter as 'Dear Madam.'"88 According to Anderson and Callwood, Clare hated his time at Chatelaine, drank heavily ("a six martini lunch man, as were all the Maclean's men") and developed high blood pressure, which brought a welcome return to Maclean's.89 Although Clare was listed as the editor, Doris Anderson, a staff writer at Chatelaine quickly moved up in the ranks, first becoming associate editor and then by 1956 managing editor. Clare's mandate had been to hold the fort after Dempsey's departure until another suitable editor could be found. John Clare left the
magazine as quietly as he arrived: all the readers knew was that in the September 1957 issue, Doris Anderson was officially listed as managing editor in the masthead.  

Anderson was born and raised in Calgary. She graduated from the University of Alberta in 1945 and according to Chatelaine "She spent a year in Europe, after graduating from the University of Alberta, writing fiction on Paris' Left Bank and traveling through the British Isles on her thumb--and $46." According to her lengthy entry in Canadian Who's Who, Anderson had worked at a number of positions; editorial assistant with the Star Weekly, scriptwriter for the Claire Wallace radio program and like Sanders, was employed in Eaton's advertising department for a brief time before she joined the staff of the magazine as a promotional assistant in 1951. She moved quickly from editorial promotions to writing articles, and one of the key characteristics of her success was her ability to write with wit and knowledge of the travails of the average woman. In 1977, Anderson retired as editor of Chatelaine to write novels and pursue other interests. A committed feminist, Anderson was President of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women from 1979-1981, and was also President of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, 1982-84. She has written two novels and one monograph on the international feminist movement. She has been the recipient of many awards, medals, and honorary degrees. In 1984 she was awarded the "Officer of the Order of Canada". At present, she is Chancellor of the University of Prince Edward Island.

The Competition:

Although the Canadian Home Journal's circulation figures ran neck in neck with Chatelaine's throughout the fifties, the true competitors for both of these magazines, and the standard by which they were judged, were the American women's magazines, and the standard by which they were judged, were the American women's magazines. The leaders were, in order of popularity, Ladies Home Journal (6,054,934 total U.S. circulation), McCall's (5,783,397), Good Housekeeping (4,477,496), and Redbook (2,740,096) followed by the grocery store magazines (which were primarily about food and could be purchased only in the grocery stores): Family Circle (5,048,809) and Woman's Day (4,479,258). Although none of the American magazines matched the circulation of Chatelaine or Canadian Home Journal (in the mid 400,000 range throughout the decade) they did have a sizable following in Canada: Family Circle (262,276); McCall's (254,617); Ladies Home Journal.
There were other more specialized magazines for homemakers-- the so-called “shelter” magazines like *Better Homes and Gardens* and the Maclean Hunter entry in this category *Canadian Homes and Gardens*-- but those were upper-middle class and upper-class magazines geared to interior design, home planning and ‘gracious living.’ The most popular ‘American’ magazine in Canada during the 1950s was the Canadian-edition of the *Reader’s Digest* which had a circulation of 850,483 in 1960.97

There were key differences between the grocery store magazines, the other top American women’s magazines, and *Chatelaine*. First, with the exception of editor Mabel Hille Souvaine at *Woman’s Day* and Bruce and Beatrice Gould the husband and wife editing-team at *Ladies Home Journal*, all the other magazines were edited by men. *Woman’s Day* and *Family Circle* were affordable magazines (10 cents per issue) and offered readers primarily “service” material. According to the brief submitted for the Royal Commission on Publications, the *Family Circle* identified itself as a “specialized publication edited only for the shoppers of supermarkets, the homemakers.”98 A report on *Family Circle*, written by Dr. Ernest Dichter and his researchers at the Motivational Research Institute, stated: “*Family Circle* is not for entertainment or ‘escape’ but a basic handbook on homemaking.”99 The magazine concentrated on food, recipes, and affordable suggestions for homemakers. *Woman’s Day* had a similar agenda, to provide:

...ideas and plans which help a housewife and mother to better understand and manage her complex role in their family and community. Subject matter includes food (how to buy, cook, serve), decorating, child-care, fashions, beauty, home sewing, building, gardening, needlework, crafts, workshops, articles on education, religion, family relationships, community activities and fiction.100

These were modest, affordable magazines which offered thrifty menu plans, considerable information on food preparation and purchase and do-it-yourself, economical tips for around the house. While there were a few articles and stories, service features comprised the bulk of the material.

*Ladies Home Journal*, *McCall’s*, *Good Housekeeping* and *Redbook* were all bigger, glossier magazines which cost 25-40 cents per issue during the decade. Although generally identified as ‘women’s magazines’ they all had slightly different styles and target audiences. *Ladies Home Journal*, “The Magazine Women Believe In,” was the front-runner. A Curtis magazine, each issue of *LHJ* was between 130-300 pages long (seasonality of advertising
affected all periodicals) and offered women numerous fiction stories, a condensed novel, articles, and a variety of service material—food, fashion, beauty, interior design, architecture and society news. LHJ had a number of regular departments: "How America Lives," which profiled 'typical' American families (the 'average' Americans so seldom depicted in the other general feature articles); "Tell me Doctor" (a medical advice column); "Dr. Spock's Talks to Mothers," and one of the most enduring features of all, "Can This Marriage Be Saved?" (which is still published in each issue of the magazine). It was aimed at upper-middle class American women or readers who enjoyed the opulent designs, dinner-party menus and fashion features. The service material in Ladies Home Journal was often multiple page, full-colour, photographs of table settings, food, or interior design as this Canadian reader, the wife of a construction worker from London, Ontario, explained:

Ladies Home Journal fashions are very good—they are done in beautiful colour and show the right accessories with a dress or suit. The pictures of food are always shown with such lovely table appointments and flower arrangements. The fiction is not outstanding but there are enough articles to make the magazine interesting without reading any of the fiction.

Equally popular, according to another Canadian reader, the wife of a hospital radiologist were the general feature articles and the overall design and tone of the magazine:

I love the Ladies Home Journal! It has a real personality and there is a magazine I'm prepared to believe in. It has visual appeal, imagination and planning....It has timeliness—when something of importance happens you can depend on Ladies Home Journal to come out with a well prepared article on it that very month.

Asked to compare Chatelaine and Ladies Home Journal this reader stated: "The Chatelaine is a nice little magazine. It is smaller and cheaper. It is quite satisfactory for regional matter. The Ladies Home Journal is smoother, more sophisticated, shall I say, more comprehensive."

Doris Anderson offers a contrasting view of the American women’s magazines:

"They were all still treating women as though all women were upper middle class women and they all had decorators. They entertained with silver and beautifully laid out tables....I looked at this and all the people I knew were building their own furniture and painting their own houses, do-it-yourself because they had no money. This was postwar, everyone was married and had young kids and lived in the suburbs. They were into a whole different way of life and I thought Ladies Home Journal was out to lunch....McCall’s was glitzy. I was fascinated by their design team because they got the editor from Good Housekeeping and they had a ball, he persuaded them to go for a lot more four colour, spent a lot more money on production and they did beautiful spreads on decorating and food. They didn’t change the magazine that much in content. Good Housekeeping was recipes. And then the supermarket
magazines were coming on fast with crafts. I studied them like crazy, I took them very seriously.¹⁰⁵

Not surprisingly, savvy editors on both sides of the border kept abreast of new developments at their competitors and either “borrowed” them or developed strategies for competing. The elaborate production budgets of the American magazines were well beyond the budgets of Maclean Hunter. Anderson’s strategy was to concentrate on the articles, as she explains:

There was a niche for us that was very, very clear to me. You couldn’t compete with McCall’s because they had 16 pages of four colour and we had at best 4 on a decorating feature. So we couldn’t compete with them on fashion, in other words in all the service department features we were going to be beaten unless we found something special so we tried to tailor all the articles in Chatelaine to be as Canadian as possible....But we could certainly beat them on articles. I knew that. We could give Canadian women articles they couldn’t get anywhere else that would deal with their lives and what was happen-in-g in this country. It was very deliberate.¹⁰⁶

Along with expending more money on production, McCall’s also attempted to transform its general features material. In the fifties McCall’s underwent two editorial transformations in an attempt to compete with the Ladies Home Journal.¹⁰⁷ In 1956, the editors decided to market the magazine as a family magazine and promoted the theme “Togetherness.” The aim was to attract male readers to the periodical. Articles on sex, marriage, complete novels as well as fashions, recipes and housekeeping articles rounded out the new package. The togetherness-campaign received considerable criticism and McCall’s was mocked for the “woefully sad expression, good only for wisecracks. This slogan was really born out of fear...of losing their life’s blood--circulation.”¹⁰⁸ The experiment failed to attract a sizable compliment of male readers. Herbert R. Mayes (former editor of Good Housekeeping) was recruited in 1958 to give McCall’s a new, bolder look which stressed photography, more colour, more fiction and a new subtitle: “The First Magazine For Women.”¹⁰⁹ It was this version that would eventually surpass the Ladies Home Journal in circulation and advertising, making it the most popular American women’s magazine in the 1960s.

Good Housekeeping, published by Hearst Magazines, and edited by Herbert Mayes and later Wade H. Nichols, billed itself as “The Magazine America Lives By.” Similar to Ladies Home Journal, and to a lesser degree McCall’s, it was a thick magazine, running from 200-300 pages per issue. Canadian readers could purchase GH for 40 cents on the newsstand or subscribe for $4.00 a year, which made them considerably more expensive than Chatelaine. Like Ladies Home Journal the editorial copy was fairly evenly divided between
features and fiction and the service material. Some of the regular features in the magazine were: "The Institute," "The Building Forum," "The Decorating Studio," "The Beauty Clinic," "The Baby Centre," "The Needlework Room," "The Bureau," and "A Page for Children." Features and fiction were less sensational than either LHJ or McCall's. Once again, the tone, and the content, were quite different from Chatelaine since they targeted the middle and upper-middle class American homemaker who enjoyed service materials, articles, and fiction with "uplifting" messages.

Redbook was edited by Wade Nicholls and later by Robert Stein. The magazine targeted young couples between the ages of eighteen and thirty-five with a mixture of feature articles, service articles and fiction. Redbook began life as a periodical devoted entirely to fiction and, even through the fifties when the fiction component of many mass market magazines was in decline, they continued to publish a novel or novella in each issue. They were published by the McCall's corporation so one of the reasons for their younger audience was to prevent competition with McCall's. Given their younger demographics, the magazine often published more controversial material and in 1954 they were awarded the Benjamin Franklin Magazine Award "for articles dealing with security risks, academic freedom and racial segregation."111

The big four American women's magazines all stuck to a fairly narrow formula--general features, service material and fiction. With the exception of Redbook, and sometimes McCall's, they offered traditional, unsensational fare which presumed an affluent reader. All of these periodicals were in the same price range, and were hefty periodicals full of colour, glossy photographs, and eye-catching recipes. They looked, and were, expensive to produce. In contrast, Women's Day and Family Circle were more homespun magazines. Cheaper, less opulent, they served as practical guides to homemakers who, for the small price of 10 cents, could get new recipes, advice on do-it-yourself projects, and household hints—with the added benefit that most of the products required could be purchased in their local grocery store.

The Readers:

One of the things Chatelaine and Maclean Hunter were most pleased about was that their magazine reached a large majority of Canadian women. The circulation figures were always a source of pride, proof that they were delivering what the Canadian woman wanted and more importantly, that they understood their audience.112 Although Maclean Hunter
promotional material and their advertisements in CARD lead one to assume that the readers of Chatelaine were largely urban, middle-class women with husbands and children, marketing surveys in the 1950s portrayed a much less homogeneous audience.

Although the numbers of Chatelaine paid circulation rose constantly throughout the 1950s, the geographical distribution of subscription and newsstand sales remained fairly constant (see Graph 2.1). Chatelaine's readership was nation-wide, although readers were more likely to hail from Ontario, Western Canada, or the Atlantic Provinces. There was a smaller, presumably anglophone audience from the province of Quebec. Thus 'Canadian women' should be interpreted primarily as English-speaking Canadian. It was not until 1960 that the company launched the French language version of the magazine.

Graph 2.1

In 1955, the Grunwau Research Company of Canada, published a study entitled Canadian Consumer Publications Report (CCPR). The purpose of CCPR was to enable advertisers to get the best value for their advertising dollar by buying space in the magazine most likely to fit their purchasers' profile and demographic group. The report sought to provide a better understanding of the readership of Canadian magazines, moving beyond the geographical breakdowns and into more difficult terrain-- that is educational levels, incomes, types of homes, size of families and, most importantly for the advertisers, the number of household appliances and gadgets they owned. The research firm conducted a series of interviews with 7,500 households in 1955, mirroring the household distribution figures provided above.113 In their report, the interviewers found that the readership per issue of
Chatelaine was 2.78 readers per copy, giving the magazine an estimated total audience of 1,133,231 people. The term 'people' is used for a reason, since the estimated number of male readers of the magazine over fifteen years of age was calculated at 228,277. That left an estimated female readership of 904,954 women per issue. The high level of readership was even more astonishing given the fact that the population of Canada was only 16 million in 1956. With respect to age for both male and female readers, over 50% of those surveyed who read Chatelaine were between the ages of 26-45; (52.5% for men and 50.5% for women).

Graph 2.2

Although the report did not give statistics about racial or ethnic composition of the readership, it did provide detailed occupational and income statistics (see Graph 2.2). In the category of occupations of heads of households, 36.2% of households which purchased Chatelaine were headed by skilled and unskilled labourers. The report included definitions of these occupational categories, and defined skilled labour as "All occupations involving considerable skill training and experience, such as barbers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers...and factory foreman." Semi-skilled and unskilled workers "included mechanical occupations requiring little or no skill and all manual labourers, except farm, such as elevator operators, gas station attendants, waiters and watchmen." Next, three vastly different occupational groups each composed roughly 12% of the households which took the periodical. These groups included a) professional, semi-professional and executives; b) farmers; and c) the retired, unemployed and housewives. Again, the definition of these groups was instructive. The category of professional and semi-professional included "all
occupations requiring a great amount of higher education of specialized training, such as doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants, actors, photographers, radio announcers and social workers." The farmer category was broadly construed as well. It included "all persons who operate farms as owners or renters, and all hired farm help." Small business proprietors accounted for 9.3% of purchasing households (defined as "storekeepers, landlords and garage owners"), teachers and government employees were 8% and clerical workers composed the final 6%.

In terms of income, the majority of non-farm households, roughly 48%, earned between $3000-4,999 per year. Another 31% of families taking the magazine made less than $3,000. The writers of this report proved adept at manipulating the data to give the best possible portrait of the income levels of the readership. By omitting 12.6% of what was quite likely the lowest income groups (farmers and farm help) it skewed the statistics in favour of the higher income levels. While reports such as this often stressed the “better readership” delivered by national magazines, or in other words the more affluent readership, these figures revealed a different story. At mid-decade a large number of Chatelaine readers were from either a working class or rural background, while slightly more than ten percent of readers were either unemployed or retired.

Compare these occupational and income statistics with the Canadian averages for this decade. As with most Census definitions and categories, the categories for 1951 and 1961 exhibit some overlap with the Gruneau categories, but these averages give a good idea of how the readership compared with the Canadian averages. The percentage of Canadian males employed in white-collar occupations represented 25.3% in 1951 and 30.3% in 1961. Blue-collar jobs represented 35.1% of male workers in 1951 and 35% in 1961. Total primary occupations, defined as farmers, farm workers, loggers, fishermen and miners, represented 24.6% of male workers in 1951, and had declined to 15.9% by 1961. The two remaining categories, transportation and communications and service and recreation occupations, represented 7.2% in 1951 and 7.5% in 1961 and the latter represented 6.5% in 1951 and 8.5 in 1961. Given these averages, Chatelaine's readership was distributed well within the Canadian averages. In terms of income comparisons, if we assume that Porter's statistics about the roughly fifty percent of Canadian families who earned less than $4,000 is accurate, the fact that at least 79% of Chatelaine readers earned less than $4,999 (remember that one of the poorest income groups was not represented in these figures) indicated that
their audience was not primarily composed of the "better readers" but was in fact composed of a large number of less affluent families.

Approximately 84% of female Chatelaine readers and 87% of male readers were married.128 The vast majority, 82 percent, of women readers of Chatelaine listed their occupation as either retired, housewife or unemployed. The largest remaining occupational categories for female readers were clerical workers (4.8%), skilled and unskilled female workers (4.4%), professionals (2.5%), small business owners (2%), and teachers (2.4%).129 The educational levels of the readers, both male and female, also proved quite interesting. Of the male readers of the magazine, 91% of them had completed grade school, 43.7% had some years of high school or had completed high school, and 13.7% had some university education or had completed university.130 Amongst women readers, the averages were similar, except for the university statistics: 91% had completed grade school, 45.3% had some high school or had completed high school, while a mere 5.8% had some years of university or had completed university.131

After outlining the broad demographic characteristics of the magazine's readership, the report examined 'Household possessions and personal habits'. At the beginning of the report the authors included the averages for these various items taken from Dominion Bureau of Statistics (DBS) information, thus making it possible to provide the CCPR statistic and then compare it with the DBS statistic. Sixty-nine percent of all Chatelaine readers owned their own homes, slightly more than the DBS average of 68% of all Canadians.132 In terms of how they lived, 82% of readers and their families lived in single family dwellings, 12% lived in two family dwellings and 7% living in three or more family dwellings.133 In terms of appliances the Chatelaine households were slightly better off than the DBS average: 83% of readers reported having an electric washing machine, compared with 79% in the DBS sample.134 More surprising were the statistics for electric and gas stoves in Chatelaine households. Fifty three percent of readers reported owning an electric stove (compared to 42.4% in the DBS sample) and 23% owned a gas stove (compared to 20% in the DBS sample), which if those two figures did not overlap, would mean that 24% of Chatelaine readers either used a wood burning stove in their kitchens or did not own a stove.135 Only 37% of Chatelaine households owned a television (compared with 39% in the DBS sample), 57% spent $20 or less per week for groceries and food, 56% of households spent less than
$300 for clothing in the past year, and 75% of Chatelaine households spent less than $200 on a vacation in 1955.\textsuperscript{136}

The purpose of these statistics were twofold, first they depicted the world of the Chatelaine reader, her household and her family. As well, they illustrated that the Chatelaine readership was broadly based across the country, and from all occupational and income groups. In addition, although stereotyped as a suburban, affluent readership, according to this study a large proportion of the magazine’s readers were from lower income groups. These statistics support Porter’s hypothesis that Canadians were not as affluent as their American cousins and that the statistics on home-ownership alone were not sufficient to conclude that affluence was widespread in Canada in the 1950s.

**Conclusion:**

On the surface the purpose of Chatelaine seemed clear but when one delves deeper the water muddies. The magazine was a commercial enterprise, created to enhance the company’s role as a purveyor of national magazines and to increase advertising lineage in Maclean Hunter periodicals. However, seven years out of ten the magazine lost money. The commercial intent and the editorial content were often at odds due to the parallel system of production in place at the magazine as well as the separate spheres of production which gendered the editorial department female and the advertising department male. The female editors wrote for, what they often considered to be, a like-minded audience. The male advertising executives were far too easily inclined to reduce the readers to one vast undifferentiated audience of consumers, for whom the advertising copy was supposed to create ‘action’. While the advertising department wanted urban, affluent consumers, the editorial material seemed to attract more working-class, rural, retired and unemployed readers. What the company had done was to create a magazine which a large number of Canadian women believed provided a forum of interest to them. They hired female editors with whom the readership identified and through the gendered nature of production created a heterogeneous community of women (editors, writers, and readers) from varying classes, regions and age groups. Their common bond was the editorial material. Chatelaine might best be understood as a magazine in which two languages were spoken: editorial and advertising. The language shared by the community of readers and creators was not the same language utilized by the advertisers and the advertising executives. Unfortunately, for the
company, the readers often proved indifferent to the language of the advertisers which sought to turn them from readers into consumers.

1 June Callwood, interview by author, 23 May 1995, Toronto, tape recording.

2 These statistics are the product of page counts per issue for these categories: total pages, advertising, fiction, articles, and Chatelaine departments (editorials, letters to the editor, food, beauty and fashion, homeplanning, gardening, child raising etc.) for the 120 issues produced in the fifties. See Appendix for more detail.


6 Chatelaine Institute, “How to Use Powdered Milk,” Ibid., 64.


9 Wini Breines, Young, White and Miserable, 2.

10 Bliss, Northern Enterprise, 460-461.
11 Ibid., 264.
12 Ibid., 248.
14 Ibid.
19 Owram, 16.
21 Ibid., 58 & 69.
22 Maclean Hunter commissioned Ernest Dichter, Ph.D. and President of the Motivational Research Institute in New York City to complete a study of Chatelaine in 1958. Permission to photocopy and use the report was provided by Mrs. Hedy Dichter, Pecksgill, New York. See Chapter Three for more details.
24 Ibid., 21-22.
25 Ibid., 22.
26 Ibid., 20.
27 Ibid., 24.
30 Ibid., 78.
31 Historical Atlas of Canada, Plate 61.
33 Joan Sangster, "Canadian Working Women in the Twentieth Century," 76.

34 Deryck W. Holdsworth and Joan Simon, "Housing Forms and Use of Domestic Space," in House, Home and Community, 192.

35 Melinda McCracken, Memories are made of this, 72.

36 Ibid., 66.

37 Breines, 99.

38 Ibid., 125.

39 For an insightful treatment of the "juvenile delinquent" in Canada, see: Mariana Valverde, "Building Anti-Delinquent Communities: Morality, Gender, and Generation in the City," in Diversity of Women, 19-45.


41 Maria Tippett, Making Culture: English Canadian Institutions and the Arts before the Massey Commission (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).


45 Public Archives of Ontario (PAO) Maclean Hunter Record Series (MHRS) F-4-4-a Box 426, Doris Anderson to Mrs Mary Bordewick, Vancouver, 3 September 1959.

46 Blair Fraser, "Joint Submission..." Royal Commission on Publications: Hearings, Volume 21, 16.


48 Ibid.

49 Callwood 1995.

50 Ibid.

51 Ibid.

52 Anderson 1994.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

55 "Chatelaine Ad: Twenty Five Years of Service" in Canadian Advertising, March-April 1953, 102.

56 "Chatelaine Ad: Ideas, Wants, Sales!" in Canadian Advertising, May-June 1953, 100.
57 "Chatelaine Ad" in Canadian Advertising: Canadian Media Authority, January/February 1955, 102.

58 "Chatelaine Ad: If It's ACTION You Want...Here it is!" in Canadian Advertising, November-December 1953, 104.

59 The Magazine Advertising Bureau was an organization independent of Maclean Hunter but largely dominated by their personnel.

60 "Magazine Advertising Bureau of Canada: Make Your Advertising a Family Affair" in Canadian Advertising, January/February 1955, 92.


62 "Magazine Advertising Bureau of Canada Ad: Canadian magazines are held in the hands we want to reach", in Canadian Advertising, January/February 1958, 114.

63 Report of the Royal Commission on Publications, (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1961), 16. The term split run refers to the practice of producing various copies of mass market magazines so as to attract local advertising, thus American periodicals (most notably TIME and Reader's Digest) produced a 'Canadian split-run', for sale and distribution in Canada, which contained Canadian advertising, effectively siphoning advertising away from the Canadian periodicals.

64 Appendix K, Table 26 in Report of the Royal Commission on Publications, 254.

65 PAO, MHRS F-1-2 Box 387, L.M. Hodgkinson, Publisher of Chatelaine to C.J. Laurin, Vice President Magazines, 6 January 1961.


67 Ibid.


71 Ibid.


73 H. Napier Moore, "Welcome Home" Chatelaine, January 1947, 56


75 Callwood, 1995.

76 Byrne Hope Sanders, "Goodby and Good Luck" Chatelaine, January 1952, 3.


83 Lee Jolliffe and Terri Catlett, "Women Editors at the Seven Sisters Magazines, 1965-1985: Did They Make a Difference?" Journalism Quarterly 71 4 (Winter 1994), 800-808. In their content analysis of American women's magazines from 1965-1985, researchers Lee Jolliffe and Terri Catlett found "that the presence of women editors did not reduce stereotypical portrayals in the magazines studied, but did increase positive portrayals of women." Chatelaine was more conservative in the Clare years but it is debatable how much of that was the effect of gender and how much was the effect of neglect and indifference to the women's magazine format.


87 Callwood, 1995.

88 John Clare, "Five men, all writers, move into the world of women," Chatelaine, May 1957, 1.


90 Doris Anderson and Floyd Chalmers dispute Anderson's hiring, but according to Anderson, Chalmers wanted to hire Gerry Anglin as Chatelaine editor since Anderson was due to get married. She threatened to quit the magazine and was ultimately given the job. See Fraser Sutherland, The Monthly Epic, 249-250.

91 Lotta Dempsey, "Behind the Scenes at Chatelaine" Chatelaine, April 1952, 80.


93 Ibid.

94 The Dichter Report reported that "the major competition for Chatelaine is in women's magazines from the States. We found, neither in depth interviews, nor in the personality profiles of the Star Weekly or Canadian Home Journal that emerged from our projective tests, any substantial competitive reader interest...As a matter of fact, other Canadian publications appear from our material to suffer from the same general weaknesses attributed by our respondents to Chatelaine...Maclean's apparently a more popular magazine than Chatelaine, is nevertheless considered less interesting and desirable than the Saturday Evening Post, Time, Life and other general U.S. publications with which it competes." Ernest Dichter, Ph.D., "A Motivational Research Study on Chatelaine Magazine," Conducted for: Maclean-Hunter Publishing Co., (New York: Institute for Motivational Research, Inc., 1938), 147.


96 Ibid.


Ibid., 128.

D.P. Hanson, Vice President, “Submission by Fawcett Publications, Inc.” Royal Commission on Publications: Hearings, Volume 5, Ottawa, 18 November 1960, 41.


Dichter report, 115.

Dichter report, 139.

Dichter, 140.


Ibid., 3.

Wood, 121.


Ibid.

This theme was repeated constantly in all their promotional advertising in Canadian Advertising Rates and Data (CARD), in the magazine, and in the briefs Maclean Hunter and Chatelaing made to the Royal Commission on Publications in 1961 and to the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media in 1970.


Ibid., 2

Ibid.

1956 Census of Canada, 1-1.

CCPR, 6

Ibid., 10

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.
122 Ibid.

123 Ibid., 15


125 Ibid., 60-61

126 Ibid., 68-69

127 Ibid., 70-71

128 CCPR., 14

129 Ibid., 12

130 Ibid., 13

131 Ibid.

132 Ibid., 57, and Introductory letter in the front of the report (DBS Statistics)

133 Ibid., 57. There were two definitions for multiple family dwellings. First, it could mean more than one family residing in a dwelling--say an extended family or two related-families sharing the same accommodations. The alternative, was that it referred to the type of dwelling--such as a duplex, or apartment building, which were "multiple" family units.

134 Ibid., 41, and Introductory letter.

135 Ibid., 45-46, and Introductory letter.

136 Ibid., 50-60, and Introductory letter.
Chapter 3: Reading Chatelaine

“I can’t count the times I have resolved to write you. My friends over the years have poked fun at me and Chatelaine. If I could not be found they would say, ‘Oh, she is at home with her Chatelaine!’ During the war years I was stationed in England. During those years Chatelaine was a faithful friend and tonic, and it was handed around to lots of people. It would be a difficult task to say which article in the paper was appreciated most. As a matter of fact I myself start at the beginning and go right through to the end, then once again in case, when turning the leaves to read one of the stories I may have missed a page.”

--Emma Davis, Madras, India.

“I do enjoy American magazines best because they are more advanced in their ideas, besides putting out a larger magazine. They are very similar to our own issues but they always seem to be a jump ahead of ours in fashion, decorating and everyday articles. I do wish the Canadian magazines would imitate their books more than they do. Take our own Chatelaine—there’s little more in it of interest...except recipes, while their Ladies Home Journal has more of everything....”

--Regina reader, in her forties and married to a salesman

By 1959 one of every three English speaking women in Canada, or 1,650,000 women, read each issue of Chatelaine magazine. While the last chapter provided a demographic profile of the readers, this chapter seeks to explore why so many Canadian women read the magazine. Readers are often the missing link in studies of popular culture. But popular culture cannot be understood solely through attention to the modes of production and distribution, close readings of selected texts, or in studies of the authors or creators. At some point the material eventually falls into the hands of a reader or viewer, whose own handling of the material, reasons for purchasing the product, and ways of reading illuminate the uses to which consumers put popular culture. It is the readers, after all, who permit the distinction between mass-produced cultural products and those products that truly become ‘popular culture.’ The readers determine what products become popular and what products will fail. Those cultural products which fail to achieve a critical mass of consumers never become viable commercial ventures. The varying reactions of the readers illustrate, if nothing else, that readers were an active part of the process of making meaning out of the magazine, that they often offered suggestions or criticisms of Chatelaine’s content, and that the creators ignored them at their peril.

While academics are sensitive to the role of readers in refashioning the product most have found it difficult to translate that interest into a sustained analysis of the consumers’ motivations and interpretations. This problem has been compounded by the lack of sources,
particularly for historical cultural studies. Fortunately, this study of Chatelaine has been able to draw upon numerous resources in an effort to examine the art of reading the magazine. These sources include the extensive letters printed in the magazine, the extant letters in the archival material, Starch figures, and the wealth of information contained in the 1958 Dichter Motivational Research Study on Chatelaine magazine. While the statements in the Chatelaine material and the Dichter report differed substantially, both support the thesis that Chatelaine magazine (specifically the editors, authors and readers) created a community, based upon gender and nationalist markers, in which Canadian women shared ideas, dreams, recipes, personal stories and information. Emma Davis’ description of reading her magazine is not atypical of the experience of many Chatelaine subscribers, nor is her expression of affection. As well, the derision of friends (however good-natured) is representative of many women’s experiences of reading women’s magazines. The critics, like the woman from Regina, a respondent from the Dichter report, often reported that the magazine did not compare favourably with American women’s magazines.

Since this chapter is about how readers read Chatelaine a necessary detour into terminology is required. Throughout this, and subsequent chapters, the terms “preferred meaning,” “alternate meaning,” “oppositional meaning” and “mis-readings” are employed. “Preferred meaning,” is the one intended by the authors, editors, or ad-makers. However, as discussed in the introductory chapter, given the range of readers, their socio-cultural backgrounds, their reasons for reading any particular text and the open or “readerly” nature of pop cultural products the preferred meaning is not the only interpretation readers may make of the material. As well, while there are preferred meanings for each article, story, ad or cover art, there is not one, monolithic, preferred meaning for the entire magazine. The range of writers and editors (the diversity of their backgrounds, interests and purposes) coupled with the variety of components made such a uniform meaning unlikely and virtually impossible. Instead, Chatelaine was a polysemic product— a magazine that contained a variety of messages and meanings for its readers. The active encouragement of writers and editors (and sometimes readers’ letters published in Chatelaine) to explore a variety of different angles invited readers to create their own alternate or oppositional readings of the material. I use the term “alternate reading” to explain a meaning which the author or producers did not intend while the term “oppositional reading” is used to identify readers
who were more actively “reading against the grain” of the text. Alternate readings were more common than oppositional readings. “Mis-readings” refers to instances where readers have not understood the author’s intent. This was most common in humourous pieces where readers just “didn’t get” writers’ attempts at irony, sarcasm or subtlety. This will become clearer in future chapters which concentrate on the text, readers’ responses and the variety of available readings.

Magazines occupy an intriguing place within the mass media. Like newspapers they are a print medium, but in composition they are equal parts print and illustration, editorial copy and advertising material. Subsidized by the hefty weight of advertisements, magazines are cheap by comparison with the costs of attending movies or buying a radio or television. Easily portable, they may be read anywhere: in the bath, lying on the livingroom couch, or traveling in the car. How they are read is determined by the reader herself: all at once, over the course of the month, for specific features or quickly skimmed between household chores. The women interviewed for Radway’s Reading the Romance claimed that romance reading was not only pleasurable but educational. This educational thrust was most often invoked to justify their reading to their sceptical spouses:

Romances are valuable according to this system because they enable the reader to accumulate information to add to her worth, and thus to better herself. In so justifying the act of reading, the Smithton women affirm their adherence to traditional values and, at the same time, engage in a form of behaviour that is itself subversive of those values.6

Thus magazines can be utilized to carve pleasurable moments from daily life, for educational purposes or as Radway’s study suggests, to enable women to question their traditional roles while appearing to support them by reading women’s magazines. The subversive nature of Chatelaine was apparent to reader and writer June Callwood who comments upon Doris Anderson’s eclectic mixture of material: “She really snuck it in. She never wavered from her principles....you never knew that you were picking up Marx’s little red book and that was a very powerful mixture of messages. She wouldn’t have succeeded if she had turned every article into a message.”7

Readers interviewed by Joke Hermes listed these reasons for reading women’s magazines: “easily put down and relaxation,” “practical knowledge,” “emotional learning,” and “connected knowing.”8
practical knowledge does more than simply legitimate reading and buying women’s magazines in terms of their practical use. It also furnishes the readers with a temporary fantasy of an ideal self. Depending upon one’s background and upon context, one may fantasize oneself into someone who is up to date regarding new products, who knows a whole litany of small remedies, who knows where to go and what to read...Reading about other people’s experiences ratifies your own. Hermes’ readers, like Radway’s, cite a variety of reasons for reading women’s magazines--to pass time, to be entertained, to learn practical and emotional skills, and to connect with other women. Magazines’ ease of use, affordability, accessibility, reliable household content coupled with compelling articles and fiction makes them an irresistible form of popular culture for women. Therefore it is not surprising that some of the most enduring, and popular, magazines have been women’s magazines or general interest magazines with large audiences of female readers.

The Dichter Study

Although the statistics and the demographic profile of the readership of Chatelaine (Chapter Two) may tell us who the readers were, they do not tell us why and how readers used any given cultural product. A 1958 report entitled “A Motivational Research Study on Chatelaine Magazine” by Ernest Dichter, Ph.D., helps to answer these questions. Dichter’s Motivational Research Institute in New York City was commissioned by the advertising and circulation managers to evaluate the magazine. According to Noel Barbour, a former advertising manager at Chatelaine, the eight-month study and 210-page report was the “largest motivational study for a publication ever done anywhere in the world” and was one of the major factors which convinced Maclean Hunter to take over the Canadian Home Journal and revamp the magazine in the late fifties. The report is an interesting historical document in its own right, since the researchers set out to discover the ‘Canadian woman’, her reading expectations, her impressions of Chatelaine, her view of American women’s magazines, and provide a specific profile of the Chatelaine reader, and how she reacted to promotional material in the periodical.

In the course of eight months the research team interviewed 127 subscribers and non-subscribers from across Canada in three phases of “depth-projective interviewing” and asked “projective” questions to another 120 respondents. The interviews were controlled by the respondents, who instead of being asked direct questions about the product were asked to “express their thoughts and feelings about the product, freely, in a rambling, conversational
manner". The projective questioning was more specific, featuring a series of questions from which the respondent was asked to choose the answer that best represented their views from two answers provided. Women were recruited from across the country to mirror the geographic demographics of the readership. There were limitations to the report, namely the over-concentration on urban readers, and the fact that non-readers based their assessments on only a few copies of the magazine. This proved particularly problematic when these non-subscribers made comments about the lack of variety in the periodical. The few issues upon which they based this analysis were more likely the cause of this skewed perception than a real flaw in the periodical.

Nevertheless this lengthy and complex document merits considerable attention for two reasons. One, it offers independent insight into the perceptions of Chatelaine magazine amongst Canadian women. Unlike the readers’ letters, the excerpts published in the Dichter Study were from Chatelaine subscribers and non-subscribers. All of the in-depth interviewees were given similar American magazines, either Ladies Home Journal or Woman’s Day with which to compare Chatelaine. This was important, since one of the key findings was that subscribers were more often fans of the magazine, and happy with the current content of the periodical. Those who seldom or never read Chatelaine felt that the periodical was old-fashioned, dowdy in appearance and not as pleasing as the American magazines. Second, the study provided the impetus for Maclean Hunter’s revamped version of the magazine in 1958: the publishers and editors took the findings very seriously, although as the fiction assessment will demonstrate the study did have its flaws.

The key findings were instructive. The Canadian woman or as she would later be called, the ‘new Canadian woman’ was “emerging rapidly into a state of social, economic and psychological independence as a woman and as a citizen.” Although the report did not use the term ‘feminist’ or embody feminist sensibilities, preferring the term ‘progressive femininity,’ researchers did discover that the Canadian woman was in a “rapid thrust toward independence” for which she needed “guideposts to action, feeling, and world orientation.” Canadian women were attracted to American women’s magazines, “extract[ing] that which is useful and satisfying” but ultimately they did “not fulfill the Canadian woman’s subjective and social ideals.”
The section in the Dichter study entitled “The Canadian Woman’s Reading Expectations” assessed the women’s answers to questions about the purpose of reading, concluding that readers were “fundamentally acquisitive.” The researchers contended that the Canadian woman had “an aggressive desire to acquire knowledge, not for its own sake, but to assure her personal adequacy. Her relationship to fiction is tangential; her needs appear to be less escapist or imaginative than here-and-now and practical.” The report included a list of what readers expected a good women’s magazine to provide:

...must be future oriented; give guidance to behaviour and to performance; put new emphasis on the Canadian way of life; address the modern woman who wishes to participate in Canada’s economic, social and cultural growth; recognize a progressive femininity; yield pleasure and satisfaction; offer attractive layout and art work.

Sixty-one percent of those interviewed “spontaneously mentioned... their habit of reading magazines for the main purpose of acquiring new skills in the various phases of homemaking, and for simple suggestions of ‘how-to.’” Other chief concerns were “being modern”, “assistance with child care” and “inter-family relationships” in which the Dr. Marion Hilliard articles (on women’s sexuality, relationships and life-cycle) were frequently mentioned as outstanding examples of the types of articles Canadian women needed.

Beyond the need for practical know-how and information about homemaking, nearly two-thirds of the respondents indicated that “magazine reading enables them to meet the conversational demands that are made upon them.” Witness this comment:

“We’d be lost without magazines--we all love them! I’m always finding that they are wonderful as conversational bridges--when there is that lag in the conversation I can always think back to some article I have read and bring that up and usually someone else has read it too or has an opinion on it and away we go.”

--Winnipeg woman, wife of a lawyer

This analysis of magazines as a common currency amongst women, or as stimulus to conversations, was often repeated. Magazines served a social function. Far from being only a solitary pursuit, readers actively sought to bring their information, critiques and questions about what they read into conversations. The Dichter study concluded that magazines served as a stimulus to conversation. No mention was made of the creation of a “community of readers” but many of the women’s comments suggested this sense of identity or membership in a community as a pleasurable aspect of reading the magazine. Those interviewed expressed a great demand for articles that opened a Canadian as well as a women’s window on the world. More specifically, these requests were for more coverage of international
issues, political issues and other topics summarized under the umbrella topic “current events.” The response of a subscriber from Riverside, Ontario, is a good example of the expanded role women wanted Chatelaine to play:

Now, the magazines have articles on all sorts of problems and no one takes offense no matter how outspoken they are. Women have more time now, of course, to give attention to what is going on in politics and theatres and all sorts of things outside the home.21

--28 year-old bookkeeper for a retail shoe store

Corresponding with this interest in current events was a demand for more information on cultural events: books, plays, television shows or radio programs.

The women surveyed indicated that magazine reading lessened their feelings of isolation. Many women commented on the sense of relief that came from realizing they were not alone, and that other women across the country had experienced similar problems or crises. As well, some believed that having magazines in the home fostered ‘togetherness’ amongst family members. The easy access to articles on family issues, teenage problems and sexual matters often led to conversations about these issues. Without this stimulus these issues might very well have remained dormant. Respondents specifically mentioned either marital problems or problems in dealing with teenagers, and how the magazines had facilitated discussion or awareness of potential problems. Most respondents to the Dichter survey were indifferent to the fiction included in the magazine, preferring that this space be utilized for more general interest articles or service department fare. Finally, the writers provided short excerpts of readers’ responses to questions about the effect of reading magazines. A Winnipeg resident, married to a district sales manager, reported: “I have definite views on my own particular leanings--garnered strictly from magazines and books. I’ve had no political experience--so what I think or know is based on the written word.”22

Similar views were expressed by a wife of a civil engineer from Toronto: “I have gleaned information and facts that have helped in everyday life. For example, I’ve worked with New Canadians through the Junior League and when you can intertwine what you’ve read with what you know, you can communicate more easily.”23

Once the general comments about magazine reading were enumerated the report provided an assessment of how well Chatelaine fulfilled readers requests. The respondents were not overwhelmingly impressed with the magazine. The researchers ranked the number
of favourable, and unfavourable, mentions of Chatelaine content and as Chart 3.1 indicates, the magazine did not score very highly.24

**Chart 3.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Favourable Mentions</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Unfavourable Mentions</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homemaking Suggestions*</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Distinctive Style</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food, Recipes, Cooking</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Condensation of Articles</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashions</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Size, Format, Layout</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Events</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Medicine</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Good for whole family</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Personality Profiles</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety of Coverage</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Chatelaine is Unexciting</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-organized Magazine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* non-food articles

Equally shockingly for the Maclean Hunter personnel, the report found that Chatelaine was "behind her (the Canadian woman’s) actual level of present development" and did not provide "any yardsticks to the future".25 Only in its “implicit” nationalism did the periodical satisfy its readers. Rather ironically, the group most satisfied with the periodical (only 25% of those surveyed) were “the French speaking Canadian woman and the rural dweller” and Dichter urged the company not to be satisfied with these “most backward readers.”26 Instead the Motivational Institute recommended that Chatelaine should try to attract the more modern reader, “lest it lose the most articulate and dynamic sectors of the female population.”27

Although it was not directly specified in the text, the urban dweller was a much desired reader since she had a greater ability to purchase the goods advertised in the magazine, or at least would result in a more attractive demographic profile for space buyers than rural women. An equal number of those interviewed, approximately 25%, thought that American magazines were a much better product and thought that Chatelaine was inferior:

“I would like to switch my Chatelaine subscription to Ladies Home Journal but an old dear aunt of mine has given it to me for 6 years and it would hurt her feelings—it is just like her to think I would like Chatelaine—she probably likes to picture me as the ever-lovin’ housewife standing beside the stove—she’s just the kind that would get a boot out of that awful fiction they print.”28

—a young, single Kingston, Ontario woman.

The other fifty percent of interviewees were ambivalent toward Chatelaine and the researchers concluded that the majority of Canadian women:

“Has fundamentally a negative loyalty to Chatelaine. As part and parcel of her new Canadian national consciousness, the Canadian woman feels that it is her duty to patronize a Canadian product and this in a large sense accounts for her subscription to Chatelaine....”29
For example, this thirty-four year old Winnipeg woman, the mother of two children, expressed her ambivalence about the periodical:

"When you mention the Chatelaine I think of a magazine my mother read years ago. It is rather an old standby in magazines as it seems its always been here since I can remember reading it. I like it very much as a magazine and think it is improving all the time, and feel when I get used to Canadian magazines again I will like it as well as the Ladies Home Journal."  

Not surprisingly, therefore, the report recommended that the periodical must upgrade its content, both qualitatively and quantitatively as well as to improve the "backward character of layout, art work, editing--ie., the old-fashionedness of its presentation factors."  

While subscribers were often enthusiastic about the magazine, they did not communicate this enthusiasm to non-subscribers and casual readers. In fact, the authors found "The main loyalty to Chatelaine appears to be exclusively among its subscribers, where it remains quiescent." Indeed, while subscribers often commented about articles, or features they liked, 54% of them stated in interviews that they did not find the magazine exciting. According to the researchers both tradition and family habit resulted in Canadian women taking the periodical, even though they were often dissatisfied with its contents. Commentators were most critical about the size, format and layout of the magazine, pronouncing it too thin, too dreary, and too realistic in comparison with the American glossies. Insufficient variety was also cited, time and again, as proof of the magazine's lack of excitement. Some subscribers found this less-glossy image appealing: one quarter of Chatelaine subscribers interviewed stated that they liked Chatelaine because it matched their "status." What this meant was that the fashions, food features and tips were within the bounds of most average Canadians, unlike those comparable features in American magazines.  

But, while Chatelaine subscribers might admire the more realistic status of the magazine, one quarter of the non-subscribers felt the magazine represented low-status aspirations.  

This issue of 'low status aspirations' was fascinating, for it manages to address both questions of class, the income level of readers and the reasons they enjoyed the magazine. Some readers mentioned the affordability of service department material as their reasons for enjoying these articles. Other readers demanded that the service department meet different criteria: that it be visually appealing, and that it create material for fantasy or wish fulfillment. For example, they wanted to see affluent table settings with silver cutlery and
china plates rather than more affordable furnishings such as Melmac plates and stainless steel cutlery. These two excerpts illustrate this paradoxical complaint about the service department material -- the desire for utility clashed with a yearning for glamour and the signs of taste:

"The fashions in American magazines are really too expensive for me but they are done so beautifully that it is fun to look at them. Chatelaine does a page on simplicity and they do quite a nice job although their fashion sketches are poor -- they did a very poor job this past month."35

"I don’t keep my copies of Chatelaine for more than a month or so but I usually always clip some recipes out and save those. The recipes are excellent but the illustrations of the food are not too good. I quite often read Family Circle which is an American magazine, I think -- I get it at the grocery -- their recipes are lousy but the pictures of the food are wonderful and intrigue me into trying the recipes but I don’t have near as much luck with them as I do with the recipes in Chatelaine."36

While the Dichter Study claimed that Chatelaine readers preferred non-fiction and practical advice, these comments from readers illustrated that both aesthetic appeal and fantastic images were key to readers’ enjoyment of magazines. Readers wanted to see fashions, foods, and decorating ideas that were different: more glamorous, more expensive, in essence, more luxurious than those they could necessarily afford. Eye appeal was very important. It differentiated the magazine experience from newspaper reading or television viewing (remember colour television was not yet available). Graphics also created interest, a desire to purchase products or try recipes and a means of lightening the mood of the sometimes solemn magazine. American magazines were more colourful, and the products highlighted the stuff of dreams. They looked luxurious, aesthetically appealing, and whetted reader’s appetites. The fact that Canadian women could not afford the American products or ultimately did not like the food was less important than the appeal of glamour, colour and affluence. Part of the purpose for reading magazines was to serve as a release from the daily grind of housekeeping, child-raising and meal preparation. Magazines had to be colourful, provide visual images that were exciting, offer meal plans or fashions that women could dream about making or wearing.

The contrast between American magazines and Chatelaine caused conflict for readers. On one hand most respondents commented on the greater visual appeal of the U.S. women’s magazines, their larger content, variety of articles, timeliness and ‘glossy’ nature and yet on the other hand they admitted to feeling guilty for consuming them. In some respects this is
not an issue that involves only Chatelaine but is almost a quintessential Canadian cultural issue: the conflict between wanting to support the native product while simultaneously being more attracted to the flashier, more colourful, more expensive American product. People explained that they would prefer Canadian magazines to emulate the style of the American magazines, if not the 'glitzier' content, but that they preferred to read a magazine geared to their national interests and personality, rather than towards American women. Thus the report concluded that if Chatelaine would capitalize on these suggestions from readers, and from the report's analysis of these interviews, they would have a very successful magazine. Ultimately the Motivational institute concluded that the magazine had an important niche to fill but that it must not become complacent, because its Canadian identity alone would not continue to guarantee subscribers and readers: "Our findings are decisive regarding the need for a Canadian woman's publication. But it must be a publication that reflects the dynamism of the Canadian woman...." The authors wrote: "Our belief is that when Chatelaine ultimately combines Canadian production, authorship and ownership with heightened style and vitality, neither the Ladies Home Journal nor any other American publication will be able successfully to compete with it." As the later increase in readers and advertisements illustrated, the implementation of the Dichter plan of action (along with the new editorial direction provided by Doris Anderson) proved successful for the magazine.

Readers' Letters:

Letters from readers, whether those published in the magazine or included in the archival collections, provide another source with which to evaluate the popularity of the magazine. Although this source is much more subjective, and constrained by the fact that very little of the correspondence received at the magazine was archived, it nevertheless allows for an assessment of how readers related to the material directly. Doris Anderson recalls that the magazine made it a point to publish a representative collection of letters: "if we got fifty letters then we ran five letters on that topic. We ran the letters as they came in or provided a balanced view of our mail." This was often a focal point of the magazine, particularly since the editors were not afraid to publish negative or critical letters, as this excerpt makes clear:

"Sometimes between deadlines, editors find themselves dreaming of putting out the perfect all pleasing magazine. As the Last Words that start this page prove,
Chatelaine is in no such danger. How lucky too--because we'd be so dull. Worthwhile stories always stir a reaction, and below is a lively crossfire of views on some recent Chatelaine topics.41

Contrary to the impression that negative letters could be detrimental to the magazine, the editors claimed that they made the readers’ page more interesting. The letters to the editor column, variously called “Reader Takes Over”, “You Were Asking Chatelaine” or “The Last Word is Yours,” was a regular component of the magazine from the early years of the decade. While considerable attention was paid to readers’ letters throughout all of the fifties issues, the sample letters in the January, May and September issues allow for some statistical information about content, location of the authors, and reasons for writing to the magazine.

An analysis of the letters to the editor provides a much different assessment of readers likes and dislikes than the Dichter Report. Throughout the decade, the average number of letters was seventeen per issue. Necessarily, the magazine condensed readers letters, while attempting to convey the variety of the letters received. Most of the readers who wrote to the magazine were women, representing 91% of all letters in which the gender of the writer was evident.42 All provinces were represented, as well as the Yukon Territory, England and the United States.43 In sharp contrast to the Dichter report (which illustrated that the service material was the highest rated material in the magazine) most writers wrote letters in response to the general feature articles in the magazine (63%).

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feature articles</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>Advice/help from editors</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Other letters</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General comments</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Food articles</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The volume of letters on any given component indicates both two levels of interest in that feature, both that women read the component and that they felt that it was worthwhile to take their time to write to the editors about the feature. While the Dichter report claimed that the service department material was of prime interest to the readers of women’s magazines, only Chatelaine’s food articles, which attracted 3% of letters, received more than a handful of letters. The parenting features, the fashion features, departmental contests, the special teen
tempo section all received only one or two letters during the entire decade in the issues sampled.

The tone of the letters in this sample also ran counter to the Dichter findings, because the majority of the writers (61%) wrote positive comments about the material in the magazine. Granted, the sample is not a complete collection of all the letters received at the offices, only those which were printed in the magazine, but the large number of negative letters which were published in the magazine (37%) illustrated that the editors were not adverse to publishing critical letters. Only 2% of letter writers were neutral, or to use Dichter’s term, ambivalent about the magazine’s content. Did the readers who wrote letters to the magazine conform to Dichter’s analysis that the most positive readers were from rural areas, with urban dwellers most dissatisfied with the magazine? In a word, no. Sixty-one percent of letters from rural readers were positive, as were 57% of letters from urban readers. Negative letters were slightly more likely to come from urban writers (41%) than rural writers (38%).

The letters received from readers, and published in the magazine were important for they, unlike the Dichter results, represented a decade’s worth of readers’ assessments of the periodical, and regular readers had a better sense of the ‘variety’ in the magazine, than non-readers who only examined three issues. Admittedly, these were fans of the magazine; they were often longtime subscribers and many were clearly happy with the content mix. The results raise questions about the Dichter report’s contention that Chatelaine readers were most interested in homemaking features (unless readers responded uncritically to this material) since most correspondence referred to the non-fiction articles. The Dichter report, however valuable, was not as spontaneous as the letters to the editor were. The projected questions only allowed for two answers—hardly likely to elicit a wide range of responses. Furthermore, this study was commissioned by the administrative side of the magazine, the business and advertising managers, whose motivation was not purely about creating a better magazine or to discover ‘the new Canadian woman.’ Dichter, as the leader in ‘motivational research,’ was recruited to produce a study which would illustrate how the magazine could be modernized, so as to increase advertising content, and therefore profit. The business managers wanted the periodical to appeal to more affluent, urban readers so that they could offer advertisers a better audience. Furthermore, since the service material “supported” the
advertising copy, the managers were keen to make it as interesting and useful to Canadian women as possible. In contrast, the readers’ letters (as selected by the editors) are probably more representative of what the magazine meant to regular readers.

Readers wrote freely about the magazine, about its role in their lives. They provided descriptions of the far from ‘average’ readers and illustrated that these women often had a very intense bond with the editors, the magazine, and with the lives of other readers. As well, the responses from the editors were free of the consumerist ethos that embued the Dichter report, the CARD ads and, as will be demonstrated, the Starch figures. Reading through the archival material makes clear that everyone who wrote to the magazine’s editors received a reply. This indicated that their readers’ opinions were valued and they were not considered to be just a mass audience whose importance was limited to purchasing the periodical. Unless there was a very controversial issue which resulted in an overwhelming number of letters, the editors’ replies were not form letters but personalized responses to readers’ queries or comments. This letter from Mrs. S. Ottley of Port Dover, Ontario, and Anderson’s reply, illustrate the nature of the relationship between readers and editors:

“I am an ardent reader of Chatelaine and prize every copy. I also collect up old copies. In doing this I came across an article in the September 1954 issue telling how you helped the Woods family form a budget. I’ve tried to follow it and gear it to my special case but my husband only brings home to me $45 a week. We’re deeply in debt and I’m having a terrible time trying to get a workable budget. I was wondering if you folks could help me in some way and so like the ‘Woods’ we could get back on our feet. We have two small boys and are buying our home. Hoping you can help me...”
--dated September 4, 1958

“...Many readers have written in to us asking for special help with their particular budgets. I’m afraid we have no facilities here at this magazine to help each individual case...I would suggest you contact your nearest Children’s Aid Society. Some country branches of this society run a counseling service which would give individual help on matters such as budget planning to people who need it...”
--Anderson’s reply, dated September 15, 1958

Mrs. Ottley’s letter was indicative of the faith readers placed in the editors; she not only attempted, and failed, to follow a four-year-old budget schedule in the magazine but believed that the editors and writers would be willing to help her family reverse their financial crisis (see Chapter 5 for an analysis of this article). Her faith in the management and financial acumen of the magazine was, from a class perspective, naive, because she was clearly unaware of the fact that her family’s income level was well below the middle-class
norm assumed by the magazine. Readers believed that the features in the magazine were designed for all Canadian women, regardless of class or income level. Anderson’s reply, dated less than two weeks after Ottley’s letter, had a more reserved tone. Her assistance was limited to directing Ottley to the appropriate government agency, though she could very easily have written a polite letter advising her that the magazine could not address the special needs of individual readers. The timeliness of the response was impressive for an organization that, by Anderson’s calculations, had “at least two hundred manuscripts and letters a week” going through the office. Likely Mrs. Ottley saved Anderson’s letter with the rest of her Chatelaine collection.

Infrequently, students wrote to the editors to request information, for school projects, about the role of a national women’s magazine. This exchange between Norma Byford and Managing Editor Keith Knowlton provided another non-commercial assessment of the prominence of the magazine, and enumerated the editors’ mandate:

“As being a grade twelve student this year, I am taking English 30. In the English course this year we are taking the project of evaluating a magazine. I have chosen the Chatelaine magazine because I enjoy it the most, compared to other magazines....2. What, if any are the political beliefs of the magazine? 3. Are the magazine’s editors aware of their responsibility to the public, both in fiction and non-fiction and in their advertising? 4. Can you cite any specific examples of the way in which the magazine is helping to make this a better world?....”
--Miss Norma Byford, Iron River, Alberta, dated October 20, 1959

“...2. Aside from supporting the broad democratic principles of Canadian life, Chatelaine takes no editorial position in the controversies of the nation’s politics. 3. Very much so. Advertising, in point of fact, is the responsibility of the magazine’s advertising department....4. In common with other magazines of quality and integrity, Chatelaine aids in society’s progress by providing the public with well researched, detailed information....Chatelaine informs by presenting considered examination of important issues of national interest. It reports what is happening; it brings to light conditions that require improvement, and tells how such improvement can be made. It opens its pages to the findings and opinions of proven experts. It provides background information on current news happenings, psychologists, and other specialists on health matters; dietitians write on foods and diets; trained observers keep readers abreast of developments in the arts....”
--Keith A. Knowlton, Managing Editor, dated November 10, 1959

No reply from Byford was found so researchers will never know what mark she received on her project. Still, like Ottley, her assurance that the editors would respond is striking. Knowlton replied because Anderson was in Europe. He took care, and time, to craft his two page reply to Byford’s question. His response, particularly the order in which he ranked the components of the magazine (non-fiction articles, current events, medical articles, food
articles and then the arts) was very different than the arrangement of the advertising managers and the CARD advertisements. His stress was upon the seriousness of the periodical, its role as a disseminator of expert information and opinion to Canadian women. The lack of attention to fashion and beauty departments, particularly given the fact that the letter was written to a teenage girl, was indicative of the pride Chatelaine editors took in their public role. Additionally it questions how seriously Anderson, and her head editors, took the service material. This candid appraisal from June Callwood supports that contention:

The ideas for the magazine and the way it would look were Doris’. She was very pragmatic about the crap in the magazine. The clothes and cooking which had no interest whatsoever for her. She knew that it had to be good quality and she had good people around her and she was amused by it, but she didn’t take it very seriously but she couldn’t be patronizing, it had to be good. And she knew her audience....she knew that women’s magazines had to have fashion and food and celebrity articles...and she was right on top of that formula and if you did that well enough then you got to bootleg the real stuff, but you had to put in the padding.47

Despite Callwood’s antipathy for service material now, she readily admitted that during the fifties and sixties she also relied upon the “how-to” articles for food and decorating suggestions. Thus the service material was a part of the ‘women’s magazine’ genre, but not one in which the Chatelaine editors, unlike the advertising executives, were prepared to focus their primary energies or enthusiasm.

For some women, the impetus to write to the magazine came from their desire to reach out to fellow readers. Many writers wrote to the editors asking that they publish their letters requesting pen pals from other parts of the country, or from Britain. These letters provided a wealth of information about the individual reader since they described some of their favourite hobbies, their gardens, religious affiliation, ethnicity or geographical locale.

This letter from Mrs. Ada Reimer of Victoria was representative of the genre:

“I would very much like to have some Pen Pals from the Eastern part of Canada, from places like Nova Scotia, Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton and all places across the border of the Eastern part of Canada. I would be glad to trade snap shots, also local papers, with any who care to write to me. One of my hobbies is collecting salt and pepper sets, I have about 75-80 sets now. My favourite flowers are Roses and Carnations. We attend United Church. I will try to answer all letters by return mail. Hope to be hearing from many of your readers in all parts of Canada.48

The isolation and loneliness in these letters requesting pen pals were often palpable.

Although some Canadians were hitting the Trans Canada highway and traveling across the country, for many readers national magazines, and television, were their ways explore other
regions of the country. The response to pen pal requests was often overwhelming, as this letter from Muriel A. Jackson of Glasgow, Scotland, explains: "The response to my request for a Canadian pen-pal which you so kindly published has been somewhat more than I can possibly cope with. From coast to coast literally, many wonderful people have written to me. Thank you." For many women Chatelaine was more than just a magazine; it allowed them to enter into a cultural community of women from across the country. They considered the editors and other readers as friends and confidants, sometimes confiding extremely personal information. Equally important was the link readers formed with other readers. One reader, Mary Kelly from Drumbo, Ontario, provided this analysis of how the magazine could improve: "I think Chatelaine is terrific, both in content and layout. But wouldn't it be nice to have a friendship corner where women can write each other and exchange ideas?" The formal friendship corner was never implemented, although it was a common occurrence for the magazine to receive letters which responded to other published letters in the magazine, and not solely to the articles, fiction and other magazine components. Additionally, numerous women commented that the letters page was one of the first items they read in each installment of the magazine.

Often readers wrote to tell the editors, and other Canadian women, about their lives and how the magazine had helped or perturbed them. This letter from Mrs. Roy Kittletz of Vimy, Alberta, provided one example of the autobiographical letter:

I am a farmer's wife with four children. I haven't even running water, but I do my work in clean pedal pushers and a clean shirt, my hair in a pretty net. I bake my own bread, keep a clean house, churn my own butter; I sew coats, dresses and embroider for the Women's Institute. We go to Church thirty miles away and I sing in the choir. In the summer the children and I play ball and go on picnics. If we go to Edmonton, which we do once a week or so, my husband takes me out to dinner and treats me as if I were still his bride. Happy? You bet I'm happy....I have read Chatelaine since I was a little girl. I think I may say I am a better wife and mother for having read so many of your articles.

Readers often employed a very intimate or confessional style when they wrote to the magazine. The revelations and the language used implied a friendship, or at least a belief on the part of the writer, that the editors would be both interested and sympathetic. Readers, like Kittletz, were quick to criticize the editors for their Toronto-centric ideas or lack of awareness about living conditions throughout the country. This reader was proud of her self-reliance and her family's 'standard of living' which bore little resemblance to how the term
was employed in the magazine. By the late fifties, the life described in this letter was out of step with what the experiences of the majority of Canadians. But readers whose lives were often radically different from the majority wrote to the magazine to demand that, as Canadian women, Chatelaine be relevant to them. They made the periodical recognize that all of their readers were not cut out of the suburban mold, and that their version of the ‘better life’, in sharp contrast to the advertising content, was not driven by the purchase of consumer goods.

Still others wrote to request assistance, either from the editors or other readers, or to share advice. Mrs. Delia Ash of Val d’or Quebec trusted the Chatelaine community enough to send this poignant request:

I’ve just received a letter from the Imperial War Graves Commission, Canadian Commission, announcing the unveiling of Groesbeek Memorial in the Netherlands on June 2, 1956. I would like to get in touch with other war mothers who are interested in taking the trip. If we travel together it will be much nicer and not so lonely. I have my two sons’ graves I want to visit over there, and surely there are others who will want to go. Won’t you please write me? 

Unfortunately, it is impossible to know the result of Mrs. Ash’s request because follow-up letters were rarely printed. This reply (to a request for gardening information) from Mrs. D.A. Frolick of Fenwick, Ontario, indicates that readers were touched by the plight of their fellow readers and did respond. She writes: “In Chatelaine Centre for April you mentioned a laburnum tree that was brought from Victoria to Toronto. ...I hope they will grow in Alberta for the English lady who misses the English spring.”

The notion that readers and editors, and regular writers as well, were friends was something that Anderson consciously attempted to foster: “I always considered the readers my friends or that the magazine was their friend, and it came into their house and it had to be stimulating, something they couldn’t wait to read, and also sometimes...reassuring.”

Critics, and some academics, have dismissed the friendly tone of women’s magazines as simply the commercial imperative of the field. That is too simplistic a position since many of the editors, Anderson included, were fans and readers of these periodicals long before they became editor. As a child Anderson read Chatelaine and her description of how she used the magazine and felt about editor Byrne Hope Sanders is important:

I read the magazine all through the period she was editor in the 1930s because my mother got it. And I can remember some of those issues better than some of the issues that I edited, because magazines stuck around, you didn’t throw them out. You used them for school projects and you’d go through them and cut things out...And I
read her editorials, and through reading her editorials you felt like you knew her and the magazine....She sounded like a nice warm friendly person.56

It is this same feeling that caused readers to write to Anderson, like Miss Fleurette Gagnon of Montreal:

Thank you for all the pleasure you have given me since I first subscribed to your magazine. It is most interesting and inspiring, and sometimes, lots of fun. I have been a subscriber for about 7 years now, and have enjoyed every issue so much that I would not want to miss one.... English is not my language, but through your magazine, I have learned a lot, underlining words I could not understand, so I could enrich my vocabulary. It is a real challenge and I enjoy every minute of it. Keep up the good work. It is wonderful!... Please accept my best wishes for the New Year. Your faithful reader....57

Gagnon was not the only writer to report using the magazine to learn English-- in the sixties a number of European-Canadian women wrote to report that they also improved their English skills by reading Chatelaine.

Chatelaine also functioned as an affordable gift that family members and friends gave to each other at birthdays or Christmas. Readers often had elaborate networks for exchanging magazines with friends and relatives. Gabrielle B. Griffiths, from Trenton, Ontario, writes: “I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how much I enjoy the magazine and each month I send a copy to my sister-in-law in North Borneo, from then on it finds its way to New Zealand.”58 Finally, appearing in Chatelaine was the easiest way to become a minor celebrity in towns and cities across the country according to Miss Penny Morriss of Winnipeg:

Thank you so very much for using the story of me in the Teens in the News section of the August issue. It was a real honour. Chatelaine has such a large circulation and so much influence in Winnipeg that it will give me a boost towards my goal of being a newspaperwoman when I graduate from university....59

The Chatelaine community existed outside the pages of the magazine because other media, along with local and community organizations, drew attention to the material in the magazine or praised their friends and members for their appearance in the periodical.

Chatelaine Council:

Another key link in the creation and sustenance of the Chatelaine community were the select group of readers known as the Chatelaine Councilors. In an editorial entitled, "Life Line from Women," Byrne Hope Sanders reflected on the close association between the
readers and the editors in Chatelaine's history. Her description of the production of Chatelaine emphasized the women's world of the magazine: "Most of our editorial staff are women, most of our contents are written by women....We have no prejudice against men--on the contrary! But it is a woman's world we are interpreting...."60 One of the key ways that the magazine kept in touch with and relevant to its readers was the Consumer Council which Sanders had created in 1947. This association was composed of 2,000 women from across Canada. These women were selected to mirror geographic and income levels of the readership and were the "life line" for the editors. Sanders congratulated them for their work, which consisted of filling out questionnaires and responding to surveys and reminded the readers to "Remember the Councilors are there to bring the actual point of view of our women themselves into the magazine--and into your life. They are serving you, their sisters, by sharing their experiences and points of view..."61 Frequent reports from the Councilors were staples of the magazine until well into the 1960s which made 2,000 readers active participants in the 'making' and evaluating of the periodical.62

Questionnaires:

Although few in number, the people who completed my questionnaire about reading Chatelaine magazine provide interesting commentary about their likes and dislikes, how they read the periodical, who they thought the periodical was directed to, and why they read the magazine. The eight questionnaire respondents (who read Chatelaine in the fifties) ranged in age from teenagers to women in their forties. Some were single, living at home with their parents and reading their mothers' copy of the magazine while the majority were wives and mothers who received their own copies. Rural and small-town residents out-number urban participants. Most were stay-at-home mothers, one was a teacher, but many report returning to work in the sixties. A few wrote poignantly about giving up their careers, or abandoning educational pursuits, once they had children. This respondent from London, Ontario, the mother of four children, recalls the role played by Chatelaine in her adjustment: "It probably helped me cope with my stay-at-home family role and my community interests prior to returning to work on my profession in the mid 60s."63 Respondents identified themselves as Anglo-Canadians: English, Scottish and Irish backgrounds, with, in one case, the addition of
a “Norman French” heritage. Based upon their husbands’ or their own incomes, they would all be included, and would undoubtedly define themselves, as middle-class.

Half of the respondents reported reading other magazines as well as Chatelaine: these were Maclean’s, Reader’s Digest, Time, and The United Church Observer, along with American women’s magazines—Good Housekeeping or Redbook. June Ellis, a homemaker and mother of six, recalls how she “traded” her magazines with friends: “I would look forward to trading my Good Housekeeping for her Chatelaine and we always told each other what we found most interesting....Each magazine went through many hands before it arrived back home. I always put my name in it if it was the one I was subscribing.” Dorothy Marlow also passed her copies on to friends or donated them to the hospital. June Ellis’ description of ‘trading’ indicates that this practice was a means of economizing as well as a social event as she compared notes with her friends about her favourite features. Other respondents, who did not report ‘trading,’ all mentioned that they talked about recipes, fashions, decorating tips and sometimes articles or editorials with their daughters, mothers, sisters, husbands, friends and neighbours. Half of the respondents purchased their own copy of the magazine, while the other half received gift subscriptions from family or students, or borrowed others’ copies.

Asked to describe a “typical” reader of Chatelaine the respondents tended to write about their own experiences and provided detailed accounts of what they liked or disliked in the magazine. This answer from Marjorie Prophet, a homemaker and mother of two children, is representative:

Homemakers who were working very hard to raise their families. It was not the affluent society that we have today so it was always necessary to cut corners—to make economic meals, sewing, crafts. So much information was so useful for so many! Career women did the above plus working outside their homes...they would be happy...to be kept informed of cultural and career changes.

According to respondents Chatelaine offered practical material of use to homemakers along with entertaining and educational articles. Many respondents remembered the service material, and how they looked forward to the “new ideas” each month. Bette-Jo Baird recalls:

I was a young mother who had given up an interesting career as an X-ray Technologist in a large hospital. I loved clothes—the latest in styles and make-up and hair-styles. I was interested in gardening and forever ‘doing-over’ (on a limited
our home while my husband was away on military duty. *Chatelaine* gave me information on all these interests and I read it from cover to cover each month.  

Asked to circle their favourite components of the magazine most of the respondents circled a variety of service material, editorials, and articles: but in written reminiscence it was the service material which provoked most of the commentary. While readers obviously enjoyed the service department material, there is another explanation for its popularity. After a passage of thirty to forty years, there are few readers who could remember any details about articles, editorials, or fiction—except that they did or did not read those features—but given the repetitious nature of service material, and the readily identifiable content of such material—recipes, fashions, interior-design tips, etc.—correspondents could, realistically, remember using and enjoying those components. The least favourite component were the advertisements—only Marjorie Prophet was a fan of *Chatelaine*’s ads.

Only one respondent, June Ellis, remembered particular types of articles that she enjoyed: “We especially like recipes that were easy for us to make and that we knew the family would like and of course the ‘Royal Family’ was always of interest and not found in American magazines at that time.” With the exception of one questionnaire, these respondents contradict Joke Hermes’ thesis about the essential meaning-less-ness of women’s magazine consumption. Zena MacLeod, a teacher and mother of four children, provides her definition of the “typical” *Chatelaine* reader along with her personal memories of reading the magazine:

> An average Canadian female who might have little time to read a lengthy novel but enjoyed light-reading, and those who like to keep up-to-date with fashions, etc.....I honestly cannot remember too much, but I know I found them pleasant to read and easy to pick-up. I do remember standing stirring food at the stove and reading *Chatelaine* at the same time!  

Other respondents also reported reading the magazine anywhere and everywhere—in the living-room, in bed, at the kitchen-table, and, my favourite, “sometimes in the car while waiting for my husband.”

Given the small sample I cannot claim that these respondents were representative of how, why, and where other Canadian women read *Chatelaine*. They do indicate that there were a variety of reasons to read the periodical—for the service material, for articles and for light reading. While the act of reading was a solitary one, wedged between work, housework, and child-care, all commented upon the social aspect—trading magazines, clipping out recipes or articles, talking to family and friends, and for a few, writing to the
magazine or entering one of the contests (recipes and Mrs. Chatelaine). They illustrate that many, in this case half, of Chatelaine readers, were also inveterate consumers of other periodicals--both American and Canadian. Implicit in their comments was the belief that Chatelaine was the source for Canadian ideas, news and views about Canadian women.

**Starch Reports:**

Some indication of reader traffic, or the ways in which readers read the magazine, can be gleaned from the Starch Reports. Starch reports, named for their American founder Daniel Starch, were generated through a series of interviews with readers. In this letter from V.C. Gruneau, head of Daniel Starch Canada Limited, to Lloyd Hodgkinson, publisher of Chatelaine, the "primary uses" of the Starch statistics were explained:

The primary purpose of Starch readership studies is to ascertain the extent to which readers of a publication have read given editorial material and advertising items appearing in specific issues of that publication. The primary use evolving out of these studies is in providing the editorial department of the publication with more specific information regarding readership which occurs on the various editorial items in the book and a picture of the reader traffic pattern throughout it. Similarly, the studies provide the advertisers with a medium through which they can determine the most effective way to use the publication.73

While editors like Doris Anderson expressed reservations about the Starch material, the advertising executives and the publishers took these numbers very seriously.74 Unfortunately most of the Starch studies from the 1950s and 1960s were destroyed, but some partial Starch reports from 1949, 1950, 1958 and 1959 permit a reconstruction of how readers responded to what was offered in those years.

In the case of Chatelaine these reports were conducted by "trained interviewers" in twelve "cities and communities of varying sizes...throughout Canada."75 For each report, approximately two hundred Canadian women were interviewed about their reading habits in the magazine. Thus, like the Dichter report, these figures were derived from a small focus group. Readers were asked to identity, for each editorial component and for each advertisement of a quarter of a page or larger, whether they had 'noted', 'seen-associated' or 'read-most' of any or all of these items. 'Noted' was just that--any reader who could recall the ad or the article was marked as a reader who had 'noted' the magazine's component. The 'noting' figures were often very high, and did not require that the reader be able to tell what the advertisement was for or what the article was about. The next category, 'seen-
associated": “...includes all readers of the current issue who remembered, when interviewed, that they had seen the advertisement in the particular issue concerned and associated it with the name of the product or advertiser....”76 Finally, ‘read most’ represented those readers who had read at least fifty percent of the material of any given article or advertisement.

The results for advertisements were quite mixed, while as large a percentage as 90% of those surveyed could remember 'noticing' an advertisement (in this case a full page colour advertisement for Marboleum flooring), the percentage of those surveyed who read most of the ad seldom left the 5-15% response range, although it could be as high as 37%.77 In contrast, a half page black and white advertisement for Westinghouse Washing Machines was noticed by 18% of readers, seen-associated by 17% of readers, and actually read by 5% of readers.78 Hardly very impressive statistics, particularly since in the noted category all the respondent had to do was remember noting the ad, and she was not required to tell the interviewer what product it advertised. That such a dubious response was included in this category gives some indication of the degree to which the Starch figures were as generous as possible. The reports indicate that the full colour advertisements attracted the most attention, followed by the large one page advertisements. Since most of the Chatelaine ads consisted of 1/4 page and 1/2 page advertisements, usually reproduced only in black and white, the reported figures were often quite low.

It is possible to compare the early reports on editorial content with those from the late fifties to see the changing perceptions of articles, fiction and Chatelaine departments. These results split readership by component, examined individual entries and provided an average for that section. For example, of the four stories in the January 1950 issue, the average percentage of readers who noted each one was 63% while, on average 49% of readers read most of the stories.79 The most popular story that month, “Let Della Do It” had scores of 66% noting, 57% reading some of it and 53% reading most of the story. The least popular story, “Melody Unheard,” had scores of 56%, 48% and 42%. Starch reports always put readership figures in positive terms, yet given the low numbers it is apparent that the women interviewed by Starch researchers chose not to read certain components. The fiction numbers were very low--37% of readers could not even remember noting the fiction! For general articles, the figures were almost identical. The editorial essay drew a range of 48% noting to 38% reading most of the piece. Of the service department material, the homeplanning
features rated the highest (83%-66%), followed by fashion (82-53%), handicrafts (69%-53%), beauty (63-46%), housekeeping (54-44%) and child health clinic (45-32%). According to Starch, like the Dichter figures of 1958, most readers read the service department material, and less than half of all readers read the fiction, articles or the editorials.

By 1958 and 1959 the numbers were considerably higher for general feature articles, with the noting scores moving into the high seventies and low eighties, while the figures for read-most ranged from a high of 78% to a low of 44%. Health features represented readership figures ranging from noted scores in the mid-seventies to read most scores in the mid-fifties. Of the service department material, the food articles were the most popular (90-70-50) followed very closely by home planning (94-59-34), fashion (79-51-30), beauty (42-36-28), and child care (42-33-23). While the level of readership for articles and health columns had improved dramatically, as had the food features (previously included in housekeeping), the readership of fashion, beauty and child health clinic had declined. Still the proportion of readers who read the service department material was impressive, and not what one would assume after reviewing the letters to the editor. This overview of the figures of the most popular components of those two years of the late fifties did not include a fiction category.

The Starch figures are problematic given their small survey size and the questionable nature of their categorization. Additionally, their testing measures could have been measuring memory rather than readership of any given article, story or advertisement. Their chief worth was that they confirmed, statistically, what many readers of magazines believed and the letters to the editor illustrated: that many readers did not read the entire magazine. For some readers the magazine seems to have been almost entirely a visual medium, one they flipped through to look at the various photographs, layouts and some advertisements but a product which, ultimately, they did not read thoroughly. That would account for the discrepancy between the noting scores and the reading scores. Other readers selected their favourite sections, whether that was feature articles, or homeplanning or food features and read them very closely. Not surprisingly, many readers avoided, or at least did not remember many of the advertisements. The letters suggest and the Starch reports confirmed that most readers appear to have avoided the child health clinic feature entirely. One can surmise that the few readers who did read this feature were the readers who had young children.
Conclusion:

Once the reader had her copy of the magazine in her hands, she was in control. She selected what she wanted, she could read it anywhere she desired, and ultimately she could interpret the material based upon her own frames of reference, regardless of whatever meaning the authors had intended. *Chatelaine* was a highly interactive magazine, which was a large factor in its tremendous success. Readers felt encouraged to write to the magazine: both to comment on the material and to ask advice of the editors, to follow the recipes, to clip out the various service department features and create scrapbooks of this material, to frame the pictures of the Queen and to respond to other readers or to write to them directly as pen pals. Individual readers’ suggestions, along with the recommendations of the *Chatelaine* Councilors, were incorporated into the magazine. While it often positioned itself as the expert, and called upon the experts to write articles, it did not talk down to its readers. The magazine apologized for mistakes and the editors returned the readers’ letters. In a word they felt accountable to their readership.

It is all of these things, combined with the nature and content of the material published in the magazine, which has allowed me to refer to *Chatelaine* as more than a magazine, to claim that it represented a community of readers, writers, and editors who formed a bond based upon gender and nationality. Class, race, age, religion and less often issues of sexual orientation would sometimes rock that community, and it should be added that this was not a syrupy sweet world in which readers, writers and editors were all in agreement. There were conflicts and heated debates but most members remained within the fold. When readers subscribed to the magazine, they often began a relationship that lasted for decades. The success of the magazine was based upon its sense of community, the fact that it had very little Canadian competition, and after 1958 was the only general interest women’s magazine in Canada. However, its market share (one out of every three Canadian women read *Chatelaine*) was phenomenal and was much greater than any of the American women’s magazine were able to accomplish. The accomplished female editors, particularly Doris Anderson and her vision of what a woman’s magazine should be, were the major reason for this success, but the writers and readers also contributed to making *Chatelaine* a Canadian periodical success story.
Erntna

Davis to Editor, “Reader Takes Over,” Chatelaine March 1951, 90.


3 “Chatelaine ad,” Canadian Advertising: Canadian Media Authority January/February 1959, 118.


5 These terms originate in the work of Stuart Hall, one of the founders of the British Cultural Studies School and a member of the Birmingham Centre for Studies in Cultural Studies. They have been “imported” to North America, and popularized, by John Fiske. See Chapter 1, 17-18 for more details. Or, see Hanno Hardt, Critical Communication Studies: Communication, History and Theory in America (London: Routledge, 1992), 185-192.


7 Callwood, 1995.


9 Ibid., 39 & 44.


11 Dichter, 4-6.

12 Ibid., 5.

13 Ibid., 10.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., 47.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid., 48.

19 Ibid., 52.

20 Ibid., 56.
Respondents were asked to list or comment upon what they liked and disliked in the magazine. As well, the researchers have included all the components not specifically referred to (for example, distinctive style) as those components disliked by respondents.

For advertising figures see Chapter 2. Circulation statistics for mid decade are cited in Chapter 2 and in Chapter 3.

Anderson, 1994. Counts of the letters for 1959 and 1962 in the Maclean Hunter Records Series in the Public Archives of Ontario supports Anderson's claim, as the ratio of positive/negative letters in the periodical is similar to the letters in the file. See Chapter 7 for more information.

"Editorial note, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine September 1959, 144.

All of these statistics were compiled from the 1950s Letters Database, which includes all letters from the January, May and September issues each year. There were 342 letters included in this sample.

See Appendix-- "Letters Database" for more information.

Public Archives of Ontario (PAO) Maclean Hunter Records Series (MHRs) F-4-4-a Box 440, Mrs. S. Ottley, Port Dover, Ontario to Anderson, 4 September 4 1958. Many readers mentioned that they kept old issues of the magazine, either for reference or for the joy of collecting the magazine.

PAO, MHRs F-4-4-a Box 440, Doris Anderson to Mrs. S. Ottley, 15 September 1958.
46 PAO, MIHS F-4-4-a Box 439, Doris Anderson to Mrs Ronald MacLeod, St. John N.B., 9 June 1959.
48 PAO, MIHS F-4-4-a Box 441, Mrs. Ada Reimer, Victoria, B.C. to Doris Anderson, October 1959.
50 Mary Kelly, Drumbo, Ontario to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine October 1958, 136.
52 Mrs. Delia Ash, Val d'Or, Quebec to Editors, "You Were Asking Chatelaine," Chatelaine, March 1956, 3-4.
57 PAO MIHS F-4-4-a Box 438, Fleurette Gagnon, Montreal to Doris Anderson, 2 January 1958.
58 PAO MIHS F-4-4-a Box 438, Gabrielle B. Griffiths, Trenton, Ontario to Doris Anderson, 5 November 1959.
59 PAO MIHS F-4-4-a Box 440, Miss Penny Morriss, Winnipeg to Doris Anderson, 22 July 1959.
60 Byrne Hope Sanders, "Life Line From Women," Chatelaine January 1951, 3.
61 Ibid.
62 For more information on the Councilors' contributions to the magazine, see Chapter 5.
64 Questionnaire of Mrs. Marjorie Hallman, Pictou, N.S., completed 18 January 1994.
65 Questionnaire of Mrs. June Ellis, Brookfield, N.S., completed 16 July 1993.
66 Questionnaire of Mrs. Dorothy Marlow, Middleton, N.S., completed 29 June 1993.
67 Questionnaire of Mrs. Marjorie Prophet, Grimsby, Ontario, completed 6 June 1993.
69 June Ellis, 16 July 1993.
70 See commentary in Chapter 1.
71 Questionnaire of Mrs. Zena MacLeod, Scotsburn, N.S., completed 28 October 1993.
73 PAO, MIIIRS F-4-1-a Box 430, V.C. Gruneau, President of Daniel Starch (Canada) Ltd., to Lloyd M. Hodgkinson, Publisher of Chatelaine, 11 February 11 1960.


75 “Starch Magazine Advertisement Readership Service: Current Issue Report--Chatelaine, September 1949” by Gruneau Research Limited. Access to these reports was kindly granted by Anne E. Whittaker, Senior Research Associate at Starch Research Services Ltd., and by Brian C. Hickey, President of Starch Research Services Limited, Don Mills, Ontario.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.


80 PAO, MIIIRS F-4-1-a Box 430, “Chatelaine Editorial Readership” 1958, and 1959 to July by Daniel Starch (Canada) Ltd.
Chapter Four: Editorials and Articles

...For years I have read glossy women's magazines of every shape and size but never before have I seen in print an article like "I Almost Lost My Husband." Surely this is the answer to problems far wider than the home.1
--Mrs. R.R. Procter, Preston, Suffolk, England

I think February Chatelaine is surprisingly good. Dr. Hilliard's Talk to Single Women is franker than even our most popular magazines would dare publish. Let me compliment you on your honesty in dealing with a vital subject.2
--Bonnie Lee McCubbins Adams, Fayetteville, Arkansas

...Here is the history of one subscription to your magazine. An aunt of mine, living in Cornwall has received Chatelaine for many years from a friend in Canada. After my mother has seen it, then my sister (a doctor and mother of three children), then myself (with four sons...), then Chatelaine continues into Northamptonshire on a journey whose end I do not know. This will give you some idea of what pleasure it is giving.3
--Mrs. R. G. Marris, Birmingham, England

One of the main reasons that international readers, along with Canadian readers, found Chatelaine so enjoyable was because they found the editorials and articles published in Chatelaine very appealing. The secret to this appeal was the, often, unconventional, challenging, thought-provoking and, yes, traditional, material which editors and writers provided the readers. The editors presumed the readers were intelligent and seldom patronized them. A diverse collection of readers--men, women, young children, teens and elderly people--read these components. The editorials and articles fostered the "community" of Chatelaine readers by encouraging reader participation, offering a variety of readings and readerly texts which were open to alternate, oppositional and mis-readings, and through the intimate tone employed in the editorial essays.

Editorials

"Your editorial 'Honesty and High Prices' is one of those propaganda yarns that gets me all het up....You say the forces that control money may put the country into another depression. Well, I think that's just what this country needs. The pity is that those who control the money are the ones who won't get hurt."4
--G.L. Galt, Ontario

"Thank you for your editorial, Let's Not Guess About Fallout. I am so glad Chatelaine had the gumption to call for action and 'not sit and wait for something to happen'."5
Agnes L. Honey, Salmon Arm, British Columbia

"I have clipped your editorial, underlined the suggestions that an independent board of scientists be set up and that Canada should lead in demanding international control
of nuclear explosions; and have sent it off to Prime Minister Diefenbaker. Maybe some of your readers will want to do the same."—Miss E. Munro, Vancouver

"Three cheers, hurray and congratulations for your editorial on Let's Make Education Really Free. Only through education will we as a people achieve true greatness in every way. A strong Canada is a well-informed Canada."—Violet M. Gammon, Toronto

The lively editorial essay, written by Byrne Hope Sanders, Lotta Dempsey and Doris Anderson, was a staple in the magazine during the decade. Sanders and Anderson worked the genre into an art form. Due to her short tenure at the magazine Dempsey only wrote a few editorials, but with these as a guide it is likely that her editorial essays would have found the dedicated following of the other female editors. Only John Clare eschewed the editorial format. The editorials in each issue of Chatelaine, except during Clare's tenure in the mid-fifties, were written in an intimate, woman-to-woman tone. Located at the front of the magazine, on the first page, these half-page essays were intended to be thought-provoking and stimulating. The editorials played a major role in distinguishing Chatelaine magazine from American women's magazines. Because of their tone, prominent placement, and subject matter, readers seemed to take this section very seriously, whether or not they agreed with the editor's perspective, and this section increased the readers' confidence in the integrity of the magazine and the editor. As well, these editorials were one of the linchpins of the Chatelaine community. The editors shared their personal thoughts on a variety of issues and the readers felt they were taken into the editor's confidence which helped to create the bond between the readers and the editors. Finally, it was through this format that many 'hot topics' of the day, whether feminist, educational, cultural or political were disseminated to the readers. Ultimately, the editorials fostered a feeling of collectivity and solidarity amongst the readers and editor of the magazine.

To provide a context for the textual analysis and readers' analysis which follows, a brief summary of the editorial database results provides a general overview of the editorial writers, themes and topics during the decade. Sanders, Dempsey, and Anderson were the primary editorial-essay writers. John Clare preferred to compile a feature entitled "Chatelaine Centre" (this feature was inaugurated by Lotta Dempsey) which was a page of anecdotes about contributors, producers and readers of the periodical. John Clare contributed two editorial essays and, as well, commissioned two guest editorialists. Editorial topics were
varied, but the most common topics were Chatelaine magazine, philosophy of life, travel, marriage, motherhood and family, women's issues, current events and feminism. The most popular themes, once again, favoured Chatelaine's importance, family, professional issues and culture. The editorials explored the private world of women--the home and family--along with the public sphere--women in the media, wide ranging gender issues and political issues. Clare's tenure as editor coincided with the most conservative editorial content which was quite a change from the other editors' essays. His dissatisfaction and frustration with the job were only partly to blame. Because he made no effort to find out what readers were interested in, his essays or "Chatelaine Centre" pieces often were at odds with the other components of the magazine. Unlike the other editors, he did not understand his audience of female readers. This is not to say that a male editor could not interpret the "Chatelaine ethos" to the readers; rather the criticism is that an uninterested male editor, with no desire to learn about or interact with the readers, could not create editorial material that pleased readers.

Editorials with which the readers connected were those in which the editors confided their personal views, thoughts or insights about their roles, the magazine or about Canada during the fifties. An examination of each editor, in turn, illustrates the differing nature of the Chatelaine editorial, each editor's personal style and provides insight into the reader's reaction to each editor and their editorial perspective. In Sander's farewell editorial in 1952 she reflected on her career at Chatelaine, particularly the nature of editorial writing:

I remember writing my first editorial for Chatelaine in 1929 when the magazine was a few months old and I was in my mid-twenties. Since then thousands of you have had the same experiences that I have--been married, raised a family, lived through a depression and terrible war. But in spite of all the difficulties life has been full and good, hasn't it? This excerpt epitomized the Sanders style of editorial writing. As the well-meaning 'big sister' she doled out encouragement, praise, and timely advice based upon her own experiences. The few readers' letters that commented on her editorials exhibited both an admiration for her and a frustration with the patronizing tone of noblesse oblige which often crept into her editorials. She always knew better than the readers, and since their only voice consisted of writing her a letter, a letter she could discard or publish at will, the relationship was terribly one-sided. In Sander's defence, she would claim that the readers were her first concern, and embued with a strong sense of social reform uplift, she cared deeply for them. Her ideology and personality were best suited to the type of work she had performed in the
war effort: encouraging team spirit, hard work and dedication to a greater good. 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, as the following excerpt indicates:

It's been enlightening over the years to read your letters and to try to reflect your development as women in a magazine. It's been exhilarating to watch your growing pride in your works as homemakers and in an understanding of the vital roles we play in the nation's life as wives and mothers.11

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.

In the two years of her editorials she covered many topics, with essays entitled "Working Wives Outside the Home" (July 1950), "Lilacs in the Rain" (May 1951), "Honesty and High Prices" (June 1951), and "What do you think of Chatelaine Magazine?" (September 51). From the title through to the last paragraph, Sanders editorial on "Working Wives Outside the Home" was full of contradictions and ambiguity:

It's a situation which is obviously going to bring about many heartaches—and many triumphs. The heartaches for those who have keyed their standard of living to a double pay envelope, who are weary of working—but can't stop. The triumphs will come for professional women, and women who want to earn their own money, for their own perfectly good reasons—and who will have an increasing opportunity to do so....For good or ill, mankind is pressing forward to some unknown goal. Somewhere in that progress, surely, lies the principle of the right to earn money—provided one can, and provided one wants to.12

Its feminist language was forward thinking, and she cast her vote, rather shakily, in favour of women's choice about paid employment. Noticeably absent were any references to the large numbers of women forced to work for more immediate concerns than their standard of living or the type of car they drove. Even though she had been married, raised a son and handled a Herculian work load, particularly during the war, she fretted about the women 'who are weary of working'. The tone of this piece was one of caution and not unbridled optimism about what the future held.

Another type of editorial that Sanders was particularly adept at penning was those I have classified as 'philosophy of life.' One example, "Lilacs in the Rain," merits attention. Written for the May 1951 issue, this was a very romantic piece about the beauty of spring, and the fact that many people miss these simple pleasures due to the hectic pace of daily life. Of particular note was her admonition to housewives to forsake their daily grind, imploring
them to "leave the floors, and the dishes, and the darning, and hurry, hurry out into the
garden!" Like most of Sanders' editorials, this one did not question the bourgeois values
reflected in her instructions, such as her perceptions of beauty, or that her readers might not
have a garden in which to commune with nature. However, all of the editorials I have
highlighted do compel researchers to question the assumptions about the purpose of a
women's magazine. In a format that has been widely criticized as merely a vehicle to sell
household cleansers, this advice ran completely counter to the advertisers' goals, and
questioned the household perfectionism of the advertisements.

One of the most consistent themes throughout Chatelaine, including the editorials,
was the Canadian origin of the periodical. The administrators responsible for marketing the
magazine constantly wrapped themselves in the flag as the primary means of distinguishing
the product from American women's magazines. The content, tone, editorial leadership and
price also differed, but the powerful identification of nationalism was always the key factor
in selling the magazine. Letters, questionnaires and interviews with readers about why they
read the periodical almost always started with the refrain that they preferred to read "our
own" Chatelaine instead one of those "other" magazines. As mentioned previously, the
Dichter study also confirmed the importance of the magazine's nationalism. Not
surprisingly, the editors often asked the readers to write to them to tell them what they liked
or disliked about the magazine. Sanders was no exception, and in September 1951 she wrote:

My job as editor of Chatelaine is an enthralling one...I believe all Canadian editors
feel that sense of excitement and growth--because our magazines are key to the
expansion of Canada itself. Our country is developing a mind of its own; a national
consciousness, a vital personality. It's stimulating just trying to keep up with it. 13

As her editorial continued it became apparent that one of her main concerns was not growing
Canadian nationalism, but stemming a tidal wave of American culture which freely entered
the country. Sanders ended with a plea for the readers to write and tell her: "The changes
you'd like to see" and "the new features you'd introduce if you yourself were editor." 14 The
backdrop to Sanders' plea was the increasing popularity of American magazines, and more
seriously the appearance of split-run periodicals like TIME and Reader's Digest which
siphoned off Canadian advertising to American periodicals, creating a potentially dire
situation for Canadian periodicals.
Two months later, in the November 1951 issue, the letters section contained excerpts from fourteen letters responding to Sanders’ request. According to Mrs. W.R. Pringle of Headlingly, Manitoba: "Your editorial acted on me like bait to a fish..." A self-proclaimed 'purse pinching joe' she reported that she liked everything but the fashions, because they were too impractical. The letters arrived from across the country, from Vancouver to Yarmouth, from married women and single women, and from male readers. Arthur Hanna of Montreal wrote that he was "In complete accord with the theme of your editorial... More power to you." Ron de Armand from Vancouver wrote expressing his surprise that he enjoyed reading Chatelaine:

"Your magazine has been coming to our office for quite some time now, and up until today I've just glanced through it. Today I had nothing to do... so I sat down and started to read Chatelaine. I must say I was a bit surprised that its contents were of great interest. Chatelaine is supposed to be a woman's magazine, but I'm sure that just about as many men read it."

Unlike these two male readers, the majority of the female readers were not so complimentary. While most writers did find something they liked in the magazine, quite often the "excellent" (their words) editorials, many expressed varying levels of dissatisfaction with the magazine. The most dissatisfied was Mrs. N. Schurko of Gatehill, Ontario, who wrote:

"For sometime now I have been deliberating with myself whether your magazine is worth getting or not. Your editorial in the September issue, however, rouses me to some hope. With the exception of some articles the stories have been insipid, the exclusive fashions of no use to me and the recipes too extravagant. All in all, your publication is lacking in originality... Why not endeavour to make it more truly Canadian?... Consider the national groups in Canada-- the Germans, Italians, Finns, Poles, Mennonites, Doukhobors, Ukrainians, Yugoslavs, even the Eskimos and Indians. Instead of a laissez faire attitude toward them, why not sponsor each group in a way which will make other Canadians understand and accept them as fellow citizens. Not only would your magazine prove more interesting, but it would become more popular particularly with all the groups involved... Your magazine is too self-centred. It should open up its vistas and broaden its horizons."

Noticeably absent from Schurko's list of Canadian groups were, of course, the predominant Anglo and Franco-Canadian groups. Hers was a request for a more inclusive, more relevant magazine for all Canadian women, regardless of ethnicity or class. Schurko's commentary on Sanders' vision of the magazine forms an appropriate conclusion to this section. Sanders was to be commended for the feminist tone of many of her editorials, particularly given the time period in which they were written. The early fifties was not a particularly conducive time to write from a feminist, albeit a maternal feminist, perspective. The lack of attention to issues
of class, ethnicity and race appear less laudable, particularly given the influx of immigrants or 'New Canadians' after the Second World War. That few readers thought to question the absence, particularly of ethnic diversity in the magazine, was probably indicative of Chatelaine's smaller readership within non-English speakers and a lack of awareness of their absence on the part of the English Canadian readers. Class issues, always phrased in terms of "affordability" of the products advertised and promoted in the magazine were often addressed by the readers, but their editorial exclusion under Sanders did not continue with Dempsey or Anderson.

Readers were quick to comment on the different tone of the magazine under Dempsey's direction. Mrs. F.C. Knight from Burlington, Ontario, wrote to say "How much I enjoy Lotta Dempsey's Chatelaine Centre, and how very lively and peppy the whole magazine is lately." Under Dempsey the editorial section was revamped into a section entitled "Chatelaine Centre", described as "A Meeting Place for People Who Are Doing Things Around Canada." The format had been changed to include a smaller, usually quarter of a page editorial column and then little anecdotes, regarding what Canadian women or the Chatelaine staff were doing. When the urge struck her, Dempsey did write full length editorials, and the one she wrote on Agnes Macphail is worthy of further examination.

Dempsey's editorial on Macphail chronicled the injustices in the political system, particularly the patronage system, which had left the recently defeated MPP without any income or pension, and reduced to a state of proud poverty. Dempsey called upon the readers of Chatelaine, and the Canadian government, to recognize Macphail's plight and reward her for twenty years of "courage and integrity" with an appointment to the Senate.

Dempsey wrote:

If every one of the more than a million readers, of say, this magazine alone, stopped thinking of this as a 'political' or 'club woman's' question, and lined up her neighbour, her dentist, her best friend, her groceryman, her golf club, her grandmother, her son-in-law and her milkman to sign a letter to the Prime Minister (no stamp required) that would make quite a backlog of nonpartisan rooters. If this particular Government of this Dominion had the courage to fly in the face of ancient tradition...Agnes Macphail could be a member of the Upper House....If all these quite plausible things happened, Agnes Macphail might feel called upon to graciously decline...the one post...which has been offered to her in tribute to three decades of national service--That of matron of a mental institution.

The difference in Dempsey's tone from that of Sanders' editorials was readily apparent. This style of hard-hitting yet eloquent feminism would become a staple of Doris Anderson's
editorial writing style, particularly in the 1960s. Dempsey recognized the influential role that being the Chatelaine editor accorded her and the readers responded to her encouragement, although not all with the intended results as these two representative samplings illustrate. A Montreal subscriber wrote "Congratulations on your request regarding Agnes Macphail. It is delightful to realize that a magazine for Canadian women is at last loyally supporting one. My letter to the PM is in the mail." From conservative Toronto and a self proclaimed, 'former admirer' (of Dempsey's) came this response: “I am disillusioned regarding your astuteness, ability and common sense. Your editorial re Agnes and the Senate nauseated me. The CCF have always advocated abolishing the Senate, none more so than A.M.” It should be added that Dempsey's editorials, selection of article content and little bon mots in the Chatelaine Centre section won her both fans and enemies: many letters were received which threatened to cancel subscriptions or, conversely, to renew subscriptions based upon her editorial direction. It would have been interesting to watch her progress over the course of a few years at the helm of the magazine, and it is not inappropriate to suggest (although no hard evidence exists to back up this presumption) that her style may have made some people at Maclean Hunter nervous.

The other editorial of Dempsey's that was noteworthy, particularly in comparison with the Sanders' style and lack of attention to class issues, was the piece which appeared in the August 1952 issue entitled simply “Editorial.” The summer issues of the magazine usually contained happy, feel-good stories to accompany Canadians at the cottage or on vacation. Dempsey broke from this mold to question the comfortable shallowness of many Canadians:

Enroute across Canada: At every station people look prosperous. Men in sport shirts, women in slacks and bright summer dresses, children burdened with little beyond an aura of well-being....I keep remembering a similar journey of less than two decades ago. Then there were brave but beaten men and women in the parched prairie droughtlands. Children of Alberta mining towns peering hungrily into the glowing windows of half-empty dining cars....I listen to conversations of well-fed, well-dressed people enjoying the ease and luxury of modern trains and planes. They seem to have everything...everything except some indefinable inner security...and faith.

Again, the contrast to Sanders was apparent: there were no 'times were good' sentiments in this piece. Dempsey urged the readers to re-examine their well-being, to anchor their sense of self-worth in something more than material affluence. The point cannot be overstated: essays such as this were oppositional (they explicitly encourage readers’ to undertake critical,
and ultimately, oppositional readings) to the consumer ethos of the advertising content and some of the service department material.

The letters section of the same issue included excerpts from twelve letters and there were the usual mix of complimentary, critical and negative letters. Indeed, most of the letters complained about some aspect of the magazine while praising others. It was a rarity in the years of this study that two letters were published from the same author, but in this issue Sanders' harsh critic returned. Apparently, Mrs. N. Schurko of Gatehill, Ontario, had continued to read the magazine and felt compelled to write an appraisal of Dempsey's Chatelaine: "Your editorials are highly controversial, but precise and happily reach into the very heart of the Canadian people. Good luck to you."28

However, it was Mrs. Doris Gehman of Cultus Lake, B.C., who was determined to support the controversial nature of Dempsey's editorials and article selection against all critics. Her description of why she read magazines and how she utilized them in their daily routine no doubt summarized a familiar situation to many housebound Canadian housewives. She wrote:

I must write to you or break a blood vessel. Please! Please! Do not pay too much attention to the funny little people who want you to print only what they wish to read and what they agree with. Please go on printing articles that keep us thinking and occasionally step on our toes a bit. When I read a magazine I want to have something to think about. What if I am mad with the author--I have a good argument with him while I wash dishes and make beds. Makes me prove to myself I'm right or maybe I'm just a wee bit wrong....The work flies fast as my thoughts and I come out of it with the house tidy and my ideas more firmly planted than ever or perhaps my thinking has been a bit tight fitting and I've had to let it out at the seams. Anyway I hope you are making money and can stand the canceled subscriptions. I'll never cancel mine until you start filling your good magazine with nothing but taffy recipes and a bunch of sweet stuff! Long life!29

There was no risk of that, although within one month of this letter Dempsey had vacated the editorship and John Clare had assumed that role.

As mentioned earlier Clare continued with Dempsey's "Chatelaine Centre' format for the editorial page. Unlike Dempsey, he rarely wrote any editorial columns, preferring instead to stick to anecdotal information, and previews of the various features in each issue. Two noteworthy exceptions were: "It's a Tough Time to be in Love" in May 1954 and his only signed editorial in October 1957 (ironically after Anderson had become managing editor and his name was no longer listed in the masthead) entitled: "One Man's Opinion: The unsimple truth about why husbands never phone home." He favoured a gently deprecatory sense of
humour, also found in his anecdotes in Chatelaine Centre, and his tone was that of a rather sheepish, misunderstood male in a female world. Given his background as a war correspondent, Maclean's writer, associate editor and very reluctant conscript to the Chatelaine editorship, this position was justified. "It's a Tough Time to Be in Love" was about young lovers, the newly-opened Toronto subway, and the besieged state of marriage, circa 1954. This editorial served to discredit the naysayers who viewed marriage as being undermined by modern behaviour, particularly younger marriages and the increasing tendency for wives to work after they married. However, the editorial also had undertones of romanticism, paternalism and a decidedly bourgeois view of what constituted a normal individual. Clare wrote:

Fortunately there continues to be something within all normal people which makes them feel that marriage is good and meant for them. They experience the romance and drive of young love. They want a house of their own; they want children; they want security; and above all they want the comradeship and affection that marriage alone can provide. And they want it to last.  

Clare went on to list books, and various courses offered at Toronto churches to prepare young couples for marriage and to encourage them to read Chatelaine's articles on marriage in the issue. The editorial ended on a note strikingly familiar to Sanders' final editorial:

Don't take marriage too seriously, because it always was a tough time to fall in love. Wars, depressions, economic booms and atomic bombs will always be incidentals compared to such fundamentals as love, marriage and the raising of families. So get a ring, a license, two tokens for the subway--and hang on.  

Obviously Clare's vision of the world of Chatelaine was one set apart from political happenings, the incidentals as he so delicately termed them. The primary focus of life was love, marriage and raising of families. His commentary was self-centred, patronizing and sexist. His ideas and essays were more representative of the 1950s than any of the other editors: unlike the others, he did not challenge the status quo, but instead was entirely comfortable with the conformity of the fifties and the fixed gender roles.  

As for the readers, some were not pleased with the direction Chatelaine had moved under Clare's editorial guidance, particularly in 1953 when the contrast with Dempsey, and Sanders, would have been most pronounced. D.A. Robertson from Lethbridge wrote to voice a complaint in the March 53 issue:

After your most successful 1952, it was a great surprise that I read the new February issue--alas, the mid-winter doldrums seem to have hit your staff. Sorry to blow off like this, in my first and only letter to any magazine, but are all the improvements in
Chatelaine during the past two years going to come tumbling down in one issue? I hope this relapse is only temporary.32

As the type of articles published in the magazine continued to improve, these critical letters diminished. It should be mentioned however, that the mid-fifties was the only time that Chatelaine's circulation lagged behind its Canadian competitor Canadian Home Journal.33 Additionally, in the "Report of the Financial Consultant" in the 1961 Report of the Royal Commission on Publications, the accountant noted that Chatelaine had made a slight profit in 1951 and 1952, but that the magazine had suffered 'heavy losses' up until 1958. They started to turn a small profit in 1959.34

In September 1958 the new and improved version of Chatelaine, subtitled 'The Canadian Home Journal,' debuted.35 In the first issue of the new and improved Chatelaine, Doris Anderson wrote the first of her monthly editorials, which was about the late Dr. Marion Hilliard (head of obstetrics at Women's College Hospital and a popular Chatelaine writer in the fifties) who had died suddenly that year. The response to that editorial was phenomenal, and Anderson never looked back. After a hiatus of roughly five years, the editorial essay (as opposed to the "Chatelaine Centre" collection of anecdotes) returned as a regular feature of the magazine. Anderson wrote with conviction on many topics: some of her recurrent themes were educational issues, current events, politics, and Canadian nationalism. The vast majority of the editorials were feminist in orientation, concerned with gender inequity and hopeful of improving the status of Canadian women.

When Anderson appeared at the Special Senate Committee on the Mass Media in 1971, the Committee asked her why she included a personalized editorial essay in the magazine, and her reply was illuminating:

I think every editor has to edit a magazine the way he sees it. I find the editorial, the personalized editorial form, a very useful device for covering sharp controversial issues very quickly, and I would hate to give it up. I cannot see that I am going to give it up. I can't see that I am going to run out of topics, or that the country is going to have all its problems so beautifully solved that I am going to have nothing to say.36

Most of the sharp, controversial issues that Anderson addressed were feminist issues. A representative sampling from the last two years of the 1950s attests to the feminist content of Anderson's editorials: "We've Been Emerging Long Enough", "We Need More Women Scientists", "Clichés We Can Do Without", "Are Ladies Obsolete?"; "Do Women Really Dominate Men?" and finally, "Let's Stop Acting Like a Minority Group." The October 1958 editorial, "Emerging Long Enough" questioned why, so many years after the First Wave
Feminists had broken through gender barriers, most importantly in achieving suffrage. Canadian women were "still emerging". She criticized the token inclusion of women on various councils, in municipal, provincial and federal politics, blaming this for the perception that women were included in decision-making process, and hence retarding numerical equality in the corridors of power. Women were not spared in Anderson's editorials. She often criticized them for being complacent and this editorial was no exception.

In "We Need More Women Scientists" April 1959, Anderson took a different approach. She argued that one of the untapped resources in the growing North American fear of being scientifically eclipsed by the Soviet Union were the fifty percent of the students in the country left out of the Space Age scientific race, namely girls. Anderson constructed her argument to focus on what was in the best interests of the nation, not women, when she explained the situation:

Almost from the time a little girl picks up a toy in her playpen, she is taught that mechanical matters and scientific affairs are the province of boys and men, this subtle propaganda is continued through high school and university....In Russia, seventy-five to eighty percent of doctors and engineers are women. But at the University of Toronto, for example, out of 1,974 engineering students only twelve are women....

Our female brain power is presently one of our richest untapped reservoirs. The longer we fail to make use of it, the less chance we have for survival in the Space Age.

These editorials were created to get readers, female and male, thinking and talking about these issues. For the marketers they were also pure gold, because they created 'good word of mouth commentary' about Chatelaine which was one of the Dichter recommendations to increase circulation.

One of Anderson's favourite styles of editorializing was to take an isolated incident of sexist behaviour or language, tell her readers about it and then with very heavy doses of sarcasm and thinly suppressed anger, criticize the behaviour or language. In May 1959, she wrote an editorial entitled "Clichés we can do without" which set out to challenge the commonplace phrases of North American society, circa 1959, such as: "In spite of everything she is utterly feminine"; "She thinks like a man", or conversely, "What she needs is a man." Her criticism of the last phrase was vintage Anderson:

Well it may surprise the complacent person who says this, but a man is, quite often, just what she doesn't need. Perhaps what she needs much more, is a good holiday, or a little more money, or a little less worry, or just someone, male or female, to listen to her.
At the end of the editorial she turned her full wrath on the bubble-headed "two dimensional doll" of the situation comedies on television.41

The last editorial profiled is Anderson's September 1959 piece, entitled "Do Women Really Dominate Men." Anderson revealed that at one of the many luncheons she had attended the guest speaker (male) had, in the course of his speech, told the almost solely female audience that "Of course, North American men are dominated by their women."42 The speaker was paraphrasing the popular thesis advanced by Phillip Wylie's *Generation of Vipers* which criticized, among other things, the impact of 'Momism' upon American men. Wylie maintained that the overwhelming attachment of suburban males to their mothers resulted in their emasculation (figuratively speaking) as adult men. The suburban world, according to Wylie and other popularizers of this canard, was a matriarchy in which women dominated their husbands and sons. Anderson reported that only a flutter of protest was heard in the auditorium, and she attacked this misperception, stating:

The Canadian husband is still the kingpin of his own particular split-level. Occasionally he may change a diaper or wash some dishes, but he expects to come home to a nourishing dinner, clean socks, tidy living room, fresh smelling babies and to receive, as well, a reasonable amount of cherishing of his own ego. Most women are delighted to provide these services and have no desire to run the household themselves. And let's be logical—if we really were the dominant sex, would we continue to do (more or less cheerfully) such monotonous and repetitious tasks as making beds, dusting...and picking up after the whole family day after day? Are these the tasks the Super Sex would choose for itself? Let's not confuse having some voice about family finances, occasionally going out to work while married, making tiny inroads into some traditionally male professions, having three women in the House of Commons and an imperceptible sprinkling of women on civic boards with domination of men. We're still a long, long way from equality with men—and a thousand light years from domination.43

This editorial provided a taste of what was to come in the 1960s, when Anderson became more confident of her editorial voice and moved on to criticize divorce laws, abortion laws and tackle other gender inequities in a more hard hitting fashion. Editorials such as these were what Canadian women came to expect from her. It is this type of discourse for which the magazine was known during the sixties and seventies, although this has been lost from the historical record. The polysemic nature of the magazine, or the multiple meanings inherent in the periodical, gave *Chatelaine* a prominent position amongst Canadian women. Editorials elicited praise and created a community in which women's voices (whether writers or readers) could overcome their isolated, insular worlds. A mass audience of women readers, from Newfoundland to British Columbia, could read editorials
such as this one which criticized the status quo and encouraged them to re-evaluate 'woman's roles' in Canadian society. Furthermore, although Anderson's editorial position gave her a prominent place from which to write about these issues, as her biography and experience at Maclean Hunter make clear, she too was just as bound, and frustrated, by the conventions of the day as the 'average' reader. For their part, the readers were very complimentary regarding her editorials, although they often voiced complaints over the various articles which they thought were too strident, too far fetched or simply un-Canadian.

In conclusion, the editorials served as the gateway into the magazine. Usually situated at the front of the magazine, they oriented the reader into the world of Chatelaine. It was through these editorials that a reader was provided with a sense of the magazine's editorial direction. Although Clare did not write editorial essays, his anecdotes about the issue, the writers, and the staff at the magazine also served to introduce the material. The editorial was written in a personal, intimate style. The impression conveyed was that of a friendly, albeit one-sided conversation, between the editor and the reader. Often, with Dempsey and Anderson, these editorials challenged the status quo. They asked the readers to examine their assumptions about Canadian life, particularly the role of women within society. Sanders also wanted to provide food for thought, but her pieces had a more sermonistic quality to them. She was either unaware of class, ethnic and regional divisions or believed instead that readers of Chatelaine were united by their readership and their gender. Clare's material was more often entertaining than it was intellectually challenging but this was atypical for the magazine if not for the era.

The editorials dealt with issues in a more timely, concise fashion than the articles could. They were thought provoking, educational, instructive and entertaining. The three women editors in particular took the job of writing these monthly essays seriously. Regardless of whether or not the readers agreed with the various essays, they seemed to have regarded them as worthy of their time, both in reading them, thinking about them and for those industrious few, worthy of writing letters to the editor. The readers responded to the material, both positively and negatively, but it was clear that the editorials elicited reactions from male and female readers of the magazine, as was intended. The editorials bound the readers to the magazine, because they spoke to them much more directly than the articles, fiction or Chatelaine departments. The editorials were from a personal perspective and their content gave many of the readers the perception that the editor was on their side, perhaps
their champion, certainly their friend and definitely attempted to cement their loyalty as Chatelaine readers. In return, readers renewed their subscriptions, talked about the magazine with their friends and family, wrote to Byrne, Lotta, John or Doris to complain, to offer congratulations or to ask for advice. The editorials played a large part in ensuring the confidence of the readers, encouraging an often emotional bond with the editor, and hence the magazine, and were the key to long-term subscriber loyalty. Editorials were one of the key foundation blocks upon which the Chatelaine community was created.

Articles

I enjoy every issue of Chatelaine immensely. All articles and stories, recipes, letters, just everything.44
--Gladys LeDrew, Conception Bay, Newfoundland.

...I am thoroughly disgusted and surprised that the moral standards of Chatelaine should have fallen so low as to publish an article such as 'Unwed mother'. I am thankful there is no daughter in my home to be contaminated by this sordid story of a girl's life. We all know this sort of thing goes on all the time, but why publicize it? Better to publish stories to lift the morals of young people rather than to drag them down.45
--"Disgusted"

After reading your August issue I have sent in four subscriptions. The article...was just exactly what we've all been waiting for. I enjoyed and digested each sentence. It was thought provoking, tolerant, and the authors obviously had deep insight...We need more articles like this.
--Ruth Becker, Banff, Alberta.

I have just finished reading the April number of Chatelaine and am feeling sorry for myself as I picture my mental upheaval when I discover a lump in my breast. I am afraid my children are all sex deviates and I must learn the address of that mental health clinic in Toronto so that I will lose no time in hastening there the next time one of my family has a fit of blues or shows signs of a temper tantrum. Do you think you might be putting ideas in our heads?46
--Mrs. H. McMaster, Orangeville, Ontario

These readers, like many others, took the baited hooks that the Chatelaine editors and writers dangled each month: the lively and controversial feature articles. These articles served as the primary means of attracting new readers while keeping loyal readers renewing their subscriptions. Each month the article titles, often employing puns or sensationalistic prose such as "A Mother Inferior," "Canadian Women Are Suckers" or "My Daughter Married a Negro", were advertised on the cover of the magazine. If readers' responses are any indication, the editors were successful--most letters were provoked by feature articles.47

By emphasizing Canadian topics and locales the editors of Chatelaine and Maclean Hunter
created a unique niche in the women’s magazine market. Chatelaine’s editors and writers offered lively, opinionated pieces which generated discussion, controversy and interest across the country, and often beyond. The purpose of the articles was to bring novelty to each issue, ‘something to look forward to’, to get women talking about the magazine, and to broaden the readership. While Chatelaine included all the requisite women’s magazine service components, the articles were a way to reach out not only to the housewives and mothers but also to working women, single women and teenage girls for whom the departmental material often had less appeal.

An overview of the articles of the decade, which follows in the succeeding paragraphs, reveals a remarkable range of topics and writers. The articles also reflected the time in which they were written, although caution should be utilized in extrapolating the everyday concerns of Canadian women from the pages of Chatelaine. The most popular series of articles were written by Dr. Marion Hilliard-- actually they were dictated by Hilliard and then ghost written into article format by freelance journalist June Callwood. Hilliard was Chief of Gynecology and Obstetrics at Women’s College Hospital in Toronto. Her articles were groundbreaking and extremely popular because she wrote with authority, verve and candor about women’s medical issues, primarily sexuality, childbirth, and menopause. Another very popular topic was Britain’s Royal Family. The June 1953 issue of the magazine was a special commemorative issue devoted to Elizabeth II’s Coronation. Throughout the decade articles by Marion “Crawfie” Crawford, Elizabeth’s nanny, kept Chatelaine readers enthralled with stories of the young princesses’ early years, the older members of the royal family, and the personality of the young Queen. Other writers also tackled royal topics, but lacking Crawford’s intimate connection with the family, they were not as successful. Theme issues were rare: the only other one during the decade was the March 1955 issue entitled “How to Live in the Suburbs”. There were the requisite stories of celebrities, but Chatelaine put a different spin on these by featuring Canadian celebrities. Readers were introduced to Barbara Ann Scott’s life after figure skating, Juliette, Gordie Tapp, Ma Murray, Don Messer and his Jubilee family, Marilyn Bell, and others. Rarely did the magazine cover the Hollywood or Broadway beat unless the featured actor or performer was Canadian. Occasionally American stars were chronicled but these items were not as
successful. Finally, a series started by Doris Anderson in the mid-fifties "The Women Of..." profiled influential women in cities across the country to critical success.

Always eager to please readers, toward the end of the decade, and on the advice of the Dichter Report, the magazine inaugurated three monthly columns: "What's New in the Arts," "Your World Notebook," and "Here's Health". According to Anderson, these columns were in response to weekly letters which complained: "I'm tired of recipes and advice about burping the baby. When I sit down with a magazine I want to get away from housework. Why don't you run something on theatre, poetry and books?" The Arts column, originally written by Robert Fulford, was a page of paragraph length reviews about books, television shows, new plays or Canadian writers. At the end of his first year writing this column, Fulford gave it up and Edna May took over. The current affairs column was often written by an expert, increasingly by Christina McCall, and provided a brief, but detailed, review of international and Canadian political news. The health column was written by a U.S. medical writer, Lawrence Galton, and was a compendium of the latest news from the medical journals. Many readers, like Mrs P.J. Kennedy from East Chissetcoak, Halifax County, wrote to the magazine to thank them for Galton's column: "I am a constant reader of your health column. It has helped many in the community."

The only other long-running featured column was for teenagers. The "Teen Tempo" page started in the late fifties and was directed at teenage girls through its concentration upon dating, clothing, summer jobs and bedroom decoration.

Despite this turn toward regular featured columns, the vast majority of the Chatelaine articles, and certainly the most popular ones, were the big features: the exposés on marriage, voyeuristic tales of the life of the Royal Family, 'Personal Experience' stories written by Chatelaine readers and a staff writer, or some examination of socio-cultural changes in the 'Canadian way of life.'

While articles accounted for only 15% of the magazine's content in the decade, their importance, prime location and novelty were key to the magazine's success. Some of the articles published were given additional publicity on the radio or newspapers because of their controversial subject matter or, in the case of an entirely different sort of article, were praised by business groups or manufacturers for presenting their product or service in a complementary light. One such consumer affairs article, "Insurance for Wives—Who Wants
It?" by Mary Jukes, "resulted in requests for 27,225 reprints," and officials from the insurance companies wrote "letters of commendation on Miss Jukes handling of the article."51 In the early fifties there were often only two or three articles per issue but by the end of the decade the magazine usually offered seven to eight articles, and sometimes included over ten articles per issue. Articles tended to be short: most were less than three pages long. The vast majority (70%) were written by women.52

*Chatelaine* published an equal number of articles from freelance writers and staff and regular writers. A list of writers whose work appeared in the magazine in this decade reads like a who's who of Canadian publishing, along with prominent Canadian and American writers, politicians, members of the news media, doctors and academics.53 Most article topics were assigned by the editors, as June Callwood explains:

"I never had ideas. Everything I got was an assignment....Doris would call in that dry voice of hers and say ‘How do you feel about doing a piece about sex and married women?’ And I’d say sure what’s it supposed to be about?’ and she’d say, ‘Well, look at it this way...’ she would just block it out and always by telephone and I would then think now how do I do this and I would start interviewing people and throw together anecdotes I heard....I had facts that I would read or go to U of T and pull out whatever I needed...I had a few choice sources that I depended on-- a psychiatrist here and a psychologist there-- who always came through with something and then I would sit down to write it. It would take me a day to write the lead. You really are writing the whole article when you write the first paragraph. And two or three days later, you’d take it in to Doris...."54

Within a couple of days, she received Anderson’s feedback and suggestions, if any, for revisions. The whole process, from the phone call to finished article took Callwood “three weeks if you didn’t do anything else.”55 Whether the author was an ‘expert’ by profession or from research and interviews the authorial voice was assured, confident and she presented herself as an authority on the particular issue. Expert commentary was one of the magazine’s selling points, mentioned in advertising directed towards readers, in briefs to the Royal Commissions and in the advertisements aimed at attracting new advertising clients.

Although always presumed to focus solely on women’s domestic exploits, *Chatelaine* articles in the fifties were considerably more diverse topically (see Table 4.1), and thematically (see Table 4.2).56

Table 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) women in the home</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>6) Entertainment</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) medical issues</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7) Travel</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) women outside the home</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8) Teenagers</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2  

**Most Popular Article Themes: 1950s**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># of articles</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># of articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Family</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>6) Conflict in gender roles</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Culture</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7) International</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Class Stratification</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>8) Sexism</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Marriage</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>9) Professional</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Money</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10) Feminism</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast, the geographic locale of the articles were very consistent: general Canadian settings predominated, that is articles which made mention of more than one province or region, followed by provincial or regional settings. Of the provincial settings, Ontario proved the most popular, followed by the Prairies, Quebec and British Columbia. This bias toward articles set in Ontario can be attributed to the fact that the magazine’s offices were located in Toronto and the freelancers who appeared most often were from the Toronto area. It seemed that the editors made a genuine effort, particularly in later years, to inject more regional and national flavour in the articles and were prepared to pay for writers’ travel expenses. Articles with international perspective, primarily American, British and European were rare. While an effort was made to represent regional diversity in the magazine, the writers and editors consistently favoured urban and suburban topics over rural or northern issues.

The focus of articles, regardless of their topic, was on gender and less frequently, issues of class. Even though the magazine covered numerous topics, whether the arts, politics, Britain’s royal family, nuclear war or traffic accidents, they were usually written from a woman’s perspective and pitched to female readers. For this reason they concentrated on marriage and children which women were deemed to have in common. Most articles either presumed a middle-class, or higher, standard of living, or regarded middle-class ideals which included a suburban home, an employed husband, a stay-at-home wife and mother with children as the norm to which everyone should and did aspire.

The articles selected for individual attention were not chosen solely because of their effect on the researcher. An effort was made to focus upon articles which the readers deemed important or controversial. This was based upon reader responses in the letters section, the archival files, and in the Dichter report, along with Starch figures. The large number of articles, and the inherent interest to cultural and social historians of many of the topics
discussed, made selection of representative articles a daunting task. Selected articles were grouped into seven categories, four which cover specific topical and temporal categories: Marriage and Women's issues 1950-1953; Marriage and Women's issues 1957-1959; Dr. Marion Hilliard’s Medical columns 1954-1956; and Humour 1954-1959. The other three categories, span the decade and are devoted to examinations of three types of articles: Ethnicity and Race; Class; and Entertainment & Celebrity. It should be stressed that the articles have been classified and grouped according to their predominant topical reference to bring some degree of clarity and organization to the material. However, there is considerable overlap of themes and secondary issues, in keeping with the Chatelaine style of making articles relevant to their major readership group: married women.

The first section, marriage and women's issues from the early fifties, examines six of the most controversial articles published during the first four years of the decade. In March 1950 journalist Beverley Grey, a self-proclaimed business girl: “Looks over her married friends, shudders, takes a reef in her girdle and strikes out with these observations” in the inflammatory article entitled: “Housewives are a Sorry Lot.” Part of what made Chatelaine magazine so popular, was its self-parody and literary attacks upon ‘women’s roles’ which for other women’s magazines was sacrosanct territory. This article was a direct hit on the magazine’s target audience. Grey claimed that “Marriage brings a full stop to mental development” and that “as soon as the wedding is over a woman drops phony interests in such things as sports, politics, and world events.” If the synopsis at the beginning of the article were not enough to inflame the readership, Grey’s vitriolic analysis of the modern housewife would:

The truth is, most housewives are lazy. They are too lazy to put down their magazine and write the story they think they could; too lazy to walk a block to do their shopping in person; too lazy to learn to sew if they can’t afford new underwear. They cover up for their laziness with monologues on their backaches and the cost of meat....if the individual housewife is saddening, housewives in the mass are appalling.

Controversial articles like this sold, partly because it was such a different article for a woman’s magazine to feature, and ultimately, because it touched a raw nerve for many married women.

Until 1952 the magazine did not publish letters regularly from the readers. However, if a particular story or article generated a large amount of mail they would feature a
representative selection of letters. Due to the volume of the mail that was received over the Grey article, the headline article on the June 1950 cover was: “Housewives Blast Business Girl” which was a composite essay of readers’ letters to the magazine. According to the editors, over five hundred housewives had written to criticize Grey’s article: “...the three things which most of them resented were the attacks on their happiness, their mental status, and their laziness.” The comments of the readers proved very interesting, particularly for an article such as this one, because of the insight they provided into how readers’ interpreted the article. The comments received on the Gray article illustrated how a seemingly hostile article could alienate some readers, while serving as a vehicle of self-examination for others. Additionally, they provide some indication of who read the magazine, why and how they read the magazine, and offer perceptive comments about Canadian housewives during the fifties. One reader wrote: “When we’re poking about the kitchen with runs in our nylons, hair in wisps, we don’t look like your Marie Holmes illustrating how to make marmalade (who does?)...” Another took Grey herself to task:

Whatever is the matter with you, Beverley Grey--I hope it is curable. Stop being a sour puss and you will find that married women are people too....In our village the women are clever and kind, some more efficient than others. Our children are healthy and usually very happy. We like our husbands. We give service to the community. We understand municipal affairs and work to improve them. We have political opinions and we don’t fight over disagreements. When we are in trouble we help one another.

In an editorial aside which was common in cases where the response to a particular article was voluminous, the editors printed an eighth of a page size box with the caption “Who is Beverley Grey” along with a picture of the hapless newspaper journalist. For her part, Grey was quoted as saying “I was amazed at the commotion I caused...my telephone hasn’t stopped ringing. And, I’ve learned a lot more things about housewives I didn’t know before.” Many writers who published articles in Chatelaine achieved instant fame, with the accompanying praise, or as in Grey’s case, felt the censorious blast of notoriety.

As this article typified, readers read beyond the preferred meaning, and judging by later letters this article could have been read as a piece of sarcasm, or as the cynical, bitter musings of spinster. The artwork which accompanied the piece was a cartoon of the disenchanted housewife which implied a light-heartedness that was absent from the written text. Artwork was an important part of the analysis of Chatelaine material since it strove not only to attract the reader, but to introduce, summarize or depict the themes of the articles as
well. While many exposés featured stark black and white photos, the use of colourful cartoon drawings was intended to lighten the tone of the piece and encouraged readers to interpret Grey's work as a work of black humour, rather than an attack. Grey's article epitomized Chatelaine's method of using oppositional articles to generate controversy and excitement amongst their key reading audience.

Another type of article favoured by the magazine throughout the period was the exposé. Morgan Winter's "The Common Law Wife" featured all the classic conventions of this genre (see illustration). It tackled a sensitive, previously unacknowledged issue. It was accompanied by a black and white photograph (in this case of three women looking at a marriage photo album, one woman has her eyes blocked out to protect her identity). A sensationalistic or overly dramatic style of writing was used which usually brought a quick response from the 'shocked and appalled' readership. The teaser, or opening blurb (which was featured under the title and usually in italics with coloured or larger text to draw the perusing reader's eye) of the article claimed: "She may live in a suburban bungalow, pack her youngsters off to school and join the girls for coffee—but she can never forget that a common law marriage is no marriage at all." The article explained how unjust laws were greatly to blame for the increase in common law marriages. Winter also revealed the classist nature of what was then a derogatory term:

To most people the phrase is familiar only in police court news—"the dead man and his common law wife were said to have been drinking heavily before the fight started." But common law wives—women who are "married but not churched"—represent a surprising cross section of the Canadian housewife population and a surprising percentage of it too, although their numbers are impossible to more than guess at.

Throughout the articles, readers learned of the legal vulnerabilities of these women and the daily shame with which they lived. While the exposé style of article was not intended to serve as a glorification of this 'lifestyle,' a close reading of the article did not reveal a link between common law marriages and sin or even an attempt to establish their wrongness. The magazine did not try to invoke closure at the end of the piece, leaving it to the reader to decide how such a thorny issue of legal, religious and moral conventions should be solved.

Reader response, as always, was mixed. M.F. Walpole of Hamilton, Ontario wrote: "We appreciate such articles as 'Common Law Wife'.... With a little soul searching these articles can be gathered into a useful supply of information on which to guide a rocky
THE COMMON LAW WIFE

By MORGAN WINTER

She defies convention for a chance at happiness. She may live in a suburban bungalow, pack her youngsters off to school and join the girls for coffee — but she can never forget that a common law marriage is no marriage at all.

One day in the spring of 1951 a gray-haired couple from a small Ontario town drove hurriedly to Toronto, bought a marriage license at city hall and went directly to the provincial government buildings at Queen’s Park for permission to be married within the usual three-day waiting period. An official who enquired with innocent interest as to why the hurry was left gaping at the answer: “You see,” explained the bridegroom, “we have been living together for many years but, well, we never got around to getting married. No one at home or our neighbors, our son — knows the difference. But now the boy is to be married himself and we must no longer leave his birth registered as illegitimate, and in his mother’s name.”

The gentle, dignified woman who listened while this explanation was given, frowning a little like any mother concerned about her child’s welfare, was a common law wife. The term means a woman who takes a man’s name as her own and sets up a domicile with him as a family unit without entering a legal marriage.

To most people the phrase is familiar only in police court news. “The dead man and his common law wife were said to have been drinking heavily before the fight started.” But common law wives — women who are “married but not churched” — represent a surprising cross-section of the Canadian housewife population and a surprising percentage of it, too, although their numbers are impossible to more than guess at.

Estimates of social workers, court officials and clergy (who of course know only such common law families as come to them for help and advice) range from “more than anyone suspects” to “many thousands from coast to coast.” The files of five social agencies covering the greater Toronto area, for in-
marriage such as many of us women face today." As an aside to her compliments, Walpole told the editors that she had also renewed her subscription, because she didn’t “want to miss an issue or any additional articles.” Other readers were far from sympathetic. Nor did they accept the article’s preferred meaning that common-law wives were victimized by the legal situation or that they came from all classes. Mrs. L. Hosie, from Regina had the “urge to write” inspired by the article and provides this oppositional reading of the article: “I consider that paying allowances to a common law wife tends to encourage immorality.”

Interestingly, Mrs. L.M. from Winnipeg offers a mis-reading of the article and of the lifestyle promoted by such an article:

....How many real marriages besides mine do you think the January publication of Common Law Wife will finish? For the sake of our seven children I was fighting to hold our home together, but I lose--the common law wife, with the help of Chatelaine, emerges the winner. Thank you.

Intended to publicize the plight of common-law wives, the article was interpreted by readers like Mrs. L.M as a celebration of adultery and explicit permission to husbands to leave their wives for the ‘other-woman.’ Over the course of the decade, a few readers commented upon the power of Chatelaine articles to harm (or “set-back”) the women of Canada. As these two letters indicated, many readers saw a simple cause and effect relationship between reading about ‘taboo’ subjects and their incorporation in Canadian society.

Another favourite type of article within the marriage and women’s issues field were those which featured, and paid tribute to, the Canadian family. Two different stories published in early 1952 garnered a large number of letters to the editors and featured two distinct types of families. In the same issue as “Common Law Wife,” Blanche Gunton, a novice freelance writer and housewife, contributed an article entitled “We Drove the Kids to Alaska.” This story typified the fifties concerns of family, finances and happy times. The article chronicled the exploits of the author’s family as they made their pilgrimage from Aurora, Ontario, to Alaska and back. Gunton wrote: “We drove 11,000 miles, five-in-a-car, heard wolves howl by night, threw snowballs on a glacier and came home better friends than we’d ever been--and all for $465.” To make their trip so economically, they slept in their car, the boys in a plywood box, complete with cover which was placed on top of the roof of the family’s sedan, daughter Rosemary in the front seat, and Blanche and husband Claude, on a mattress in the modified back seat and trunk. While meals were home cooked every night,
it had been decided that “Dad and the boys would...shop” while “Mom was to have a vacation.” This story captured the do-it-yourself rage of the fifties, the increasing popularity of camping throughout the decade (large families made this an affordable holiday) and the myth of the happy, suburban family playing together. The Gunton’s experiences, encounters with nature, and the good-natured manner in which they all got along, made for wonderful escapist reading in this winter issue just as the editors had intended. This was a endearing piece, but it was not so fantastic that it was beyond the realms of most of the readers. The writer was at great pains to play down her upper-middle class status (her husband was a dentist) taking pride in how economically the trip was accomplished.

Stories like this one always garnered favourable responses, but Gunton’s tale proved especially captivating-- many readers wrote Chatelaine to request exact descriptions of the sleeping compartments designed by her husband. Mrs. E.A. Scully of Lethbridge wrote: “As a word picture of a most interesting and educational holiday this story can’t be beaten.” A year later, the “Chatelaine Centre” informed readers about a family who had been inspired by the Gunton article: “After reading Chatelaine’s story....last year the Carmans (of Welland, Ontario) took to the road too and drove all around the Gaspé and the eastern United States. Mother and daughter slept curled up on the car seats. Father and son slept on a collapsible table with their heads in the trunk. The trip was such a success they are planning to go to the Rockies this summer.” Clearly, some Chatelaine content did create ‘action’ amongst the readers, but often it did not tie in with the advertising material at all.

“All One Big Happy Family” by Marjorie Wilkins Campbell profiled an entirely different sort of family, the Winterburns a farm family from the Haliburton region of Ontario with eleven kids. As the opening teaser prompted, “If you’re going crazy with two kids in a bungalow on a busy street, come down to the farm and meet the thirteen Winterburns....” The magazine found the family when Norma Winterburn wrote a letter to the staff, enclosing her favourite maple syrup recipes and a short description of her large household. In a rare display of urbanism and Toronto-centrism, the editors claimed to be amazed that a family like this still existed and set out to discover how that was possible. Readers were told that the Winterburns farmed on land cleared by Fred Winterburn’s (the husband) grandfather:

The other important character in the Winterburn story is the two-hundred acre farm itself--forty acres cleared, the rest rough bush and grazing land--for the Winterburns literally live off it. Fred Winterburn built their home from its limestone, oak and
Birch; he builds five or six punts each year from its pine to sell to summer tourists; and the boys help harvest its cedar for Dad's shingle mill. The Winterburns eat its vegetables, beef, milk and butter. The farm's blueberries (523 baskets last year), strawberries (900 quarts), its shingles, boats, maple syrup and surplus steers, hogs and chickens provide the Winterburns' $2,500 annual cash income--to which family allowance for six of the children adds $432.78

The Winterburns' mode of living was dissected, respectfully, as if they were residents of another land. In a fashion reminiscent of National Geographic's treatment of the exotic 'other,' Chatelaine editors substituted big-city bias and bourgeois presumptions. The class based differences were readily apparent: the Winterburns ate at a "linoleum covered table" laden with "good, plain food" around which "everything is shared." In a magazine full of consumer durables, processed foods and fashion sections, this piece was opposed to the pace and purpose of the rest of the magazine, and of the 'representative' life that it depicted. Norma Winterburn bought flour and sugar in hundred pound bags, her tinned vegetables in flats of tins, and preserved or made much of the food the family consumed. Pictures of the interior of the cabin, and of the fortyish Winterburn parents with their children bore testimony to their difficult livelihood and rustic living conditions. The romance of this piece, like the later seventies television show "The Walton's", glorified the simple, agrarian life:

And then, one evening soon, the Winterburns will all gather round the big table, reach for crisp brown pancakes and one of the large pitchers of new maple syrup, and count up the latest sugaring-off as the best ever.80

The seasonality of rural life, the fact that all of the children pitched in to help, the gentler pace of life, and the hardships endured, which form lasting bonds of family, were all stressed in this article.

While it is easy to provide the figures illustrating the rising Chatelaine readership throughout the decade, it is more difficult to determine what reading the magazine meant to the readers. After the article on the Winterburns ran, the family reported "receiving orders from all over Canada" for their maple syrup.81 For M.M. Storey of Grandview, Manitoba the Winterburns' article proved enjoyable, but not for the preferred meaning that viewed the Winterburns as the 'other':

I enjoy reading Chatelaine and articles like 'One Big Happy Family,' in March are tops with me. Not because of the family angle, for big families were commonplace when I was young, but because I was born in Norland and this story took me back to my childhood. Those Winterburns are a fine-healthy looking bunch and no wonder they learned to work hard early in life--that land is very stony and it was hard to make a living. Do I remember the maple syrup! We never get any half as good now. Thanks for Nora Winterburn's recipes.82
Storey’s comment that it wasn’t the “family angle” that made the article enjoyable but because, alternatively, it reminded her of her childhood in the same community illustrates how readers’ own personal resources colour their interpretations. An appearance in the pages of a Chatelaine article or departmental feature was often a quick route to minor celebrity status. Unlike magazines today which are characterized by rigid boundaries between writers, editors, readers and participants, the Chatelaine community was very fluid: article suggestions often came from readers, participants in the articles found themselves at the center of attention for a short while after they appeared, and very interested readers often wrote directly to the participants rather than to the editors. It would be short-sighted to view the magazine as only a cultural product intended to produce a profit for Maclean Hunter, or to provide a few hours of innocent escapism for its readers. On an entirely spontaneous level, amongst the readers, editors and often participants, it also formed a community of interest that transcended producing or reading the periodical.

One of the key identifications for this community was Canadian nationalism. In the early years of the decade, no article created more fuss than “Canadian Women Are Suckers” written by two American women, and published anonymously.83 Given a prominent cover advertisement, this article informed the readership that “You are suckers about men in general and husbands in particular because you let them live in another world, a masculine world where there is no place for you.”84 In the article these two American wives informed Canadian women that their own husbands assisted them around the house, including time with the kids. They talked to them about current events and issues other than the home and household, they did not take fishing and hunting vacations with the boys; and they vacationed as families in the U.S. The article ended with this encouragement to Canadian women to get jobs:

Taking a job should not be thought of as proof that your husband can’t support you, but looked upon as a fulfillment of your talents and capabilities. Neither does it mean that you are being unfeminine and neglecting your family. Instead of spending spare time at teas and bridge parties, concentrate your interests and enthusiasms. When your family no longer needs all your time you will find that a career will help you to be a fascinating personality rather than just ‘the wife.’ 85

The headline of the May 1952 letters section needed no interpretation. “Suckers is a fighting word: So say hundreds of Canadian women who saw red at the observations of two American wives in March Chatelaine.”86 The letters section that month contained excerpts
from twenty-four of the hundreds of letters received. Mrs. L.A. Pecker of Port Credit, Ontario, wondered “Why we have to tolerate this type of article in a Canadian magazine?” Another group of women from Antigonish, N.S., responded with this criticism of Americans: “We have often wondered why American men have a world-wide reputation for being wolves. Now we know. They are so seldom unleashed that they run wild as soon as they can pry their wives’ arms from around their necks.” Finally, from V.W. in Vancouver came this analytical reply: “I think it is very clever of Chatelaine (tongue in cheek) to encourage you to be so brave and brash. Chatelaine knows people will get up on their ears and the result may be a bit of useful heart and mind searching.” This article proved so incendiary that the magazine received letters in response to the letters published in the May issue. Mrs. R. May, of Strathcona, Manitoba’s analysis of this tempest was representative:

There was a lot of truth and a lot of nonsense in the article...but I was pleased that you stood your ground and said that Chatelaine published the article as opinion, not advice. My opinion is you should publish more such articles and really wake people up....All power to your magazine.”

The final article in this section returns to the exposé genre for Gerald Anglin’s 1953 piece on “The Pill That Could Shake the World.” Accompanied by a dramatic black and white photograph featuring the profile of a woman’s face, her one visible eye open wide, while she opened her mouth to swallow a capsule, this article was meant to attract attention and generate discussion, if not controversy. Anglin’s article was an investigation of the scientific developments of the pill, along with a condensed history of the birth control movement in Canada and the U.S., and commentary about the application of such a pill in controlling world population:

A simple and economical birth control pill which was easy to buy obviously could influence greatly the sex life and the marital happiness of many Canadian families. Some thoughtful men believe, moreover, that such a pill could save the world from a threat they consider greater than the atomic bomb—the threat of over-population which is already taking a staggering toll in human life and misery.

It is examples such as this Anglin piece that Maclean Hunter and Chatelaine personnel recall as some of the groundbreaking articles published in the magazine, often years before American magazines were publishing similar articles. Even though the article was meant to excite, it was a fairly straightforward piece of liberal reportage, concentrating on facts, scientific developments, history and implications. One of the functions which the magazine performed was to disseminate new, and controversial, information to Canadian women.
For many women, articles in Chatelaine were one of their few sources of information, and one of the only ones that could be obtained without fear of embarrassment or chastisement. The letter from Mrs. Margaret Sorhus of Kindersley, Saskatchewan, epitomized those readers for whom these articles were, in oft-repeated words, a god send:

After reading your article I feel compelled to write and congratulate you for it. Here in Canada we may as well be living in the middle ages as far as birth control goes. I have several friends as well as myself wondering why sterilization is not legal in Canada. If it were it would certainly solve the problem for those of us who have four or five children and cannot afford any more.93

Conversely, readers, like Madeleine Waldron from Montreal, were outraged about Chatelaine’s endorsement of birth control:

If you intend printing anything again like ‘The Pill That Could Shake the World’ consider my subscription canceled. Yes, I am a Roman Catholic, and I do believe that the Dr. Henshaws and the Margaret Sangers do immeasurable harm. You, as a publisher, share responsibility for placing such ideas before a public already very selfish and materialistic.94

Articles published in the early years of the decade within the large topical category of marriage and women’s issues ran the gamut of styles, topics and themes. What was important for the magazine, in terms of readership figures and statistics, and for the readers of the periodical was that they be timely, interesting examinations of issues affecting Canadian women.

Throughout the decade, although more prevalent in the later years of the fifties, were articles which explored issues of race and ethnicity. While all of the pieces were both sympathetic to new immigrants to the country, and often celebrated cultural highlights, (particularly cuisine and household customs), the tone of these articles changed noticeably. The issue of immigration surfaced in 1957 as the focus of Jeannine Locke’s piece “Can the Hungarians Fit In?”95 It followed a young Hungarian immigrant couple, Frank and Katey Mayer, since their arrival in Canada in search of “the good life.”96 The plight of Hungarians had captured the attention of Canadians when a large number of refugees emigrated. Chatelaine’s article was a very timely examination of this phenomenon. Locke’s piece detailed their flight from Hungary and subsequent arrival in Canada: “Only six months ago in the darkness of an early November morning, she and her twenty-seven year old husband, Frank, were crouched in a ditch a few yards from the border between Hungary and Austria...Sixteen days later, Katey and Frank Mayer were in Canada.”97 The article was
obviously intended to put a more humanistic spin on the large numbers of immigrants. Locke’s article detailed both the Mayers’ impression of North America, along with the more traditional voyeuristic impressions of the immigrants, particularly their struggles to overcome language difficulties, find lodgings and get their first jobs. Their accommodation to the ways of the country was detailed, as epitomized by this excerpt which provided an example of ‘Hungarian English’ (of the sort Eva and Zsa Zsa Gabor would make famous) along with the story of how their names were Canadianized:

While Frank was being “operationed” (Katey’s word)...Katey went to work “cleanering” in St. Joseph’s Hospital....It was there that she got the name Katey. Her name at home had been Katarin. On her first day at work in the Hamilton hospital, an orderly told her, “Your name here is Katey.”...On the advice of Canadian Hungarians that “Francis is not so good a name in Canada as Frank,” Ferenc promptly became Frank.98

Both the help of the expatriate Hungarian community and the Canadian community in the process of their accommodation was interesting, as was the importance of names that did not readily mark them as immigrants. Locke was quick to include Hungarianisms in the article, from Katey’s speech to her discovery of the wonders of the supermarket, marking them both as humourous or cute objects of fascination for Canadian readers, along with a rather subtle tribute to the commercialized ‘good life’ available in Canada. Many Canadians were eager to assist in housing the new immigrants, and the Mayers were fortunate enough to find accommodation with a surgeon’s family in Toronto, who had specifically requested a refugee couple to live in their furnished flat. It was here, amidst the “nine children...three dogs, two fish, a pussycat, a skating rink, an English cook and a grandmother from Scotland,” that Katey was introduced to the wonders of the grocery store: “She came home staggering under a load of sardines, instant coffee, canned soups, ham and chicken legs—all newly discovered delicacies. She brought home so much ice cream that they used it in great scoops even in their coffee.”99

Locke’s article romanticized Canadian immigrants, profiling a couple who described their reception in Canada as “a fairy story.” Canadians were depicted as warm-hearted, friendly (and wealthy) people who vied for the chance to host new Canadians and help them acclimatize themselves to the country. In an era in which immigrants were called New Canadians and multiculturalism was unheard of, the decision to emigrate to Canada meant integration. In essence Chatelaine’s article conveyed the impression that immigration was
about learning the language, getting a job and then discovering the joys of Canadian life: grocery stores, high-heeled shoes for women, planning for their own home in suburbia and their first car. The onus was on the immigrant group to fit into Canadian life. And in this article the immigrants in question, Katey and Frank, were all too eager to get jobs, learn English, get retraining at the university which they deduced was the key to the good life in North America. It both romanticized the immigrant experience, glossing over or neglecting the indecision and fear that accompanied such a momentous change, and congratulated Canadians for a job well done in welcoming the new immigrants, again a rather romanticized version of events. The article ended with Locke’s patronizing expression of praise: “But like most of their countrymen, they’re integrating nicely.”

Letters received about this article were favourable, although for a variety of reasons, as this one from Mrs. M. Filwood from Toronto illustrated: “I enjoyed [the article].... This Hungarian woman ironed clothes for the doctor’s wife and, I gathered, did other helpful duties for her, just out of sheer enjoyment of helping. If this article states the whole truth it does give me hope that all is not lost in this cold, calculating world....” Other readers were more sensitive to the experience of the émigrés rather than their usefulness to their new hosts. A Nova Scotia reader commented: “I was impressed by the article...Although I’ve never met any Hungarians I am sure they would make better Canadians than some of us born in Canada if they were given the time and opportunity by us....Hoping to read more on our fellow Canadians.” Finally, Rev G. Simor, affiliated with a Hungarian relocation group, hoped that the article would serve as inspirational literature to others: “I hope many people will read this article, especially immigrants, and that they too will be encouraged by the wonderful successes and achievements of this couple.”

At the end of the decade the self-congratulatory tone was replaced by concern as the September 1959 cover asked “Are Canadians Racial Bigots?” The actual title, “Are Canadians Really Tolerant” was co-written by Yvonne Bobb, a West Indian immigrant to Canada, and Jeannine Locke (see illustration). The dramatic title and opening teaser—“We smugly boast that we have no racial barriers, but, says this young West Indian, in practice we’re just as prejudiced as any nation. We just dodge the issue by keeping coloured people out”—made it perfectly clear that this article was not about to pull any punches. The article was written in a direct style. Bobb’s experiences: her inability to meet many new
Are Canadians really tolerant?

We smugly boast that we have no racial barriers, but, says this young West Indian, in practice we're as prejudiced as any nation.

We just dodge the issue by keeping the colored people out.

By YVONNE BOBB
as told to Jeannine Locke

WHITE CANADIANS are smug about their record of untroubled relations with colored people. But I believe that they have simply side-stepped trouble, by keeping all but a very few colored people out of the country. Most Canadians are, in fact, no friendlier toward people whose color and customs differ from their own than are those residents of Little Rock or London's Notting Hill whose behavior white Canadians loudly deplore. It's easier for Canadians to conceal their unfriendliness; that's the difference.

After three years in this country I can see an advantage in the kind of discrimination practised in the southern United States—it is at least forthright. In Canada, where there are no apparent restrictions on my freedom, I'm allowed to stumble into barriers—prejudices against my color which, although subtly applied, are nonetheless real.

I came to Canada from Trinidad to continue my studies as a librarian, though to enter the country I had to serve a year as a domestic. Since my arrival I have formed very few friendships with white Canadians. I have tried. I was told that the YWCA was the place to meet other strangers in Toronto. I went to the YWCA, where I was Continued on page 64
Canadians, the subtle yet systemic racism which she encountered, her difficulty in finding an apartment, and her resentment at her treatment were all dealt with matter-of-factly and without any sugar coating to make the article sit a little easier with the readers. This was a tough, angry article: her statement claiming that "most Canadians are, in fact, no friendlier toward people whose colour and customs differ from their own than are those residents of Little Rock or London's Notting Hill whose behaviour white Canadians loudly deplore" illuminated Canadian's hypocritical analysis of racial integration.105

Not surprisingly, in the November 1959 issue, letters in response to Bobb's article were the most numerous. The editors felt compelled to provide this introduction to the letters:

From the replies to Yvonne Bobb's outspoken comments on colour prejudice in this country, we can take some heart...Not one writer thought intolerance was good or even a necessary evil. All looked forward to the day when we shall have One World, with all its children truly brothers. One sidelight: many readers remind us sadly that intolerance often occurs, too, between white and white.106

This statement, and some of the letters which were featured, ran counter to Chatelaine's earlier pieces which had glorified ethnicity and the way in which Canadians had welcomed European immigrants. Mrs. Helen Ostapec of Thamesville, Ontario, wrote: "I am a native of Czechoslovakia and our skin may not be quite as dark as that of a West Indian or Negro, but our name is foreign and most of the Canadians hold it against us as though we were freaks of nature. Thanks to Yvonne Bobb for writing her story."107 Mrs. M. Ferrare of Toronto provided an interesting metaphor about how the magazine had effected her, she writes: "the article was like a shot in the arm, and I take the injection gladly."108 It was rare for readers to identify their ethnicity, or age, when they responded to articles, but in the case of articles about ethnicity it became important for letter writers to identify themselves to the other readers, as partial explanation of why they wrote. This letter from Helen Kent of Richmond Hill, Ontario criticized Bobb's article because it did not mirror her own experiences:

Yvonne Bobb forgets that most immigrants feel strange and unwanted for several months after their arrival here. Undoubtedly, her colour adds another dimension to the situation, which white immigrants do not have to deal with, but, as a coloured Jamaican who came here eight years ago, I cannot permit your magazine to think that all coloured people think or react as she does...If we show as much patience and tolerance as we possibly can, some time in the distant future there may be real understanding. We are the ones who have to teach (Canadians) that we are acceptable, so we might as well face up to that fact and responsibility.109
This lengthy quote illustrated not only the importance Chatelaine articles were accorded (and her concern about the impact the article could have on other West Indian immigrants) but that the readers used the letters section of the magazine as a forum with which to address other Canadian women. In fact, while Bobb’s article had demanded change, the letter writers all preferred slow, evolutionary change rather than anything dramatic.

Articles on race and ethnicity show the changes in the magazine, and its readership, as they progressed through the decade. The earlier concentrations on romantic, voyeuristic pieces about how the Hungarians would adapt to Canada gave way to critical articles about the hypocrisy of Canada’s treatment of new immigrants. Because later articles were written from personal experience, rather than the perspective of the expert Anglo-Canadian journalist, the articles seemed more authentic and encouraged the readers to be more honest in their replies. Articles on non-Anglo Canadians also demonstrated that Chatelaine’s readership did transcend racial and ethnic barriers. It was a forum for Canadian women, one which immigrants were quick to realize existed for them as well as the native-born. Articles such as these were an attempt by the magazine to reach out to groups other than Anglo-Canadian women, created controversial conversation pieces for all readers, and gave the impression that Chatelaine was a leader in social issues reportage.

While articles on race and ethnicity were easily earmarked, those articles which focused on class issues were more subtle, eschewing the term class in favour of terms like ‘standard of living.’ Blatant use of the term class, or references to any class other than the presumed (and desired) middle-class reader, would not appear in the magazine until the 1960s when the magazine published articles on poverty, life in the inner cities, and single mothers. For this section the focus is upon the middle class and life in suburbia, although one article from the end of the decade profiled a couple who had opted out of the suburban lifestyle.

One of the most popular series of articles in the mid-fifties was written by Sidney Margolius entitled “We Sent An Expert to Help This Family Make Both Ends Meet.” Margolius, the author of a best-selling book called How to Buy More With Your Money, helped the Woods family of Riverside (near Windsor), Ontario, work out their financial problems, and the readers of Chatelaine were able to follow their progress in a series of three articles. The Woods, Russ and Joie and their two children, were described as a fairly typical,
white-collar family. Russ, the sole wage earner, worked as a music teacher for the Windsor public school system, earning $4,450 per year. Margolius described the reason for their problems, and how they represented the majority of Canadian families:

Theirs is the struggle of many young white collar families as they strive to participate in Canada's climb toward a higher standard of living while fighting the inroads of a cost of living that has bounced up sixteen percent in just three years. More than twice as many Canadian families have mechanical refrigerators and vacuum cleaners as had them ten years ago. But more than half our families are still without even these basic amenities, and the drive to own them and sewing and washing machines and other equipment for more comfortable living is causing much midnight budget juggling.¹¹¹

It quickly became apparent that this was not a family with serious economic problems. Russ' salary was comfortably middle-class, slightly higher than statistical average of the day, and the family’s true problem was impulse spending, particularly on items which they bought on installment plans. Margolius put them on a budget, telling readers "The budget is like a muscle: the more they use it, the more effective it will become. They'll accumulate the money to buy in larger quantities, save installment fees, anticipate their needs when cut-price buying opportunities arise."¹¹² The emphasis on buying effectively, as opposed to saving money, paying down their mortgage, or investing for their future, was the purpose of the article. According to Chatelaine this was the typical family struggling to make ends meet, not the rural family (remember their shock over the Winterburns), the immigrant family, or the working-class family. Canada was portrayed as a sort of classless world of conspicuous consumption, and family budgeting was construed as temporary belt tightening before the next wave of planned purchasing.

Readers were swift to critique this article, and as all of the correspondence indicated, they examined the family budget in minute detail. One of the chief criticisms of the budget was the absence of a category for regular contributions to a church. Reverend W.B. Macodrum from Geraldton, Ontario responded: "That Margolius budget rather disturbed me. It is the first I have studied where no mention is made of religious support."¹¹³ All the other letters printed questioned why such a relatively comfortable family should have been profiled. This letter from Mrs. D. Milner of Winnipeg highlighted her frustration and anger: "I'd like to see the Woods family try to buy a house (not new), carry insurance, and raise a family on considerably less than $4,450 as we are doing. We pay as we go or do without. And we enjoy life. Let's be honest: they are living way beyond their means. On $4,450 we could bank $1,000 a year and still feel that we were living like kings."¹¹⁴ Finally, in
response to an update on the Woods' situation, this compelling letter from Mrs. Lillian Tustin of Aldergrove, B.C., was featured in the letters section:

I was quite appalled...at the thought that there were those who could not raise two children and keep out of debt on nearly $300 a month. I would be in heaven on this income, as I am at present bringing up six children, all under fifteen years and the oldest a spastic, on a hundred and forty dollars and this is the most we have handled in six years. Most years our income has been less than $1000...Even a load of wood extra can throw our own buying out of kilter...going into debt is entirely out of the question as we could never get along at all if we did.115

Clearly these readers did not consider that the magazine was aimed at more affluent readers than they, but rather that the editors and Margolius had erred in selecting an unrepresentative family. Lower-income readers of Chatelaine, often though not always from rural areas of the country, would voice these complaints about articles focusing on what they considered suburban issues, or according to Mrs. W.J. Hentley of Huntsville, Ontario “selfish” families like the Woods and their “pagan” lifestyle.116

The following year the magazine devoted an entire issue to an examination of the suburban phenomenon. “How to Live in the Suburbs” (see illustration) was brimming with information on how to deal with such issues as “There’s a Problem Child Next Door,” “How to Furnish a Home Without Panic Buying” and philosophical issues like “Is the Coffee Party a Menace or a Must?”117 In the “Chatelaine Centre” (see illustration) piece at the front of the magazine, the editors explained the purpose and aims of the issue:

...Chatelaine explores this expanding horizon, discussing the customs, reporting the problems of suburban living and suggesting some of the answers. Our coverage of this big story began way back last August and before it was concluded had drawn in nearly every member of the staff. We chose Don Mills, near Toronto, for a close look, partly because it contained families whose incomes, problems and outlook represented fairly average cross section of this part of national life and partly because it was one of the most modern, planned suburbs in Canada.118

The centre-piece of the issue was Doris Anderson’s perceptive “How to live in a suburb,” complete with a black and white photo of a morning coffee klatch. This article employed all the trademarks of the Chatelaine article, research, countless interviews, information garnered from academics and academic journals, along with Anderson’s pithy observations and witticisms: “Suburbia is the friendliest community in North America since the days of the stockade and Indian raids.”119 This was not a self-congratulatory article about the joys of living in the middle-class enclave. Gender, race, and class were analyzed in her portrait of the “white man’s white-collar community”: 
HOW TO LIVE IN
THE SUBURBS

Is the Coffee Party
a Menace or a Must?

A Spring Fashion Bazaar
for Suburban Women

You Can't Cook
Without a Freezer Shelf

English New Home
without Picture Hanging

Understanding the Problem Child
Next Door

In this issue:
Part III of
Kate Atkinson's
New Baby Book
How Chatelaine Went Calling in The Suburbs

A NEW TYPE of civilization is springing up around the edges of our packed towns and cities. Since the war, close to 1,500,000 people have moved out of the cities they had fled to, back into the new land of the suburbs.

Their habits mark shifting patterns in Canadian life, all the way from the night shopping hours to the giant supermarkets to the growing civic conscience of ratepayers, who make the once-eccentric lives of township councils a nightmare of demand and criticism. This is a land properly concerned with youth, for the majority of families who have a home in the suburbs do so to provide free growing space for their children.

In this special issue, Chatelaine explores this expanding horizon, discussing the customs, reporting on the problems of suburban living and suggesting some of the answers. Our coverage of this big story began way back last August and before it was concluded had drawn in nearly every member of the staff.

We chose Don Mills, near Toronto, for a close look, partly because it contained families whose incomes, problems and outlook represented a fairly average cross section of this part of national life and partly because it was one of the most modern, planned suburbs in Canada.

The Don Mills families cooperated handsomely. They patiently filled in the questionnaire Chatelaine mailed them. They figuratively rolled out the red carpet and opened their homes to the gaze of strangers; they uncovered the secrets of their wardrobes, their refrigerator shelves, their closets and their budgets. And they did all this without asking for anything.

Associate Editor Doris McCallum, who had already explored communities in one end of Canada to another in her search of interesting subjects for our Women of Canada series, started off by walking from door to door, street to street. She called on housewives at random to get an unbiased picture of the joys and sorrows of living in a suburb.

Once when she knocked on a door a woman’s voice called out briskly, “Come on in; I’ve been waiting for you. Hang your coat on the cupboard,” the voice continued. “The baby’s bottle is all ready and you’ll find your lunch in the refrigerator.” It was quite a shock for the voice’s owner to realize suddenly that Doris was not the baby sitter she’d been expecting.

When the preliminary research had turned up women with problems and some answers, Doris called in our house-service experts to discuss in detail the special problems in their fields.

Marie Holmes, Institute Director, met a group of suburban housewives, appropriately enough, at an afternoon coffee party. She found the answer to a lot of midweek problems lay in making better use of the refrigerator freezer shelf — see page 20. Rosemary Bower, Fashion Editor, found many women could not get away to shop for clothes so she brought the clothes to them — in an enormously successful three-day fashion bazaar. You’ll part over her spring fashion show (pages 11-17) whether you live in a suburb or not. Margaret Newcombe reports on how smart young suburbanites solve their decorating problems on page 18. Mrs. Frances Johnson, an expert in child behavior, heard about the problems that most often plague mothers in the suburb and she passes on her suggestions on page 22.

In short, as many aspects of suburban living as we could cover in one issue were examined. The editors passed on their own experiences from many parts of the country. So the design for living we uncovered in one place is equally applicable to hundreds of other families who may choose to live in Wildwood in Winnipeg, Ville-St. Laurent in Montreal or Killarney in Calgary, and we’ll be looking at other suburbs, and other problems in the near future. Our special issue, we hope, will prove helpful to all who live or plan to live in the growing world of Suburbia.
The main patterns of conformity are fairly rigidly laid out right from the start. Most of the people in any given suburb fall into the same income group. They often have the same kinds of jobs. They're roughly in the same age group. Old people and teenagers are rare. There are no Negroes, Chinese. Non-English speaking families are the exceptions. There are no slums, no ‘big’ houses, no wrong side of the tracks.120

The promised “solutions” were not very helpful. Not very surprisingly, the onus was on the individual woman to create the suburban life that she wanted (whether to be a joiner or an iconoclast was up to her), but systemic changes such as moving to the city were out.

Suburbia was founded, after all, on the availability of affordable housing and the belief it was a good place to raise children. As for class and ethnic differences, Anderson suggested mother “point out to both Mary and Bill that the rest of the world who don’t live in Sunnyvale Acres are not inferior or funny but merely different, and there’s nothing terribly wrong with being different.”121

From a nineties perspective Anderson, and Chatelaine’s, analysis of life in suburbia leaves major issues unexamined: the affluence of the community and the lack of ‘representativeness’ of the community. This planned suburb was fairly well established by the time of this profile. However, for a fifties women’s magazine, this article was heretical, particularly the critique of the lack of intellectual stimulation for women in the “burbs”:

You may discover that you are unconsciously playing down your education, taste and opinions that might mark you as different. One young suburban housewife told me: “You’ve got to be mediocre or you become as big an oddity as the emu. My husband actually had to work up a repertoire of dirty jokes--the barnyard kind--to keep up his end of the conversations with the boys. I buried the fact that I had an M.A. degree in English under the sod of our new front lawn.”122

Anderson touched a nerve for residents of Don Mills “concerned about the impression we may make all over the country”123 and the magazine published two letters from residents complaining about the article:

The coverage given our homes and the fashion show (March) was a great compliment, but we take exception to the article, How to Live in Suburbia...In our neighbourhood there are eight university trained wives; not only have they not had to "bury their degree under the sod of their front lawn," but they have been asked to utilize their knowledge in the growth of our community organizations. We agree that suburban housewives, isolated from the mainstream of life, can easily become narrow in their outlook and thinking. We, in Don Mills, are endeavouring to see that this situation does not arise.124
Another resident of Don Mills wrote to complain about the article: “Some of the things you mention aren’t necessarily done....1. No coffee parties in the mornings. Mornings are for housework. 2. Racial intolerance--a lot of people in Don Mills look different from everybody else--this is Canada.” Neither letter was concerned that other Canadian women would interpret their lives as particularly charmed, or affluent. Readers who did not reside in Don Mills wrote congratulatory letters about the article, yet only this letter from Kay Parley of Toronto pointedly complimented Anderson for her direct analysis:

The isolationist attitude setting apart a clique of thinkalikes, lookalikes, talk-alikes, who want to raise their children in a narrow rut, seems nothing short of a tragedy. Some lucky providence got me born on a Saskatchewan farm where the nearest neighbours were a large family of Polish immigrants...The girls became my friends, I visited in their home...I am glad I live now where everything from Yiddish to Dutch is spoken in the stores and a Hindu woman in a silk sari with a diamond in her nose shops beside me at the freezer. Children need the chance. They should know that these are the people they have studied about in school, the people the artists painted, the people who composed the music they hear, the people who make up the rest of the human family...Doris McCubbin must be congratulated for pointing up the situation so cleverly.

The last years of the decade witnessed a departure from the often solipsistic articles on the classless ‘middle class’ of Canadians. Lorraine Porter’s “We Found Fun and Freedom on $2,100 A Year” profiled two ex-Torontonians who had chucked their city jobs, retired to their six-room cottage, and were eking out a comfortable existence north of the city. Unlike the Winterburns, this couple was decidedly middle-class, owning land as an investment in Pickering and Richmond Hill, which they planned to sell to finance their later retirement years. They described life on two acres of land, the seasonal joys of rural life, travel to Mexico via bus to save wear and tear on their car, and the joys of fresh food. Porter’s comments about their food buying was, quite unintentionally, a direct assault on the food manufacturers and advertisers whose ads subsidized the magazine each month:

Our food is tastier and more nutritious now than four years ago when we spent twice as much on groceries. With both of us working at that time, I shopped hurriedly, and bought 'quickies', such as frozen foods, store pies and cakes, and delicatessen delicacies. With a monthly budget of $58.51 for groceries we buy carefully these days. And I have only half as much to buy now--for instance, I buy flour to bake pie crusts, but the fillings come from our orchard.

The contrast between this excerpt and the Woods article was striking. While the vast majority of the articles which made explicit reference to class issues depicted the middle income level, occasionally an article such as this, with a very different focus, made it into the
magazine. While not the gritty portraits of poverty the magazine would highlight in the sixties, such articles provided a very different overt meaning: they spoke to a lasting tradition of anti-consumerism and as such provided a counter to the messages of the advertisements. No letters were printed on the letters page regarding this article; it obviously was not controversial enough to merit attention when the same issue contained an article on abortion. Chatelaine’s articles which focused on class issues in the 1950s were sporadic and while women from all ‘income groups’, to borrow their phrase, were readers, the emphasis was on the comfortably middle class.

As mentioned earlier, the series of articles which most captivated the reader’s attention were the medical articles written by the team of Hilliard and Callwood. Only Hilliard’s untimely death in 1958 brought an end to the series. “Woman’s Greatest Enemy is Fatigue” was the first essay in the series. Hilliard’s brief biography, written by Clare, should have piqued the interest of even the most jaded reader:

Dr. Hilliard has an insatiable appetite for life. She’s Chief of Staff at Women’s College Hospital, Toronto, is a practicing surgeon and women’s doctor, and acts as marriage counselor on the National Committees of the Church of England and the United Church of Canada. She has such variously assorted interests as hockey, Beethoven, the theatre, trout fishing, Chinese food and liberal causes. With the ghost-writing assistance of June Callwood, Hilliard was able to convey her unique perspective and personality to the readers. Above all, Hilliard’s articles were written in a plain, common-sense style. Her medical training gave her the authority to write about these issues but her pieces were free of medical jargon and hence accessible to all readers. She did not patronize the reader; instead the reader was treated to a conversational, personalized approach. In an era that did not favour blunt, direct talk about such “private matters” as sexuality, menopause, menstruation, or childbirth, Hilliard’s articles were exceptional for their explicit and calm manner. Most important, this information was for the first time readily available to all Canadian women in an easily obtained, and very respectable format, their own woman’s magazine.

The blurb which opened “Fatigue” explained why such an innocuous subject had been Hilliard’s choice for her first essay: "Because fatigue strikes every woman during the three most critical periods of her life. Because fatigue is often a tragic mask for boredom, fear or selfishness. Because fatigue can break up your marriage, bring on mental illness or shorten your life." Hilliard’s definition of fatigue included perpetual tiredness but also “a
state of apathy toward tomorrow, of headaches, backaches, crying spells, heaviness of body and mind," which sounds remarkably similar to something Betty Friedan would later call "the problem that has no name." While Hilliard's three most critical phases of women's lives were defined as pregnancy, the first few months after childbirth and menopause, she did not exclude unmarried women or married career women from her advice. All were told to make time for themselves--to get proper rest, more specifically that housework could wait and in the case of new mothers that the children's fathers should be called into service. Hilliard's reward for women whose exhaustion was caused by overly fastidious housework regimes was a "dunce cap." For those with a bad case of ennui, Hilliard advocated work:

I wish I had kept records of the number of times I have found that the solution for fatigue is part-time work. Housewives who are lonely and frustrated by the repetitive tasks of cleaning a home; women in the grip of the menopause who are frightened and upset; women living with older people who rasp on their nerves—all can be helped by getting out into another world. As you can see, some fatigue is caused by too much to do and some by too little; some is a by product of a glandular change and some is the result of monotony or pure selfishness. Fatigue is such a common occurrence that it has been called the Great North American Disease....

Notably absent was any reference to medication, psychological assessments, or women's victimization. Hilliard was a survivor: she encouraged her readers and patients to help themselves, to acquire a sense of self-esteem as individuals—not as wives or mothers.

Letters such as this excerpt from Mrs. E.F. Hartwick of Arvida, Quebec, illustrate the reaction the article elicited:

I feel I must write to thank you on behalf of all your readers and particularly the thousands of harassed mothers of pre-school age children for your wonderful article...I had practically convinced myself I must be neurotic with my chronic weariness, and lack of energy...This is the kind of article that should be spread far and wide for its outstanding contribution to the well-being of all women.

Older readers like Mrs. Louise Sandvold of Crystal Springs, Saskatchewan wrote: "How I wish I had read it years ago. As it is, it will be a great help in the years to come." The magazine did not receive any negative letters about the Hilliard articles, that is they did not publish any in the letters column, until the series had run for a few years and the good doctor had ventured into more psycho-social areas of commentary.

Perhaps one of the most controversial Hilliard articles published was "Woman's Greatest Hazard—Sex" which the magazine ran in the January 1956 issue. The editors did not bother with any cover art for this issue, just centred the title "Woman's Greatest Hazard: Another Challenging Article," minus the word sex, in the middle of the cover and framed it
with a yellow border. This was the only case of a Chatelaine cover with no visuals in the entire two decades surveyed. The blurb underneath the cover was a subtle, decorous, yet no less effective teaser for the article: “A reluctance to talk about this basic personal problem has caused confusion and unhappiness to countless women. This is why Chatelaine presents this frank, intelligent article...” While the magazine was at great pains to present the article in as unsensational style as possible, this issue proved to be, as they surely knew, extremely popular. The “Sex” issue sold out within days of hitting the newsstand. Hilliard’s article was not a technical how-to piece; she presumed a basic knowledge amongst her readers. Instead, this article systematically abolished sexual shibboleths: women’s unresponsiveness, seniors’ asexuality, romantic versions of sexuality, and male prowess about all things sexual. Passages such as the following one, in which Hilliard explained the difference between male and female responses to sex, undoubtedly reassured many readers:

The male inevitably arrives at marriage with the conviction that love-making is a straightforward simple pursuit with certain fulfillment. He is so constructed that, while the atmosphere of love-making may vary considerably, his own enjoyment is relatively constant. Women, on the other hand, are deeply dependent for their enjoyment on the atmosphere. It must be just so, with no distractions, no jarring moments, no annoyances, or else she is incapable of genuine response. While she was quick to advocate that married couples “need experience and practice,” her essay also made it perfectly clear that while women’s responses to lovemaking were different from men’s, women could, should and did respond to sex: “the same woman can experience the whole galaxy of climaxes, from the top to the bottom, depending on her mood.” One of her concluding comments was that “love-making is a human need, a comfort for the body, a soother for nerves and brightening influence on the spirit.”

The article broke the silence which still hindered the public discussion of sex: it talked openly of sexual adjustment after marriage, advocated that couples maintain a sense of humour, and stated unequivocally that women could and should find sex pleasurable. The absence of moralizing—indeed Hilliard promised to examine un-married women’s sexuality in the next issue—clearly marked the essay as something most Canadian women had not seen before. If they had, it was not in a mass circulation women’s magazine. Reader’s reactions were mixed. Some like Mrs John A. Brown of Toronto were “disgusted and horrified.... Is nothing sacred and personal any more?...I think you should know how articles of that sort appear to women of my sort—the better educated, more carefully brought-up sort—in other
words (old fashioned but true) a lady.” E.M.K. from Halifax was equally chagrined: “If women want this sort of information let them ask for it in private—I would blush to think my daughter of fifteen would get this article and read it.” But others, in remarkably candid letters, told how pleased they had been to read the essay, like this response from R.H. in Edmonton: “I feel compelled to write and thank you for it. If I had been able to read such an article twenty-five years ago I should be a much happier woman today.” Another reader from Campbellton, N.B. “only wished there had been such plain truthful articles written twenty-five years ago.” The most original letter was written by Owen J. Bennett of Abbotsford, B.C.:

It should be required reading for all couples who intend to marry. After seventy years of living I feel sure it would save millions of lives from being tainted with the nasty grey shade of misconception and vulgarity regarding one of God’s most beautiful and useful gifts.

It was articles such as this that set the magazine apart from the American women’s magazines, got people talking and writing, sold copy and ultimately made Chatelaine a household word. In the words of Mrs. Hilda Carscallen of Whitby “...one of Dr. Hilliard’s articles is worth the whole subscription price for a year.”

Although most Hilliard articles contained some medical information, or were premised on Hilliard’s expertise as a gynecologist, she also branched out into more psycho-social articles. One of the first of this new thematic approach “How to Stop Being Just a Housewife” in the September 1956 issue was another ground-breaking article. Hilliard was quick to condemn the idealized version of womanhood promulgated by the media:

There is a prevailing image of womanhood, slightly plump in a cotton print dress, surrounded by adoring golden-haired children as she bends over an oven door to take out a pan of biscuits. In this pink picture, the woman’s face is brimming with contentment, tears of tender joy stand in her eyes and she is bathed in a glow of fulfilled femininity. She’s wonderful all right, but she’s no more real than the fantasy image millions of men have of themselves.

Hilliard argued that “Women need to work to gain confidence in themselves. Women need to work in order to know achievement. Women need to work to escape loneliness. Women need to work to avoid feeling like demihumans, half woman and half sloth.” Finally, she critiqued the misguided focus on beauty and catching a husband at the expense of getting an education or training for some sort of employment:

...the married woman is fooled, into believing that she can spend her whole life without acquiring a single skill. This is the deep dark water under the thin ice of a
married woman's composure. Frittering away the scant years before she marries, she learns no trade. She comes to marriage with little ability beyond a certain flair for looking attractive in strong sunlight. On this house of cards, she builds her self assurance. She rises in the morning full of the delight of greeting her young loveliness in a mirror. But time won't hold still and this butterfly reaches her mid-thirties, when her children are almost independent and her one small talent is beginning to weather. The change in her appearance, which had counted for so much, makes her unsure. She is now ready, with her family nearly grown, to take part in the bustle outside her home, but she is newly timid and has no training. Unskilled occupations look wearying, unworthy and dull; so she sits at home and becomes more despondent with each empty, wasted day.149

This trenchant critique of women's roles before and after marriage, seven years before Betty Friedan made the same observations, ran completely counter to the received wisdom about the content of women's magazines. However, the Hilliard pieces had proved themselves very popular. Maclean Hunter and the editors of Chatelaine wanted to increase and keep the circulation. Increased circulation meant higher rates for advertising copy, which meant a greater chance of profit. Content mattered, but from a business perspective anything that would guarantee sell-out issues was assured of a place in the magazine. Thus Hilliard's pieces, while running counter to much conventional material published in the woman's magazine, if not always in Chatelaine, made it into the periodical. Such articles make it clear that Chatelaine's agenda was to publish a wide variety of material. It was not merely a 'feel good' periodical for housewives but encouraged them to question the status quo, and at the very least stimulated readers to think.

Readers like Mrs. Z.W. Dean of Calgary were quick to pick up on the surprising variety in the magazine: "Just a line to say how much I have enjoyed Dr. Hilliard's fine, sensible articles. She must be a wonderful woman and I'd love to meet her! Congratulations too on your many varieties of writing--I like your magazine."150 Other readers took offense at Hilliard's article and wrote in defense of the profession 'unlike any other.' A.B. from Ontario claimed that the article: "made my good Scotch blood run cold....'Just a housewife' doesn't do me justice and I'm not bragging. No other job in the world gives a person the chance to use their abilities in so many different ways for the betterment of mankind and the world in general."151 Mrs. R.B. from Alberta concurred adding: "If anything, so far from hunting for more work, most women I know would give anything to just have one afternoon a week off."152

While articles like Hilliard's offered critiques of Canadian housewives, Chatelaine also occasionally used humourous articles to parody itself and to ease the seriousness of the
feature articles. All of the articles were in the genre made famous by the American humourist Erma Bombeck, the wry mother/housewife observations about the hilarity of everyday life. While many readers failed to see the humour in these pieces, for some women they provided moments of release and proved to be just the tonics they needed to get through the day. Phyllis Lee Peterson’s “Don’t Educate Your Daughters” pithily dissected the folly of the university-educated housewife and mother. In the following excerpt Peterson contrasts the two types of housewives—the educated and the uneducated—toting up their relative merits and general happiness:

I have reached the inescapable conclusion that the happiest women are those who have to take off their shoes to count up to ten. If you don’t believe me, look around you. Look at Dora B., for instance, the dumb little blond who never got through high school. Everyone felt sorry for Dora when she went out to work while the others went to college, but Dora knew her own career. By the time the rest of you emerged into reality with heads stuffed full of biology and eugenics, Dora’d put them into practice. Now the young husband she helped get started is a ball of fire and her four children are full-grown while you’re still pushing a baby around the chain store. Dora knew by instinct that what you lost through education, that a woman’s real job is a man and the sooner you get behind him and push, the better.153

Self-deprecating styles of humour were one of the foundations on which housewife humour was based, but there was also an edge to these pieces, part anger and part frustration, about society’s expectations for women. Humour such as this found the readers nodding in agreement, or for those who read it as a non-humourous article filled with indignation. One of the reasons that readers so frequently misread these articles was that they very successfully mocked the earnest tone of the advice articles in the magazine, and women’s magazines in general. Some readers were not too keen about the self-parody of the magazine or of their roles, displaying an insecurity and sensitivity about ‘being just housewives’ like those perturbed readers who responded to Hilliard’s piece.

Under the title “Do Educate Your Daughter” the magazine printed responses from readers. Of the eight letters to the editor reprinted in the magazine, most were critical of the article, illustrating vividly how ironic, satirical essays clearly intended to be interpreted as humourous essays could so easily be misinterpreted. Respondents were quick to enumerate their educational accomplishments in the text, or to list their degrees behind their names, like this letter signed by six university-educated Saskatoon women: “We the undersigned, are completely disgusted with the article...Dullness and frustration may be found in marriage by every woman, regardless of her education. The truly educated woman...will make something
more of her marriage." Mrs Joan Arkett of Parry Sound, Ontario, was also not amused: "My daughter goes to college!" Interpreting the article as a straight forward piece of advice to mothers, Mrs. James French of Whalley, B.C., claimed “Never have I read such a narrow-minded article.” Only one letter, from Mr. and Mrs. P. Grant of Agincourt, Ontario, interpreted the piece as a work of humour, additionally commenting that a literal interpretation would be all too common:

We enjoyed your humourous article, Don’t Educate Your Daughter....While amused at the irony of its reverse logic, we were sobered by the thought that many people actually think this way...Doubtless, there are men who prefer wives too ignorant to argue or too simple to see through them. If an education can keep our daughter from marrying one it will be an excellent investment.

Doris Anderson admitted that the editors wanted to include more humourous pieces in the magazine but that it did not seem worth the effort of writing letters to those readers who had misinterpreted the humourous intent and so had been offended.

No single topic received more attention when Chatelaine devoted space to celebrity profiles and entertainers than the British royal family. In the early years of the decade, especially the coronation year 1953, the magazine was full of articles on Elizabeth’s work, her history, her family responsibilities and as the decade progressed her children, her sister Margaret, and her husband Phillip. Not only were Chatelaine subscribers avid fans of the royal family, quick to devour new articles and point out genealogical errors on the part of the writers, they also frequently wrote to the magazine to praise the latest colour photographs of the Queen and her children. The January issue contained the first of an exclusive Chatelaine series written by Hector Bolitho about the Queen’s life entitled: “Let’s Not Work the Queen to Death.” Bolitho identified himself as something of an insider, having lived within the “cloisters of Windsor Castle during the years of her childhood.” Detailing the frantic pace set by the royal family, Bolitho encouraged the Queen’s loyal subjects not to place too many demands on the new sovereign. The third part of the Bolitho series-- “The Three Lives of Our Queen”-- featured an examination of the royals’ various castles and homes throughout Britain. This month’s feature on the Queen was notable since it offered one of the many “full colour for framing” portraits of the monarch included in the magazine. The editors have thoughtfully kept the reverse side of that page empty of either editorial or advertising material. Of equal importance were two letters of discontent printed in the letters column, both from readers in Alberta, perturbed at the amount of space devoted to coverage of the
‘British’ royal family. Mrs. Bill Scott of Red Deer: “Haven’t you anything more constructive to write about than the British nobility and an exiled Greek? As a third generation Canadian I’m certainly not interested.” Similarly not amused was Mrs. L.K. Thomas from Lethbridge who asked “...Is something the matter with me or are there other readers as sick of articles on the Queen as I am?”

Thomas got her answer, and so did the editors, as the May 1953 issue contained excerpts from seventeen letters responding to the Thomas and Scott letters, four of which were in agreement with them. The readers who wrote in defence of the articles on the royal family were quick to play the cards of nationalism and loyalty, and some went so far as to paint Thomas and Scott’s desire for more Canadian content as treasonous. Miss F.M. Harris of Smiths Falls, Ontario wrote that she enjoyed “...your articles on the Queen and would like to see more. If British royalty doesn’t interest Mrs. Scott, perhaps articles on the Kremlin would.” For Mrs. A. Synder of Edmonton, the articles on the royal family made her “...glow with pride when I read of the royal family and may God help us if we didn’t have such a fine example.” Mrs. M. Megran of Montreal declared that she would: "...much rather read about the romance of Philip and Elizabeth than some movie star” and that she “...Already (had) the beautiful colour picture on the wall." Readers who defended the inclusion of articles on the royal family were adamant about two things: their Canadianness and their love of the royal family. The large number of articles on the royals was one of the defining features of the magazine during the fifties, and clearly differentiated the magazine from the American ‘Seven Sisters.’ While American magazines published articles on the Queen, due to her celebrity status, for Chatelaine the Queen was more than just a celebrity: she was part of the fabric of Canadian life, in the words of many readers she was, simply, ‘ours.’ To that end, M. Robinson of New Westminster, B.C., remarked upon the importance of royal coverage for her decision to renew her subscription:

...My main reason for renewing my subscription, among others, was because I was sure Chatelaine articles on the timely subject of royalty would be choice. So don't disappoint the many who have a deep interest in one of the few remaining really solid institutions left in this world of tottering ideals.

While the printed letters suggested that most Chatelaine readers were very fond of these features, the editors had to deal with a vocal minority who were equally displeased. Mrs. Dueck of Lethbridge was not atypical for canceling her subscription to protest the royal
articles. She was atypical for including an analysis of why she dislike them: "...Please stop sending me your magazine. Almost every page is an advertisement for the Queen. She is no god to worship. Then why put her all over the pages of every magazine? You'd think no one was ever crowned before."\(^{170}\)

Other celebrity and entertainment features rarely generated as much attention, or heated debate, but readers seem to have enjoyed them for their entertainment and relaxation value. A typical *Chatelaine* treatment was to feature a lesser known Canadian celebrity such as a new sports phenomenon or eager young actress, along with profiles of established Stratford, Ontario actors, and performers on either the radio or television shows of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. To differentiate these pieces from what might be printed in a more general interest magazine, or in the newspaper, *Chatelaine* often concentrated on the performers’ homelife and their family, along with their professional attainments.

Typical of this genre was “Whatever Happened to Barbara Ann Scott” written by freelance journalist Dorothy Sangster.\(^{171}\) It would be hard to top this article for those looking for a very traditional assessment of women’s roles. Sangster traveled to Chicago to write the profile of Scott’s life after her retirement from professional skating and her marriage to Chicago advertising executive Thomas Van Dyke King. Wealthy and the co-owner of a new Barbara Ann Scott Hair Salon in an affluent section of Chicago, Scott’s life had changed dramatically from her skating days. Not eager to talk about the past, or even display her trophies and medals, Scott preferred to be “Tommy’s wife” and her focus was her elegant white apartment, her pets (Bertyl the turtle, Leroy the budgie, Prince the poodle) and her husband. Her remarks about her daily routine, presumably meant to identify her as the average housewife and showcase her feminine skills, had a decidedly different effect on the readers:

“You've probably heard I have this thing about tidiness. I like a clean house and everything in order. I dust my window ledges every morning, and take the shades off the lamps, and straighten out things in the medicine cabinet, and arrange the glasses in neat rows, and take all the books out of the bookshelves so I can dust them properly. I think anyone who’s a good housekeeper probably does the same as I do, but a lot of my friends seem to think it's very funny. They kid me because I give Tommy his breakfast in bed on a tray, and lay out his tie and socks, and shine his razor, but a husband has to work all day and I think he should be comfortable at home. Besides, if you aren’t going to devote yourself to your husband, why marry?’'\(^{172}\)
Why indeed? Scott’s fetish of cleanliness, and her slavish attention to ‘Tommy’ were evident throughout the article. For all the glory, dedication and adulation that had come to “Canada’s Sweetheart,” nothing compared with doting on her husband. Even her athletic edge had been blunted so as not to conflict with her husband’s golf game.

This article was a perfect example of how story ideas could, and frequently did, turn out entirely differently than originally conceived. And although Scott’s emphasis on being the best spouse and housewife could be interpreted as laudatory, for an internationally renowned Canadian celebrity to have traded it all in for cleaning cabinets and doting on her husband was not what her fans expected. Part of the resistance to this article was Scott’s move to the U.S.-- her Canadian fans felt forsaken. Furthermore her obvious affluence and her perfectionist style of housekeeping alienated many women who did not have the luxury of a live-in hairstylist. Mrs. L. Carruthers of Dartmouth, N.S., expressed her consternation that Scott’s style of housekeeping was not possible for those women who had young children at home: “A very nice article on Barbara Ann Scott. Most of us housewives like a neat house, too, but try it with four children who like to cut papers and eat oranges in the living room.”173 Others, like Mrs. C.R. Baker of Ottawa, were less enthusiastic, writing “...as for what happened to Barbara Ann, who cares?”174 Finally, Mrs. E.D. Pigott of Vancouver wrote: “I am glad I renewed my subscription to Chatelaine, one gets such a picture of how the other half lives, comparing the wonderful ending to your story, ‘The Child Who Adopted Me’ and the almost useless life of Barbara Ann Scott.”175

By the end of the decade the tone of the articles on marriage and women’s issues had changed. Chatelaine, under Anderson’s editorship, featured more articles on controversial topics-- abortion, suicide, and teenage delinquents-- as well as articles which depicted better balanced assessment of women’s roles. In short, the magazine articles indicated that women could lead fulfilling lives outside of the household. In the October 1958 issue Dr. Alastair Macleod, Assistant Director of the Mental Hygiene Institute in Montreal, contributed an article on “The Sickness in our Suburbs.”176 In this up-date to the 1955 special feature the “eminent psychiatrist” warned that “Suburbia is a growing threat to our mental health....It breeds boredom, suspicion and loneliness and disrupts family life by confusing the roles of the sexes. Here’s where we’ve gone wrong--and what we can do about it.”177 The majority of the article was devoted to Macleod’s thesis that the major problem in the suburbs was “the
blurring between the roles of the sexes" which created "matriarchies" or "manless territory where women cannot be feminine because expediency demands that they control the finances and fix the drains and where...men cannot be masculine because their traditional function of ruler and protector has been usurped."178 According to MacLeod this lack of a clear separation of gendered roles left suburban children "bewildered".179 The article did not suggest practical ways in which to overcome the suburban dilemma, other than that humans are highly adaptive. Although Macleod’s article condemned the mutable gender roles he had discovered amongst suburban women in Montreal, he did not place the blame for this situation, or the demands for change, upon women:

I am strongly against trying to cure them by attaching blame to women. Women have already an almost insupportable load of guilt. They feel guiltily responsible for their sense of harassment, they blame themselves for any turmoil in marriage, they feel guilt when children misbehave, more guilt if they miss a home-and-school meeting, guilt if they can’t grow roses or make garlic salad dressing. Women cannot bear much more guilt; they are already ill with it.180

How did the object of such academic analysis and angst react to this article about the ills of suburbia? One thing was perfectly clear from the letters that Chatelaine printed in the January 1959 issue— the Macleod article touched a nerve all across the country, and at the time of publication over three hundred letters had arrived.181 According to the calculations of the editors, 42% of the respondents supported the suburban way of life, and thus disagreed with MacLeod’s findings, 39% agreed generally with his findings and 11% of respondents looked elsewhere for the troubles with suburbia.182 Expert or not, many women were not about to swallow MacLeod’s theories about the importance of strict gender roles and the primacy of the male. From Mrs. Vera Fiddler of Ottawa came this response: “I was mad when I read Dr. MacLeod’s remarks...Dr. MacLeod is apparently in favour of women acting as servants.”183 This letter, from Mrs. Irene Craig Neil of Port Stanley, Ontario, contradicted MacLeod’s findings about the ‘matriarchy’ of suburbia with a rather pithy retort: “I left the suburbs because I was in danger of getting just too itsy bitsy feminine. I know of nowhere in Canada that the male ego receives as much flattery as it does in suburbia...The modern rebel soon feels a sense of smothering in the male prestige and dominance of suburbia.”184 Overall, readers thought the psychiatrist’s analysis missed many of the nuances of suburban life such as its affordability, the desire on the part of many women and men to work together and share their duties. Instead they pointed to things like the lack of culture, the lack of
shops within walking distance and the constant microscopic gaze of academe as undermining life in the suburbs. One piece of correspondence that Anderson received about this article was from prominent sociologist Professor S.D. Clark of the University of Toronto, who was interested in quoting from the MacLeod article in his book and anxious to see the correspondence from Canadian women.185

The MacLeod article (like the Grey, Anderson and Hilliard pieces before it) was not the only one to criticize the situation of the stay-at-home housewife. In an article entitled "How Much Are You Worth to Your Husband," writer Cynthia Steers examined the value of women’s unpaid work in the home.186 Steers advanced a key component of feminist ideology, that the unpaid work of women in the home subsidized the economy and put women at a distinct disadvantage. By her calculations, she figured that housewives saved their husbands $257.65 per month, assuming that the average ‘middle income’ family ($5,000-$8,000 dollar range) with three children, would have to employ eleven employees to replace the housewife: a housekeeper, cleaning woman, laundress, home economist and shopper, chauffeur, baby sitter, handyman, seamstress, cleaner, hostess and gardener. Additionally, the husband would lose his $1000 tax deduction for a stay-at-home wife.

While Chatelaine obviously thought this sort of fiscal enlightenment would be, at the very least, interesting reading for their subscribers, many of their readers were disgusted that a monetary value would be placed on their job as spouse, housewife and mother. Of the three letters printed, all were critical of the thesis and tone of the article. Mrs. Anna Tennenhaus of Bathurst, N.B., wrote:

Cynthia Steers article...is appalling and asinine. She lists chores performed “for the husband”, when in reality they are performed for HER home and herself. Most North American wives are sheltered in superior homes, fed excellent food, dressed in pretty clothes, driving nice cars, enjoying much social life, protected for the eventuality of widowhood, all by one man who usually struggles much harder than she does to obtain these amenities for THEIR families.187

Reader Tom Richardson of Kindersley, Saskatchewan, perhaps not surprisingly, thought that “Maybe now would be a good time to have an article on how much is the husband worth to the wife.”188 Clearly feeling that men had been unjustly accused, Mrs. D.T. Vanstone of Beaconsfield, Quebec, claimed that “I feel I receive every cent of the hypothetical amount in the pleasure of living with a husband who excels in assisting with the tedious tasks, and in the care of two wonderful children.”189
Two very disparate articles published in the August 1959 issue generated voluminous mailbags of letters to the editors, the one “How to Go To University at Home” by Eileen Morris was a straightforward informative article about options for part-time enrollment in undergraduate university programs, as well as some information about correspondence university courses. According to the article “Some twenty-five Canadian universities offer courses especially designed for even the busiest homemaker.” Interested homemakers were advised to contact the magazine for more information. This information was available free, though the reader had to include a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Chatelaine made frequent use of such services to readers; they were further links that connected the readers with the periodical, and also were ways to test which articles and items most appealed to their readership. Non-commercial services such as these were impressive since they indicated to readers that the magazine took them seriously and established the authority of Chatelaine editors on a variety of issues. The October issue of the magazine included this editorial report:

Within three weeks an unpretentious August feature had drawn the biggest Chatelaine mail of the month....The response: more than one thousand letters as we go to press. Every one of the twenty-five universities offering courses received inquiries from potential scholars. Front runners were: University of Toronto, University of British Columbia, University of Alberta, McMaster and Western, in that order.\[191\]

The response to the article had been both staggering and totally unexpected. Anderson wrote a letter to Morris to let her know about the response to the article and to encourage her to write another article for the magazine: “the response to your story...is practically swamping us. By rough calculation almost every woman in Canada has now been inspired to go back to University...”\[192\] Proving once again that although Chatelaine editors prided themselves on having their fingers on the pulse of Canadian women, they were never sure which articles would be critical successes and which ones would be too controversial, boring or uninspiring. Further evidence of the long lasting effect some articles had on readers was this poignant letter written to Anderson in 1962 by Mrs. Phyllis Bentley:

I have been cherishing a clipping from your magazine dated August 1959, in the hope that one day I might see my way clear to begin studying. I wonder if I might still be able to get information about a homemakers degree course in my city Montreal? I would be most interested to know whether Loyola University offers such a course leading to a B.A. degree.\[193\]
Over the course of this study many correspondents mentioned that they had clipped and saved articles, photos, editorials, as well as the more traditional recipes, from the magazine. While not wanting to make too fine a point about the degree to which the magazine was interactive, many readers did make scrapbooks of various features in the magazine and it was not uncommon for some letters to be received asking for copies of old, cherished articles which had become lost or destroyed.

The other article in the August 1959 issue which attracted attention, this time of a very critical nature, was Joan Finnigan’s “Should Canada Change Its Abortion Law?” The article’s preface indicated that it would be a critical examination of a controversial topic: “It’s among the world’s harshest--and critics charge most backward. By recognizing only one reason for abortion, it forces desperate women to seek help from a vicious back-room racket that often deals in death.” Finnigan went on to quote statistics of back room abortions, and provided reasons why the law should be changed. “The very narrowness and inflexibility of this law does not stop abortion, but drives it underground into comparatively dangerous channels where Canadian women every year lose their lives.” This is one of the progressive pieces of social criticism for which the magazine would be even more visibly identified throughout the sixties. Later, the editors acknowledged that they “knew we were heading into controversial waters,” but after reading the letters received reported that responses were “split evenly for and against abortion.” Mrs. H.C. Walshaw of Calgary reported that the article “...was excellent and has occasioned some thoughtful discussion among my own friends and acquaintances....” V. Leclair of Ottawa was also in agreement about the need for change: “...let us stop pretending that we have religious freedom. Since the medical profession seems disinclined to help, it is up to women’s groups to act. Thanks for a wonderful article.” Negative letters employed moral and religious arguments in their criticism of Finnigan’s suggestions. This letter from Mrs. R.S. Ricciotti of Wallaceburg, Quebec, is representative of these letters: “Your article should have been titled Should Canada Legalize Murder?” Only this letter from Mrs. K. Kirkpatrick of Duncan, B.C., argued for legalized abortion as a method of family planning: “At twenty-nine I am one of the 'worn-out' mothers, having had seven children in less than nine years. We need help--the Swedish way.”
This overview and analysis of some of the most distinctive, popular, and infamous articles to appear in the pages of Chatelaine magazine during the fifties questions the perception that the content of women’s magazines was solely about housewives and their concerns. It is clear even from this necessarily condensed overview that the magazine tried to reach as broad a group of Canadian women as possible, and thus tried to cover any and all topics that they thought would have appeal for women. Similarly, it would be foolhardy and reductionist to claim that the preferred meaning inherent in the articles reinforced the status quo of the happy housewife, raising her children in an idyllic suburban development. The readings, topics, themes and meanings of the articles were multiple and readers were exposed to various perspectives in most issues of the periodical. Some of the articles which were the most avant garde, like Hilliard’s essay on housewives, elicited mainly critical letters because their content intimidated the readers and were at odds with the time period. The articles helped to foster the ‘community nature’ of the magazine, often reporting on women in far flung regions of the country (i.e., not from southern Ontario) or general articles which examined how Canadian women were coping with their roles as housewives, mothers and spouses. Other articles encouraged them to broaden their minds and their lifestyles by taking part-time jobs, starting small businesses, seeking challenging volunteer positions or greater education, making women think that perhaps there was more to life than their stay-at-home existence.

Regardless of the variety of the magazine, and whether the article topic was an entertainment feature, a medical article or one devoted to marriage and children, these articles formed a common currency amongst Canadian women. In an era in which only women’s pages in newspapers or American women’s magazines might cover these issues, Chatelaine provided a unique medium for Canadian women. It educated, entertained, criticized and encouraged its readers, and the readers responded with letters of their own in which they took the editors to task or thanked them for any particular feature. Readers responded to other letters and in turn the editors often pursued article topics which had originally been suggested by the readers. Beyond reading the magazine, many articles were clipped for future reference or as in the case of the portraits of the Queen and her young children hung on the walls of homes across the country. In conclusion, the topics and issues discussed in the magazine made their way into countless conversations across the country—
coffee klatches, at cocktail parties, over supper with the family and amongst female family members. The articles in the periodical proved influential and memorable for many women, and the magazine itself transcended its mass-produced commodity to become a friend, confidant, advisor and educator. Ultimately, the magazine created a community of readers, writers and editors.

**Conclusion:**

Sanders, Dempsey, and Anderson’s editorials were not just introductions to the magazine or light-hearted essays addressed to affluent, happy, suburban women. Instead, they were timely, concise, issue-driven essays. Articles, particularly those by Hilliard and Callwood, indicate that *Chatelaine* published material which questioned and implored readers’ to question the status quo. Under another name, Betty Friedan’s problem without a name was Hilliard’s ‘fatigue.’ Friedan was very vocal about the fact that American women’s magazine editors would not publish excerpts of her book—even though she had worked for them as a freelance journalist. 202 It was only after *The Feminine Mystique* topped the best-seller list (1963) that the women’s magazines sought her for articles and featured her in numerous personality profiles. In contrast *Chatelaine* published the Hilliard articles in the mid-to-late fifties, and it would publish even more overtly feminist articles, by Christina McCall, in the early sixties.

Articles and editorials published in *Chatelaine* were different from the American competitors-- a fact that was noted time and again in readers’ letters. Canadian writers, topics, locales and subjects coupled with the different tone and content mix made *Chatelaine* unique. Equally important, these articles generated interest, commentary, criticism and suggestions from the readers. Readers’ letters indicate that the *Chatelaine* community was active in interpreting the offerings and that the “preferred meanings” of these components were often ignored, misinterpreted or opposed by readers who were clearly engaged by the material. In the end, the articles and editorials had wide-appeal, provided a range of topics and commentary, and fostered a sense of community amongst readers.

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Agnes L. Honey, Salmon Arm, British Columbia to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine September 1959, 144.

Miss E. Munro, Vancouver to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Ibid.

Violet M. Gammon, Toronto to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine January 1959, 68.

For a detailed overview of the editorials database--the sampling process, categories of analysis and the results please see the Appendix.

In an interview with the author, Doris Anderson remarked that John Clare was a "Nice man but totally out of his depth! Didn't understand women, didn't want to understand women, and didn't want to be there."

Anderson Interview, Toronto, June 30, 1994.

Byrne Hope Sanders, "Goodbye and Good Luck," Chatelaine January 1952, 3.

Ibid.


Byrne Hope Sanders, "What do you think of Chatelaine magazine?" Chatelaine September 1951, 3.

Ibid.


Ibid.

Mrs. N. Schurko, Gatehill, Ontario to the Editor, "Reader Takes Over," Ibid., 4.

Mrs. F.C. Knight, Burlington, Ontario to Editor, "Reader Takes Over," Chatelaine July 1952, 6.


Agnes Macphail was elected as the MP for South-east Grey from 1921-1940. After her federal defeat she moved to the Ontario legislature and served as an MPP (York East) from 1943-1951.

Lotta Dempsey, "...she wouldn't have been elected dog-catcher...," Chatelaine April 1952, 3.

Ibid.

Montreal subscriber to Editor, "Reader Takes Over," Chatelaine June 1952, 2.

A former admirer to Editor, "Reader Takes Over," Ibid.

18 Mrs. N. Schurko, Gatchill, Ontario to Editor, "Reader Takes Over," Chatelaine August 1952, 2.

29 (Mrs. L.R.) Doris Gehman, Cultus Lake, B.C. to Editor, "Reader Takes Over," Chatelaine August 1952, 3.

30 John Clare, "It's a tough time to be in love," Chatelaine May 1954, 1.

31 Ibid.

32 D.A. Robertson, Lethbridge to the Editor, "Reader Takes Over," Chatelaine March 1953, 3.

33 "Canadian Home Journal ad" and "Chatelaine ad" Canadian Advertising: Canadian Media Authority January/February 1957, 301, 121 & 127.


35 New and improved refers to their buyout of the Canadian Home Journal and the revamped style and tone advocated by the Dichter Study.


37 Doris Anderson, "We've Been Emerging Long Enough," Chatelaine October 1958, 16.

38 Doris Anderson, "We Need More Women Scientists," Chatelaine April 1959, 16.


40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.


43 Ibid.


45 'Disgusted' to the Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine September 1950.

46 Mrs. H. McMaster, Orangeville, Ontario to Editors, "Letters to Chatelaine" Chatelaine June 1956, 2

47 Statistics taken from the 1950s Letters Database.


49 Public Archives of Ontario (PAO), Maclean Hunter Record Series (MHRS) F-4-4-a Box 438, Mrs. P.J. Kennedy, East Chizetcoak, Halifax County, to Editors.

50 Statistics compiled from the general survey database. Percentage based on the figures for total article pages and total magazine pages for the decade. The range throughout the decade is considerably different, from a low of 5.6% in the November 1952 issue to a high in July 1953 of 31.3%. For more information see Appendix 1.

51 PAO, MHRS, B-2-4-A-D Box 89, Maclean Hunter Newsweekly, May 12, 1950, Volume 40 Number 19, 6.
Statistics taken from the 1950s article database see Appendix for more details.

Kate Aitken, Robert Thomas Allen, Doris McCubbin Anderson, Dr. William E. Blatz, Max Braithwaite, Pearl S. Buck, June Callwood, Ellen Fairclough, Trent Frayne, Robert Fulford, Clyde Gilmour, Donald R. Gordon, Dr. Marion Hilliard, Bruce Hutchison, Sidney Katz, Roger Lemelin, Jeanne Locke, Margaret Mead, C. Knowlton Nash, Hilda Neatby, Christina McCall Newman, Peter C. Newman, Phyllis Lee Peterson, Dorothy Sangster, Eric Severeid, and Claire Wallace all contributed articles to Chatelaine in the fifties.


Ibid.

Statistics from the Articles 1950 Database, see Appendix for further information.


Ibid.

Ibid., 27 & 37.


Ibid., 64.

Ibid., 69.

“Who is Beverley Grey?” Chatelaine June 1950, 68.


Ibid.

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Ibid.

Mrs. L. Hosie, Regina, Saskatchewan to Editors, “Reader Takes Over,” Chatelaine April 1952, 104.

Mrs. L.M., Winnipeg, Manitoba to Editors, “Reader Takes Over” Ibid.


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Mrs. E.A. Scully, Lethbridge, Alta to Editors, “Reader Takes Over,” Chatelaine April 1952, 104.

“Chatelaine Centre,” Chatelaine April 1953, 1.


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78 Ibid., 24.
79 Ibid., 43 & 45.
80 Ibid., 46.
82 M.M. Storey, Grandview, Manitoba to Editors, "Reader Takes Over," Ibid.
84 Ibid.
85 Ibid., 76.
87 Mrs. L.A. Pecker, Port Credit, Ontario to Editors, "Reader Takes Over," Chatelaine March 1952, 2.
89 V.W., Vancouver, B.C. to Editors "Reader Takes Over," Ibid.
90 Mrs. R. May, Strathcona, Manitoba to Editors, "Reader Takes Over," Chatelaine July 1952, 4.
92 Ibid., 17.
93 Mrs. Margaret Sorhus, Kindersley, Saskatchewan to Editors, "Reader Takes Over," Chatelaine December 1953, 3.
94 Madeleine Waldron, Montreal, Quebec to Editors, "Reader Takes Over," Ibid.
95 Jeannine Locke, "Can the Hungarians Fit In?" Chatelaine May 1957, 24.
96 Ibid., 52.
97 Ibid., 25.
98 Ibid., 53 & 55.
99 Ibid., 55.
100 Ibid., 56.
103 Rev. G. Simor, SJ, St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church, Toronto to Editors, "Letters to Chatelaine," Ibid.
104 Yvonne Bobb and Jeannine Locke, "Are Canadians Really Tolerant?" Chatelaine September 1959, 27.
Bobb claimed that many Canadians were smugly superior about their lack of racism but her experiences convinced her otherwise—thus she labeled Canadians hypocritical.

“The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine November 1959, 134.

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Mrs. M. Ferrare, Toronto to Editors, Ibid.

Helen Kent, Richmond Hill to Editors, Ibid.


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Mrs. D. Milner, Winnipeg to Editors, “Reader Takes Over.” Ibid.


Mrs. W.J. Henley, Huntsville, Ontario to Editors, “Reader Takes Over,” Ibid.


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Ibid., 13.


Davies letter, Chatelaine June 1955, 3.

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Lorraine Porter, “We Found Fun and Freedom on $2,100 A Year,” Chatelaine September 1959, 43.

Ibid., 68-70.

Ibid.

Dr. Marion Hilliard, “Woman’s Greatest Enemy is Fatigue” Ibid., 13.
131 Ibid., 13 & 57.


133 Hilliard, 58.

134 Ibid., 59.


136 Mrs. Louise Sandvold, Crystal Springs, Saskatchewan to Editors, Ibid.

137 Chatelaine Cover, January 1956.


139 Ibid., 38 & 39.

140 Ibid., 40.


142 E.M.K., Halifax to Editors, Ibid.

143 R.H., Edmonton to Editors, Ibid.

144 R.D., Campbellton, N.B. to Editors, Ibid.

145 Owen J. Bennett, Abbotsford, B.C. to Editors, Ibid.


147 Dr. Marion Hilliard, “Stop Being Just a Housewife,” Chatelaine September 1956, 11.

148 Ibid., 90.

149 Ibid., 91.


151 A.B., Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

152 Mrs. R.B., Alberta to Editors, Ibid.


155 Mrs. Joan Arker, Parry Sound, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

156 Mrs James French, Whalley, B.C. to Editors, Ibid.
Mr. and Mrs. P. Grant, Agincourt, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.


Hector Bolitho, "Let's Not Work the Queen to Death," Chatelaine January 1953, 9.

Ibid., 56.


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Mrs. Bill Scott, Red Deer to Editors, "Reader Takes Over," Ibid., 3.

Mrs. L.K. Thomas, Lethbridge to Editors, "Reader Takes Over," Ibid.

Miss F.M. Harris, Smiths Falls, Ontario to Editors, "Reader Takes Over," Chatelaine May 1953, 9.

Mrs. A. Synder, Edmonton, Alberta to Editors, Ibid.

Mrs. M. Megran, Montreal to Editors, Ibid.

Seven Sisters is the affectionate term used to describe the big American women's magazines: Good Housekeeping, McCall's, Ladies Home Journal, Family Circle, Woman's Day, Redbook, and Better Homes and Gardens.

M. Robinson, New Westminster, B.C. to Editors, Chatelaine May 1953, 9.

Mrs. R. Dueck of Lethbridge, Alberta to Editors, Ibid.


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Mrs. L. Carruthers, Dartmouth, N.S. to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine November 1959, 134.

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Mrs. C.R. Baker, Ottawa to Editors, Ibid.

Mrs. E.D. Pigott, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine February 1960, 106.

Dr. Alastair MacLeod, "The Sickness in Our Suburbs," Chatelaine October 1958, 22-23.

Ibid., 22.

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Ibid., 96.

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183 Mrs. Vera Fiddler, Ibid., 50.
184 Mrs. Irene Craig Neil, Port Stanley, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.
185 PAO, MHRS, F-4-4-a Box 436, Doris Anderson to Professor S.D. Clark, Department of Sociology, University of Toronto, 5 March 1959.
186 Cynthia Steers, "How Much Are You Worth to Your Husband?" Chatelaine April 1959, 34 & 35.
187 Mrs. Anna Tennenhaus, Bathurst, N.B. to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine June 1959, 110.
188 Tom Richardson, Kindersley, Saskatchewan, Ibid.
189 Mrs. D.T. Vanstone, Beaconsfield, Quebec, Ibid.
190 Eileen Morris, "How to Go To University At Home," Chatelaine August 1959, 8.
191 "Editorial note," Chatelaine October 1959, 156.
192 PAO, MHRS F-4-4-a Box 440, Doris Anderson to Eileen Morris, 17 August 1959.
193 PAO, MHRS F-4-4-b Box 442, Mrs. Phyllis Bentley, Montreal to Anderson, 15 May 1962.
195 Ibid.
196 Ibid., 104.
197 "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine October 1959, 156.
198 Mrs. H.C. Walshaw, Calgary to Editors, Ibid.
199 V. Leclair, Ottawa to Editors, Ibid.
200 Mrs. R. S. Ricciotti, Wallaceburg to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine November 1959, 134.
201 Mrs. K. Kirkpatrick, Duncan, B.C. to Editors, Ibid.
Chapter 5: Stories and “Ideas”--Fiction & Departments

"A Present for Miss Merriam" and "Fifteen Borrowed Dollars," in December Chatelaine, are the finest stories I have read in a long time. It's refreshing to read fascinating decent stories about good everyday people. There are still a lot on this earth but they are sadly neglected in modern fiction."¹

--Mrs Pearl M. Walker, Maine, U.S.A.

"All I can think of to say is thank you, thank you, thank you. Paris may be the world’s leader in fashion for the pencil thin slim types but downtown Metz hasn’t much to offer the prospective mother. French dressmakers are wonderful, though, and I expect lovely results from your February maternity patterns. I want you to know how my Chatelaine travels. First my landlady enjoys looking through it and if there is anything she particularly wants to know, I translate. Next it travels down the street to my butcher’s wife. Finally it makes the rounds of my Canadian girl friends. To each of us, when Chatelaine is in the house, it’s just a little of home and we appreciate it immensely."²

--Norma R. Herman, Metz, France

Women’s magazines, like detective novels, soap operas, science fiction and other pop culture formulas are specific genres which, if they intend to keep and attract new fans of that particular genre, must follow certain conventions. One of the prime conventions of women’s magazines are the inclusion of romance fiction and service department features which include regular columns on beauty and fashion, food, decorating, gardening, housekeeping and child raising. Magazines may fine tune their departmental features, or rotate the inclusion of the various features, but the total absence of this type of material would seem as foreign as a detective fiction novel without a murder to solve. Thus, while in previous component sections, it has been demonstrated that the magazine played with the conventions of the format, particularly with respect to editorials and general feature articles, this section reaffirms Chatelaine’s identity as a ‘typical’ woman’s magazine. It would be reductionist, however, to interpret the inclusion of stories or “ideas” for the household as a means by which Canadian women were encouraged to stay in their homes and content themselves with their housewifely role. That it was prescriptive literature is clear. What it was teaching, however, merits some careful analysis.

FICTION

"...we housewives like a story as a pick-me-up while resting the arches and getting ready to tackle the next job. A laugh over a cartoon or a cry over a piece of fiction is to my mind what I hope to find when I pick up a magazine...."³

--Mrs. M.A. E. McLeod, West Hill, Ontario
"Some suggestions:...a serial (fiction) gives you something extra-special to look forward to each month."4
--Mrs. Clifton Collier, Albert County, N.B.

"The bonus fiction section—blah!—I read it and then say ‘oh, fiddle.’ It’s a waste of time. The paper is horrible—it doesn’t add to the magazine. They must do it for economy purposes so I’ll go along with it.”5
--married Winnipeg woman

"Please, how about a simple, uncomplicated love story? Morley Callaghan is all right for the smart set, but he and his kind of writer are not for us simple souls."6
--Vera Vanmeer, Burnaby, B.C.

Chatelaine’s fiction component was composed almost entirely of formulaic romance fiction, aside from a handful of stories published by authors like Morley Callaghan, Hugh Garner, Alice Munro, Ernest Buckler, Gabrielle Roy, Hugh MacLennan, Mazo de la Roche, and even a previously undiscovered George B. Shaw. In a rare moment of self parody (about fiction), Chatelaine acknowledged this fact by publishing the article, “Ten Plot Lines We Can Do Without” in the June 1950 issue. According to Joyce Marshall, a Canadian novelist and author of this article, she enjoyed magazine fiction but was dismayed by the repetitious format of idiotic plotlines:

Don’t get me wrong. I like reading fiction. I like the excitement of opening a fresh copy of my favourite magazine, with its glowing illustrations of provocative heroines and godlike males. The thing I don’t like is the certainty that in at least one story per issue I’ll meet My Most Detested Plot.7

These fabled ten plotlines included: “Mother Takes a Holiday”, “The Girl Who Wears Glasses,” “The More I Hate You The More I Love You,” “The Boss Comes to Dinner,” and “Love is All.”8 Marshall’s scathing commentary about the banality of much magazine fiction caused the editors to append this note to her article: “We guarantee that none appear in this issue.”9 [Emphasis theirs] Marshall was not an ‘average’ reader yet she expected that women’s magazines publish good romance fiction—a demand echoed by Verna Vanmeer (introduction epigraph) and other readers. Marshall’s definition of good fiction included more sophisticated plotlines, better writing, and respect for the readers’ intelligence. Many of the stories published in the magazine during the decade mimicked Marshall’s ‘Ten Most Detested Plotlines’ because they were overly dependent on implausible plots, poorly written characters, and endings which were far too trite. The fiction component limped along throughout the fifties, growing progressively smaller until the Dichter report recommended
that it be jettisoned entirely. Hundreds of readers protested this move which firmly established that the fiction component had a dedicated following amongst Chatelaine readers. This chapter provides a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the magazine's fiction to examine its popularity: critically analyzing the themes, codes, plots and characterizations employed by the writers and interpreting the various ways that Chatelaine readers might have interpreted the fiction component of the magazine.

John Cawelti, in his landmark study Adventure, Mystery and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture, advances four hypotheses about why formula fiction was so popular:

1. Formula stories affirm existing interests and attitudes by presenting an imaginary world that is aligned with those interests and attitudes.
2. Formulas resolve tensions and ambiguities resulting from the conflicting interests of different groups within the culture or from ambiguous attitudes toward particular values.
3. Formulas enable the audience to explore in fantasy the boundary between the permitted and the forbidden and to experience in a carefully controlled way the possibility of stepping across this boundary.
4. Finally, literary formulas assist in the process of assimilating changes in values to traditional imaginative constructs.

Chatelaine’s fiction fits Cawelti’s typology very well because readers were expecting to get and usually received romance fiction. That fiction featured characters and settings that the readers were familiar with, the drama often took place in suburbia and all of these stories conformed to the discipline of the happy ending. But in working towards the resolution, the characters often grappled with tensions, emotions and issues that threatened to disrupt or prevent the happy ending. It was these fissures in the plotlines that often made the stories compelling since they illustrated the paradoxes and ambiguities faced by women readers in the fifties. Recently, academics have turned their attention to this previously dismissed form of popular fiction, realizing that the stories’ simple plot lines, readily discernible themes and symbolism make excellent sources from which to extrapolate the concerns of a given society. Romance fiction has been the fiction of choice for many women because, according to Janice Radway, it is “compensatory literature” which “supplies them with an important emotional release that is proscribed in daily life because the social role with which they identify themselves leaves little room for guiltless, self-interested pursuit of individual pleasure.” Radway concluded that through romance reading women created a community for themselves, albeit one mediated by the mass media, in which they sought comfort,
support and relaxation. The thesis of pop cultural ‘communities’ is very important to this work on Chatelaine magazine since to a varying degree all of the editorial components in the magazine encouraged the readers to consider the Chatelaine world as a ‘community’ of Canadian women readers. In contrast to the editorials and the articles, which provided thought-provoking pieces, along with entertainment value, the short stories had a different dynamic: they provided fantasy, or escapism. They did not overtask the reader but rather provided a source of relaxation. The fissures permitted readers to interpret the stories differently and to identify with the heroine’s problems but they seldom provided resolutions in which the heroine opted out of the status quo.

Fiction had always been a component of Chatelaine, but this period represented an era in which the fiction component of the magazine was under attack and in decline. The fiction component was most prevalent at the beginning of the decade, when it was common for each issue to have three or four stories. By the end of the decade the number of stories had declined to two per issue, unless there was a fiction bonus section. Fiction bonuses, printed on newsprint at the back of the periodical, were inaugurated in 1956. These bonuses appeared a few times per year, usually containing three short stories or a complete serialized novel. On average, fiction represented 11% of the magazine’s offerings during the decade.

The straight romances, those in which the characters were involved in a typical love plot (i.e., before the story they were not married to each other), accounted for 57% of all the stories examined. According to Cawelti, “The crucial defining characteristic of a romance is not that it stars a female but that its organizing action is the development of a love relationship, usually between a man and a woman...The moral fantasy of the romance is that of love triumphant and permanent, overcoming all obstacles.” Another category, also loosely within the realm of the romance, was the family or marital genre, which accounted for 31% of the fiction. This romance sub-genre was fascinating. These plotlines tended to focus on marital dissatisfaction and problems which, naturally, by the end of the tale were favourably resolved. This type of story, the ‘falling back in love with your husband or wife,’ provided a window on fifties marriages and life in the ubiquitous suburban development. In addition, this genre included stories with other types of familial conflict: teen dating, the question of when to have children, employment concerns, or life in suburbia. They were romances because the happily-ever-after ending was always employed. They focused on
love in its familial varieties, and the emphasis was on inter-personal relations. The other genre which proved popular was the ‘protagonist’s quest’, appearing in 7% of the sampled fiction. These quests involved the protagonists in some sort of search, usually personal, but they did not include a romantic involvement. According to Cawelti’s analysis these quest stories would be classified as melodrama:

“Melodrama, then, is the fantasy of a world that operates according to our heart’s desires....its chief characteristic is the combination of a number of actions and settings in order to build up the sense of a whole world bearing out the audience’s traditional patterns of right and wrong, good and evil.”

Finally, although rarely published during the decade and only included once in the fifties sample, there was the mystery. Although these stories also contained love plotlines, the main focus was on solving a crime. Similarly, humourous stories did not appear very frequently. Given readers’ penchant for misinterpreting humourous pieces, the editors decided that it was not worth the critical mail or the letters of explanation.

In contrast to the writers of non-fiction articles, the Chatelaine short story writers were rarely identified in the “Chatelaine Centre” or “What’s New at Chatelaine” sections. The likely reason for this was that the magazine preferred to keep the American origin of the stories, and writers, quiet. The fiction editor, Almeda Glassey, was based in New York. Glassey made frequent trips to Toronto, but the main component of her job was to read through the “thousands of manuscripts” the magazine received each year. Chatelaine was at a disadvantage since it was competing with American magazines for their fiction, and could not pay comparable rates for the fiction and serialized novels they published. Rates of pay for the fiction writers whose work appeared in the magazine were $400 for First North American Serial Rights, rising to $600 for the third and all subsequent stories published by the same author in the periodical. In comparison, an American magazine like the Ladies Home Journal could afford to offer $10,000 for a serialized novel or monograph, depending on its popularity. Thus, other than works by Canadian authors (who were often delighted to have the opportunity to write for the magazine) the majority of the imported fiction was second-rate in comparison with the American magazines. This fact was often noted by the readers, and was one that Chatelaine acknowledged but never publicized. When a Canadian author’s story ran in the magazine, the person was always identified. This was particularly
true if the author became a regular writer for the periodical, like Sheila MacKay Russell in the sixties, or won an award for the contribution, like Ernest Buckler in the late fifties.

Many readers appeared resistant to stories which deviated from the romance and melodrama conventions, so when more sophisticated types of short stories appeared they were often panned by the readers. Ultimately, the editors of the magazine were always searching for "light romance and perhaps the odd story on marriage and mother-in-laws. Of course, we can always use a good mystery." Throughout the decade only 15% of the fiction sample were written by Canadians. Ironically, stories were overwhelmingly set in Canada (83%), followed by the United States (13%). Since the vast majority of stories did not have a very well developed sense of place, indeed they were virtually unidentifiable cities, suburbs or in rarer cases rural areas, Canadian keywords often were inserted to give the impression that they were set in this country. It seems evident that the editors at Chatelaine were adept at reworking the titles or settings of the fiction, to give the appearance of a Canadian context.

Women comprised the majority of fiction authors (75%) but given the lack of identification of the authors, and the often bizarre names, many of the stories appear to have been published under a pseudonym. The average protagonist of a Chatelaine story was an Anglo-Canadian woman in her twenties who had a equal chance of being married or single. Married female protagonists were usually stay-at-home wives and mothers but if she was unmarried she was most likely to be a student (either at the high school or university level) or to work in a clerical job. After the protagonist, the next most important character in each story, character one, was the ideal man. Like the protagonist he was also young (mid-twenties), of Anglo-Canadian background, and his marital status matched that of the protagonist (i.e., if she was single, so was he). His occupations were much more diverse than hers but he leaned toward the professions, or creative and cerebral work as either a writer, artist or academic, or corporate employee. Most of the second characters were men as well (62%) although they were more likely to be employed in the corporate sector than first characters.

The female characters were often emotional, manipulative or dominant while male characters were inclined to be macho, dominant or emotional. Women were not cowering victims in this fiction. Female characters were usually the protagonists which usually meant
that they were more likely to have agency and to determine the resolution of the story. These gendered relations of power illustrate an almost contradictory combination of female autonomy within a seemingly traditional genre: in Chatelaine romance stories, the woman almost always got her man. Overall, in the fiction sample, the female characters determined the resolution in 60% of stories, while both men and women equally determined the outcome in 3% of cases. These findings support the conclusions of Alison Light's work on British women's magazine fiction in the 1950s:

They all offer their women readers symbolic landscapes of lost and found identities, of simultaneous rebellion and submission, an exploration of social constraints and often a deeply pleasurable resolution of them which is--often impossibly--both individual and fully social.\textsuperscript{28}

In other words, fictional heroines had autonomy, and exercised their own agency in the majority of these stories; paradoxically, however, they chose the socially respectable and expected position for women: marriage and the home. Female characters were often the more powerful characters in the stories but they were equally likely to achieve this power through feminine wiles (crying, scheming, over-emotional displays intended to manipulate), because they were mothers, wives or daughters (family role) or by exploiting their sexuality. Female power derived from feminism (either liberal or maternal) was rare. In stories where the male characters had power, they relied on patriarchal privileges, institutional reasons (business, medical, and legal expertise) or, very rarely, on sexuality.

In conclusion, gender relations were the prime focus of the stories. Most writers employed gender issues in their works of fiction while a large number also addressed class and age.\textsuperscript{29} These were stories concerned with the individual and her personal dramas, and far less concerned with geographical, political or international events. The lack of defined Canadian locations and settings did not matter because this was an interior world of emotions, feelings, personal identity and class identity. Characters were evaluated in the course of most stories by personal, often biological, categories-- gender, appearance, family connections and class-- rather than more public or meritocratic issues-- educational attainments, employment, or knowledge. The discourse employed in Chatelaine fiction was that of personal identity and the private world of gender, emotions, and class. The most popular themes were: marriage or dating, class stratification, family, conflict in gender roles, and sexuality.\textsuperscript{30} Binary conventions, oppositional pairings like light/dark were conventions
easily and readily utilized in formula fiction since they provided a readily accessible framework of interpretation—indeed much character and plot development was so explicit as to need no interpretation. Chatelaine stories utilized three binaries repeatedly: feminine/masculine; adult/child; and hero/villain.31

While the overview of the survey results might appear to paint a rather conservative picture of Chatelaine fiction, the detailed examination of various themes—housewife unrest, masculinity, working women, heterosexuality, lesbianism, adultery, feminism, ethnicity, class and suburban ennui—were all addressed in the stories. These fissures are indicators of the tensions, conflicts and anxiety in suburbia. Wini Breines in her book Young, White and Miserable: Growing Up Female in the Fifties has remarked upon the paradox of the decade, the prescribed world of women, and the “cultural discontent and resistance” beneath the stereotypical facade of the fifties.32 This is an excellent characterization of the dynamic at work in the fiction component of Chatelaine magazine: many of these stories vividly illustrate social fissures and discontent as the female characters strain against and question the prescribed limits of their world, engage in moderate rebellion (if only within their own minds) only to accept the slightly modified or re-thought status quo at the end. The fiction component of the magazine illustrated that progress toward the resolution (marriage and the perfect life in suburbia) was not without its problems and that there were various turns in the road where the characters could have stopped on their way to the suburban bungalow.

Housewives’ lament:

The housewife tales were very interesting— for the discussion of the dissatisfaction experienced by the heroines and the ways, often very superficially, that the authors reconciled this discontent.33 “This is Life” by Sylvia Shirley put the moral of the story right up front, under the title, to catch the reader’s attention: "Home is more than a shelter. It’s a haven created by the warmth and tenderness of a woman’s heart.”34 The heroine, Ruth a stay-at-home housewife and mother, her husband Sam and pre-school daughter Debbi are the main characters. In contrast to most stories which took place in suburbia, or at least the private family home, this story was set in a small, third floor apartment. A minor family crisis—a broken fishbowl—precipitates Ruth’s soliloquy about her life:

Afraid to use the precious new vacuum cleaner, Ruth ran the carpet sweeper back and forth, carefully collecting the debris and just as carefully collecting her anger.
Nobody showed any respect for her work. It simply had no value to anyone. How did women stand it? It was impossible to simply go on being a cow and a third rate menial. How many women were institutionalized every year because they couldn't take it. Homemaking was not the glamorous adventure the magazines painted. You couldn't go backward, women must have some other place, some other rights. Who had made this a man's world anyway, and if it was why had they bothered to educate women, show them that there could be freedom?35

This passage provides a trenchant critique of the prescribed roles offered women in the fifties as well as the impossibly high-standards set by the service material, and advertisements, in women's magazines. It is also instructive that instead of “ease of use” or “freedom from worry” portrayed in the appliance advertisements Ruth worries about wear and tear on the machine-- hardly the image of carefree, conspicuous consumption. Stories such as this one illustrate the polysemic nature of the magazine-- the inclusion of a wide variety of (often conflicting) material. This ambiguity could result in greater reader identification since it recognized, and mimicked, the inconsistencies in women's lives. The limitation of many stories which featured this theme was that the female characters rarely uttered this critical commentary; rather it was kept as an internal dialogue, between the reader and the character. Ruth's reconciliation to her lot comes after an evening out with Sam, breakfast in bed (prepared by Sam and Debbi) the next day, and of the course the requisite discovery that her “helpers” had used all the dishes in the house. After her fury abates, and while cleaning-up, she reflects on the situation, and realizes that her husband and daughter would be lost without her:

She took a deep shivering breath. How near the edge of darkness they lived, and how much depended on her! Dear God, if she ever let go her end... Ruth took a quick look around the shining kitchen, breathed deep the good warm smell of the meat in the oven, remembered her mother-in-law with no real place to feel wanted on Sunday, heard Debbi's child-song from the next room, saw her husband's tender uncertainty and blinked. This was life, quick with warmth and love, red-blooded, sure and sane!36

The moral of this story was obvious. All women must shoulder their family burdens and make some sort of plan of action. Accepting this role provided happiness, or at least contentedness. The ending affirmed the belief that women had a common lot in life, as the title suggested “This is Life.” But no matter how neat and pat the ending of this story, real readers could have interpreted this tale of housewife's lament differently. Ruth's questioning had opened a door for the readers to take a different path. Although Ruth opts for the status quo, her re-assessment of her life serves as a form of empowerment. She realizes that as discontented as she often was, her role in the family was paramount. This story exemplifies
that paradoxical situation in which the female character has agency and yet opts for the status quo.

**Trapped Men:**

Julie Prise's "The Dark Hall," was representative of this troubling genre: a somber tale, told from a male protagonist's vantage point, about the stifling nature of marriage and work as a white collar drone at the firm of Wellington and Sanders. The interior monologue, a regular plot device, was featured in this story as our unnamed husband reflected on his life, marriage and wife (who was seated at the front of the streetcar) while he rode home on the streetcar:

> It would be interesting to watch a woman who hadn't the remotest idea her husband wanted a divorce. She was so safe in her busy unledged existence, bounded by the price of carrots, a weekly pamphlet on how to bring up her children and a yen for crackpot lectures. Scrambling little Libby. She seemed inexhaustible in her energy for the unimportant.

This indictment of the typical housewife and mother seems quite out of place for a woman's magazine. Our backseat philosopher was the stereotypically 'trapped man', tethered to a wife and two kids, a sick mother and uninspiring job, all of which his commentary made abundantly clear he detested and resented. In sharp contrast to how reconciliation is achieved in the housewife tales (resignation and responsibilities) trapped men need to reassert their dominance and virility. In this case he "stalks" his wife down the street:

Two blocks they went, and three....An overhanging branch hit him in the face and the tingling sensation was pleasant. He was surprised to discover he was enjoying himself. Every time he put his foot down, she listened. She felt. The heart inside the little green jacket was beginning to thump. And he was doing it. She was not thinking of anything in the world but him. He was adventure, a stranger in the night, bringing excitement to Libby. When they were not more than two arms' length apart, he whistled to her softly. She broke into a run. With the swiftness of fright, with both hands out, she pushed at the gate of the iron fence, swung it open. And he wheeled her around against the open gate and imprisoned her in his arms. He thrust his hands through her hair and jerked her hair back. He could see her face, flung up to him, a pale blur in the night, her mouth rounded to scream, her eyes big with shock. And he saw the shock leap to fury when her eyes met his. She lashed out at him with her fist. He laughed, brought his mouth down hard on hers and held her close while the wind blew her hair against his cheek. Abruptly her struggling ceased.

The sado-masochistic imagery, the pursuit, and Libby's terror at an impending assault all served to re-invigorate the husband's attraction to his wife. Instead of a divorce they plan a vacation. This story was troubling and perplexing from a number of perspectives, not the
least of which are the questions it raised of the readers’ reaction—did women find such tales appealing?

An important sub-theme in this story was the way the author dealt with heterosexuality. Chatelaine stories were never very explicit, in fact most readers complimented the editors for the “clean” fiction. The sensual culmination of most tales was the kiss and ‘tender embrace.’ Male characters initiated these moments of abandon, but in order to reassure themselves and the readers that they were ‘real men’ it was common for the adjectives ‘hard’, ‘forceful’ and ‘skillful’ to be used. These terms were code words for manliness and a powerful male heterosexuality. In turn, the women who were the beneficiaries of these kisses often expressed their sexuality as a concession: they went limp, ceased struggling, or gave in to their partner’s skillfulness. Sexuality was something only men possessed and could, at their own convenience, turn on or off in their partners. Passion, as defined by this story and countless others, was male-controlled, often included violence or mind-games, and both occurred and was completed swiftly. In contrast to the male characters and their passion, the female characters seemed dazed by the force and the pace—before they were aware of what was happening it was over.

While still married, all of the men in these stories experience some epiphanous event which, intellectually at least, undomesticates them. All of the stories end with the re-assertion of their manliness. These characters serve notice that they intend to reassert their privilege as ‘men of the house’ and in most cases, the women accept this with gratitude. The restoration of order in the fifties marital drama revolved around a new found appreciation of their wives, but also a definite determination to take back the control they had abdicated. For women readers, the misogynistic themes in all of these stories could not have been more overt. If they read oppositionally, they could take some interest in the male perspective of marital life in the fifties, but their sympathies could hardly lie with female characters that are bullied, stalked, and forced back into more circumscribed roles. They do highlight, however, how varied the content of Chatelaine fiction could be and that not all stories conformed to pat stereotypes about romance fiction.

**Working Wives:**

Working wives were not a common feature in Chatelaine fiction but a few stories
focused upon women’s employment. The tone of these stories was often very light-hearted as if to balance the ‘serious’ nature of the topic. Edith Brecht’s “Hats on Her Head” was representative of the employment stories. The heroine, Sally DeWitt, a rather empty-ended young bride, had been written off by her husband Lew, as “a pretty girl who only used her head for hats.” To keep his attention, and to keep him away from his intelligent, single female colleague, Sally decides to get a job—in, naturally, a hat shop. Money is not an issue, and never the motivation for the job. So, while this frothy little tale began with the stock character of much formula fiction, the good looking but vapid woman, Sally surprised the reader (and Lew) by getting a job. The story is accompanied by a Harold Town illustration which features a ruggedly handsome male, propped up in bed reading while scornfully glancing at his wife across the room. Sally is propped up in her identical twin bed, twirling her hair and playing with the ribbon on her nightgown. Between the two beds are a pile of hat boxes, one of which Town decorated with phallic illustrations—so much for coy sexuality. Further compounding the odd twist on a very conventional format the female character was the more sexual of the two, and the resolution did not restore the status quo:

They went to bed at the same time and the space between them seemed suddenly not there at all, so that when Lew reached out an arm and pulled her over to him, Sally wasn’t surprised. “Even if you are in business you’re still mine, you know, Sally,” his voice full of the old tenderness. “We mustn’t let things come between us ever again. Only I wish you wouldn’t go to those openings. Drop the hats, and take a trip with me,” he pleaded. Sally’s heart cried “Yes,” but her head said, “No!” Her head said, “Be true to yourself! You can’t live idly and hold your own, or Lew’s respect. Share your life generously with him, but stick to hats.”

Sally’s determination made an impression on Lew, although he confessed to “not fully understanding” her decision. “Hats on her Head” illustrates that formulaic fiction could, at times, stretch the conventions and truly surprise the reader. It would have been perfectly conventional for Sally to assuage her marital boredom with more shopping, visiting, or a greater devotion to her husband. Instead the resolution of this idiosyncratic story was work. Although the status quo was not broached often, when it was it could be in the most implausible and unlikely fictional situations.

**The Morality Tale:**

While straight romance stories glorified young love and gave the impression that all teenage girls spent all of their waking hours contemplating their dating prospects, the
marital/family stories dealt with the aftermath of marriage and children. It was rare to have one of the marital/family stories concentrate on young, that is teenage, married couples. Still in May 1953 Chatelaine introduced a “new Canadian writer” Charlotte Moore who wrote about “two nice kids who grew up too fast.” "Don’t Cry, Little Girl" was accompanied by an appropriately melodramatic illustration of a brunette teenager lying face down on her pillow, crying. Given those overt hints about content, the general contours of the plot was obvious. Dorrie and Biff, aged 18 and 19 respectively, had married when they discovered that Dorrie was pregnant. This overly moralistic tale was calculated to give teenagers and their parents pause about the ramifications of “young love” and depicted their life in stark terms: they lived in a small apartment, Biff worked at the gas station and they had 'no prospects’. The apartment described sounded very similar to that of the Kramdens, televisions’ “Honeymooners.” Chatelaine writers’ used apartments to signify that characters were down-on-their luck, working class or troubled. In this case, Dorrie’s mother was scandalized that her daughter now lived in such a place, after her middle-class, suburban upbringing. The resolution for this piece, particularly in an era which viewed marriage as sacrosanct, centred on the fact that Dorrie and Biff both “grow up” and accept responsibility:

"I don't belong with those guys any more sweetheart. I belong with you and young Inglefritz." Her heart sang. It was the first time Biff had ever joked about the baby, tagged it with a nickname like young couples you read about in magazine stories. At the hospital entrance they had to wait a while before she could get out of the taxi. She gripped Biff's firm strong hands like a vise, but she did not utter a sound. She was no longer a little girl crying for her mother. She was a woman leaning on her husband's strength.

For Dorrie, growing up meant learning to depend upon her husband and not to depend upon her mother, or family for support. Acceptance and maturity for women, ironically, involved dependence upon a man. The reference to magazine stories would seem to serve multiple purposes. Initially it made Dorrie and Biff seem more realistic because, just like the reader, Dorrie read magazines. Magazine reading was obviously a common currency amongst women, and one which carried some authority, particularly in matters of the heart. Perhaps the author was also questioning the impact of such stories on impressionable readers, in keeping with her heavily moralistic tale. In examining how fictional heroines worked out their dilemmas Chatelaine’s readers could re-assess their own beliefs. However, one should not presume that the closure, or ending created by the authors, would always mirror the solution that readers would think appropriate.
Feminism:

In the mid-fifties, a few stories began to incorporate feminist themes and they provided an intriguing example of the way that authors were able to take new ideas and mold them to fit the romance convention.45 “Did You Hear What Betty Mallory Did?” by Ruth Tempest is representative of these stories. The plotline consisted of heroine Betty Mallory registering a complaint with a police officer because a man called her a ‘woman driver.’ While this story appears to be a standard piece of formula fluff, in reality the reader learns of systemic discrimination against women through an examination of Betty’s case. Listen as Betty tells the police officer her complaint: "'But there is harm done,' Betty Mallory said. 'I was unreasonably insulted. I broke no law. I am a good driver; sex has nothing to do with it. I want to file a complaint against that man--isn't there something like--well, using abusive and obscene language?'"46 Dismissed by the police as inconsequential, our Betty gets her day when she is given a front page story in the local newspaper:

"I am filing this complaint," Mrs Mallory told a local reporter "on behalf of all other women drivers who are sick and tired of being insulted and maligned without just cause. The accident rate on the highways of our country is a national scandal," she said. “The blame falls on teen-age drivers, and so called 'women drivers'. I assert it is the boors and vulgarians, the egotists and the rule-scoffers who should be caught and punished..."47

In the resolution, Betty was vindicated since the abusive male was convicted of drunk driving, making her husband and neighbours proud of her stand. From a feminist perspective Betty’s victory was rather hollow because her motivation for lodging the complaint—objection to sexist, derogatory comments about women drivers—was not acknowledged. She won because the man was considered a bonafide menace to society not for his petty slander of Betty’s gender. However, this story does raise feminist issues, and critiques the sexist and degrading commentary about women’s abilities. Betty Mallory is an example of a heroine who stands her ground, rather than re-evaluating her life and taking solace in her family.

Adultery:

“Alive Again” by Canadian writer Evan Hunter was the first piece of romance fiction that actually dealt with affairs and sexuality in an open fashion.48 The opening teaser proclaimed: "This was the moment she had hoped would never come—when he would demand again the love she secretly feared had never died, and she’d have to decide the price
of being...Alive Again." Our protagonist, Lois (a wife and mother), meets her former lover David on a Montreal street. Years earlier they had an affair, when David was married and Lois was single. Reminiscing over a drink, at a bar called the Plotter's Hideaway, David informs Lois that he'd like to "make love" and that "Women love differently than men." Since the readers are privy to Lois' thoughts we knew that she was tempted, yet she decides that her marriage, child and her 'responsibilities' were more important than feeling 'Alive Again'. Most Chatelaine fiction was very chaste, even when depicting married couples.

Although this story perpetuates the notion of difference between male and female sexuality, it does permit women a sexuality. 'Maturity' for female characters meant finding and marrying the right man. The right man had a good job, was kind and considerate, and yet the right man never seemed to be the man who sparked romantic or sexual feelings in the female characters. While most stories did not elicit much reaction from readers in terms of letters to the editor, reader response to Alive was swift and negative. This letter, from M.M. in Toronto, epitomizes the letters published in response to this story: "...for a magazine purporting to be a Canadian women's magazine to print such a story. Liquor, obsession with sex and laxness in morals are now undermining our national life. Leave that type of story for across the border. Its only redeeming feature was the end."51

**Cross-Class Love and Ethnicity:**

Mil Smith's story "End of Summer" depicted a summer romance between a middle-class, Anglo-American teenager named Vicky and her working-class, Italian beach boyfriend Guido. Set in California, this story was meant to be mildly titillating (see illustration). Descriptions of Guido in his swimming suit, his body, and his sexuality abounded, as did descriptions of his effect on Vicky:

He reached for her hand and Vicky found herself running down the sand beside him, very conscious of his hand, hard and live and thin-fingered, around hers. She screamed, half from shock, half from delicious pleasure, as the first breaker caught them and he whooped with her, letting go her hand to dive like a seal into the furying green water.
The possibilities of this story breaking convention were greatly diminished by the story’s opening statement: “Guido didn’t belong in Vicky’s world. Could she share his?” Guido had two strikes against him: Italian ethnicity and his working-class background (he was a cannery worker). Despite the objections of her family (and they are all based on criticisms of his job and ethnic background) Vicky was determined to date Guido. Only when Guido told her that he was due to be transferred to another cannery, and she saw him in his street clothes, did it become apparent to Vicky that they were unsuitable. For a summer fling (really a few passionate kisses) Guido was a perfect fantasy: well-built, sexy, handsome and fun. But at the end of summer (with all its imagery of returning to school, to normal life and maturity) Vicky opts for her longtime beau Wally. Wally, in his office wear, and carrying that classic bourgeois icon, the briefcase, matches her class, educational level and her ethnicity. Like most of the other stories which preceded it, the resolution restored the status quo. But ironically for a piece of ‘romance’ fiction this piece confirmed a rather harsh reality, that marriage and growing up, meant selecting someone appropriate, ‘a good provider’ in the parlance of the day, rather than the traditional romance staples of romance, passion and love. Wally and Vicky were as comfortable as an old tennis shoe, but Vicky (and the readers) knew that their relationship lacked passion.

Lesbianism?:

One story proved to be an exception to all others in the romance genre, “Vixen in the Snow,” a fantastic story of imagery friends and ‘true love’ imagery which featured a chaste lesbian plotline. From the suggestive title and the story’s opening teaser: “The story of an elfin girl and a love that knew neither time nor age,” it is clearly not a standard piece of romance fiction. The illustration which accompanies this story is drawn in a shade of blue gray and features a fox and a bright eyed young woman caught in a blinding snow storm. ‘Vixen in the Snow’ contains a veritable treasure trove of suggestive imagery. The author’s choice of a fantasy or fairytale genre allows her greater latitude in character development, plotting and motivation.

The setting is Hazen’s Hollow which is an isolated location, seven miles from the village where the protagonist’s family lives. This “queer place,” as the Hollow was identified numerous times, was formerly inhabited by the Hazen family who have long ago abandoned their farm. The Hollow has returned to its natural state—a rustic garden of Eden. It is a
fertile and enchanted place where weeds, wild flowers, animals and two young girls cavort amongst the tangle of shrubs, grasses, overgrown fruit trees—apples naturally—and abandoned cottages.

The narrator and protagonist of this story is the aptly named Ivy Frazier. Throughout the course of the story she ages from ten to nineteen, and the plot follows her weekly visits to her elderly Uncle Ira, the Hollow’s only remaining resident. On her first solo journey to the Hollow, at age ten, she immediately falls in love with the place and meets the mysterious Mattie Hazen:

“This morning, though, as I was passing the old Hazen cemetery, I caught a flash among the tipsy headstones... and turned to investigate it, I saw, stretched out in the sun on a fallen moss covered slate marker surrounded by patches of pink and white ground phlox, a mother fox. Her ears were alert, but her pointed face was placid and pleased... with infinite care I lowered myself until I lay flat on my stomach in the tall weeds and gave myself up to the pure pleasure of watching them play. They were so pretty and graceful and unconscious of being observed that I laughed aloud... ‘Now you’ve done it,’ said a voice in my ear, and I turned my head quickly... A little girl was lying prone beside me, her slanting yellowish eyes laughing at my discomfort... She had a pointed little face, and her remarkable eyes were fringed with long black lashes, but her hair was the peculiar thing about her—reddish, with a queer dark gloss to it. It was the sort of hair you wanted to stroke. She said, ‘I’m Mattie Hazen. What shall we play?’”

And so the love that knew “neither time nor age” begins. Rich’s recurrent use of the word queer is worth mentioning, particularly due to its absence from other works of fiction in Chatelaine. No other story utilized that word and thus Rich’s use of “queer” could be understood as a code-word for lesbian readers or those familiar with the multiple meanings of that term. Naturally, Mattie and Ivy become fast friends and their weekly rendez-vous by the Hazen cemetery becomes the focus of the story. The imagery and the intense friendship between the two girls is reminiscent of Lucy Maud Montgomery’s Anne of Green Gables and given both the popularity of that work and the similarities between the texts, it would appear that Rich was familiar with Montgomery’s work.

When Ivy returns to her uncle’s, she is quick to tell him about her new friend and she “breathlessly” tells him that she “loves her.” Ira, the stereotypically laconic, unflappable farmer, advises her to “keep your tongue between your teeth,” and not to tell her family or friends. Ivy’s visits continue and throughout the summer she is able to spend more time in the Hollow than during the school year. Notably, while Mattie and Ivy’s relationship
blossoms easily and is a source of great joy to both of them, Ivy’s relationships with other girls are an entirely different matter, as she explains:

None of the other girls were like her, and their silly chatter and budding interest in the boys and bewildering habit of being Best Friends one day and Not Speaking the next left me uneasy and unhappy. There were times when I didn’t see how I could possibly stand the days till I could run the Hollow with Mattie.

Threats to Mattie and Ivy’s relationship come from two fronts: teenage boys and Mattie’s mother. The most troubling threat to Ivy and Mattie’s relationship was Ivy’s persistent suitor Fred Ellis. Now aged 16, Ivy’s mother comments on her unhealthy attachment to the Hollow and her misguided priorities:

“I’ve just about reached the limit of my patience with you, Ivy,” she announced. “And the first thing you know, Fred will stop asking you. He’ll get as sick as I am of hearing nothing but the Hollow, the Hollow, the Hollow. You’re going on 17 and it’s time you grew up. You act like a child, always running to the Hollow to play!” Oh, the scorn she put into that word, and I suppose she was right. I’d been so wrapped up in the Hollow and Mattie for so many years that my emotional development hadn’t kept pace with my age.

This emotional immaturity implied by the bond with a female as opposed to a male parallels the psychiatric descriptions of female homosexuals. It is not beyond the bounds of interpretation to posit that the Hollow is much more than just a geographical location, particularly given Ivy’s mother’s concern about how much time she spends there. The Hollow’s fecund and particularly female imagery easily invokes sexual imagery. While psychiatrists were quick to condemn sex deviates (one of the terms for homosexuals in the fifties) for their immature expressions of their sexuality, they were also quick to impress upon parents that masturbation was another form of juvenile or immature sexuality which required vigilance. Playing in the hollow could be a metaphor for masturbation just as easily as it could for lesbianism or intense same-sex bonding. More explicitly, Ivy’s mother is concerned that her daughter is not maturing properly. Fred is not her primary focus nor does she seem to respond to this relationship properly. While the mother is not aware of Mattie, nevertheless Ivy immediately makes the connection between her relationship with Mattie and her immaturity. Fred symbolizes more than just marriage and the normal life, he is Ivy’s future. If she spurns him she will jeopardize an ordered, comfortable life for a tenuous, insecure one.

Attempting another tactic, Ivy’s mother warns her that Ira ruined his life by pining away for a young woman who had died of pneumonia. This serves as the epiphanous
moment of the story as Ivy’s mother reveals the name of Ira’s long lost love—Mattie Hazen. Interestingly, when her mother mentions Mattie’s name Ivy’s face “went stiff and queer” and her father, upon hearing the conversation remarked that Mattie was a “queer looking girl”. In an attempt to rationalize the relationship, Ivy decides that her Mattie must be the deceased woman’s namesake. Shortly after this discussion, Ivy makes one last, tragic, trip to the Hollow where she discovers Uncle Ira dying of pneumonia. She races to find Mattie, but while running in the now raging snowstorm, she trips over a headstone—Mattie’s headstone—and promptly passes out. Her family, and the ever loyal Fred, find her lying in the snow.

After weeks of bed rest she is finally able to tell Fred what happened, and this concluding paragraph explains the story for the readers as well:

I told him a little of all this, because I thought he should know why I couldn’t marry him. He refused to understand, or perhaps he couldn’t. “Ivy, darling” he said, “you’ve been very sick. You had a terrible shock, finding your uncle dying, and then lying out there in the snow all that while until we found you. No wonder you’re all mixed up and upset. That little girl you say you used to play with—all children go through that, you know. . . . You’ll forget about it when you’re stronger.” I closed my eyes, pretending to be even more tired than I was, and after a while Fred went away. For just a moment I was sorry and a little lonely. But I’d get used to loneliness, I thought, as I began the long wait for the kind of love that I knew now could exist—the kind of love that refused to surrender to death, the kind of love that I might never find, but for which I could never, now, accept a substitute. It is unreasonable to wish that Rich had provided a better definition of ‘the kind of love’ to which Ivy refers, but all of the imagery and intensity of the relationship, coupled with the decisive dismissal of Fred permits one to conclude that this ‘fairytale’ is really about the ‘love that dare not speak it’s name.’ “Vixen in the Snow’s” ending is remarkably different from the conventions of the Chatelaine romance. Similarly, few stories ever focused upon female friendship as the major plot device. If female friendships occurred in the stories they were almost always secondary to the love-interest. Very few romances, and few fiction stories in general included such open-ended resolutions. The reader can conclude Ivy’s tale according to her perception of what the story had been about. Was the unrequited, intense love Ira’s for Mattie or was it Ivy’s for Mattie? Those readers who believe in an afterlife can imagine Ira and Mattie happily reunited but there is no authoritative direction for that conclusion. More importantly, Ivy is the protagonist, it is her story that occupies center stage and the outcome for her resists closure. Ultimately, Rich’s use of the fantasy or fairytale genre permits two very different interpretations of this story. On one hand it is a mystical
story of undying love, between Mattie and Ira and of a passionate friendship between Ivy and Mattie; or if readers follow the suggestive language, the code words and the metaphors for female sexuality, it is a love story between two young girls complete with an affirmative ending in which the remaining character expresses her determination to seek out that sort of love again.

Suburban Ennui

This final theme was one voiced again, and again, by both male and female protagonists. "The Wasted Years" (see illustration) by Hugh Garner was a late fifties story of suburban angst and anger, directed at the jailer, the wife: "This is about Dorothy and me and the fourteen years we'd been married and why, as I looked at her across the room that night, I thought, 'I hate her.' It's about something else, too...A story every married couple should read."64 Listen as the unnamed protagonist explains his discontent:

Dorothy is a fine wife and mother, and I guess I'm lucky she isn't lazy or dirty like some wives I've met. My sudden hatred for her was quite impersonal, as is the hate of the convict for the prison guard. I had suddenly realized that thanks to her I'd become one of the married prisoners that inhabit every suburb like ours in the country. I'd become a Dagwood Bumstead almost without knowing it, a guy who was fenced in by habit and custom, and by marriage. I looked back over the years and thought of all the things I'd once planned on doing, and how I'd given them all up in exchange for a twenty year mortgage on the bungalow, a car still owned by the finance company, and a house full of installment furniture and gadgets.65 Garner's indictment of the culture of consumption implicitly contradicts and critiques the messages provided by the advertising material in the magazine. The freedom promised in the advertisements had proved illusive as well as ironic as the protagonist laments the constrictions of suburban marriage and the accompanying entanglement—life on the installment plan. Given the misogyny in this piece, and the bitter, resentful mood of the protagonist it is difficult to imagine the resolution. Determined to head out on his own, our hero makes it as far as a downtown bar where, drink in hand, he surveys the room. The bar, like the apartment, functions as a locale for society's undesirables—and as the antithesis of the safe, middle-class existence. Projecting all sorts of classist assumptions onto his fellow "drinkers"—that they are pitiful, and pathetic—he decides to return home. Once home, Dorothy informs him that their son broke a window and everyday life is restored:

She got up to go to the kitchen, and I grabbed her and kissed her. "What brought this on, the drinks?" "No, I just felt like it, that's all."...What was a seven dollar window
wants was watching TV with antenna. Suddenly I knew
the manner I'd become.
compared with living like all those people I had seen downtown? I knew I didn’t hate Dorothy.66

The difference between downtown and suburbia was stark: suburbia represented family, contentment, security and safety, while downtown represented the dismal lives of the working class. While our bourgeois male protagonist had a boring job as a cost accountant, at night he could return to the kids and wife on “Rosemary Lane.” The moral, as the protagonist informed us in the last sentence, was that “contentment is the reward of virtue.”67

Reader reaction:

Fiction was either loathed or loved by the readers. The Starch figures for fiction readership, taken from the early years of the decade, illustrated that while a large component of those interviewed noticed the stories, the percentage of readers who read most of the fiction was 49%.68 Similarly, most respondents to the Dichter Study in 1958 stated that they did not like the fiction component of the magazine: “The fiction in Chatelaine is terrible.”69

When asked which part of the magazine they read first, only 19% of subscribers read the fiction articles first, while 46% of non-subscribers read the fiction first.70 The Dichter evidence allowed them to conclude that subscribers of the magazine were aware of the poor quality of fiction, and generally tried to avoid it. Many devoted readers disagreed with these findings and they wrote to voice their complaints. This letter from Elizabeth Hammond, Director of the Shoe Information Bureau of Canada, provided a good indication of how upset fiction’s fans were at the absence:

Funnily enough its been on the tip of my ‘typewriter finger’ for several months to send you a scrawl saying, “where the hell is the fiction”...BUT--when I opened my February Chatelaine, I felt I must speak my piece. Not only was there fiction—but GOOD fiction—...I felt really cheated when Chat [sic] dropped fiction—in fact I lost considerable interest in the magazine, although I did skip through it...71

The familiarity with which Hammond refers to the magazine was interesting and demonstrated an affection for the periodical. She shortens the name the way one does a good friend’s name. Anderson’s reply acknowledged that Hammond had not been alone in her disappointment when the magazine dropped fiction for a few issues: “I have to admit that we goofed in the first few issues of the combined magazine last fall. We had just finished a fairly extensive survey about what readers wanted and it seemed to prove that they were
fairly indifferent to fiction. However, surveys, like everything else, can be quite wrong, as we realized several hundred letters later!"  

While many readers expected to see stories in each issue of the magazine, they were equally adamant that they be respectable stories. Most of the letters printed on the letters page either complimented the editors on their choice of "refreshingly wholesome" fiction or took them to task for publishing a story such as "Alive Again!" Many readers praised Chatelaine for publishing cleaner fiction than the American magazines, and one reader wrote from Britain to make a similar comment concerning English magazines. Whenever the magazine deviated from the normal format of romance and family/marital dramas to feature a murder mystery or a darker piece of fiction, letters of complaint were received. This letter from Cecile E. Leslie of Chilliwack, B.C., explained why older readers, and some women in general, may not have cared for this type of fiction:

I dislike 'horror' stories, and you have had too many of them lately. Most women living in lonely parts of Canada have their own experiences of terror or horror. We relive them too thoroughly in stories like 'Murder in Muskoka' (a hideous title), and that one of the nice girl lured to a lonely house for marriage. Life for a woman can be thrilling enough and troubled enough without murders and murderers--stories, too.

Most readers wanted nice, light fiction. Two letters at the end of the decade also demanded something more, and it was curious that they believed Chatelaine's regular fiction offering did not contain what they requested, namely, morals. From a Saskatchewan reader came this complaint: "Most of your novels are disgusting, vague, cheap emptiness! Why not something with a moral?" Two years later, a reader from Beamsville, Ontario wrote a very detailed letter about what she thought 'good fiction' should include: "Your June issue has a fine story....It is gripping and powerful, driving home the folly and tragedy of drink with its pitiful waste of human values. I am sure there are many who are delighted."

While the Beamsville reader would have deplored the bar culture depicted in Garner's story, undoubtedly she would have commended the moral at the end: "Contentment is the reward of virtue." That is an appropriate phrase to explain the plots, lessons, morals and character motivation which ran throughout the entire oeuvre of Chatelaine fiction in the 1950s. Although the romance fiction often provided escapist moments of entertainment and relaxation, many of the stories were also didactic. Often, they appeared to be morality tales, laced with a little bit of romance or romantic tension, a narrative hook to hold the reader while the lesson was taught. The chief lesson of Chatelaine fiction taught readers was that
while life for women could be trying, frustrating, even deeply disturbing, a good marriage and a happy family life could provide the necessary antidote to a harsh world. The most discontent expressed in the Chatelaine stories came from male protagonists. The connection between male frustration and violence was a disturbing theme in far too many tales. It serves both as a caution about the happy world of suburbia as well as a caution against assuming that all of Chatelaine's fiction readers were women. The large number of family and marital dramas reflected the majority of the magazine's readership who were married, and for whom such fictional stories would have great appeal. Family and marital dramas in particular highlighted the joys and frustrations married couples faced on a daily basis along with the reassurance that a happy resolution would be found. Straight romance stories pointed young women toward the right man, defined as one with education, good career prospects and more than likely one from a middle-class background.

The more sophisticated and appealing stories made effective use of humour but the resolutions were often the same. The handful of stories with feminist plots or quest plotlines (which did not necessarily involve romantic liaisons) were the only stories which broached conventions, and in which the status quo was not reaffirmed in the resolution. These stories provided much needed variety in a collection composed almost entirely of formulaic fiction. For example, fantasy “romances” like “Vixen in the Snow” offered readers an interesting departure from the norm. However, while the resolution almost always reinforced the status quo, the twists and turns in plot development highlighted many different options for the protagonists and readers alike. For readers whose lives were not as perfect as the heroes and heroines of these stories, those moments of conflict, anxiety, confusion and reappraisal provided readers with the resources to change, interpret or rewrite the endings in their own imaginations, or life situations.

**Chatelaine Departments**

"I do think the recipes contained in Chatelaine are wonderful. I hear many women discussing them and the cookbook as if Chatelaine were the pillar of good housekeeping and food preparation."^78
--H.M. Pawley, Edmonton

"When I settle down with my favourite magazine I want to be entertained when I get the time to read....I have no problem children, no old furniture, I'm living in a village and my housekeeping doesn't need changing and my respect for Kate Aitken fell
when I saw her articles....I have taken Chatelaine most of the time for the thirty-five years I've been married and I don't like the changes. 79
--Mrs. E. MacAlpine, Carbon, Alberta

"Every time you have a garden article by Helen O'Reilly in Chatelaine I try to save my copy. But friends borrow the magazine and never return it, and sometimes, when they do, they have clipped or removed pages, thus marring these articles. I like my friends, and can't refuse to lend them the magazine, so I have taken to copying the garden articles in a looseleaf notebook. I like the way they are written, and this looseleaf book has become my guide, as this is my second year gardening. Thank you for the good articles." 80
--Mrs. J.S. Forbes, Dauphin, Manitoba

"Please! Where are fashions that do not look like Mata Hari on a bender; needlework with modern ideas? I'm disappointed..." 81
--Frances Scott, Toronto

During the fifties approximately a fifth of the magazine's space was devoted to the departmental material. 82 The cornerstone of the service department material was the Chatelaine Institute. The American women's magazine Good Housekeeping (GH) had created such a concept in 1901 when they founded the Good Housekeeping Test Institute. 83 This development proved phenomenally successful, according to one magazine historian because it "sounded like a formal scientific establishment" and "readers came to believe they could rely on the judgments of its staff." 84 Not surprisingly, Maclean Hunter decided that Chatelaine needed an Institute, so as to compete against the American magazines and with Canadian Home Journal (which did not have an institute). The Chatelaine Institute was founded in 1930. 85 The Institute provided the magazine with authoritative editorial features, which served three purposes: to provide credible, tested service features for the readers; to encourage new ideas; which would in turn attract advertisers for whom these features (it was assumed) would sell products. It was the Institute staff, trained as home economists, who tested and created all the recipes featured in the magazine, evaluated new products for the Chatelaine Seal of Approval (again mimicking GH's Seal of Approval), and turned out all of the copy for the features on home planning, housekeeping, and food preparation (see illustration).

As mentioned earlier, while the editors were concerned with attracting and keeping interested readers, and to that end they believed that general feature articles, fiction, and interesting editorials were the key to reader interest, the Maclean Hunter company also had to keep and attract advertisers to the magazine. For this purpose, the company's ads in
The Institute Staff takes part in a “blind taste test” of a product submitted for Seal of Approval. Preferences for stew on plates 1 and 2 are recorded to determine the value of Ac-cent as a flavor intensifier.

**The Institute APPROVES**

When the Institute starts investigating food products submitted for Seal of Approval, the whole staff may be called into consultation.

This happened in the initial testing of a flavor intensifier, Ac-cent. Because improvement in flavor should be noticed when Ac-cent is added, we asked the members of the staff to taste foods prepared with and without the product.

For example, a record was kept of the preferences for beef stew on plate 1, as compared with the stew on plate 2. No one knew which contained the Ac-cent. But the secretary’s list showed that all the tasters preferred the flavor of the stew with Ac-cent added.

A series of these blind taste tests included soups, gravies and sauces, each proving conclusively that company claims for the product were sound.

The usual check by our research chemists verified quality in the product itself. Final summation of all tests rated Ac-cent worthy of our Seal of Approval.

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**SUICIDE**

Continued from page 7

opened before me, but all this was a rich and upsetting diet for a mind already reeling with fear of inferiority. And as the war progressed, my soul became sick with the inquisition and misery in the world.

Yet my husband seemed to plod straight through life as if nothing had ever changed, concerned only with his business and his family. The ideas and doubts that troubled me never seemed to touch him at all, but as our children began to assert their independence, he tried to play the role of benevolent father. When they laughed at his advice, violent arguments ensued.

Then his mother brought her even more old-fashioned set of principles to live with us, warmly denouncing her grand-

The “tissue test” proved to Alexis...

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The “tissue test” convinced Alexis Smith that there really is a difference in cleansing creams. Alexis is co-starring in the Paramount production, “Here Comes the Groom.”

We asked her to cleanse her face with her regular cleansing cream. Then we invited her to try Woodbury Cold Cream on her “immaculately clean” face and handed her a tissue to take it off.

The tissue told a startling story. Even after a thorough cleansing with her former cream, Woodbury Cold Cream floated out hidden dirt!

Why is Woodbury so different? Because it has Penaten, a new miracle ingredient that actually penetrates deeper into your pores to remove hidden dirt! Penaten is gentle, it’s Penaten. It’s Penaten that helps Woodbury to smooth dry skin more effectively. The rich, lubricating oils go deeper—dry-skin lines, little rough patches just melt away.

Touch your face—it’s silken soft! Do you think your face is really clean? Try the “Tissue Test...and be sure. Buy a jar today—25c, 15c, 7c, $1.15.

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Woodbury Cold Cream

floats out hidden dirt... penetrates deeper because it contains Penaten
Canadian Advertising Rates and Data (CARD), directed to space buyers, advertising firms, corporations and business people, often described the primary role of the service department material as educating Canadian women to a ‘better standard of living’ and helping advertisers by creating consumer demand for their products. This excerpt from a 1954 Chatelaine advertisement in CARD is both representative and illuminating about the role of service department material:

Women’s service magazines are close to the buyer. They focus the interest of your prospects on their pages in an atmosphere of ‘do something’ ideas. Women read service magazines for ideas on how to improve their homes, their families, themselves.86

The phrases ‘do something’ and ‘improvement’ were key to much of the service department material, for it fostered an environment in which housewives were encouraged to seek new recipes, new decorating ideas, and innovative ways to solve housekeeping dilemmas. Neither perfection or contentment could ever be achieved, for there were always new trends, new colours, new types of foods or changing cuisines with which to experiment.

Maclean Hunter was confident about how the service department material was supposed to work, as this 1953 excerpt illustrated:

Tested recipes and menus from the Chatelaine Institute are read by some three quarters of a million women. From Chatelaine’s service these same women get ideas that result in millions of wants that find their way onto millions of shopping lists for so-called ‘impulse’ sales. Your advertising, run with those service articles and tied to this proven audience, will produce the kind of action that means big, fast turnover to the grocery business....Over the years Chatelaine has educated women to want more interesting, nutritious meals. It has been a big factor in raising the standard of living.87

Due to continuous ‘Starching’ of the reading audience, Maclean Hunter was always able to marshal the figures to prove that readers were indeed reading this material. The Starch ‘noting’ figures for departmental features like “Chatelaine School of Beauty” and “Fifty Favourite Recipes were 84 and 88 percent respectively.88 Impressive figures, but they were only that, numbers which reflected how many women had ‘noted’, not read, not purchased, and not ‘acted-upon’ the information. The real proof of the success of the service department features was found in the letters to the editors, the contest entries and the requests for beauty makeovers or gardening advice. Judging by these factors, the recipes printed in the magazine garnered much attention, particularly when they came from fellow readers as part of contests or special features.
This testimonial from the Director of Public Relations, Dairy Farmers of Canada, from the end of the decade explained "the simple, suggestive philosophy of food advertising" and the cause and effect nature of service department features and advertising upon the readers:

"Food is its own best salesman. Nothing sells food like colourful, appetizing pictures of the food itself. So, if it looks good to eat--advertise it in magazines. We have not found a better way to make food look attractive than by advertising it in full colour magazines. But there are other important factors. Showing housewives how to create appetizing meals with Diary Foods is an educational effort. And for this, Canadian magazines offer an ideal background of confidence and authority. We have been constant users of Canadian magazines for over 8 years. The ever growing sales of Diary Foods prove that they have done an excellent job." 89

Many advertisers, and CARD ads, would offer this simplistic analysis of how advertisements and service department material affected women. The research does not support that contention. Furthermore, given the often poor quality reproduction of colour advertisements and the black and white photos which accompanied most Chatelaine service material features in the fifties, neither food features or ads looked very appetizing. When the ads and food features did use colour photographs these were often garish combinations to attract maximum attention. For example, the January 1954 cover featured the grand prize winning recipe from that year’s contest. Mrs Eva Phillips of Belleville, Ontario, won for her casserole called ‘Seven Layer Dinner’ which included: peas, carrots, sausage, potatoes, hamburger, and onions, with a garnish of maraschino cherries! The full colour photo was, simply, nauseating. Hence, food photographs could, and often did, convey a completely different impression to readers.

Corresponding with the fact that food advertisers were the largest group of advertisers in the magazine, the cornerstone of the service department material were the food articles and monthly menu plans. Throughout the decade there were two prime food writers, Marie Holmes and Elaine Collett, both Directors of the Chatelaine Institute. According to Holmes the role of the Institute was as follows: "Our aim is to keep our fingers on Mrs. Homemaker’s pulse....We try to give her news of all the latest developments that will make her housekeeping easier and her meals more attractive; we find out her problems and the answers to them." 90 According to the editors, the Institute was able to accomplish this through “letters and telephone calls, from Chatelaine’s own two thousand strong Consumer Council, surveys and via the country-wide trips and meetings where women can meet Institute
representatives personally." 91 Sometimes, the readers went to the magazine directly as in 1957 when “thirty six members of Women’s Institutes in Halton County, Ontario boarded a bus for Toronto. They toured our kitchens, laundry, and editorial offices and then settled down in the Chatelaine Institute for a cup of tea and a chat.” 92 Although the company and the advertisers’ perception of the service department material was to foster advertising copy and sell products, the women who worked in the Institute and the readers regarded it differently. The women who worked in the Institute were professionally trained as home economists and dietitians, and their advice reflected that training, whether administered through the magazine or in person. They were the experts to whom novice and experienced housewives could turn for advice, and many readers seemed to have relied on their services extensively.

Although the food articles generated by the Institute during the fifties covered a wide range of issues, from preserves to breakfast menus to forays into ethnic fare (Italian and Chinese), the majority of recipes provided in the magazine were for standard Anglo-Saxon Canadian dinner ideas or desserts. Recipe format took four forms: the “Family Favourite” feature in January or March, the regular monthly feature “Meals of the Month”, special features throughout the year, and from the middle of the decade onwards the “Name Brand” recipes feature each October. An examination of a sampling of recipe ingredients revealed that 53% of recipes printed in the magazine did not make use of convenience foods in the finished product. That is, a small majority of recipes featured products made from scratch, even though the makers of processed food products were the primary advertisers in the food category 93 This statistic illustrates that the service department features were not simply free advertising for the magazine’s advertising. Similarly, while the CARD ads and Maclean Hunter stressed consumption, the overwhelming theme of fifties food articles was thrift. Whether it was “Penny Wise Meat Loaf Dinners in Company Dress” or “Dollar Meals That Taste Like a Million,” thrifty, affordable family meals were the star attraction of the food articles. 94 According to Anderson, part of the reason for the Institute’s focus on realistic or budget meals, in sharp contrast to the lavish, full colour spreads of the American women’s magazines, was that the Institute itself was on a strict budget from Maclean Hunter and many of the departmental features were accomplished on a very small budget. 95 Not surprisingly, one of the recommendations of the Dichter report was a greater use of colour, since many
departmental features were accompanied by uninspiring, monochromatic layouts. A larger budget was recommended to allow for more inventive and exciting service department features. Thus while it was accurate to claim that the food features created ideas and sparked sales, they did not spark any conspicuous consumption of processed food products or 'gourmet' style seasonings or accessories. The 47% of food articles in which processed foods were utilized, almost always featured canned soups (Campbell's advertised in every issue of the magazine) or tinned vegetables in features like "Drama from a Can" yet seldom required any of the new frozen food products.

In the January 1951 issue the magazine launched what was to become a much anticipated yearly feature of the magazine: "Fifty Family Favourites."96 The Institute sent a letter to each Chatelaine Councilor requesting her family's favourite recipes. The Councilors responded by sending in 1,500 recipes, and it was from this huge source that the magazine selected the best fifty. Often the January cover (see illustration) featured one of the recipes and this feature became a cornerstone of the January issue. According to the Institute staff the reader was encouraged to: "Stop wracking your tired brain and add these 50 favourite recipes to your favorites, and coast along for a few months on someone else's discoveries. You will find among them some specially tasty supper dishes such as barbecued spare ribs, economical ham and egg pie and an Italian spaghetti with a particularly piquant sauce...."97 The recipes came from all across the country. Because they were approved by ordinary people (many recipes were accompanied by a photo of the Councilor), readers might well consider these recipes sure fire winners in the evening game of 'what's for dinner?' One of the lucky Councilors in 1952, Mrs. J.D. Gillespie of New Westminster, B.C., wrote that her recipe for Graham Wafer Cake was: "So good, I would like everyone to enjoy it. I tried nearly all the recipes you printed last year. We did so enjoy the change of diet."98 Special departmental articles such as this one brought readers together and literally had them swapping recipes with one another as if they were neighbours.

Contests and reader input were key to the success of the food section in the magazine. The readers responding to the contests came from across the country, many from suburban, rural areas or small towns. Women from the big cities did not fair as well in these cooking competitions and were more likely to participate in fashion and beauty competitions. A profile provided of the winner of 1951’s 'Salad Contest' is representative of the brief
Chatelaine
FOR THE CANADIAN WOMAN

January 1932 15 Cents

Crawfie tells how a princess can be a prisoner in a palace—
"Elizabeth the Woman"

STUFFED FRENCH BREAD

Long crusty loaf of French bread, stuffed with canned sockeye salmon

ONE OF
50 FAVORITE RECIPES
from Chatelaine Councilors — page 28
biographies which accompanied winning entries. Doreen Ohlman of Plevna, Ontario ("150 miles northeast of Peterborough"), a twenty-five year old mother of five children (all under the age of six), was the grand prize winner. While the magazine contained advertisements for lots of household appliances and the advertising assumed that most readers were able to purchase these products, the description of Ohlman's living conditions provide a sharp contrast since she:

"...lacks many of the conveniences many urban dwellers take for granted. She, her husband and their five children live in the wilds of Ontario, eight torturous miles from the small hamlet of Plevna. Without supermarkets and departmental stores Mrs. Ohlman must shop the hard way....Mrs. Ohlman tells us that her copy of Chatelaine comes to her via train and 'stage' and is pretty used up after it has been passed around from home to home in the Land O'Lakes district. Entries such as Ohlman's were often selected, both for the quality of their product as well as a desire to include readers from more remote areas of the country. Rural women continued to read and participate in the magazine despite the overt difference between the Ohlman family's style of living and the suburban lifestyle often on display in the advertisements, or depicted in the home planning features. While she was not part of the advertisers' preferred demographic group, Ohlman and other readers like her reflected the diverse readership of the magazine.

In 1954 the magazine decided to open up their Family Favourites contest to all readers, making it truly a contest for the fifty best recipes in the country. It went on to become a reader favourite and a Chatelaine institution-- that year the numbers swelled to a total of 1,850 entries. Contest entries peaked in 1956, when over 5,000 entries were received. That tidal wave of entries delayed the results until the March issue because "the Institute offices were almost adrift in recipes..." and "staff members all had to extend recipe reading to after hours at home." Letters received from entrants in the contest were both effusive in their praise for the feature, which was not remarkable since each was hoping to win or at least get her recipe printed. Often they commented that they had kept their issues for years, so that they might refer to the printed recipes. Mrs. Roy McNichol of Dundee, Quebec explained, "...I've kept the January issue of Chatelaine for the past three years." Similarly, Mrs. E.G. Sundquist from Nanaimo, B.C., wrote:

"Never having entered a contest of any kind before, I am not quite sure just how to go about it....I trust you may be able to use them even if they are not good enough to win a prize, so that others may enjoy a taste pleasure we have enjoyed for many years."
Besides I rather feel that I owe Chatelaine something in exchange for all the perfectly grand recipes it has given me through the years.\textsuperscript{104}

While winning the contest was clearly the entrant’s intent, it appears that the recipe forum and exchange was also pleasurable. According to readers, the contest’s popularity was due to the realistic nature of the recipes. Most demanded that the recipes meet their daily requirements, as this letter from Margaret Rasmussen of Vancouver illustrates:

"Your contest has interested me very much, mainly because of the request for family recipes. Other homemakers like myself who have children...are mainly interested in reliable, simple-to-prepare items which are not too rich or costly. It’s not that we wouldn’t all like to be able to make chiffon cakes, etc., but we just can’t afford to at the rate food we prepare is devoured. You are probably aware of this situation but perhaps like to be reassured by your readers from time to time on what they want and why."\textsuperscript{105}

Although Chatelaine’s readership was primarily confined to Canada, overseas readers and American readers often commented on the various features in the magazine. This letter from Mrs. V.M. Cheyne of Southhampton, England, confides that Chatelaine recipes had given her the edge in local competitions:

I have won first prize for Salad Dressing three years running at a very big horticulture and home industries show in Southampton. The Chatelaine containing the recipe was August 1951. I also make my Christmas cake from one of your recipes and it is always much enjoyed, so here is more strength to your elbow.\textsuperscript{106}

These recipes became part of many housewives’ repertoire, and many families owed some of their ‘favourites’ to the Chatelaine contests and to the features produced by the Institute.

The “Meals of the Month” menu-page was another favourite Chatelaine food features. Whenever an issue did not contain this page of detailed meal plans, readers wrote to complain. Judging by these letters, Chatelaine’s influence on Canadian families’ meals was quite large. Mrs. E.H. Donnelly of Windsor, Ontario, wrote:

“I would very much like to know why you discontinued those Meals of the Month. I was just lost without them and as that was the main reason I bought your magazine you can imagine how disappointed I was. I keep hoping each time I get a new magazine that you will again be planning all my menus for me. I am sure that many others must have found that as helpful as I did."\textsuperscript{107}

Mrs. Grace DeJong from Montreal agreed with Donnelly, commenting that the “new setup of the daily menus page” was “such a boon for a housewife especially these days--to be able to get an idea for the next day’s or week’s meals."\textsuperscript{108} Even a cursory glance at these meal plans confirmed that considerable time was spent in the kitchen by the many Canadian women who followed the Institute’s style of meal preparation. These were labour intensive meals.
Chatelaine's meal plans advocated hot lunches for children and dinner meals always included a meat entrée or casserole, vegetables (often creamed or scalloped), a fancy rice or potato side dish, and dessert.

Other singular features represented the third type of food article featured in the magazine. Whether exploring food that men liked to eat, planning meals for the calorie conscious or encouraging picky children to eat well balanced meals the Chatelaine Institute tried to respond to the many demands placed upon the fifties kitchen and the resident housewife short-order cook, chef, baker and dietitian. Articles like Elaine Collett's "Food Fit For a Queen" (hamburgers, apple pie, roast chicken with mushroom stuffing, herbed new potatoes, minted new green peas, garden salad and thick western sirloin) in the June 1959 issue was representative of most of the food features.\(^{109}\) The emphasis was on ‘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. As the menu makes very apparent, the difference between American and Canadian foods was often negligible. What the magazine did was create names, such as Western Sirloin, that reflected regional diversity. The more ‘realistic’ or ‘cheap’ (depending on the readers’ perceptions) menus also created a ‘Canadian’ image. This image was less affluent and more practical compared with the lavish American features.

The fourth type of food feature was the National Brands recipe collection printed in each October issue from mid decade. These were huge, forty page collections of recipes, complete with corporate identification. Not surprisingly they made specific and extensive use of the sponsors’ products. Each year the feature had a different theme. Accompanying this yearly feature was an increased amount of food advertising, usually from products included in the recipe collection which was the point in the first place. Some readers were fond of this tactic, like Mrs. Lois Browett of Hamilton, who wrote to Anderson to request another copy of this much cherished issue:

"Would you possibly have a ‘back issue’ of Chatelaine dated October 1957 that I could purchase? I know this request sounds a little strange but I was keeping that particular copy as it had some nice recipes (over 200) called "Cookbook of Thirty Minute Specials." Unfortunately, my youngest child cut up pages 60-73 and 78 to 81 and the pieces are missing..."\(^{110}\)

Mrs. Browett’s letter was an anomaly in the extant letters about these National Brands features. Most of the readers did not appreciate the two hundred ‘free’ recipes. Mary G.
Wark of Owen Sound, Ontario, complained that there were “Far too many of these self-improvement articles now--housewives can’t be bothered reading that--all those thousands of recipes--I never used one of them--and I do love to cook.” Mrs Beryl Haslam of Pointe Claire, Quebec, voiced a similar complaint, about those October issues with the huge recipe content: “The fact is, I find your magazine rather dull! So much advertising....However, I am not too interested in such an amount of recipes.”

In contrast to the success of the Family Favourite’s issues, which each had fifty recipes, these National Brand features were not as successful for two reasons. The first was the fact that the magazine overwhelmed the reader with far too many recipes. Equally important was the clearly commercial component of this feature. A large part of the success and the charm of the Family feature was that the recipes came from other women. Readers found them interesting because they provided a glimpse into how other Canadian housewives fed their families, or entertained. The recipes from corporations lacked the warmth and interest, plus they so evidently pushed their own products in contrast to the recipes from readers which were often regarded as more economical or practical.

In contrast to the reader input and interest in the food features, the home and household planning features were almost always written by the assigned staff writer, and reader input was restricted to writing letters and clipping interesting articles out of the magazine. This category, while termed homeplanning and household, also included the gardening column written by Helen O’Reilly. In the sample, of these features 44% were about home planning (exterior or interior design, remodeling, etc.) 38% were about housekeeping and 16% were gardening features. The vast majority of these articles were written by women, although there had been a male home design editor in the early fifties. A variety of writers produced these features in the fifties-- John Caulfield Smith, Catherine Fraser, Doris Thistlewood and Barbara Reynolds.

The job of home planning editor was a tasking one, as this description of Doris Thistlewood’s responsibilities illuminated:

“Being Chatelaine’s home planning editor, Doris Thistlewood, can tell you, involves much more than writing one or two features a month for the magazine. Only a small part of her work gets into print. Hour long speeches to women’s clubs, radio interviews, visits to designers, architects, and decorators somehow all get wedged into her workday. Then there are the letters from readers with decorating problems. She’s delighted to help them and generous with ideas on everything from how to spend
wedding present money to building brighter bazaar displays. After hours she gives us advice."114

The description of Thistlewood’s multi-faceted role as liaison with designers, disseminator of ‘new ideas’ through the magazine, addresses to women’s groups, expert adviser to the readers, and expert advisor to the staff in her ‘off hours’ illustrated one of the ways in which the magazine transcended both its own format and created a sense of community amongst the readers and editors. These visits from the Chatelaine experts were highlights in many communities, and cross country trips were frequent. They brought the message of the magazine in person, to attract new readers, and gave the staff a valuable way of touching base with the needs and questions of the readership.

Home planning features throughout the decade reflected and anticipated the needs of young, suburban and, sometimes, urban Canadian couples. While the magazine occasionally printed articles about the home planning problems of apartment dwellers most of the articles featured suburban living. It should be emphasized that the suburban homes that the magazine featured were far from grand by today’s standards (many had only 1200-1400 square feet of living space), but the focus on new houses in suburban enclaves (as opposed to renovations or re-modelling older homes) was well established.

The articles on home planning fell into three categories, the Chatelaine Home Decorating series from 1952 and 1953; the single features on renovating, painting, suburban building, architectural houses, etc.; and starting in 1958 the yearly “Homes” feature in which the magazine built and furnished model Homes in various regions of the country as a promotional vehicle for advertisers, and an ‘ideabook’ for readers. In 1952 the magazine launched “The Course in Home Decorating”, written by Catherine Fraser (“an outstanding authority”). This ‘course’ was intended “to help you give your home more charm, more beauty--to make it a more useful and harmonious place to live.... You will want to read, study and save all seven issues.”115 The magazine often suggested that readers should cut out the service department material to make a scrapbook for future reference. Some women believed that other readers were taking ‘the course’, and they seemed to derive enjoyment from this knowledge as this letter from Mrs. R. Dowson of Nemiskam, Alberta explained: “Your course in home decorating was a most effective way of reaching busy housewives. It's much easier to study when one knows thousands of women are in the class.”116 The course was viewed as an affordable way of obtaining some decorating expertise, and the younger readers
were appreciative. Mrs. E. Dodds of Montreal wrote: “Your lessons on home decorating are wonderful! I’ve started my scrapbook for we have bought a duplex and will move next May. That will give me plenty of time to read your seven lessons, benefit by them and put them to use in our own home.” These articles were clearly written for younger women, who would be decorating their first homes, since they stressed planned buying, economizing on a budget, and dealt with issues for which new houseowners needed assistance. In keeping with the *Chatelaine* raison d’être the Canadian angle was constantly stressed, whether in the use of colour to match the local flora and fauna, or in Canadian theme rooms like this August 1952 article “Five Rooms for Fun—See Canada First in Your Own Basement” (see illustrations). The suggested recreation room themes were “the totem room, the habitant room, the stampede room, the sea chanty room and the trans-Canada room,” and all were outfitted in the stereotypical furnishings and accessories which those terms bring to mind. By the end of the decade, Canadian design (as illustrated in the magazine) had become more sophisticated, incorporating antiques and collectibles in design plans. This should also be interpreted as an up-market shift, since the magazine implemented the Dichter suggestions and went in search of a more affluent or ‘progressive’ market.

The decorating course and other singular features received very positive letters from readers, indicative of both their enjoyment and the fact that the material attracted their attention and was actually read. Articles such as “How to Buy More With Your Home Furnishing Dollar” were always popular, according to Marion Downton of St. John’s. “This kind of article is just what we ‘first time furnishers’ need and eagerly look forward to more of the same in future *Chatelaines*.” The most appreciative devotees of *Chatelaine*’s service material were skilled in the art of making do, stretching their decorating and grocery dollars and they responded to articles that reflected that reality.

The articles on housework and new household products and tools were the other major component of the *Chatelaine* home and household department. The housekeeping section was the most repetitious in the entire magazine. While it was relatively easy to put different spins on meal preparation or decorating, housecleaning by its very nature was both tiresome and made for dull copy. However, the Institute did attempt to provide different, usually quicker, ways to accomplish the household tasks in their many series on how to ‘modernize’ homecleaning, The home economist training was most evident in these pieces
Lesson 4: Chatelaine's Home Decorating Course

5 ROOMS FOR FUN

By Catherine Fraser, Chatelaine Home Decorating Consultant

See Canada first—in your own basement. These “coast-to-coast” recreation rooms are keyed to the play-and-party needs of your young fry, but grownups will enjoy relaxing here, too.

A recreation room should be chiefly for young fry, from toddlers to twenties, but it should be prepared to accommodate adults on occasion, too.

It isn’t a substitute for a living room; but it will save the living room from suffering too much wear and tear, so that this can remain a place where grownups and young folks feeling grown-up may read and talk and visit without volcanic interruptions.

It should be a place for play and fun, and the fun should start with planning and building the recreation room. There’ll be more fun if the whole family’s in on the project—and more still if it’s built around the theme of a family hobby or a trip to some favorite part of the country . . . even if it’s a trip you haven’t taken yet.

These are some of the considerations we had in mind in planning this fourth lesson in Chatelaine’s Home Decorating Course, but as we have stressed since the beginning, the basic consideration in planning any room must be usefulness.

We had seen many recreation rooms in which Junior’s toys had to be dismantled before his parents could play a game of ping-pong. Before we visited a home where trestles of planks and orange crates carried the tracks around the walls where they weren’t in anybody’s way. That useful idea became the basis of our Trans-Canada Room, pictured above.

In another home we know, the modest-sized L-shaped living room seemed to bulge at the seams because it just wasn’t built to accommodate an extra upright piano. The idea of moving the piano to the recreation room was the spark that exploded into our Stampede Room (opposite page)—and then we were away.

We said, “These are Canadian basements we are planning for, basements that will serve their main purpose through eight cold months.” So we went to work to create rooms with an atmosphere of coziness and warmth, and which derive their design from any Canadian child’s knowledge of and interest in, his or her own country. We left Mexican motifs and Hawaiian designs to the Mexicans and the Hawaiians and we stayed happy at home in our own country, but we weren’t content until we had covered its whole breadth from the soft, shrouded slopes of the Pacific to the salty cragginess of our Atlantic shore. We amused ourselves thinking of inexpensive ways to furnish and decorate these rooms in keeping with the regional theme of each one. Amenities, we think, long outlasts the corn joke carved on wooden plaques and the midway keystone doll that some people put in their basements instead of the garbage.

We never miss a chance to make these “all-Canadian basements.” Continued on page 31.
The Totem Room, like all four on this page, is designed for the teenage family. Totem figures and Indian masks can be copied from real things in books and museums and painted on plywood. Drumheads for stool and end table are of leather.

The Habitant Room is a nod to a Quebec farm kitchen, complete with stove. An old ice box can be set into the top of the stove to hold oddities. An old-style wardrobe hides a television and record player, and also protects them from rummaging. Boards can turn ugly steel or brick supporting pillars into handsome squared timbers.

The Stampede Room grew around an upright piano which, while still a good instrument, created a small living room. The band, covered with rodeo or travel posters, it creates an attractive wall break, and is equally handy for afternoon piano practice or evening singing when the coach hands hit town.

The Sea Chanty Room will appeal to old salts from St. John's to Weymouth that. Making the doors silly calls for skill, but the sturdy stools are simple log lengths bound with line, and most other items are found in marine supply catalogues.
because the writers insisted on a "planned" approach to household cleaning regimes. More could be accomplished in less time if housewives had a system, stuck to it, and then (particularly in the later years of the decade) rewarded themselves with time off for good behaviour. Whether it was "Plan Your Housekeeping", "Streamlined Homemaking for the Career Woman" or "Chatelaine Takes a Fresh Look at Housecleaning," the presumptions, and advice, were almost always the same. An analysis of their 1959 series provides a taste of these prescriptive articles.

In March 1959 the magazine launched the "Chatelaine Takes a Fresh Look at House Cleaning" series which stated "We'd rather see a clean untidy house than a frantic you." That phrase "clean untidy" summarized perfectly how the Institute had shaved time off the housework regime. Cleanliness was still important, but fastidious rules about tidiness were relaxed. This eight-page article provided housewives with a very strict schedule, one worthy of examination for an example of how intricate and detailed these housework articles could be, and more importantly, for their instruction into how housework should be performed.

The daily list of chores to be performed gave some indication of the high standards expected even in an article purportedly about "clean untidiness." Each morning the housewife was to "throw bedclothes back and open window wide to air at least twice per week" and to "make-up and dress becomingly for your homemaking role" in "slacks and a gay shirt, or a pretty housedress. Morale is half the battle here." From there it was on to breakfast, and then the breakfast dishes which one was supposed to "drain dry" to save time. After that there was room for a "small job," meaning "handwash a fragile blouse, bath the baby, play with your preschooler or give yourself your weekly shampoo and pin-up." Next was the livingroom, diningroom and hall area of the house where the housewife was instructed to "tidy, dust once over lightly as you go with a treated cloth, carpet sweep, dust mop, and finish a room at a time." Keep in mind these tasks, unless stated otherwise, were to be performed everyday. After a brief break for morning coffee, a "phone call, the paper or a magazine," it was into the bedrooms to "make beds, tidy bedrooms, dust, and dust-mop" again a room at a time and then into the bathroom to "tidy, clean basin and replace any soiled towels." Later it was back to the kitchen to start the dinner--vegetables to "peel and wash" for storage, and to "prepare dessert." After all of the above work had been completed, Mrs. Housewife could finally take her lunch. After lunch there were the requisite dishes to
wash, a special job which depending on the day was ironing or intensive cleaning of some part of the house, then a tea break. By this point the children were home from school and it was time to set the table (or ask the children to do it), make dinner, and do the dinner dishes. The final chores of the day were to set out the breakfast dishes and cereal, and to put the water in the coffee pot so that everything would be ready for the next day.

The Institute's vision of clean untidiness did not even allow the lunch dishes to wait until the evening dish cleaning. By the time the special jobs had been done (and on Fridays extra tasks were taken on to free up time on the weekend), it was an intensive, exhausting schedule. Noticeably absent from all of these instructions was any indication that husbands or children (other than setting the table) should or did perform any tasks in the house. On other pages in this section they provided hints to assist the working wife, and again there was no suggestion that husbands share any of the burden of the household. Proving the adage that 'work expands to fill the time available', other than those two tea or coffee breaks and lunch time, the housewife's day was consumed by cleaning, tidying, grocery shopping and clothes washing. Once her children and husband returned home, her remaining hours awake were largely spent catering to them or spending time with them. If this article was taken seriously, and housewives tried to emulate the advice of the Institute, they need never have worried of having 'nothing to do.' Three letters were printed in the June issue, two negative and one in praise of the article. Audrey Singer of Port Credit, Ontario, wrote: "Having read Elaine Collett's 'Fresh Look...' I feel the need to cry out with an 'everywoman's' voice. I have tried to follow her routine, and it has left me exhausted. Would you ask a maid to do all these things in one week?" Mrs. D. Robinson of Greenwood, N.S., appreciated the article saying that she had "picked up some very helpful hints." Finally, N. Smith provided a rather terse commentary: "Altogether, I think your suggestions are maddening." The readers were quick to admit that they had studied the article, tried the suggestions but ultimately found them too rigorous.

This article, and the articles on housework in general, were some of the most traditional fare included in the magazine. This is the material that springs to mind when the words "women's magazine" are uttered. But as this section indicates readers were prepared to critique this literature and felt free to ignore its prescriptions. Where Elaine Collett and her crew were so successful in their food articles, and moderately more successful at the
home decorating articles, these housekeeping articles fell on blind eyes. Many readers, in different contexts, wrote to express their joy and delight about their haphazard days, lack of strict scheduling, and at times, more slothful habits. They were not prepared to clean house in this manner just because Chatelaine said so. These housework articles, like the Homes features, were not successful because they were too didactic. There was too much expert guidance and advice and not enough input from the readership. While the magazine responded to letters from readers who requested articles on certain topics, advice with their decorating or beauty regimes, there was never a letter printed from a reader requesting more articles on how to clean your house effectively. Some readers found these articles moderately successful, like Mrs. Natale or Mrs. Robinson, but their letters clearly state that what they liked were the “hints”-- neither of them mentioned that the rigorous scheduling was helpful or necessary.

In complete contrast to housecleaning and home planning, the gardening columns were one of the very popular departmental features. Helen O'Reilly’s gardening column ran regularly in the magazine during the decade. O'Reilly, a former law student and publishing firm employee, turned her attention to gardening and Dempsey told the readers that “she and a friend raise delphiniums, and other valuable flowers, like sweet peas” on a “wonderful country project just outside Toronto.” The photo accompanying Dempsey’s brief biography showed an older woman wearing denim overalls in the process of shoveling manure into a wheel barrow. Not your typical glamorous image portrayed in the women’s magazine, and this down-to-earth manner came through in O'Reilly’s writing style. She wrote informative, no-nonsense articles on a variety of gardening issues, i.e.: perennials, lawn maintenance, growing strawberries, etc. Her articles were usually full-page essays about the various merits or demerits of a particular type of plant, complete with the Latin name of the plant, detailed growing instructions, germination requirements if using seeds and/or instructions on how to buy economically at the local nursery. Mrs. D. McCowan of Burrows, Saskatchewan, wrote to thank the magazine for the gardening column and the general homemaking features:

“We get so many good hints from your magazine. Chatelaine’s Garden Chart was worth all we paid for it as peonies are our special flower and we have to transplant them this fall, and did not know how. I will be glad of any advice you can give on home economics as it helps our clubs so much. We are all rural women, and the club is The Great West Homemaker.”
Many other readers would also comment on the role the magazine served in stimulating discussion and ideas for various women's groups across the country. Ironically, for a magazine that tried to attract the urban reader, rural readers were more apt to find the magazine indispensable. This was a result of sparser resources, fewer sources of information, and less access to groups and available 'experts' in small towns across the country. Although the magazine received a small amount of mail about this column, it was all favourable and judging by the columns' inclusion throughout the decade, new gardeners came to depend on the Chatelaine expert.

Another area in which the Chatelaine expert shone brightly was in the fashion and beauty department. A requisite women's magazine department, fashion and beauty features waxed and waned throughout the years, appearing prominently in the April beauty issue, and the September issue which featured much back-to-school clothing (for teenagers and university "girls") as well as the fall fashions for housewives and mothers. Like fashion and beauty features today, many of these articles were nothing more than collections of photos, or illustrations, of various designers' clothing, shoes and accessories, undergarments, make-up or cleansing creams, complete with price and the stores and locations in which the products could be purchased. Features such as this composed the vast majority of this department's articles. A wide variety of material made it into the magazine, but the editors throughout the decade, Eileen Morris (1950-1952), Rosemary Boxer (1952-1956), and Vivian Wilcox (1956-1959), were pre-disposed toward showcasing the latest fashions, new colours of makeup and encouraging readers to dress stylishly and use make-up on a daily basis.

Amongst the wide range of fashion and beauty features, from "Never Too Late to Look Younger" to "Your Hundred Dollar Trousseau" to "She Dresses on $1 a Day," the emphasis was on clothes purchases and makeup regimes. No fashion and beauty articles were more successful than the make-overs of Canadian women, and because they combined both fashion and beauty advice, will be examined in some detail here. The April 1954 cover-girl was Marion Clarke, the winner in the Spring Beauty Week Contest. Beside the cover photo was the text: "Clerk to Cover Girl Her Beauty Story Can Help You Too" (see illustrations). The article, aptly entitled "Cinderella From Pugwash," told a twentieth century fairytale of a young woman from a small community in north eastern Nova Scotia, whose entry into the Chatelaine contest was not only successful, but also the "magic wand"
Cinderella from Pugwash

BY ROSEMARY BOXER
Fashion and Beauty Editor

The magic wand was a letter to Chatelaine's Spring Beauty Contest. Her coach — a shining North Star whisking her to wonderland. Her Prince Charming — the TV camera that wooed and won our makeover girl

ONE SATURDAY last September Marion Clarke, a tall brown-haired girl of twenty-one, came home from her job in Halifax to spend the week end with her family in the nearby village of Pugwash. Her reading that week end included Chatelaine and when she saw the announcement of our Spring Beauty Week Contest, Marion showed it to her mother and remarked, "Guess I'll send in an entry and win that trip to Toronto."

She was smiling when she said it, mocking her own air of casual confidence she did not feel, but when the hundreds of entries from all parts of Canada were sorted, judged and judged again, Marion was one of the finalists. And in the final judging she was the one we chose to fly to Toronto by TCA for a week in November as our guest at the Royal York Hotel. She was the girl who got, in addition, a hundred dollars for her Christmas shopping and was given a complete
We started right in on the beauty makeover and Marion emerged a cover girl.

...beauty makeover to make her as attractive as she really is...

So Marion Clarke became our cover girl for the Spring Beauty Week issue, a feature began and developed by this magazine. The picture you see on the front of this magazine was taken at the end of an exciting, sometimes hectic, week of parties, interviews and fascinating sessions with beauty experts and photographers. It was a week for any girl to remember but as Marion got ready to go back home her Cinderella story took a fresh and even more dramatic turn.

One of her public appearances was her television debut before CBC cameras on the popular evening show Tabloid where she was interviewed by Dick MacDougall. The show was no sooner over than Ernest Bushnell, television coordinator for the corporation, was on the telephone from Ottawa to tell Toronto to "hang onto that girl." A second appearance on the show was arranged.

As a result of that phone call Marion was offered a contract in television and early this year, still a little dazzled by what had happened, she left her job in Halifax to move to Toronto, a move which could profoundly affect her whole life.

We certainly had no idea that we were going to see Marion change from a clerk with Imperial Oil to a television performer when we met her the day she got off the plane and we began to plan our beauty makeover over her. We did see great possibilities, though, in this poised brunette with the wide-spaced intelligent blue eyes and the fresh complexion so many Maritime women have.

We saw that she could be much more attractive than she...
Here's my cut, still wet. I decided I liked it, and the sandwich.

After the shearing, a shampoo. With my hair gone, I felt light-headed.

Eyebrows get darkened after she'd tweezed them to a trimmer line.

Eye make-up was something new but I decided it did things for me.

was. Her face, for instance, was small and round—almost chubby—unusual in a girl five feet eight inches tall. But instead of wearing her hair short and away from her face to make it look larger and more in proportion to her height, she'd buried it in a long horse page-boy that also made her look taller.

And since it's always easier to see what hairstyle is needed to correct feature faults when a face is bare of make-up, we always begin our makeovers in a hairdressing salon.

In Marion's case I had decided on a short haircut and if at first Marion wasn't enthusiastic about it, she afterward admitted that the new short, wedged cap cut did make her face look larger and her eyes more prominent. Something else this did, as we had planned, was that along with losing the too-tall look she'd also lost the too-thin look. Actually, Marion wasn't thin at all, but a long-hanging hairstyle on a tall slim girl often creates that illusion.

The second stage of makeover, when a new face is created with the magic of make-up, is perhaps the most interesting of all, especially when that make-up is in the skillful hands of CBLF's Make-up Director, Irene Kent, who has been with us through more than a dozen makeovers now. We know from your letters that you've enjoyed the makeovers as much as we have and your response to our Spring Beauty Work Contest was so gratifying that we decided to include eight more contestants in this issue. Although these women weren't as lucky as Marion, their letters were so good that we couldn't overlook them. You'll find their makeover stories with pictures on the next two pages. Notice in particular the startling effects we've achieved with eye make-up and foundation creams. Many of these women had never worn eye make-up and all were either using the wrong shade of foundation or none at all, which is just as bad.

Marion was one of the none-at-alls. In her letter she described herself as a dab-of-powder, dash-of-lipstick.
which whisked her to Ontario where “her Prince Charming—the TV camera...wooed and won our makeover girl.”132 While in Toronto, being made-over, styled, introduced at various parties and photographed for the cover, Clarke appeared on the CBC show “Tabloid.” The producers were so impressed by her that she was asked back for a second appearance and eventually given a contract. The story of Clarke’s transformation was framed in black and white photos depicting the various stages of her Chatelaine experience. Even Boxer was impressed by the changes winning a Chatelaine contest could make in someone’s life:

We certainly had no idea that we were going to see Marion change from a clerk with Imperial Oil to a television performer when we met her the day she got off the plane and we began to plan our beauty makeover of her. We did see great possibilities though, in this poised brunette with the wide-spaced intelligent blue eyes and the fresh complexion so many Maritime women have.133

Of course, the magazine could have hardly hoped for a better ending for this story which proved the importance of eye make-up, foundation cream and a good haircut. The patronizing tone evident in Boxer’s comment about Clarke’s features, and the regional stereotype of the fresh-faced Maritimer, were part of her style of writing. She was the expert who brought make-up to the ignorant and innocent, transforming them into women of beauty and presence. Similarly, while most of the women who entered these contests were from cities, there was a great appeal in selecting someone provincial, someone for whom the trip to Toronto would be a big adventure, and in whom the transformation would be very dramatic. While reference was made to Clarke’s personality, the makeover, Boxer’s expertise and the prestige of winning a Chatelaine contest were reasons for Clarke’s new life in Upper Canada. Clarke’s return to Nova Scotia, particularly the comments of her family upon her new appearance provided a nice contrast to Boxer’s fashion-speak prose, but even they eventually came around to the ‘new look’:

Back home, not even her sister, Eleanor recognized her with her new hairdo....The first thing her brother Joe said at the airport when she came home was, “What did they do to your hair?” Her mother sadly observed, “They’ve plucked your eyebrows.” But everyone, when they became accustomed to the new Marion, liked the way she looked.134

The meaning was obvious in this piece: style and glamour triumphed over down-home values and the natural look. How did readers respond to this Cinderella story?

Two lengthy letters were printed in the June 1954 issue in response to Clark’s makeover, one negative and one positive. Both illustrated how reader’s could interpret the
article very differently. The first, from D.I. Langley of Prairie, B.C., criticized the changes wrought in Clarke:

"Ugh! If that is what your beauty experts turn out...how glad I am that I did not enter your Spring Beauty Week Contest—not that I stood a chance of winning. I like the sweet unsophisticated look of the pre-treated Miss Clarke. But, oh, the after effects! She looks like a water-soaked poodle...."135

Langley’s letter proved, as did many others written about service department material or regular articles, that regardless of how ‘expert’ the analysis, if the readers did not agree they were not afraid to say so, or to criticize. Another letter, from Mrs. Murray Smith of Pugwash, N.S., took an entirely different approach:

"...I have known Marion Clarke since she was a wee girl—a girl to whom fame has come overnight. We in Pugwash and surrounding countryside are most appreciative of Chatelaine’s interest shown her, an interest which will have such far-reaching effects on her future life and career."136

The story of Marion Clarke may have touched many Canadian women, particularly those who envied her success and vowed to enter the next contest. For the winner’s community, regardless of the contest, the publicity from the Chatelaine exposure always seemed to create Warhol’s ‘fifteen minutes of fame’. The magazine had an aura, a prestige, and those who got published in it, were highlighted in it, or won one of the magazine’s contest never forgot what a thrill this exposure had brought.

These makeover contests, like the recipe contests, were instrumental in creating interest in the magazine, increasing the readership and getting women across the country to interact with the periodical and presumably talk amongst themselves about the latest Chatelaine-induced craze. The fashion features differed from the food contests in that they attracted younger women, many single, to the periodical. Most manufacturers and corporations strive to get consumers young, hoping that they will remain loyal consumers as they age and Chatelaine seems to have made an effort to attract younger women (although some older women found these features interesting) to the magazine. Once they came to regard the magazine as an authority on Canadian fashions, it was not a large jump to regard them as experts on food and nutrition, parenting, or household planning. In this way, the magazine became part of the currency of conversations amongst women, part of their lives and for some, part of their dreams, ultimately increasing the links between them and the periodical.
Another regular column, and depending upon the size of the magazine a department, was the alternatively titled “Young Parents” or “Your Child.” This section usually only contained one article--“Child Health Clinic”--which was surrounded by advertisements for baby’s formula, children’s medical products and children’s clothing. “Clinic” was written by Dr. Elizabeth Chant Robertson, a nutritional researcher at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. Unlike Marion Hilliard, Robertson was married (to Dr. H.G. Robertson, a Greek professor at Victoria College, University of Toronto) and had two grown daughters.137 The focus of the column was decidedly medical, as most columns featured very detailed information about childhood diseases, growth and development, along with more general articles on discipline and Robertson’s specialty nutrition and dietary requirements. They were informative, without ladling guilt onto mothers or talking down to them. The intended audience, regardless of this department’s title, was mothers. Fathers were rarely addressed, and although the term parent was often used, it was employed as a synonym for mothers.

Although Robertson wrote the bulk of the articles, this department also featured the “Chatty Chipmunk” page, as well as articles from freelance writers. These freelance pieces were often written in that self-deprecating manner so familiar to readers of Erma Bombeck. These were humourous, although with an educational intent, and explored issues like traveling with children, children’s Christmas pageants, and in “My Dotter Kant Spell” educational issues.138 What the young parents department very seldom did was employ an overly pedantic approach to child-raising issues. Despite the increasing size of the periodical or the challenges of raising all of those baby boom families, the magazine devoted relatively little space to children or their concerns. It was rare to receive any letters in response to these articles, particularly Robertson’s columns, and thus this does not appear to have been a very popular section. In contrast the same amount of space devoted to Helen O’Reilly’s gardening columns resulted in more letters of praise or letters seeking advice.

One of the irregular features in the magazine throughout the decade was the children’s page called “Chatty Chipmunk.” “Chatty” (his formal name was Chatsworth) was written by Laura Aliman, wife of Gene Aliman, the Maclean’s art director.139 Aliman’s daughters Susie, aged 11, and Jenny, aged 4, were consultants for this page of children’s games, brain teasers, and do-it-yourself craft ideas.140 The feature started in 1955 and continued into 1957, though it was soon eclipsed by the Teen Tempo page (the precursor to
Miss Chatelaine) and quietly dropped from the magazine. While it ran in the magazine, the column attracted letters from boys and girls, from Canada and the United States, thanking “Chatty” for the fun games and puzzles. Even adults wrote to commend the magazine for the section, since it provided an added bonus for harassed mothers or teachers who now had another resource for children’s entertainment that was affordable and easily accessible. This letter, from Mrs. Robert Edmonds of Kaipokok Bay, Labrador, is representative:

“Chatelaine is a must among my collection of magazines. I look forward to every mail I receive it. Mail comes to us every six weeks. As the community teacher and nurse, I often use Chatty Chipmunk’s page in school. The children are delighted with Chatty’s ideas and he has become much loved by the boys and girls.”

The children’s page was often a staple in women’s magazines, although as letters from readers made clear, regardless of whether or not there was a separate child’s page, children utilized the magazines to do school projects or cut and paste colourful images from the magazine for their own amusement. Due to the semi-permanent nature of magazines, their affordability and the resourcefulness of some parents and children, these colourful (in comparison with newspapers) periodicals often had secondary or tertiary uses well beyond those intended by the writers, the company and the advertisers.

This overview of the magazine’s service department highlights the multifaceted role the magazine played for Canadian women. While the fiction stories, general interest articles and editorials were about entertainment and education, the service department features were more basic: how to repaint your kitchen, deal with a child’s cold, make a maternity wardrobe or cook the perfect pot-roast. They filled a need, for the novice housewife and mother, that in previous eras would have been filled by the extended family, particularly female kin—sisters, mothers, grandmothers, aunts and cousins. The magazine was a source book for wives and mothers. They attracted young and old readers, though older women were more attracted to the food and recipe contests, while the younger, often single women, were attracted to fashion and beauty features. These food, decorating, fashion and gardening articles were the most interactive of all the features in the magazine they encouraged readers to clip and save articles, create scrapbooks, enticed them to enter contests or send away the coupons for decorating, fashion or beauty advice. For readers outside of the larger cities and suburban areas, who did not have access to as many resources—like decorators, home economists, architects and nutritionists—the magazine enabled them to get the latest developments in all
of those fields economically and without straying far from home. Finally, the department features contributed greatly to the feeling of community in the magazine, since readers wrote to offer suggestions, enter contests, share their recipes with other Canadian women, or to ask for advice. While the magazine could not afford to create the lavish layouts that the American magazines could produce, they could succeed (and did) in their own niche: Canadian fashions, food, home design, decorating and gardening hints.

Conclusion:

The analysis of fiction and departmental material in Chatelaine magazine in the fifties is important for two reasons. First, the analysis of the stories and “ideas” found in Chatelaine indicates that even the core material of a women’s magazine could offer readers the unexpected. Fiction readers received a hefty dose of moralism, some fantasy, a little humour and, sometimes, depictions of the upset of suburban husbands and frustrated homemakers. The service material offered more traditional fare—concerned as it was with nutrition, recipes, fashion and beauty tips, gardening advice, children’s medical issues, interior decorating and housekeeping. Still, in comparison with the lavish, conspicuous consumption displayed in the service departments of American women’s magazines, Chatelaine proffered more realistic service material in keeping with the limited budgets of their readers.

Equally important is the nature of the reader-participation with this material. When the editors, aided by the advice of the Dichter report, attempted to get rid of the fiction component—the readers rebelled. A core group of readers wanted the “fantasy” component of the magazine to remain—however much its critics labeled it old-fashioned, second-rate or inconsequential. Similarly, whenever the departmental material veered towards overly prescriptive articles, the readers resisted and complained. Thus this overview of the text and reader response illustrates that even with the most traditional of Chatelaine features the subscribers did not passively digest this prescriptive literature.

4 Mrs. Clifton Collier, Albert Co., N.B. to the Editor, Ibid., 116.
6 Verna Vanmeer, Burnaby B.C. to the Editor, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine October 1958, 136.


8 Ibid., 2-3 & 56.

9 Ibid., 2.


12 Radway, 95.

13 Ibid.

14 See appendix for more information on the Fiction Database methodology and findings.

15 Source, General Survey Database figures based on total page fiction and total magazine page counts for 1950-1959. See Appendix for more information.

16 See Fiction in the Appendix.

17 Cawelti, 41-42.

18 Ibid, 45.

19 Doris Anderson recalled that whenever they published a humourous piece, either fiction or non-fiction, readers always wrote in to complain about the articles, particularly ones in which satire and sarcasm were used, because they had interpreted them literally. Anderson responded with a letter apologizing for using humour in the magazine. Anderson interview, June 30, 1994.


21 PAO, MHRS F-4-1-a Box 427, Doris Anderson to Lloyd M. Hodgkinson, re. Prices for Articles and Fiction in Chatelaine, 7 June 1960.

22 PAO, MHRS F-4-4-a Box 438, Almeda Glassey to Keith A. Knowlton, 23 June 1959.

23 PAO, MHRS F-4-4-a Box 438, Doris H. Anderson to Almeda Glassey, 3 June 1959.

24 PAO, MHRS F-4-4-a Box 441, Sheila Mackay Russell, Edmonton to Doris Anderson, 28 January 1959. Russell, an Edmonton writer, comments: “I just want you to know that I’m delighted with your introduction of the Martins in the February issue. I particularly like the dramatic new title and I hereby make a solemn promise to pay attention to titles in future.”

For the purposes of classification, the three most important characters in each story—the protagonist, character 1 and character 2—had their sex, occupation, marital status, age, and ethnicity tabulated. For more detailed information about these results see the Appendix.

See Character 1 and Character 2 Vital Statistics, Fiction, in the Appendix.


See Resources, Fifties Findings, Fiction in the Appendix.

See Table A.15 in the Appendix.

See “Binaries” in the Fiction Findings, in the Appendix.


Sylvia Shirley, “This is Life,” Chatelaine May 1950, 30.

Ibid., 71

Ibid.


Prise, “The Dark Hall,” 75 & 77.


Ibid., 44.


Ibid., 43.

For another story with a feminist theme, see Vera Henry, “The Cake That Made Aunt Lindsay Famous,” Chatelaine May 1955, 34.


Ibid.

49 Ibid.
50 Ibid., 77 & 78.
53 Ibid., 107-108.
54 Ibid., 29.
56 Ibid.
57 Ibid., 30-31.
58 Ibid., 31.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid, 34.
61 See Chapter 8 for an analysis of the article “What Turns Women to Lesbianism?”
62 Ibid., 34-35.
63 Ibid., 50.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid., 127.
67 Ibid.
69 Dichter, 104.
70 Ibid., 103.
71 PAO, MHRS F-4-4-a Box 438, Mrs Elizabeth Hammond, Director of the Shoe Information Bureau of Canada, to Doris Anderson, 30 January 1959.
72 PAO, MHRS F-4-4-a Box 438, Doris Anderson to Mrs. Elizabeth Hammond, 6 February 1959.
74 Letters from Mrs. Pearl M. Walker, Maine, USA (see epigraph) and from Doreen MacAlister, Liverpool, England: I enjoy most of the articles and think the fiction is of a somewhat higher standard than that in our women’s magazines” to Editor, “Reader Takes Over,” January 1953, 3.
75 Cecile E. Leslie to Editor, “Reader Takes Over,” Chatelaine January 1952, 55.
76 A.P., Saskatchewan to Editor, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine September 1957.

77 Mrs. Louise Ramsay Purchase, Beamsville, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine September 1959, 144.


81 Frances Scott, Toronto to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine April 1959, 156.

82 This figure is based upon the General Survey Database page counts for all 120 issues. The total number of departmental pages was 116 out of a total of 494 pages for the decade. The departmental figure includes editorials and the letters page, although they are not included in this analysis, which accounts for this higher figure (21% of all fifties content) than a tabulation of only food, fashion, home and household, young parent’s column and Chatty Chipmunk’s page. Deducting letters and editorials from the page total would result in a figure of close to 20% of fifties content and is more representative.


84 Ibid.

85 “Chatelaine Centre,” Chatelaine March 1954, 1.

86 “Chatelaine Ad,” Canadian Advertising: Canadian Media Authority (September-October 1954), Volume 27 Number 6, 114-115.

87 “Chatelaine Ad,” Canadian Advertising: Canadian Media Authority (September October 1953), Volume 26 Number 4, 104.

88 “Chatelaine Ad,” Canadian Advertising: Canadian Media Authority (November-December 1953), Volume 26 Number 5, 104.

89 “Magazine Advertising Bureau of Canada,” Canadian Advertising: Canadian Media Authority (March April 1959), Volume 32 Number 2, 110.

90 “Chatelaine Centre,” Chatelaine March 1954, 1.

91 Ibid.

92 “Chatelaine for the Canadian Woman,” Chatelaine October 1957, 1.

93 See Food Findings, Appendix for more details. Lists of ingredients were scanned for convenience foods—i.e. canned soups, cake mixes, tinned vegetables, pre-made pastry dough, etc.—to better understand whether or not the magazine made a conscious attempt to promote processed and convenience foods. Chatelaine Advertising Database: Processed food advertising accounted for 9% of all food advertising in the magazine, while unprocessed food and baking supplies accounted for 4.75% of food advertisements.


95 Anderson 1994.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
100 Ibid., 21.
102 “Chatelaine Centre,” Chatelaine February 1956, 1.
104 Mrs. E.G. Sundquist, Nanaimo, B.C. to Editors, Ibid.
105 Margaret Rasmussen, Vancouver to Editors, “You were asking Chatelaine?” Chatelaine February 1955, 4.
109 Elaine Collett, Director Chatelaine Institute, “Food Fit For A Queen,” Chatelaine June 1959, 24-25.
110 PAO, MHRS F-4-4-b Box 442, Mrs. Lois Browett, Hamilton to Doris Anderson, 30 June 1962.
112 Beryl Haslam, Pointe Claire, Quebec to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine December 1959, 116.
113 These figures are taken from the Home and Household database, see Appendix.
114 “Chatelaine Centre,” Chatelaine April 1956, 1.
117 Mrs. E. Dodds, Montreal, Quebec to Editors, “Reader Takes Over,” Chatelaine July 1952, 4.
120 “Chatelaine Takes a Fresh Look at House Cleaning,” Chatelaine March 1959, 63-70.
121 Ibid., 64.
122 Ibid.
123 Ibid.
124 Ibid.
125 Audrey Singer, Port Credit, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine June 1959, 110.
126 Mrs. D. Robinson, Greenwood, N.S. to Editors, Ibid.
127 N. Smith, Scarborough, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.
128 “Chatelaine Centre,” Chatelaine April 1952, 1.
130 “Chatelaine Centre,” Chatelaine April 1954, 1.
131 Cover, Ibid.
133 Ibid., 32.
134 Ibid., 40.
136 Mrs. Murray Smith, Pugwash, N.S. to Editors, Ibid.
137 “With the editors,” Chatelaine November 1951, 124.
139 “Chatelaine Centre,” Chatelaine January 1956, 1.
140 Ibid.
Chapter 6: Cover Art and Advertisements

The photographic reproductions are a fright. Is there any real reason, except Art for Art's sake, in putting our Queen on the cover along with a pop-eyed singer and a sultry model?1
--D.A. Robertson, Lethbridge

... I wonder if you people realize there are thousands of housewives in Canada who can't afford any of the modern labour saving devices. I still scrub floors and wax and polish by hand. On the farm I carried water by hand and heated it on a wood stove; we have neighbours here in the city who still do not have running water. There isn't one woman on this street who has an automatic drier.2
--Mrs. Hazel M. Paisley, Saskatoon

I am an old Canadian Home Journal subscriber you inherited. While I always enjoyed the old magazine I am absolutely thrilled with the new; even the ads are enjoyable.3
--Mrs. Thomas Dicks, Vancouver

Chatelaine's advertisements and cover art provided much of the visual appeal in the periodical. These two components also served as lightning rods for readers' criticisms about the magazine, particularly the often poor visual appeal and Chatelaine's less-glossy (cheap) appearance. Cover designers negotiated the contradictory demands of good magazine design with the readers' preference for traditional, respectable covers to display on their coffee tables. Ads and cover art also accentuated the fault lines (class, region and race) within the mass audience. The other features strove to ignore or gloss over these "differences" but in these features it was impossible. In the pages and pages of advertisements, readers who were not within the targeted audience of middle-class consumers, were excluded by the narrower, class-specific content. The same feature which Mrs Dicks enjoyed was beyond the reach of Mrs. Paisley.

Cover Art

*When I brought the July Chatelaine home my wife looked at the cover and remarked, 'What a vulgar picture!' Then I read the story of the teen-agers in Kitchener and it occurred to me there might be a connection between pictures of that description and the rousing of the sex instinct...Covers of this type will lessen your subscription list rather than increase it."4
--F.W.L., High Bluff, Manitoba

*I am not an old prude, and I enjoy Chatelaine, but the September cover is a disgusting spectacle for a respectable magazine. With all the beautiful flowers, fruits, and other subjects to choose from, all you have to offer is another leg show, on a scantily clad young woman. Will our sex never learn that we can't command respect
if we do not respect ourselves? I would cancel my subscription, if it wasn’t nearly out.\textsuperscript{5}

--E.G. Reid, Toronto

"...I was astounded when I read the criticism of E.G. Reid, Toronto. She may not be a prude, but she is certainly no artist. The graceful figure gave pleasure to many people of my age group, and I was brought up by Victorian parents."\textsuperscript{6}

--E. Wood, Saskatoon

"I like the cover picture on my mother's Chatelaine. But I wonder if girls enjoy looking at other girls--especially remodeled ones. Now take me. I'm not remodeled, just me. I'm not a man yet, but I'm getting there--and by golly I think the girls would like a picture of a man for a change. Personally, I think this one is pretty good. Of course if you don't please return it as there are quite a few girls in school who wouldn't mind having it."\textsuperscript{7}

--Floyd Allard, age 16 Paddockwood, Saskatchewan

Chatelaine covers were the first image, and the first impression, of the magazine. As these letters from various readers made clear the cover art, like many of the magazine’s components, served many purposes. Readers often remarked about poor visual images on the cover, connecting poor or lewd cover art with a lack of respectability and fears over the impression the cover would make upon other readers. Furthermore, because these magazines often lay about on people’s coffee tables, or in magazine racks, the cover art on the magazine proclaimed to friends, family and nosy neighbours alike that the household was a Chatelaine household. For many readers, they wanted the educational, entertaining and ‘clean’ world of Chatelaine to be reflected on the cover.

Chatelaine cover art during the 1950s served a different purpose than cover art does on contemporary magazines. Today’s magazine readers expect covers to be lavish, original, and brightly coloured. In other words covers serve to attract our attention to one particular magazine amongst many others on a crowded newsstand. While fifties readers hoped the covers would be visually appealing or interesting, the covers were not used as advertisements to promote newsstand sales. Although newsstand sales increased throughout the decade, the percentage of the single copies sold was never greater than 5.2%.\textsuperscript{8} However, the visual appeal of the covers, the colours and the images photographed all contributed to the act of reading the periodical and interpreting its content. According to Ellen McCracken, "The visual images and headlines on a magazine cover offer a complex semiotic system, communication of primary and secondary meanings through language, photographs, images,
colour and placement." McCracken further contends that the cover serves to establish the magazine's genre and image:

"Genre identity is crucial to a magazines' sales and readership, and plays a role in the reader's sense of self as she consumes it. The cover's generic encodings often operate in the public sphere, so that when making a news-stand purchase, reading in a public place, or displaying the magazine on a coffee table, one identifies oneself as a...reader."

Thus with respect to Chatelaine, this section will interpret and illuminate the messages proffered by the magazine covers during the decade.

The magazine had five art directors, or art editors during the 1950s: Francis Crack, Art Editor (50-51); A. Stanley Furnival, Art Director (52-53); Keith Scott, Art Director (54-55); Ron Butler (56-58) and finally Joan Chalmers, Art Director (59-62). This was one of the few areas of the editorial department in which men figured prominently, although not exclusively, throughout the decade. The magazine's art directors favoured photographic images over illustrations; indeed it was rare for a cover not to have either a large photograph or a collage of smaller photos. These photos were produced at various studios in Toronto, although it was not uncommon to occasionally use a Karsh photo on the cover. The cover had annual cosmetic modifications until it was re-designed for the new-and-improved September 1958 issue. Until that issue, all versions of the Chatelaine cover featured the word "Chatelaine" in large typeface running across the top portion of the cover, with the subtitle "For the Canadian woman" either above or below the title. Thus the text used on the front cover made very clear who Maclean Hunter intended as the preferred reading audience. The remaining three quarters of the cover featured a photograph—either a woman's face, children or the latest delicacy created by the Chatelaine Institute test-kitchen. This photo was placed on a solid coloured background. The colours varied from bright Christmas reds to the more subtle pastel shades favoured on the spring issues. While there were exceptions, the general impression of these covers was of a rather dowdy, old fashioned magazine during the 1950-1952 era. The covers during the Sanders and Dempsey years were holdovers from an earlier era, with their illustrations of dewy-eyed ingenues in their new Easter bonnets. Under Clare's direction, 1953-1957, Furnival, Scott and Butler all implemented bolder colour schemes, and often featured a combination of images but this was too obviously an attempt to 'look modern' and often lacked any sort of aesthetic sensibilities or themes to pull the various images together. Readers were often critical of these 'combination covers' as this comment
from W.M.P. of Toronto indicated: "...Enjoy all the articles on the royal family, but the March cover is too much. Why mix our Queen's lovely face with fish and awning stripes?"12

In the Dichter-inspired cover which debuted in 1958, the title “Chatelaine” had a vertical placement on the left side of the cover. The subtitle had been changed, to reflect the buyout of Canadian Home Journal, and was now “The Canadian Home Journal.” In contrast to the frugal use of bold colours and multi-coloured combinations in the preceding eight years, this new layout displayed the title and subtitle in a bold colour, on a white background. The remaining two-thirds of the cover featured photographs or illustrations on a black background. This white and black motif, along with the multicoloured text made for a cleaner, more-modern looking cover. It also seemed geared to attracting a younger reading audience, both of single teenage girls and young married women.

The cover included various blurbs (blurb is the magazine term for the sentence-long teasers printed underneath the title which summarize or introduce the article) advertising each issue’s featured articles. If the Chatelaine Institute was producing a special food, decorating or beauty feature, it too was advertised on the cover. Often the article titles used on the cover were different from the actual titles used inside the magazine. Editors tried to jazz up the subjects or provide suggestive titles that would lead the reader to search rapidly for the corresponding article inside the periodical. The size and number of these article titles varied, but they were usually used to frame the visual image selected as the major focus of the cover. A particularly important article, like a Dr. Marion Hilliard article or a new installment on the Queen, would merit a different coloured banner to draw the reader’s attention or whet her appetite.

Regardless of the layout style, the use of colour, or the headlines and banners, the major focus of each Chatelaine cover throughout the decade remained fairly constant-- a young, white, female face.13 One of the hallmarks of contemporary magazine covers is the reliance on the ‘star’ or ‘celebrity’ photo to sell copies of the magazine. Not so Chatelaine.

**Table 6.1**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) female model</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>4) Inanimate objects</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) children</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>5) Royals or Celebrities</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) family groupings</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6) male/female models</td>
<td>3%</td>
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Chatelaine cover children—whether babies, children or teenagers—were almost all female (in the case of babies they were often wrapped in a pink blanket or some such feminine identifier). Covers without people offered food, art or flowers. Royal and celebrity covers also concentrated on women—the Queen, the Queen Mother, Princess Margaret, or Canadian celebrities like Joyce Davidson, or for couples, Charles Templeton and Sylvia Murray.

The Chatelaine covers lacked variety during the decade, but as the following case study indicates some readers were very resistant to change which might explain this sameness. In the January 1957 issue the magazine published a Savignac drawing, to highlight the travel feature they were promoting, which featured a happy-faced porter (coloured pink) carrying a young brunette woman’s luggage (her skintone was also pink) while she held her dachshund (see illustration). In the introductory essay Anderson explained the motivation for this different cover:

Last summer when we were planning the January issue, we decided there was no better pickup for that after Christmas slump you’re probably going through right now than a travel issue. A travel-poster cover seemed only logical and one name came immediately to mind—Savignac. He is a dark, curly haired Frenchman, internationally famous for his powerful, simple drawings. That’s why our cover looks so different this month—it’s a Paris import. Like it?14

The editors believed that the cover art should stimulate interest in the periodical, and that given its usage of colour and glossy paper, should sometimes offer more whimsical or fantastic images. The cover’s dark blue background cover and whimsical drawing certainly made it stand out in a sea of female faces and staged shots of children at play. Ultimately, however, the cover had to appeal to the readers’, and not the editors’, aesthetic sensibilities. If the readers liked the new approach to cover art we will never know, since the only published response, from Mrs. Campbell Humphries of Castleford, Ontario, was far from complimentary:

What a horrid cover on your January issue! The colours are nauseating; the artistry terrible; no proportion; no eyes; no tail end to the dachshund, if that is what the beast is supposed to be; measles on both characters’ faces! I thought all this, then found you had imported it from Paris! Really! Whoever Mr. Savignac is, he could take lessons in art from my four-year old daughter.15

Interesting that for this reader, the news that the monstrosity had been a Parisian import seems to have made the whole situation even worse. Perhaps she assumed they paid more for this cover than they were used to paying for their Canadian-produced artwork. It was clear from this experiment that the lack of innovation in cover design was not always the fault of
the Art Director’s lack of vision or the stinginess of the company, but rather was the result of the readers’ desire for the familiar.

The conclusions one can draw about the Chatelaine cover photographs and illustrations was that their emphasis on young, white women or children or familial groupings clearly marked the magazine’s femininity. It was also an attempt to attract young mothers or newly married women, since elderly women appeared very infrequently. Photos or illustrations of men, either as husbands, teenage boys or children were notable for their rare appearances on the cover of the magazine. Not surprising for the period was the absence of women of colour or ethnicity on the cover: a photo of a francophone from Montreal was as far as Chatelaine’s depiction of Canadian women’s racial and ethnic diversity went during the fifties. While it is impossible to ascertain what component of Chatelaine’s readership was composed of women of colour, native women or ethnic women it was clear from these covers that the Art department interpreted a “Canadian woman” to mean an Anglo-Canadian. So while the subtitle welcomed and encouraged all Canadian women to purchase the magazine and read it, the cover photos delineated a narrower, more exclusive vision of the reading audience—white, young, presumably heterosexual women. Since the photos were usually only head and shoulders shots, and thus clothing and class specific iconography were usually absent, the magazine could and did appeal to all classes of women.

As well, the concentration on the average woman, or the use of models who were supposed to convey images of the ‘average Canadian woman,’ positioned the magazine as one that featured articles of interest to all women, and not a celebrity-driven, entertainment magazine. In keeping with the Chatelaine mandate of Canadian content the celebrities were Canadian, or the Royal family. Articles on the Royal family sold copies and due to the Commonwealth link they were viewed as within the Canadian sphere. The Queen was, after all, ours as well. Furthermore, there was a tremendous interest in the Royal family as the decade included Elizabeth II’s coronation and people were fascinated by the female monarch, her children and her husband.

Taken together, the graphics and textual components of the Chatelaine covers made very clear that the intended or implied reader was the Canadian woman. That the images of the Canadian women used to sell the magazine to readers, or with which readers might have identified, were all young, attractive, heterosexual white women is important. This was the
implied community of Chatelaine readers, one that by virtue of its generic styling and use of the cropped head and shoulders photograph, encompassed all Canadian women regardless of class, region or religion if not age, race, ethnicity or sexual orientation. The absence of difference in the portrayal of these women was quite noticeable from a historical perspective, but would probably not have seemed inappropriate or narrowly defined for the time period. The fifties have been characterized as one of conformity and the images on the cover of the magazine are emblematic of the sameness of suburbia. The cover was one of the many ways that the magazine positioned itself as the cultural authority on Canadian women, and attempted to foster a sense of community amongst its readers.

Advertisements

"...we were all blind to the advertising. We never thought that anybody had any control over how appalling they sometimes were about women. I didn’t see it. I once did one. I wore a blue bonnet for Blue Bonnet margarine, the only one I ever did, but I did do it. I thought nothing of it. That’s another world.”16

--June Callwood

“...You can expose your brand name to a lot of people, but it’s not really working for you until it influences the buying habits of women. The great brands of America were built by magazine advertising. It is the added impact of magazine advertising, people’s confidence in and respect for magazines, that helps to make brands great. Chatelaine is the kind of magazine that can help your brand in the community. Chatelaine is edited for young homemakers, and brides-to-be; a mass market representing over a billion a year in purchasing power...For building brand influence--for being there when the sale begins--place Chatelaine at the top of your national list.”17

--Chatelaine advertisement “What Makes Brands Great?” from CARD

“It’s a fact Chatelaine is Your Best Medium to Sell Women: More than three quarters of a million women read Chatelaine for ideas on homemaking, cooking, grooming, and the answers to the many problems which homemakers face. These women recognize that Chatelaine is designed for their needs and interests. They identify themselves with the material, both editorial and advertising, presented in Chatelaine....When reading Chatelaine, they are keenly interested in products and services which can make them more efficient, more attractive, happier housewives. By advertising in Chatelaine you gain a select audience of alert, eager prospects who are interested and in the mood to buy...and because of this they respond quickly to your sales message.”18

--Chatelaine advertisement from CARD

The discourse of the advertisements in Chatelaine and the advertisements about the periodical which were published in CARD was very different from the editorial content of the magazine. As the preceding excerpts make clear the consumer ethos was paramount in
the world of *Chatelaine* advertising. The power of women’s magazines to deliver an eager, receptive and actively consuming audience was touted constantly in all of the CARD advertisements. The implications from this sort of advertising material was that advertising in the magazine was a sure bet. Any ad placed in the magazine was supposed to assume the integrity of the magazine and command attention, just like the editorial material did. Most importantly, the business executives at the periodical and the advertisers who purchased space in the periodical believed that the emphasis of the magazine was on the service department features, and that advertising would be supported by this material and create sales. The advertising rhetoric assumed that *Chatelaine*’s readers were consumers in waiting, passively waiting for the advertisers and the editors to identify their wants and satisfy their desires.

Beyond the rhetoric, however, it was clear that *Chatelaine* was contested space, and that advertisers, publishers, editors, and readers each brought their own agendas and interpretive skills to making or reading the magazine. As previously mentioned, the language of advertising differed from the language of the editorial content. In the analysis that follows it will be argued that the language of advertising depicted a comfortable world of middle-class consumption. The preferred image was that of the middle-class housewife who in her role as the family’s chief purchasing agent bought, or influenced the purchase of, a vast number of consumer durables, food products, clothing, makeup and children’s products. Whatever the messages of other sections of the magazine, the advertisements continued to depict women’s roles very narrowly. Emphasis will be placed upon the images used by Canadian and North American corporations to encourage women to consume their products. Since the importance, and impact, of the advertising lies not just in their attempts to sell products but in the images they used to encourage consumption, a statistical and critical analysis of the advertising material found in *Chatelaine* magazine during the 1950s will be the focal point of this section. This decoding of ad content includes an examination of the major industries and brand names which advertised in *Chatelaine*, an analysis of the gendered images depicted, and the various themes, meanings, and codes operating in the advertisements.19

Throughout the decade the magazine published advertising and editorial material in an equal ratio. The advertising content represented approximately 53% of the total pages of
Chatelaine for the fifties, or a total of 5,653.5 pages of advertising. The average percentage of advertising content in each issue of the magazine was slightly lower, at 51.8%, or for the average issue size of 90 pages, roughly 46.5 pages of advertising in every issue.

Within the pages of Chatelaine there were a wide array of products advertised: food, children's merchandise, household cleansers, large and small appliances, clothing, beauty products, toiletries, cars, cigarettes, insurance, travel, drugs and medical products, stationery, and building and housing supplies, to name just a few of the most popular products on display. Alcohol advertisements were absent--they made their debut in the 1960s. Ninety-one percent of all the products advertised in the decade were nationally recognizable (although not always available) brand names. Some of the frequent advertisers in the magazine were Campbell's Soups, Kraft Food Products, General Electric Appliances, Swift's Meat Products, Noxzema Skin Cream, Heinz Foods, Yardley fragrances and cosmetics, Avon Cosmetics, Fleischmann's Yeast, Listerine Antiseptic, Simplicity Patterns, Tex-made Cottons and Wabasso bedding. Although there was a vast array of goods, products and services advertised in the pages of Chatelaine, the seven categories represent nearly 90 percent of the magazine's advertising (see Table 6.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) food products</td>
<td>15.98%</td>
<td>5) medical &amp; feminine hygiene</td>
<td>9.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) appliances, furniture, building</td>
<td>14.59%</td>
<td>6) leisure, hobbies/crafts</td>
<td>7.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) beauty and toiletries</td>
<td>14.39%</td>
<td>7) housewares</td>
<td>5.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) general household products</td>
<td>11.02%</td>
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</table>

The half page and quarter page ads proved the most popular with the advertisers, accounting for 50% of all the ads placed in the magazine. Full page ads accounted for 18%, while eighth of a page and less than an eighth of a page ads represented 26%. Multiple page spreads were very rare. The location of the advertisements in the magazine proved interesting as well. Of course, the prime ad placements were the back cover, or fourth cover as it was referred to in CARD, the inside front cover or second cover, and the third cover or inside back cover. No distinction was made, in terms of price, for advertisements appearing in the body of the magazine, however the largest numbers of advertisements appear in inverse ratio to the largest number of editorial pages. The first quarter of the magazine contained the prime editorial spots and the least number of advertising pages. As one moved
through the magazine the editorial content declined and the advertising content increased, with the largest number of advertisements placed in the fourth quarter. The size of the ads also decreased as one moved from front to back through the magazine. Thus the larger ads, particularly the full page ads, were found in the first half and the smaller ads, particularly the eighth of a page size and smaller, were mainly clustered in the fourth quarter of the magazine.

The composition of the advertisements differed greatly from magazine ads today because 66% of the ads in this survey were black and white. Usually the larger advertisements had one or more colours, but 23% of full page ads were also black and white. The use of colour increased throughout the decade, particularly after the Dichter Study of Chatelaine in 1958 recommended a greater use of colour. As the prices for colour advertisements listed in Chapter 2 indicate, colour reproductions were tremendously expensive and many advertisers were prepared to forego the additional expense. It should be reiterated that Maclean Hunter itself used colourful accents sparingly. The rather dull, gray tone of the magazine contrasted quite remarkably with American women's magazines which featured much more lavish and colourful productions.

The graphics in the advertisements varied, but the two most popular types were those in which people were illustrated or photographed interacting with the product and those in which only the product was on display. Most of the ads were set in the home (45.5%) or were very simple photographs of the product alone (23%); ads featuring people at play, such as at the beach, cottage, outdoors or in a more relaxed setting, were a distant third (12%). Ads without people accounted for 33% of the total. Of the ads which depicted people and the product, the vast majority had only one person in the ad (60%), two people (21%) or three people (8%).

The community which populated the world of Chatelaine advertisements displays the advertisers' view of life. It was readily apparent that the ad community was a very narrow reflection of Canadian life in the 1950s, and indeed was not intended to reflect reality, but instead depicted the ideal Canadian consumer. Even without benefit of an in-depth analysis, it would be extremely simple to calculate the racial origin of the ad community: 98.8% of them were white. Only seven ads contained multi-racial depictions of people and the product. Of the five products found in these ads, (Cream of Wheat, Aunt Jemima Pancake
Mix, Pure Barbados Fancy Molasses, and Dole Pineapple) four depicted different races (three Blacks and a Hawaiian) because they were the product's trademark personas. The other ad, a spot for Canadian Pacific Holidays, included a number of white Canadians at play in Alaska, Banff and Lake Louise. At the bottom of that ad, standing beside a totem pole, and presumably one of the exotics on display, was a Native woman and her child, carried papoose style on her back. The only ad that did not include white people was for Dole Pineapple, which depicted three Hawaiians swimming, canoeing and enjoying their island paradise.

In terms of ethnicity, while the people portrayed in the fictional ad community were still overwhelmingly Anglo Canadians (87%), other ethnic groups were represented: American (3.3%); European (3%); Scottish (1.8%); French Canadian (1.5%) and English (1.3%). Another very narrowly defined characteristic of this community was class origin. As expected, the vast majority were from the middle class (81%); upper class (7%) or a combination of these two categories (5.9%). The visual clues, i.e., clothing, housing, jobs etc., were overt, and often the text supported the imagery. However, unlike the category of ethnicity, the text never explicitly used the term ‘class’, ‘workers’ or any other class specific moniker. There were only a handful of ads which depicted workers (1%) and combinations of working class and middle class people (1.7%). With respect to age and sexual orientation, the narrow representation continued. The most heavily represented age group was the twentysomething range, accounting for 54% of all people in the ads. The multigenerational category was the next most popular (17%), followed by infants and children (11%) and thirtysomethings (7%). The sexuality of the people in the ads was resoundingly heterosexual.

Gender was the one surprise category, largely because of the absence of males from the world of advertising in Chatelaine. Fifty-seven percent of all the ads with people, consisted solely of women, either alone or in groups. Male and female groupings in the ads, accounted for only 15%. Men appeared by themselves in only 3% of ads. Children and teenagers, of both genders, appeared in 10% of ads.

 Turning to ad imagery and mood, the results were even more remarkable. I had presumed that the two most prevalent types of imagery would have been maternal imagery or sexual imagery-- neither proved correct. Maternal imagery occurred in only 30% of ads with people. Sexual imagery was more prevalent, although far from overwhelming-- 8% of ads had “rampant” sexual images (nudity, lingerie or sexually suggestive poses) while 31% had
moderate sexual images. A variety of moods prevailed in the ads-- homestyle and affluence-- were the most popular in ads without people. Similarly ad actors, the settings and the situations represented a wide variety of moods-- playfulness, insecurity, wholesome, dramatic, sexual, maternal and medical-- were the most popular.

Within this sea of statistics it is possible to draw some conclusions. There was no overwhelming ad image, product or mood in Chatelaine advertising in the 1950s. It presented a rather drab world with black and white ads predominating. When colour was used, it was usually as an accent. The result was a documentary-like realism in stark contrast to the American ads with their lavish uses of colour. The ads were taken from a variety of products. Almost all of them related to the world of the household: food, furniture, homebuilding supplies, the family's clothing, medical products etc. Very few ads were for products used outside the home. Of those that were, mainly travel ads and automobile ads, the family was featured on vacation or in the car. The ads were set largely in suburban homes--indeed should cultural-anthropologists ever base a study of Canada in the 1950s on Chatelaine advertisements they would conclude that the Canadian woman never left her home. It was also clear that it was a woman's world, a white, Anglo-Canadian woman's world. Older women, lesbians, and ethnic women did not live in this suburban enclave. The Mrs. Chatelaine of the advertisements lived in a suburban home, which was sometimes affluent but usually fairly average, although always extremely tidy. She was pictured happily, often ecstatically going about her household routine. She was, in essence, the ideal housewife, attractively dressed and groomed, occasionally sexually provocative, and attentive to the needs of her husband, her children and her home.

A survey of some of the most compelling advertisements from the decade points to issues that a macro study often misses. The majority of ads were not worthy of distinction because they were straightforward attempts to sell a variety of products, utilitarian presentations of products. The more memorable ads were those that transcended the restrictions of the medium and grabbed the readers' attention, brought a smile to their faces or lodged themselves in the readers' memory. The following examination of some of the ads, provides an analysis of their “structure of meaning”. According to Gillian Dyer, “Advertisements do not simply manipulate us, inculcate us or reduce us to the status of objects,” rather “they create structures of meaning which sell commodities not for themselves
as useful objects but in terms of ourselves as social beings in our different social relationships."28 Through an examination of the various meanings, codes, dreams and fantasies at work in these selected advertisements, one can better understand the world that confronted the Chatelaine reader and posit ways in which she mediated these messages.

The selected ads are drawn primarily from five categories: food products, household appliances, furniture and building products, beauty and toiletries and housewares and clothing. One of the most lengthy and enduring ad campaigns to run in the magazine was a series from George Weston Ltd., which paid tribute to “The heart of the home.”29 This very distinctive series of advertisements ran from 1950 through to 1954. All of them were full page ads, with sixty percent of the space devoted to a full colour illustration. They depicted various sentimental moments of the Canadian family, including a daughter’s graduation from high school, a son’s first job, and the adult son returning with his family for Sunday dinner. The second phase of this campaign, starting in 1954, depicted Canadian women outside of the household. One ad featured women workers leaving the plant after their shift was over, while another focused on a perky looking Atlantic Canadian woman, helping her husband haul in the fish nets. The illustrative style was reminiscent of Norman Rockwell’s work. All of the ads were bathed in warm tones, often pastel colours, denoting love, affection, and moments to remember. Although each ad had a different topic, the preferred message, which was explicitly stated in the ad copy, saluted Canadian women’s work in the home with their husbands and family. A closer examination of two of these ads, both illustration and copy, will highlight the roles of women Weston’s felt compelled to salute.

**Homemaker Supreme**

“Her apron strings are family ties,” featured an illustration of an attractive-looking woman, standing in her pink and green kitchen, happily removing her apron before joining her family at the dining-room table (see illustration).30 Visible in the dining room were her husband, wearing a suit and tie and brandishing the carving knife to start carving the roast beef, and her son, wearing a t-shirt and shorts and smiling back at Mom. Also visible in the kitchen pantry was the bread box, and on the countertop Weston’s Bread and Crackers. Surrounding the ad copy at the bottom of the page were smaller illustrations of a woman
Her apron strings are “family ties”

The ties that hold a family together in loyalty and affection start at a woman’s “apron strings”.

Yet making her home a pleasant place to live is just one of many contributions made by the Canadian woman.

For she is also a dietitian who plans good meals to keep her family fit for work or play . . . a companion who shares in her family’s pleasures and problems . . . a nurse ever on call to care for her children’s hurts . . . a teacher who trains her children in good citizenship.

In these and many other ways she is a one-woman business contributing vitally to the welfare of her family and the stability of Canada.

Weston’s is proud that so many Canadian valued Weston customers . . . and that 5 shareholders about 48% are women.

And Weston’s realizes that, to hold the confidence enjoyed for over 85 years, it must constantly a highest quality in its products and so satisfy standards of the Canadian woman.

"Always buy the best—buy Weston..."
taking food out of the oven, shopping, and chatting with her husband; vignettes of a typical day. The ad copy was extraordinary for its romantic ode to the Canadian wife and mother:

Making her home a pleasant place to live is just one of many contributions made by the Canadian woman. For she is also a dietitian who plans good meals to keep her family fit for work or play...a companion who shares in her family’s pleasures and problems...a nurse ever on call to care for her children’s hurts...a teacher who trains her children in good citizenship. In these and many other ways she is a one-woman business contributing vitally to the welfare of her family and the stability of Canada.31

The preferred meaning, the meaning intended by the advertisers, could hardly be more overt. The Canadian woman’s place was with her family.

There were numerous covert codes at work here: patriotism, the influence and importance of Canadian women, the professionalization of motherhood and housewifery, the business of the household and within the illustration, the codes of maternal love, family pride and happiness. The view was that everything would be all right if Mom was in the kitchen wearing her apron. This was a perfect example of the 1950s adworld family: a middle-class utopia with Mom in the kitchen, Dad carving the roast and happy, well-adjusted Junior waiting for his dinner. The preferred reading was intended to be positive. This conception of women’s roles was a good thing for women, their families and the country. If one’s family did not achieve this romanticized ideal, the tone of the ad copy in particular, might have induced guilt in the wife and mother whose family (her responsibility remember) did not fit this pattern. Whether one purchased Weston’s products because they reinforced a feeling of maternal pride or conversely, to assuage maternal guilt, the ad was nevertheless effective.

Superwoman

The second Weston’s ad, “One done...One to go,” featured an illustration of women workers punching out at the time clock on their way home from work (see illustration).32 There were no tired, worn-out workers here; indeed they looked more like they were coming home from shopping rather than ending their paid workday. The three women sport bright smiles, are well groomed and made up and are wearing brightly coloured raincoats. It’s a good thing too, because as the ad copy informs us their family work day is just beginning:

Five o’clock—one job done and one to go. Behind her is another day...ahead is her home and family. For she is the modern wife whose skill and effort in office or plant is helping to build two big projects...the Canadian Future and the Canadian Home.33
Five o'clock—one job done and one to go. Behind her is another day... ahead is her home and family. For she is the modern wife whose skill and effort in office or plant is helping to build two big projects... the Canadian Future and the Canadian Home.

Moments from now, the girl on the job will be transformed into the lady of the house. Out of the slacks or office suit... and into a pretty house dress and fresh lip-stick for a home-coming husband. These efficient hands will be flying in her very own kitchen, doing the jobs women love to do for their men... fixing dinner... picking up bits of mending... whisking through a touch of ironing. And then... the precious time of quiet sharing, as both dream of the future their present labors will make come true. The house they will own... the garden they will tend... the children they will educate and watch grow...

Canada is a working country... and women stand side by side with their men to see that the work is done. It's a fine system, and a democratic one. And the not-so-silent partner helps her husband hold the line on both fronts. This is the way a family grows... and with such families Canada reaches new horizons of happiness and achievement.

Weston's take this way of honoring Canadian women, who for many years have made Weston's quality products the first choice in their homes. The name of Weston's is a family favorite today just as it has been for generations—a preference based upon quality first and always in food products.

Always buy the best—buy

Weston's

BISCUITS • BREAD • CAKES • CANDIES
Again, the codes of patriotism, family, women’s role and women’s service to the community ring loudly. But because she was modern, unlike our earlier woman who only concerned herself with her family, she gladly worked a double day. The staple of many ads to follow, particularly in the seventies, this Weston’s ad portrayed the mythic superwoman, capable of handling all her family responsibilities and her job:

Moments from now, the girl on the job will be transformed into the lady of the house. Out of the slacks or office suit...and into a pretty house dress and fresh lipstick for a home-coming husband. These efficient hands will be flying in her very own kitchen, doing the jobs women love to do for their men...fixing dinner...picking up bits of mending...whisking through a touch of ironing. And then...the precious time of quiet sharing, as both dream of the future their present labours will make come true. The house they will own...the garden they will tend...the children they will educate and watch grow...34

According to Ellen McCracken, one of the typical techniques utilized by women’s magazines, particularly in the advertising sections, was to use the “transgressive and the forbidden, and then attempt to contain these elements by invoking dominant moral values.”35 This analysis is not unlike Cawelti’s typology of the romance, where the genre could contain contradictory and paradoxical themes which are ultimately resolved in favour of the status quo. This ad fits both descriptions perfectly as it acknowledged women’s work as something modern and different and then incorporated it back into the familiar codes of household, family, marriage and children. Women worked, according to Weston’s, because they wanted the middle-class dream of a house, children, and a garden. Although not stated, the ad implied that married women’s work was only temporary. As well, the code of femininity was particularly strong in this ad, assuring the reader that a woman who worked outside the home need not be any less feminine than the housewife. Finally, the ad stressed that women’s work, far from being personally fulfilling or liberating, was really in service of home, and country:

Canada is a working country...and women stand side by side with their men to see that the work is done. It’s a fine system, and a democratic one. And the not-so-silent partner helps her husband hold the line on both fronts. This is the way a family grows...and with such families Canada reaches new horizons of happiness and achievement.36

Regardless of her working status, the wife was what she had always been, a helpmate to her husband. An alternate reading to this preferred meaning could make wives who did not work outside the home feel guilty about shirking their duty to family and country. Linking
employment with democracy might have resulted in some very different interpretations of this ad.

**The Mechanized Household**

The various codes at work in these Weston’s ad can be summarized as the super-motif of ‘Mom Knows Best and that’s why she buys...” This was a recurring motif in countless food ads, ranging from Kraft products, Campbell’s Soups, Ovaltine beverage, Coca-Cola, Sunkist oranges, and children’s products. A large part of the advertising rhetoric of the fifties declared that the housewife and mother could become so competent, knowledgeable and proficient because the manufacturers had taken much of the labour and a large part of the guess work out of running the household. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the appliance and general household item advertisements. This code in the advertisements contrasted with the service department material which, while promoting foodstuffs, cleaning products or ready to wear fashions, nevertheless implied that housewives required skills and knowledge to run their households effectively. The departmental features blended consumption and educational themes (indeed the magazine stressed that women depended on this service department material for critical know-how) while the ads, not surprisingly, emphasized the fulfillment and ease produced by consumer products. Here the focus will be on three ads, one for aluminum pots, one for vacuum cleaners, and one for portable kitchen mixers.

The Aluminum Company of Canada advertisement “They discovered aluminum” told the reader that three generations of Canadian women’s cooking prowess owed much to their aluminum pots and pans. This black and white half page ad had small illustrations of Grandma’s, Mother’s and Daughter’s smiling faces and then brief biographies of their cooking successes. While it was Daughter who belonged to “the aluminum age,” both Grandma (“who had the first aluminum saucepan in town”) and Mother (“she brewed Dad’s coffee in an aluminum pot”) also experienced the aluminum success. In their attempt to link ease of preparation, purity and generations of cooking success to their product, the company also undercut and reinforced the motif that scientific advances in appliances and housewares had resulted in a stress-free, and almost work-free, household. This science motif was employed quite often during the fifties and was usually linked to the space age.
Canadian Westinghouse, in a rather garish, predominately blue, green and purple advertisement, proclaimed in January 1953 “You Can Enjoy Complete Freedom from Work on Washday” (see illustration). Our smiling, nicely dressed housewife, wearing that fifties staple jewelry-- a strand of pearls-- was illustrated removing clothes from her washing machine. Another picture depicted her pulling on her gloves before she heading out to, presumably, a luncheon. Once again, the advertisers portrayed the utopian household, run by appliances in which women were the monitors or “bosses” and not the workers. This was undoubtedly a very appealing fantasy for housewives still stuck in the dark ages of laundry. However, another interpretation of this ad genre is the increased expectations and household perfectionism or personal perfectionism that this freedom implied. If it took little energy to do the family’s laundry, then other uses could be made of the day, more housecleaning, more beauty regimes, more volunteer work, etc. Although the ad did not explicitly tell readers what they could do with their time, it was one of the few ads to link reduced hours spent in pursuit of a perfect house with leisure (the word “relax” was used). In most cases the found hours were linked to more time spent with children.

General Electric was also fond of this motif. Many of their ads for appliances, large and small, featured the theme of freedom from work through appliance purchase. One particularly bizarre ad for a vacuum cleaner sported the subtitle “You do so little...your G-E cleaner does so much” (see illustration). The graphic on this ad featured a large illustration of the vacuum. In the middle of the ad was the typical suburban living room with the cleaner clearly visible in the middle of the floor. One woman was illustrated vacuuming the floor, and six outlines or cutouts of herself were depicted cleaning the curtains, the furniture, the paintings, the bookshelves, and the lampshades. As was always the case with vacuums and floor polishers, the illustrations depicted a rather limp wristed hold on the appliance, which gave the impression that either the woman was floating along behind the cleaner or that it was so light, it required little exertion. The startling, no work part of this equation was that you could “Clean a whole room without once moving the cleaner!” While the preferred reading was freedom from work, or at least ease of use, this army of cutout and real women, tied like tentacles of an octopus to the vacuum cleaner, was also household perfectionism at its apex. This product that promised freedom from work actually encouraged vacuuming spots that with other more cumbersome cleaners would have been hard to reach and hence
RELAX AND ENJOY YOURSELF ON WASHDAY

Load the LAUNDROMAT... set the control... then go out and do as you please while the Laundromat does the work. It fills itself, washes, triple rinses, spins the clothes damp-dry, drains, cleans itself ready for the next wash, and shuts off.

Only the Westinghouse Laundromat lets YOU boss the job if you want to. You can stop it anywhere in the cycle to add or remove forgotten or lost-scaled clothes... repeat or skip any part of the action. It's completely automatic, yet completely flexible.

One of the greatest advantages of the Laundromat is that it does not use more hot water or soap than your load requires. The "Water Saver" door tells you exactly how to set the "Water Saver" for maximum economy. Ask your Westinghouse Dealer to show you a Laundromat in operation.

Now! You can enjoy Complete Freedom from Work on Washday

ANOTHER WONDERFUL WESTINGHOUSE LABOUR-SAVER IS THE CLOTHES DRYER

You can dry your clothes any time you wish, without work and without weather worries. The Westinghouse Clothes Dryer eliminates all the drudgery... all the heavy manual work... of drying clothes, and provides any degree of dryness you want — from damp-dry for ironing to bone-dry for storage.

No matter how or when you wash your clothes, all you have to do is put the wet clothes into the Dryer, set the dial, and your work is done. The Westinghouse Clothes Dryer saves all the wear and tear of line-drying... saves mending and ironing. Your Westinghouse Dealer will be glad to give you a demonstration.

And here is Canada's latest washer... the new Westinghouse! It's safer for your clothes, easier for you! Exclusive "Cushioned Action" washer clothes clean, faster, and without wear. The "Instantaneous" Control O-Roll Wringer is the latest one... makes... a slight push or pull on the wringer, or a pull on the clothes, stops the roll instantly. Pressure over the entire length of the roll is automatically equalised for thick or thin items, and is adjustable to suit the material. On display now at your Westinghouse Dealers.

YOU CAN BE SURE... IF IT'S Westinghouse
Enjoy easier cleaning with the new

YOU DO SO LITTLE... YOUR G-E CLEANER DOES SO MUCH

Just set the new General Electric Swivel-Top Cleaner in the centre of your living room, and enjoy the Easiest Cleaning ever! Without once moving the cleaner - you can spotlessly clean every nook and cranny. For, as you move freely about the room, the cleaner's cleverly constructed swivel-top turns and allows the lightweight hose to follow you around.

Imagine too, attachments that cannot fall off the end of the hose. With the G-E Swivel-Top, eight matching attachments are locked into place - easy to change, yet positively interlocked. These attachments, a throw-away bag, and sustained cleaning power even as the bag fills - plus quiet operation, make the G-E Swivel-Top everything you will ever want in a cleaner.

POSITIVE INTERLOCKING ATTACHMENTS

At the flick of a button, attachments are locked into place until you disconnect them. They cannot fall off yet they're so easy to interchange. Eight non-marking attachments are provided in a handy storage caddy, each attachment designed to do its own cleaning job efficiently.

THROW-AWAY BAG

You never touch the dirt or see it - all caught in G-E's strong, extra-long throw-away bag - ready wrapped for the garbage. You change it only 6 times a year.

AND FOR GLEAMING FLOORS

The G-E Floor Polisher will save you hours of hard work. With it, hardwood, linoleum and tile floors sparkle in a hurry. You just guide - the G-E Polisher does all the work.

CANADIAN GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY LIMITED
only done a few times a year. As readers of the Chatelaine service material well knew, this sort of fastidious house cleaning took a vast amount of time and energy.

**Tools of Romance**

By the end of the fifties there was an increasing emphasis on allusions to romance to sell products, a host of “unromantic” products. One ad, for General Electric Portable Mixers, featured three small photographs of a woman using the turquoise coloured mixer and then a half page, blurry photograph of the woman, her man (husband or boyfriend it is unclear), the mixer and a cake (see illustration). Obviously making a pun on the word mixer, the little drama illustrated that the rewards for using this new appliance were great. After all, the woman was smiling inanely, the man was grinning and telling our G.E. Portable Mixer operator that “That’s even better than mother used to make!” As with all the ads in this genre, while the copy and graphics were all very enthusiastic about the product and what it could do for the reader, they were also classic advertising fantasies or wish fulfillment. They created excitement about products in which the novelty quickly faded and the promise of revolutionized existence never materialized.

**Marital Bliss**

One of the most effective ways advertisers found to sell appliances and housewares was to link them with weddings and bridal showers. In the world of these ads, love, marriage and consumption were often tied, and indeed many advertisements depicted wedding receptions where the wedding party stood blissfully surrounded by the various products purchased as wedding gifts. Ads for Bissell Sweepers, Community Cutlery and G.E. Appliances aptly illustrated the code of marital consumption. A full colour, back cover advertisement, “She’s in love...and she loves Community” featured a three quarter page illustration of a dreamy looking brunette gazing blankly out at the reader while pieces of cutlery floated around her head (see illustration). The reader was supposed to identify with Ann because “Ann’s a lot like you. With a head full of dreams these days, but plenty of common sense, too. That’s why she made up her mind to have all the silverware she needed, right from the start.” Oneida isn’t just selling silverware here, they are selling a dream of marital happiness, fantasies of the perfect life available to all young brides like Ann if only
HANGS ON THE WALL or stores flat in a drawer, out of the way but handy for action all over the kitchen from range to counter top.

LIGHTWEIGHT BUT POWERFUL. Weighs less than 3 lbs., yet has power to stand for the heaviest batter. 3 speeds at your fingertips.

HAPPY KEEPS TEST allows batter to drop back into mixing bowl. Push button selector releases beaters for quick and easy cleaning.

"That’s even better than mother used to make!"

see how a GENERAL ELECTRIC Portable Mixer whips up compliments for you!

ONLY G-E HAS THE WHIPPING DISC
Cream, egg whites and potatoes are whipped light and fluffy in seconds with this exclusive whipping disc included at no extra cost.

GENERAL ELECTRIC PORTABLE MIXER

You’ll cook better than grandma ever did — when you own a General Electric Portable Mixer. Higher angel cakes, lighter frostings, lighter meringues, smoother batters — all as “easy as pie” with this busy mixer on the job.

The day a G-E Portable Mixer comes to your house you will start to ENJOY cooking. Three beating speeds handle ALL the mixing — from heavy batters to frothy creams.

Choose from four pretty colors to match or accent your kitchen — canary yellow, petal pink, turquoise or white.

Remember too — more Canadians choose General Electric Appliances than any other make.

CANADIAN GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY LIMITED.
No slowpoke collecting for Ann—she wants her service complete

Ann's a lot like you. With a head full of dreams these days, but plenty of common sense, too. That's why she made up her mind to have all the silverware she needed, right from the start. Not just a place setting or two—but a whole chest full of precious, gleaming Community.
they 'buy all the silverware they need.' With names like 'White Orchid', 'Lady Hamilton' and 'Coronation,' the ad none too subtly made allusions to royalty, to a life of ease and happiness. Furthermore, any Chatelaine reader could afford the fantasy because this was affordable affluence-- the product advertised was silver-plated flatware, and not sterling silverware.

Even more mundane household items, like Bissell Sweepers, which did not lend themselves to much romanticization, used the marital, bridal and love motifs to make their products seem an indispensable part of young marrieds existence. An ad entitled "Give the Bride a Bissell Sweeper" featured three cartoon vignettes, plus a poem, on a full page black and white ad (see illustration). The first scene showed the bride, holding her Bissell in one hand, being carried over the threshold by her husband. The other illustrations show her happily using her Bissell. For as "little as $9.45," the ad promised, the Bissell Sweeper "Keeps rugs spick; Keeps home span; A Bissell helps her keep that man!" The most glaring example of the Bridal Shower motif was the General Electric ad entitled "The Right Gift for a Special Occasion" (see illustration). Another full page black and white entry, this ad featured a store window display of smaller G.E. appliances, irons, kettles, toasters, floor polishers, etc. Peering ecstatically through the glass was a bride, wearing her wedding gown and still carrying her corsage. The ad makers have presented an image of the wonders of marriage, all those new appliances, which will "make someone's life so much easier and happier--for years." The alternative reading is to decode the ad for marital consumptive bliss as an ad which features a bride, imprisoned behind the glass of the store window, screaming in horror at the fate that she has just consigned herself to, namely countless hours of household toil. The ridiculousness of many of these images, particularly for the large component of the Chatelaine readership that was already married, could readily undercut the romanticized version of marital happiness.

The Good Life in Suburbia

This drama was reenacted in countless ads. The following ads for Coca-Cola, Polythene Plastics, Aunt Jemima Pancake Mix and finally Amtico Flooring illustrate the various interpretations of suburban life, and its progress throughout the decade. The Coca-Cola advertisements found in Chatelaine featured some of the idealized slices of suburban
Give the Bride a Bissell Sweeper!

Keeps rugs spick keeps home span
A Bissell helps her keep that man!

As little as $945 buys this handy helper

Wonderful gifts for brides. Bissell Sweepers save time and work. . . . keep rugs brighter, longer. The brush, with its gentle bristles, adjusts automatically to thick or thin carpets. . . . reaches down to clean up dust and dirt in a jiffy. A Bissell Sweeper empties at a touch of the handy lever. . . . and its built-in brush cleaner combs the bristles clean as they sweep. Best housekeepers use Bissell Sweepers . . . for daily cleaning . . . save their vacuums for the heavy work.

Choose for wedding and shower gifts . . . and for yourself. . . from 4 handsome models . . . in Fashion Colors . . . at the BISSELL GIFTS FOR BRIDES CORNER in your favorite store.

Bissell Carpet Sweeper Co. of Canada, Limited
Niagara Falls, Ont.
The Right Gift for a Special Occasion

Gift suggestions shown above:
LOCK • FOOD MIXER • FLOOR POLISHER • KETTLE

eATHERWEIGHT IRON • STEAM IRON • TOASTER

GE ELECTRIC APPLIANCES

CANADIAN GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY LIMITED
life. In “Coke Time and Friends” the suburban housewife was pictured reading the paper, presumably, on a Saturday afternoon (see illustration). Conveniently situated at her feet, on the coffee table, was a bucket of ice cold bottles of Coca-Cola, a long-standing symbol of refreshment that was used throughout the world. This act of hospitality appears to have drawn her neighbours in for a drink since they can be seen coming through the doorway. The three people, two women and one man, all have a healthy, wholesome appearance. They are casually, yet neatly dressed in shirts and dungarees for the visiting couple and a pink sweater and capri pants for the hostess. This was an image of relaxation, of happy, informal visits with Jones’, everyone enjoying an understated affluence. This wholesome, middle-class dream could be found with the purchase of Coca-Cola. Indeed, the reward for purchasing well (“You know what guests like best”) was your guests; serve some other cola and the Jones’ might never return.

The ad “Flexible Polythene housewares do not chip, crack or break...” featured a full colour half page ad in which Mom and little Jimmy were in a typical looking kitchen (see illustration). Mom was busy opening and closing her polythene containers, while little Jimmy played with his dump truck on the same Formica kitchen table. Viewed quickly, the ad portrays a scene not unfamiliar to many readers, except that the only thing visible in this woman’s kitchen are polythene containers. The ad copy stated that the “modern woman knows unbreakable polythene” products are “realistic”. Viewed more closely, Mom’s forced smile seems to harden. Perhaps this innocent little scene was really about to explode as Jimmy, looking a little nervous on second viewing, knocks over some of Mom’s containers. The claustrophobia of this small kitchen could speak volumes of the true nature of many days in suburbia.

“Wake up, Henry!...It’s time for Sunday ‘Brunch’” an Aunt Jemima ad showcased Dad’s role in suburban family fun (see illustration). This full page ad featured a series of photos including Henry in bed; a large full colour photo of Aunt Jemima pancakes; and then a photo of Henry, wearing his silk dressing gown, shaking up a batch of pancakes while Jane and Joe, also in their housecoats, flip pancakes on the electric griddle. Mom peers around the corner of the kitchen door approvingly. This family fun motif was employed quite often to jazz up otherwise basic products. The intended message was that the happy-looking housewife and Mother not only bought the pancake mix, she bought a weekly installment of
"Come in, it's Coke Time"—
warm words that welcome and say
you know what guests like best.
There's no equal for ice-cold Coca-Cola . . .
in unique flavor to delight your taste . . .
in wholesome goodness to refresh so pleasantly.
Matchless—that's Coke—matchless.
flexible polythene housewares
do not chip, crack or break...

Two out of three Canadian women (according to two separate, independent consumer surveys) prefer flexible plastic housewares. These unbreakable polythene products give greater value for the household dollar, last longer and retain their decorative good looks. The modern woman knows unbreakable polythene toys too...likes the way they withstand really rough treatment, are realistic, with rich, permanent, moulded-in colours—lighter, tougher, safer (non-toxic, have no sharp edges). Believe it or not—they even float!
Put 1 cup milk, 1 egg, and 1 tablespoon liquid shortening in shaker.

Add 1 cup AUNT JENIMA PANCAKE MIX.

Now the fun! Shake vigorously ten times.

Pour batter onto griddle. Perfect pancakes every time!
family playtime, and a much earned rest from meal preparation. Naturally, everyone looked perfect, particularly Mom and Dad, both of whom were Hollywood glamorous. Of course, behind the scenes Mom has orchestrated this whole event, got everyone up, made sure that all the necessary ingredients were on hand, the kitchen was sparkling clean and after all the shaking and flippin’ has happened the washing and drying will be Mom’s preserve.

Food and housewares manufacturers were not the only ones to sell their products by pushing suburban happiness. The manufacturers of building and decorating product employed this motif most of the time as well. However, they also were most likely to use affluent settings, imagery or themes to sell their products. Home renovation and building were the ultimate dream or fantasy ads, because they promised a perfect house and, when the husbands were included, passionate togetherness. The ad “When a floor is Amtico Vinyl Flooring” featured a couple dressed in formal evening wear, dancing on their new Amtico Celestial Vinyl Flooring (see illustration). Half of the ad was devoted to a full colour photo of the flooring, but adjacent to the dancing couple (who were gazing rapturously into each other’s eyes) was the short poetic phrase “A floor is moonlight...and romance...and beauty”. Other Amtico patterns, “Renaissance” and “Gleaming Stardust”, also promised to add romance to a marriage. The implied message was that any size of Amtico flooring in a house would be a ballroom just inviting a wife and her husband out onto the dance floor. The production values in the building supplies advertisements were higher than many of the other products advertised. These advertisers most often used full colour ads which made their products that much more appealing. Additionally, because of the fact that products like copper pipes, linoleum flooring, cedar shingles or household furnaces were expensive and rather involved products to buy, the advertisers strove to emotionalize them as much as possible. The reception of the Homes features in the late fifties and sixties, and the declining number of advertisers for these features is evidence that the home and building product manufacturers were not getting a good response to their Chatelaine ads.

The Craft of Femininity

While most of the products were pitched at women as consumers for the family, the ads for women’s clothing, cosmetics and toiletries were directed at the individual woman. These ads always employed the themes of self-improvement, cult of youthfulness, and
a floor is moonlight...
and romance...
and beauty...

when a floor is Amtico VINYL FLOORING

Floor illustrated is pearlescent Amtico Celestial Vinyl. Other imaginative Amtico designs include dimensional Renaissance, gleaming Stardust and co-ordinated Terrazzo, Marbleized and Plain Colors.
highlighted insecurities about body appearances or hygiene in their attempts to encourage women to buy their products. These products used the hard sell: women were told they could not live without these products, or if they did, their social lives, marriages and self-worth might be jeopardized. Whether in the Noxzema ads ("Which of these skin problems spoils your appearance?") the Listerine ads ("Why he left so early") or Yardley's ("Makes you feel so fresh and feminine") the code was feminine improvement (see illustrations). According to the ad makers, successful women (and success here was defined in terms of appearance, shape, youthfulness and scent) owed their success to various perfumes, deodorants, soaps, or mouthwash. Many of the ads for cosmetics and toiletries did not feature photographs of women but rather included illustrations which were more easily manipulated to depict idealized versions of femininity. Most insidiously, the Yardley ads featured a china doll as their example of true femininity. A large majority of the ads for women's clothing were advertisements for foundation garments, girdles, corsets, brassieres and hosiery. Again, the codes were similar to those of the cosmetics ads: "Magic Controller" girdles which "Let you feel so free" promised to let the natural you shine while controlling, hiding or accentuating other problem areas (see illustrations).

The True North

Finally, one code, that of Canadian values or Canadiana, deserves mention. Many advertisements utilized shots or illustrations of the outdoors, usually the domesticated view from the cottage, but often more rugged illustrations of mountains, rivers and lakes, linking the product with the country and with an implied purity. Similarly, there was a hokiness or lack of polish to some of the ads that differentiated them from the more glossy, American images. This was particularly clear in the ads for family clothing, featuring lots of flannels or plaids, printed cloth with outdoor motifs, or in ads in which the family was depicted cozily huddled around the recreation room fireplace. One ad, for Mary Maxim knitting patterns, "For warmth and comfort there's nothing like a handknit!", featured a group of nine sweater clad men, women and children waiting for a bus stop (see illustration). The sweater names: Hoedown, Wolf, Fleur de lis, Oil Derrick and Holstein Cow, identified the product as Canadian, and while improbably staged, the people in this ad looked more like 'characters' than professional models. Such ads displayed an earnestness and lack of sophistication or
Why he left so early

It was Edna's first big date with him and—here she was, back at home, puzzled and unhappy before the evening was half over. What had she said or done to hurry him away so early?

Now something she had done . . . or something she had left undone. It might have been a different story had she been smart enough to let Listerine Antiseptic do its work for her. After all, no one wants to put up with halitosis (bad breath) a minute longer than he has to.

How About You?

What happened to Edna could happen to you . . . to anybody. Isn't it foolish to risk offending when Listerine Antiseptic is such an extra-careful precaution against it?

Listerine Antiseptic instantly halts simple bad breath and stops it, usually for hours on end. Yes, actual clinical tests showed: that in 7 out of 10 cases, breath remained much fresher and sweeter for more than four hours after the Listerine Antiseptic rinse.

Steps Bad Breath

When you want to be at your best never, never omit Listerine Antiseptic. Use it before every date. Better still, you should freshen and sweeten your breath every night and every morning as well.

Three generations of fastidious women have looked upon this delightful antiseptic as almost a passport to popularity . . . certainly a "must" for good grooming.

While sometimes systemic, most cases of halitosis, say some authorities, are due to bacterial fermentation of tiny food particles in the mouth. Listerine Antiseptic quickly halts such fermention and overcomes the odor it causes.

Lambert Pharmaceutical Co. (Canada) Ltd.

Listerine Antiseptic... stops bad breath for hours
Makes you feel so fresh and feminine

Yardley English Lavender is unlike any other fragrance you've ever used. Because it's more than a lingering, lovely, lighthearted scent. It's a feeling... fresh, gay, wonderful—like being in love! And you know when you feel like that, you look your prettiest. Enjoy the fragrance of Yardley Lavender in many forms... give it with pride.

Yardley English Lavender from $1.55. Toilet Soap, box of three $1.50.

Yardley Lavender

Lavender Dusting Powder $2.50
After Bath Freshener $2.00
More than a Corset! Better than a Corset!

Amazing New Playtex Magic-Control!

With new non-roll top and hidden power panels, it slims and supports you as Nature intended!

Here, for the first time, is natural figure control! Magic-Controller is one smooth, piece of fabric lined later. Every inch reflects firm control. It does more for you than any girdle, and fits you forever from restricting, constricting corsets.

Prove of Magic-Controller's power to "hug" your figure naturally comes when you wear it under your clothes.
PIERRE BALMAIN, leading fashion designer, says:
"This season the emphasis is on you—your slimmer hips, your trimmer waist-line. And the girdle for you is Playtex! Such slimness, comfort, freedom—and see how it flatters the fashion!" Playtex Fabric-Lined works its figure-slimming miracles without a seam, stitch or bone—leaves you so free, keeps you so comfortable, with cloud-soft fabric next to your skin. Invisible under sleekest clothes, it washes in seconds, dries in a flash—and the four new Adjust-All Garters take wonderful care of your stockings!

PLAYTEX FABRIC-LINED GIRDLES with new Adjust-All Garters, White Magic or Pink, $8.50. Other Playtex Girdles from $4.50. At all department stores and better specialty shops, PLAYTEX.

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Playtex FABRIC-LINED Girldes
for warmth and comfort
there's nothing like a handknit *Mary Maxim®* sweater!

Striking, colorful design—wears beautifully—so reasonable in cost—that's a *Mary Maxim* sweater! You’ll find the pattern grows under your fingers like magic—just a few rows work into inches of sweater. Perfect for winter sports and casual wear the year 'round. Knit these from *Mary Maxim* patterns specially created for *Mary Maxim* 4 ply Northland and Cloudspin wools.

*Mary Maxim* graph style patterns are so simple to follow! You see every stitch to be knit in all sizes. There are patterns for every member of the family from 4 to 44. Each pattern only 25c.

*Miss Mary Maxim*
artifice that seemed particularly Canadian. Of course, it also may very well have been an issue of finances and an inability to produce as slick an advertising campaign as the larger corporations.

Readers’ Responses

Ultimately, one must consider how the Chatelaine readership responded to the products advertised in the magazine. Of the twelve respondents to a questionnaire for this study about reading Chatelaine in the 1950s and 1960s, nine stated that they disliked the advertisements, while three people stated that they enjoyed them. In the case of letters to the editor, both those published in the magazine, and those included in the archival papers, there were very few which explicitly mentioned the advertisements. Ruby H. Bauer of Vermillion, Alberta, wrote that “I thoroughly enjoy articles and advertisements of new products, fabrics and fibres, household appliances, and love new recipes that are different but practical enough for me to use.” Mrs. N.W.B of Leaside, Ontario, seems to have tolerated the advertisements but enjoyed the availability of products: “All your reading material is worthwhile--nothing to be skipped or skimmed over, and when I see something advertised that suits my fancy I know it will be available to me.” Meanwhile, Julia Mulligan, from Langley, B.C., told the editors how she had reviewed the magazine for her Women’s Institute meeting, “For the May meeting...I reviewed the May issue of Chatelaine. I picked out the highlights, even commented on patterns and advertisements. I want to tell you how pleased my audience was. Some said, ‘where did you find it all?’” It would appear that most writers to the magazine did not feel that it would be worthwhile to complain about the advertising material, or that the editors refused to print many letters about the advertising. However, one dissenting voice on advertisements did make it into the magazine. Mrs. L.G. Henders of Elm Creek, Manitoba, wrote: “I am somewhat disappointed. Although I recognize the value of advertisements to housewives and homemakers like myself, as well as their value to publishers in terms of dollars and cents, is it really necessary to have so many?” The editors assured Mrs Henders that without the ads they could not pay their bills.

Although most of the Starch reports from the 1950s and 1960s were destroyed, those that remain indicate that ads were read much less frequently than the other components of the
magazine. Trained interviewers conducted "Readership Studies" in 12 areas throughout Canada, and interviewed approximately 200 people for each issue's report. The reports ranked viewers responses in three categories: Noted, Read Some and Read Most to ads of a quarter of a page or larger. The results were quite mixed, while as large a percentage as 90% of those surveyed could remember 'noticing' an advertisement, the percentage of those surveyed who read most of the ad seldom left the 5-15% response range, although it could be as high as 37%. In the 'noted' category all the respondent had to do was remember noting the ad: they were not required to tell the interviewer what product it advertised. That such a dubious response was included in this category gives some indication of the degree to which the Starch figures were as generous as possible. The reports indicated that the full page, full colour advertisements attracted the most attention. However, since most of the Chatelaine ads consisted of 1/4 page and 1/2 page advertisements the reported figures were often quite low.

Another development in the periodical itself leads one to question just how much 'action' the advertisements really generated. Throughout the fifties, Chatelaine, MAB and the Brand Names Foundation placed advertisements in Chatelaine, encouraging readers to read the advertisements and to support the national brands that they saw advertised in Chatelaine: "The more good brands you know, the better you buy. Get to know them in this magazine. You’ll cut buying mistakes—get more for your shopping dollar" (see illustration). This ad was “Published in the interest of consumer protection” by the Brand Names Foundation, a “non-profit educational foundation.” Other ads of this genre linked lifestyle and the clichéd phrase, ‘better standard of living,’ with brand name products advertised in magazines. “That’s You Up There where the living’s good!” was a full page black and white ad with a photograph of a man and woman, holding hands and jumping into the air while standing on top of the world (see illustration). The ad copy told us that the reason for this couple’s euphoria was their purchases of branded products:

That’s You, elevated to the world’s best living by the proven brands of products that never let you down....That’s why you can shop so confidently, so profitably, so easily, by buying products with responsible names....Easy to keep up with what’s good: just read the ads in this magazine."

Although no hard evidence exists to back up this claim, it would appear that some studies had concluded that Chatelaine advertisements were not working as well as they could have, and
If it weren’t for brand names
You’d have to be a doctor
to buy the right baby food

You’re fussier about a baby than about anybody else in the family.

You shield him from drafts, boil his dishes, measure his meals by ounces.

Yet you don’t hesitate to let strangers fix his food! You buy it in cans or jars at your grocer’s. And you know you’re right.

How can you be so sure? In fact—how can you be sure about anything you buy? Isn’t it because you’ve learned the basic rule of safe and sound buying:

A good brand
is your best guarantee

No matter what kind of a product you want to buy, you know you can trust a good brand. You know the company stands back of it because its reputation is at stake. And so—you know you are right.

The more good brands you know, the better you buy. Get to know them in this magazine. You’ll cut buying mistakes—get more for your shopping dollar.

Published in the interest of Consumer Protection by
CHATELAINE
in Cooperation with
BRAND NAMES FOUNDATION
INCORPORATED
A non-profit educational foundation
That’s YOU, elevated to the world’s best living by the proven brands of products that never let you down—and for a very down-to-earth reason: each manufacturer has to live up to the highest standard set by his competitors. His product has to be good to survive—it’s as simple as that. So if he changes it at all, you can be sure he’s aiming at something better.

That’s why you can shop so confidently, so profitably, so easily, by buying products with responsible names. Living on top of the world?—you bet! But you’re on ground as safe and sound as your own back yard.

*Easy to keep up on what’s good; just read the ads in this magazine.*

Published in the interest of Consumer Protection by CHATELAINE in Cooperation with BRAND NAMES FOUNDATION INCORPORATED A non-profit educational foundation
thus the company and the Brand Name Foundation, tried to bolster consumer confidence by placing these ads in the magazine.

It is clear that the relationship between the magazine, the advertisers, and the readers was rather complicated. The magazine was dependent on advertising to break even, and profits were made or lost on the number of advertising pages generated each year. That the magazine lost money throughout the decade can be attributed to competition from television and American periodicals, and to the editorial changes at the magazine. As the Starch Reports, the questionnaire respondents, and the letters to the editors indicated, readers' response to advertisements were mixed. While the evidence suggests that the advertisers were not as successful at selling the products displayed in the magazine as they would have liked, the images used to sell products, the 'structures of meaning' were both pervasive and persuasive. The cumulative effect of the advertisements, not the reader's response to the individual ad, is where the real power of the advertising lay. As both the statistical and critical analysis makes clear the preferred meaning of the advertising pages was, not surprisingly, consumption. Consumption meant a suburban home; the 'traditional' family; the cult of youthfulness; the suburban utopia; passionate marriage; and fun times with the family. In some instances it could also reaffirm one's identity as a Canadian. For women these images offered to them by the advertisers and corporations where as restrictive as they were seductive, the promise of perfection and purpose through purchase: whether in the household, child raising, marriage, or less frequently the larger community. With a little help from the advertisers any Chatelaine reader could become a household dynamo-- a master craftswoman on the cleaning, cooking and purchasing frontier. Thus while their roles were limited, the women depicted in the fifties advertisements had purpose, drive and were often portrayed (although aided and abetted by the products and advertisers) as exceedingly competent.

Many women were excluded from the adworld of the magazine, and given the comment of Mrs. Paisley (introductory epigraph) and the demographic profile in Chapter 2, it is evident that many of the magazine's readers did not have large discretionary incomes with which to purchase the products on display in the magazine. While the individual reader had the ability to screen out these images if she so desired, it would have been virtually impossible to ignore them entirely, given the repetitious nature and the vast number of advertising pages in the magazine. However, considering the less-affluent readership, the low figures for advertising readership, and the often ridiculous images of the advertisements
many Chatelaine reader’s no doubt concluded that unless they were planning to purchase products advertised in the magazine that the ads were the price of an affordable magazine. Thus, while they demanded attention with their colours, their overwhelming numbers, and their presence on almost every page many readers no doubt regarded them indifferently or as obstacles in the way of reading their articles and stories. June Callwood’s comments about how “blind” she and other women were would suggest as much. However, that lack of attention does not change the fact that in contrast to the other sections of the magazine which challenged the readers to think, to question the status quo, and to look for solutions to social problems, the advertisements presented a world in which consumption was the solution to any and all problems.

Conclusion:

The narrower images provided in the ad pages and on the cover of the magazine were different from the other components. These pages pandered to the “targeted” group within the mass audience—youthful, white Canadian women and middle-class consumers—and not the whole readership. Ads and cover art were the least-popular components (or the most over-looked) yet the messages and images are important since these were the most visual components of the periodical. The advertising fantasies that they offered readers, as well as the perfect image of “Canadian woman” warrant attention—particularly because they point to a narrow, class and racially specific group. Readers’ responses—questionnaires, letters and Starch results—along with the Brand Names Foundation ads, indicated that readers used two strategies to deal with this material—they ignored it or they wrote to complain. Admirers, at least vocal ones, were rare. Thus neither the cover art nor the ads were very successful. These two components serve as a caution to researchers willing to conclude (or to believe the advertising rhetoric of the CARD ads) that readers were passive consumers. Similarly this analysis discounts the view that sheer numerical weighting of the ad pages means that the consumerist ethos is paramount in women’s magazines.

2 Mrs. Hazel M. Paisley, Saskatoon, to Editors, “Reader Takes Over,” Chatelaine June 1958, 8.
3 Mrs. Thomas Dicks, Vancouver to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine December 1958, 76.

6 E.Wood, Saskatoon to Editors, “Reader Takes Over,” Chatelaine December 1952, 72.


8 Using the sales figures provided in Canadian Advertising Rates and Data for 1950, 1955, and 1959, the percentage of net single copies sold was calculated using the figures for net single copy and total net paid copies. Canadian Advertising Rates and Data (Fourth Quarter 1950) Volume 23 Number 4, 120; Canadian Advertising: Canadian Media Authority (May June Issue 1955) Volume 28 Number 1, 100; Canadian Advertising: The Media Rate and Data Authority (January/February 1960) Volume 33 Number 1, 116.


10 Ibid., 22.

11 Statistics from the General Survey Database, see Appendix for further details.


13 Statistics from the General Survey Database. See Table A.2 and A.3 in the Appendix.

14 “Chatelaine Centre,” Chatelaine January 1957, 1.


18 “Chatelaine Advertisement,” Canadian Advertising: Canadian Media Authority (September October 1955), Volume 28 Number 5, 106.

19 See Ad Database, in the Appendix, for detailed methodology and results. There were 1007 ads in the sample.

20 As with all statistics, the average obscures a wide range of advertising page contents, from a low of 32.6% advertising in the January 1958 issue to a record 58.3% in the April 1959 issue. These statistics were compiled from the general survey database, based upon the entire 120 issues from the 1950s.

21 See Appendix for more details.

22 Food, represents general food products, processed food, baby food, baking supplies and soft drinks. Household appliances, furniture and building supplies includes all home furnishings, appliances (both large and small), home entertainment, paint, wallpaper, and anything connected with repairing, remodeling or building a home, i.e. copper tubing, roofing shingles, furnaces, etc. Beauty and toiletries includes all cosmetics, shampoos, soaps, depilatories, hair colouring, mouthwash etc. General household products includes household cleaners, and general items for the home, like paper products, light bulbs, aluminum foil etc. Clothing is fairly self explanatory, except that it includes all family members, and includes both ready to wear garments and the notions, patterns, and material needed for sewing at home. Medical products and feminine hygiene, includes medical products for the entire family.  Leisure, hobbies and crafts includes all travel advertisements, knitting and sewing patterns that were not clothing, book clubs, record clubs and do-it-yourself manuals. Housewares includes linens, towels, bedding, china, silverware, pots and pans etc.

24 "Holidays to fit your purse--Alaska, Banff and Lake Louise--ad for Canadian Pacific," Chatelaine May 1951, 85.

25 Obviously, there is a very fine line between these classifications. However, in all the ads, these people were either identified explicitly in the text as a different ethnic group or they were easily identifiable by their clothing, particularly in the case of the Scottish category which was often denoted by characters wearing kilts, and tartans.

26 See Appendix for more details. 39% of fifties ads did not contain any sexual imagery.


29 "A Vice President Comes to Dinner--Weston's Ad," Chatelaine August 1951, inside back cover.

30 "Her apron strings are family ties--Weston's Ad," Chatelaine November 1950, 56.

31 Ibid.

32 "One done...One to go--Weston's Ad," Chatelaine June 1954, 75.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.


36 "One done--Weston's Ad," Chatelaine June 1954, 75.


38 Ibid.


40 "Enjoy Easier Cleaning with the new G-E Swivel Top Cleaner--Canadian General Electric Company Ltd.," Chatelaine April 1954, 92.

41 Ibid.


43 Ibid.

44 "She's in love...and she loves Community--Oneida Community Ltd.," Chatelaine October 1953, back cover.

45 Ibid.
“Give the Bride a Bissell Sweeper--Bissell Carpet Sweeper Co. of Canada Ltd.,” *Chatelaine* May 1954, 46.

Ibid.


Ibid.

“Coke Time...and friends,” *Chatelaine* May 1954, 62. Coca-Cola advertisement used with permission of Coca-Cola Ltd.

Ibid.


“Wake Up Henry--It’s Time for Sunday Brunch; Aunt Jemima Ad,” *Chatelaine* September 1958, 43.


“For warmth and comfort there’s nothing like a handknit Mary Maxim sweater!--Miss Mary Maxim,” *Chatelaine* September 1958, 49.

The twelve participants were from Nova Scotia, Ontario and British Columbia. They were almost entirely female, 11 to 1, largely from rural areas, and represent an age range of early forties to early eighties. See Chapter 3 for more details.


Mrs. N.W.B. to Editors, *Chatelaine* September 1951, 72.


Mrs. L.G. Henden, Elm Creek, Manitoba to Editors, *Chatelaine* November 1958, 116.


Ibid.

“If it weren’t for brand names You’d have to be a doctor to buy the right baby food--Brand Names Foundation,” *Chatelaine* January 1956, 38.

Ibid.

“That’s You Up There where the living’s good!--Brand Names Foundation,” *Chatelaine* May 1954, 97.

Ibid.
Part Two: The Sixties
Chapter 7: Context

As a native Torontonian and Canadian living for the past four years in the USA I have tried to be a good ambassador of the Canadian way of life. . . . However, you do not make things any easier by the articles carried in your magazine. Surely there are places in Canada which are more glamorous than reading about isolated mining towns and fishing villages. . . . I buy a magazine to be entertained, to read about interesting places and people not about isolation, cold, gloom, frugal economy of dress and housekeeping and problems people have created for themselves. Surely there are places worth writing about and letting the world know about. I refuse to pass Chatelaine around to my American friends as it is no example of Canadiana. . . . All these things prompt me to cancel my subscription. 1
--Mrs. Audrey Berisford, Wilmington, Delaware, U.S.A.

. . . We have been receiving the Chatelaine on your trial offer and find it a real treat to have a good Canadian women’s magazine. It is so practical and keeps us up to date in things Canadian for example the Best Jobs for Girls really interested me as I have four girls in school. For years my mother has given me the Ladies Home Journal. I am not interested in stories and prefer articles of help and interest. In Vancouver it is hard to be Canadian as we are such a mixture, your magazine certainly measures up in this way. Your Teen Tempo and The Last Word is Yours is always carefully read. Keep up the good work in pointing up our country’s good standards and keep us Canadian. [emphasis hers] 2
--Mrs. E. Martin, North Vancouver, British Columbia

The contradictory opinions of Mrs. Berisford and Mrs. Martin encapsulate some of the changes in content, tone and outlook that characterized the sixties version of Chatelaine. Once again, American women’s magazines provided the norm against which the Canadian periodical was judged and were Chatelaine’s prime competitors. Most readers were quick to enumerate the differences and similarities between the U.S. and Canadian magazines or to warn Chatelaine’s editors that they should avoid mimicking the glossy images provided in the American magazines. This overview of the decade examines the changes in the text, situates the magazine within the Canadian cultural and historical scene, explores the continuities and change within the Chatelaine group at Maclean Hunter, profiles the reader demographics, and peruses reader letters, questionnaires and commentary to reconstruct the art of reading the magazine.

The Text:

The style and layout of the magazine (see Chapter Two) resembled that of the previous decade. While Maclean’s adopted the smaller sized format of its current magazine,
Chatelaine continued as an oversized periodical. Slight modifications of the cover art, more numerous and colourful advertisements and colour pages within the magazine differentiated it from its fifties model. Each issue began with an editorial which was followed by the news section, “What’s New.” “What’s New” provided commentary on new developments in arts, health, fashion, beauty and shopping. As well, the section entitled “What’s New With You” provided an edited space where amateur correspondents and contributors could provide information on Canadian women in general. “Your World Notebook” (YWN), the foreign and current affairs page, continued into the sixties although it had faded away by mid-decade. After YWN’s demise Chatelaine replaced it with a “Books” column, initially written by Christina McCall and later, Adrienne Clarkson. Following these regular features were the general interest articles and fiction stories. The magazine launched a homemaking contest called the “Mrs. Chatelaine Contest” in 1961 which boosted the interest in the departmental features. In 1968 the Family Favourites Recipe Contest was dropped because it was too successful— that year 7,000 entries were received and “Elaine Collett just couldn’t handle that kind of response.” Otherwise, the departmental fare was virtually unchanged.

Advertising increased as one moved throughout the magazine. The incidence of multiple page advertisements, particularly for Kraft Foods and Swift Meat Products, was greater. The Chatelaine departmental articles followed the general features and fiction yet almost all of the articles—whether departmental, general interest or fiction—were completed at the back of the book. Children and gardening were still relegated to the back of the magazine. The final page of editorial material was the reader’s letter page: “The Last Word is Yours,” which featured excerpts from readers’ letters and a small advertisement with the highlights of the next issue.

While the magazine’s design remained consistent, its content did change: general feature articles accounted for a greater proportion of the periodical in the sixties, while fiction had fewer pages. As well, the magazine was considerably thicker than the fifties’ counterpart; the average issue size expanded from 90 pages to 112 pages per issue. The subscription price remained at $1.50 a year until January 1967 when the annual subscription rate was raised to $2. Chatelaine was an affordable magazine in the fifties (when it had a subscription rate of $2/year from 1953-1958) but given the rising wages, the larger size and the lower price it was an even better buy in the sixties. Not surprisingly the magazine’s
circulation grew at an impressive rate. At the start of the decade the average total paid circulation was 767,250 copies per month with newsstand sales accounting for approximately 52,000 copies and subscriptions the bulk of all sales.\(^5\) By 1970 the circulation for the English version was 980,000 (newsstand sales were 70,000), and using Maclean Hunter’s estimate of two women readers per copy that gave the magazine 1,960,000 women readers for each issue.\(^6\) According to a 1968 study, “over a twelve month period, the audience of Chatelaine combined editions increases to 51% of the total female population.” Chatelaine’s market saturation and breadth was the envy of the U.S. women’s magazines.

**Gender, Society and Culture in Canada**

The sixties were a turbulent decade. The accomplishments of the era—Expo 67, medicare, the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans, the creation and completion of numerous new universities and the Quiet Revolution—attest to the powers of big government, nationalism (both Canadian and Quebeccois), affluence and optimism. The darker side of the era—the flag furour; the FLQ mailbox bombings and their not-so-quiet revolutionary tactics; the international tensions between Canada and the U.S. over foreign policy and monetary policy as well as the inter-personal conflicts between prime ministerial and presidential temperaments -- illustrate the negative effects of nationalism, the good neighbour policy and affluence. Canadians did not experience the chaos that the Americans did—the political assassinations, de-segregation battles, violence, racial riots and the Vietnam war—but they did watch, read and hear about all these issues in the mass media. The anxiety, despair and agitation, while not shared, was surely felt. The decade was also an era of youth revolt—which started within universities and radiated outwards. The student “New Left” would clash with their parents’ generation over politics, peace activism, feminism, the educational system and global capitalism. Within this setting of international turbulence and generational conflict, Canadians faced another stock-taking as the gulf between English-Canadian nationalism and French-Canadian separatism widened. The introspection, the rhetoric and much of the political will focused upon defining a nation and a society as it headed towards its centennial. What it meant to be an English Canadian, as opposed to an American or a Brit, was an issue of great concern. French Canadians had a stronger sense of identity but for them, the question was, increasingly, whether or not to remain in the country.\(^8\)
Concerns with foreign policy and increasing federal-provincial conflict between Quebec and the federal government occupied centre stage. In particular, the controversial adoption of the maple leaf flag (after closure was invoked in the House of Commons) and the establishment and Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism were two of the litmus tests of the Canadian national psyche. Victories, in the form of a universal pension plan and medicare, were more productive results of the era of government largesse. The election of Pierre Elliott Trudeau as Liberal leader and Prime Minister in 1968 created a mass media frenzy called “Trudeaumania.” Under Trudeau, the Liberal government ushered in reforms to the Criminal Code in the areas of divorce, abortion, birth control, sexuality and homosexuality in 1969.

While the Canadian economy had waxed and waned throughout the fifties, the annual economic results from the sixties were positively buoyant. No industry experienced a negative growth rate over the ten year period. Yearly summaries in the Canada Year Book listed the reasons: increased demand for goods and services in the earlier years of the decade, slow growth of imports to the country, an increasing level of exports (mining and agriculture in particular), and finally, the stimulus provided by the production of iron, steel, cars and car parts. These accomplishment were all the more astonishing given the fact, particularly in the later years of the decade, that many industries and government agencies were rocked by lengthy strikes.

With a booming economy and close to full employment, Canada was a popular destination for immigrants and the numbers, while slightly lower than the fifties, reached 1,336,025 by the end of the decade. The population of Canada topped 21 million by 1969. Newcomers from continental Europe (particularly Italy, Germany, Portugal and Greece) made up the bulk of immigration in the sixties, followed by British and U.S. immigrants. Although their numbers were lower, immigrants from Asian, West Indian and African countries were increasingly likely to emigrate to Canada. Thus the twenty years from 1951 to 1971 witnessed a change in the ethnic composition of the country. Those claiming British ethnicity dropped from 47.9% of the population in 1951 to 44.6% in 1971. Similarly, those reporting French ethnicity also dropped from 30.8% in 1951 to 28.7% in 1971. The primary ethnic group gaining members was the census polyglot category ‘Other Europeans’ which rose from 18.2% in 1951 to 23% in 1971. As the findings of the B &B commission later
confirmed, multiculturalism rather than dualistic culture would become the order of the day. Like other Canadians, most newcomers chose urban areas, preferably in Central Canada, in which to settle. By 1971 the urban/rural ratio had risen to 3:1 as 76.1% of the population chose to live in urban areas of the country.  

In contrast to the fifties, birth rates in the sixties dropped considerably and by decade’s close the baby boom had turned into a baby bust. “Between 1959 and 1968 the total fertility rate declined by 38 percent” an average of “4.2 percent per annum” which was a much greater drop than Canada had experienced during the depression era. The chief factors in this drastic reduction were the decline in marriage rate and the advance in birth control, notably the arrival of the pill. The median ages for marriage had also risen: by 1968 the median age for men was 23.5 years and 21.3 years for women. 

All of these demographic changes affected employment. The labour force grew by 1,963,000 people or 30.6% and the number of women in the labour force increased by 1,033,000 or 62.3 percent. Women’s labour force participation was directly related to the growth in the service sector and the demand for clerical workers. Increasingly, women remained in the workforce after marriage. By 1970 women represented 35.5 percent of the workforce and the majority of women workers (over 56 percent) were married. By today’s standards, unemployment was very low: between 3 and 6 percent for male workers, and less than 1.1 percent for female workers. 

Most members of the workforce shared in the economic wealth of the decade. Yearly wage increases were, by contemporary standards, astonishing. “During the period from 1961-65, there was little change in average weekly hours but average hourly and weekly wages rose substantially... average weekly wages rose 16.8% in manufacturing. ... average hourly earnings increased 15.8 percent...” Yet, conservative estimates of the level of poverty in the country still concluded that slightly more than a quarter of Canadians lived below the poverty line. This line, in 1968 dollars, was $1,800 for a single person; $3,000 for a family of two; and $4,200 for a family of four.

However, the increasing feminization of poverty was also apparent— single women, elderly women and single mothers were most likely to be poor in Canada. Largely to blame for that was the wage disparity between men and women. Even the wage gap between male and female clerical workers was substantial. Figures taken from 1965 indicated that, on
average, male clerical workers in manufacturing made $105.72 for a 39 hour week. Female clerical workers in manufacturing earned only $67.83 for a 37 hour week.23 For every male clerical dollar, women earned 64 cents. The difficulties faced by women entering, or re-entering the workforce, the blatant wage discrimination, the example of the President's Commission on Women in the U.S., and heavy lobbying from Canadian women's groups and Chatelaine magazine, finally propelled the Pearson government to create the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada (RCSW) on February 16, 1967.24

Feminism in all its variations (liberal, socialist, and radical) became, as the sixties progressed, an increasingly important force in Canadian society.25 According to Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin and Margaret McPhail the conditions for the re-emergence of feminism were the mass entry of women into the workforce, increased university attendance, and changing employment goals within a "context of a series of popular movements in which everything was questioned--lifestyles, language, music, dress, ideas and values."26 They also note the importance of the birth control pill, Betty Friedan's 1963 The Feminine Mystique, and Doris Anderson's appointment as Chatelaine editor.27 The importance of disseminating information to a mass audience of women—as Chatelaine did—cannot be underestimated. "In 1965 there were few women's organizations, no women's bookstores (because there were almost no books about women) and no women's studies courses in schools and universities."28 The contemporary feminist movement emerged from two distinct directions—the established women's groups such as the Federation of University Women and the YWCA—and the student-activist groups like Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA). Voice of Women (VOW), a middle-class women's peace organization (founded in 1960 after a newspaper article by former Chatelaine editor Lotta Dempsey spurred Toronto women to collective action), also began to support feminist issues by the end of the decade.29

On May 3, 1966 Laura Sabia (president of the Canadian Federation of University Women) met with representatives of 32 other women's organizations to discuss how to improve the status of Canadian women. The solution, they believed, was state intervention. Doris Anderson's first editorial which called for a government study of Canadian women appeared in the July 1966 issue of Chatelaine. According to Adamson et al.:

It was no accident that the first calls for a royal commission came from women involved in established women's organizations. They had previously lobbied governments, often successfully, and believed in the state as an agent of change. They
were able to put into action an 'old-girls' network that gave them not only a sympathetic media voice (Chatelaine), but sympathetic MPs and government officials (for example, Grace McInnis and Judy LaMarsh).30

That following September “several hundred of Canada’s well-educated and publicly minded women gathered in the Railway Room in the House of Parliament to demand government action to improve the status of women.”31 Sabia attached a threat if the government failed to respond—“two million women would storm Ottawa.”32 In her memoirs, Judy LaMarsh, indicated that Sabia’s threat and organization were critical to changing Pearson’s mind and granting the Royal Commission.33 Although liberal-feminist in orientation, the RCSW and the media coverage publicized the plight of Canadian women and a large variety of women’s groups, individuals and ideological perspectives were presented to the Commission. The RCSW replicated in official form the “consciousness-raising” groups that many women were forming in communities throughout Canada. According to Myrna Kostash, consciousness-raising involved:

“Getting together in a circle to talk, to hear, to open oneself in an environment of sisterly sympathy and recognition and to begin the extended and difficult process of expressing hurt and anger and hate and fear in female experience that had been denied legitimacy elsewhere. To speak of housework and living alone and childbirth and body image and girlhood and bosses and lovers.”34

Although the feminist groups were most active at the end of the decade, many of the topics, concerns and ideas raised in c-r groups that were offered to the RCSW (where Chatelaine presented a brief on behalf of the readers) and voiced in conversations and arguments in feminist groups were addressed in the pages of Chatelaine magazine.

Reflecting on the impact of Doris Anderson’s editorship at Chatelaine, June Callwood commented:

“It wasn’t until Doris Anderson became its editor that it began pushing us, nudging us towards awareness of women’s rights. I’ve often said in the 60’s and 70’s when I was giving speeches on the women’ movement...I’ve always given credit to Doris who is really the leader in this country...of that awareness...”35

Similarly, asked to describe the impact, if any, that feminist ideas in Chatelaine magazine had upon its large mass audience, Callwood recalled that the feminism of women like Irene Murdoch (who after her marriage disintegrated in 1968 took her fight for an equal share of her family’s Alberta farm to the Supreme Court of Canada) in all likelihood was fostered by the editorials and articles in Chatelaine magazine.36 Callwood stated:
I can imagine that woman sitting on that farm with the life she had and she picks up the Chatelaine for the tuna casserole and reads something about women’s rights or dignity and having a life of her own with recognition and going POW! Irene Murdoch. I wouldn’t be surprised if Irene Murdoch had read Chatelaine. Her determination was so ahead of her time....

Another reason for the upswing in feminist ideas in the sixties was due to a key cultural change—the increased importance placed upon university attendance. According to statistics, “during the 1960s, school and university enrollment increased by 50 percent and staff by 70 percent. This culminated, by 1970, in approximately 30 percent of the entire population of Canada either receiving or dispensing education.” Whereas the teenager had occupied centre stage in the fifties, the young-adult was the generational focal point of the sixties. By the end of the decade American and British fads were all part of the Canadian scene: styles—whether, unisex, hippie or folk; music—rock and folk; drugs—marijuana and LSD; sex—pre-marital and ‘free-love;’ and protest—sit-ins, teach-ins & and those who just preferred to ‘drop-out’ as their ultimate statement about society. Earlier fads, Go-Go dancers, psychedelic colours, mini-skirts and tall boots all spilled over into Canada. The clothing and music admired in the fifties were considered ‘square’ as the young and not-so-young valiantly attempted to keep up with each hip development.

For all generations, the Centennial celebrations in 1967 provided one of the highlights of the decade. Most communities and volunteer groups created and built monuments to Canada’s hundredth birthday. Thus the growth of new community centres, new sports, or cultural facilities across the country was great. Individuals also got into the act, whether designing Centennial motif crafts, forming Centennial choirs and cultural groups, or in planning community celebrations. Governments were not to be outdone, and the federal government under Secretary of State Judy LaMarsh, kicked off the festivities with a New Year’s Eve party on Parliament Hill, organized a Centennial Train and Centennial Caravans to traverse the country, created Festival Canada, the performing arts program, and commissioned a number of memorial buildings. Bobby Gimby’s infectious ditty “Can-a-da” was the first Canadian recording to turn gold. The culmination of all this activity was Expo 67. Playing host to the world, Montreal and Canada put on a very good show and the fair was a tremendous success. The site was then used for two more years to host the “Man in His World” exhibit. The B & B Commission (under the leadership of André Laurendeau
and Davidson Dunton) also increased awareness about the role and importance of Canadian culture through the public hearings, reports and recommendations.41

It is in comparison with the sixties that the fifties are regarded as a staid, conservative decade. Certainly one cannot dispute the exuberance and the changes of the sixties: increased university attendance, increasing participation by women, particularly married women in the workforce, plummeting birth rates, declining marital rates, a robust economy and almost full employment. Affluence was much more apparent in this decade than in its predecessor. The freedom of the decade was probably more fictional than any children of the sixties would care to admit but the relaxed styles of dress, behaviour and social mores contrast sharply to the more ordered, reserved fifties.

The Chatelaine Group:

Unlike the numerous personnel changes during the fifties, the magazine’s workforce in the sixties remained fairly constant. Editor Doris Anderson and the majority of departmental editors (Elaine Collett, Director of Chatelaine Institute; Vivian Wilcox, Fashion Editor; Eveleen Dollery, Beauty Editor; and Wanda Nelles, Craft Editor) remained in their positions throughout the decade. Barbara Reynolds 1960-1961, Alan Campagne 1961-1968, and Annabelle King 1969 all held the position of Home Planning Editor. Una Abrahamson joined the staff as a member of the Chatelaine Institute in 1961 and later was promoted to Consumer Editor. Lois Wilson was Gardening Editor from 1964-1969. Keith Knowlton was Managing Editor from 1958-1965. Jean Yack Wright, former Associate Editor, moved to fill the Executive Editor position in 1964 and then the Managing Editor position in 1965. Art Director Joan Chalmers left her position in 1962 and was succeeded in the position by Kenneth Jobe (1963-1968) and Keith Branscombe (1969). On the managerial and business side of the magazine, Lloyd M. Hodgkinson continued as publisher throughout the entire decade, as did Gordon Rumgay the Circulation Manager and A.B. Gardner Manager of Advertising and Sales. The sixties at Chatelaine were characterized by a great degree of continuity. Those who assumed senior positions had all worked their way up from within the organization and thus were very familiar with the magazine’s style and focus.

Although there was a large degree of continuity in terms of personnel, the decade witnessed many changes within the Chatelaine unit at Maclean Hunter. In 1960, in response
to fears that one of the American women's magazines would create a "Canadian version" and engage in direct competition with Chatelaine, Maclean Hunter bought the French magazine Revue Moderne and launched Châtelaine La Revue Moderne. This enabled the company to offer advertisers a truly national market, one no American women's magazine would be able to match. Veteran editor Fernande Saint-Martin emphasized Châtelaine's key selling feature—a French-Canadian identity—and employed French-Canadian journalists, novelists and fiction writers. Like Anderson, Saint-Martin also wrote a personal editorial essay each month. This was combined with modified and translated material produced by the Chatelaine Institute in Toronto. Châtelaine's editorial office was in Montreal, and they had a full (albeit smaller) editorial and support staff separate from Chatelaine's Toronto headquarters. Both versions bought Canadian rights to the articles so that they could be printed in either periodical and often articles originally published in Chatelaine were translated for Châtelaine. Although few articles originally published in the French edition made it into the English version, there was a large degree of overlap between the two publications. However, shared material aside, it would be incorrect to view Châtelaine as merely a translated version of the English magazine because the different editor, editorials, fiction and many general interest articles created a different tone.

Another magazine, Miss Chatelaine (which grew out of the "Teen Tempo" page) was launched in 1964 to appeal to the teenage girl, aged 15-19, and was extremely successful at attracting advertisers to its "handy purse or pocket size" format. Miss Chatelaine was published between four and six times per year. In his statement to the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media in 1970, Lloyd M. Hodgkinson described the periodical as a "wholesome, constructive" magazine for "young people." Most issues were a mix of fashions, beauty tips, social pointers, and career information. In a more elaborate definition of its business and editorial mandate, Hodgkinson stated:

It is basically a fashion magazine designed to give guidance and information on Canadian fashion and through this service help give definition and growth to the fashion industry. In addition, Miss Chatelaine provides information on career opportunities, social situations important to the young, personalities and educational developments. For entertainment, it carries regular fiction stories written by students in Canadian schools."

Far less successful than either Châtelaine or Miss Chatelaine was Hostess magazine which MH launched in 1968 to compete with Homemaker's Digest in the controlled-
circulation magazine category. **Homemaker's Digest** was introduced in Toronto in October 1966 by Gordon Badger and Randall Munger. The purpose of this new women's service magazine, as this excerpt from a **CARD** advertisement made clear, was to target “prime homes”:

**Homemaker's Digest** is delivered by personally addressed mail to the 1,024,000 homemakers that meet the following “prime home” qualifications:
1. Living in the 53 Canadian cities of 25,000 population or more.
2. Top 75% socioeconomic (Middle and Upper Income Homes)
3. Homes with children
4. Male headed homes.
5. Head of household under 53 years of age.

The editor of **Homemaker's** was Jeannine Locke whose often controversial articles had been a staple in **Chatelaine** during the fifties and early sixties. While Maclean Hunter was quick to enter the controlled circulation fray, they also had to be careful in pitching their new product to advertisers, since it would have been impossible to refer, as the **Homemaker's Digest** ad did, to “waste circulation.” What the **Homemaker's** people referred to as ‘waste’ was, of course, the bulk of the **Chatelaine** readership. Hence the advertisements for **Hostess** were more understated, claiming that **Chatelaine** equaled women readers while **Hostess** equaled homemaking readers. Advertisers who wished to use the new periodical were required to place an ad, minimum of a half page, in **Chatelaine**.

To differentiate themselves from **Homemaker's**, **Hostess** promised a more discriminating readership:

It will be distributed by personally-addressed mail to 800,000 women who do not now subscribe to **Chatelaine**. The households reached will be in Canada's 24 major markets only. Further selectivity will be achieved by eliminating widows, spinsters, apartment dwellers in central areas of each market and the lower 10% of families on the socio-economic scale. **Hostess** recipients are homemakers in complete family units only: that is, a wife, a husband and at least one child.

Both **Hostess** and **Homemaker's** determined that the choicest audience, the audience best able to consume the advertiser's products, were urban families in top socio-economic categories which followed the husband-as-breadwinner pattern and had a minimum of one child. Single women, families with working wives, working class families and rural families were not preferable readers or consumers. The promotion and marketing strategy of **Hostess** magazine raised many questions about the desirability of **Chatelaine**'s large mass audience from an advertising perspective as well as the effectiveness of advertising in the periodical. While it
was impossible to obtain evidence about the ineffectiveness of advertising (given the overheated rhetoric of CARD advertisements and research reports), the introduction of controlled circulation magazines would indicate that Chatelaine's audience and readers were not a prime audience, but rather a mass audience, for whom the purchase of advertised products was not a key priority.

What neither periodical had counted on was the increased postal rates in 1969 which drastically affected the viability of all periodicals, but particularly the controlled circulation magazines. Hostess folded after only one year in operation and Maclean Hunter forfeited a "million dollar investment." Homemaker's switched to a direct delivery system and was able to survive. Homemaker's found the startup period very difficult, but having inspired advertiser confidence and survived the Maclean Hunter competition, their niche market has served them well.

Alongside the implementation of three new periodicals, Maclean Hunter was busy making the "Chatelaine Group" more advertiser friendly. In 1960 the magazine began offering "split-runs" which enabled "advertisers to introduce new products in one area while advertising established products in other areas." Split runs also allowed for regional advertising. Partial page size inserts were made available in 1962 which allowed advertisers to run special yearly promotional advertising booklets. Finally, in 1967 the business department created "14 regional editions available to advertisers designed to suit their marketing areas." These editions were implemented primarily to compete with television so that they could deliver a format suitable for both local and national advertising specially targeted to female readers (and buyers) in urban areas.

The Culture of Production

After her retirement from Chatelaine Anderson tried her hand at writing fiction. Rough Layout, published in 1981, was dedicated "To all the great people I worked with in the magazine business." Jude, the protagonist, is the editor of a women's magazine entitled "Young Living" published by the fictitious Meridian Publishing Company of Toronto. The book is a humourous, often scathingly funny account of the trials and tribulations of a women's magazine editor. Anderson's fiction, which she acknowledged, is very thinly veiled. This excerpt, in which Jude defends the magazine to her feminist friend Lenore,
provides excellent insight into both the tensions of magazine production and the real readers behind the circulation and marketing report statistics:

“Look, I push feminist articles as much as I can,” Jude protested. “I’ve got a certain kind of magazine. It’s not Ms. It’s not Branching Out. It’s not Status of Women News. But it does reach a lot of women and it can make an impact. Gradually, Bradbury [the publisher] would like to run a magazine only for affluent young couples living in penthouses. To him, women are technically dead after thirty-five, and they all belong to upper-class families. They own cottages, snowmobiles, cars. They travel constantly. They change their furnishings with every season. They use gallons and gallons of creams and bath lotions...The reader is not a feminist, Lenore. She’s a consumer--according to the people at Meridian.” In fact, Jude ignored, as much as possible, the advertising department’s view of the reader. She felt her audience was struggling with debts and personal problems. Far from being affluent, they were more likely pressed financially. The women worked because they had to. Most of them clung to polyester suits and easy-care hairstyles. Cooking was simple because recipes had to be made after they got home from work. Exotic cooking was something they liked to read about occasionally, and try on weekends. They were--especially the younger ones--intensely interested in keeping their marriages together, and caring for their children...They were marginally interested in public issues such as ecology and nutrition. All these subjects Jude tackled; but for her own satisfaction, she laced the magazine with a strong dose of feminist articles.59

The contrast between the advertising department’s view of the readership and Jude’s was obvious. The publisher and advertising executives emphasis on consumption prioritized the young, urban affluent reader at the expense of the majority of the readership who did not fit into these categories. That the ad-men’s grandiose impressions of the readership matched the overheated rhetoric of the consumer reports and CARD advertisements was not surprising. As urban professionals residing in Toronto the numbers and ‘lifestyle’ depicted confirmed their presumptions and validated their own sense of how Canadians lived. The letters from readers were not glossy paens to consumption but at turns were reflective, critical or complimentary.

The business executives saw the numbers, read the figures and calculated the circulation while Anderson and her editors read the letters, met the readers at women’s group luncheons, tabulated their contest entries and compiled the Councilor’s reports. For example, in 1961 Elaine Collett took a ten-day trip across western Canada. In a memo detailing Collett’s exploits, publisher Lloyd Hodgkinson wrote: “During that period the popularity of Elaine herself and the stature of the magazine, is evidenced by the fact that she appeared in 9 TV interviews, 16 radio interviews, 9 newspaper interviews and 2 magazine interviews...”60

Collett’s own memo revealed the popularity of the editorial and departmental material amongst western-Canadian readers:
Doris—Your editorials are well read and anticipated. Women editors and commentators quote Carol’s column and yours continually. Shopping with Chatelaine is well read and used by C.A.C. members and Home Economics Teachers....Low cost recipes in Chatelaine and the January budgets have been used by nutritionists and Public Health nurses with welfare agencies. The Supervisor of Home Economics, Vancouver Island has used 200 copies of Chatelaine’s Bride’s Guide to Cooking, Chatelaine, April 1957. She had it reprinted when we ran out of tear sheets and still circulates them.... “Homemaker’s Diary” used by radio programs for women and home service departments.61

Obviously, the interactions between editors and their readers occurred outside the boundaries of the magazine itself. As this reply to a reader’s letter indicated, Anderson placed great emphasis on the letters received at the editorial offices: “We place a high value on all letters from our readers because only through many points of view can we judge the success or failure of our constant efforts to make Chatelaine a better magazine.”62

The Balance Sheet

Chatelaine’s large circulation was an indicator of the popularity of the magazine but not necessarily of financial prosperity. The test of commercial health were the advertising revenues and profit generated by the periodical. In terms of profit, Chatelaine magazine was not overwhelmingly successful during the sixties—although there were some contradictions in the sources. According to the brief Maclean Hunter presented to the Report of the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media in 1970, the English and French versions of the magazine were “profitable in some years (notably 1967, the year of Canada’s centennial) but not in others.”63 Maclean’s fared even worse and only turned a profit in 1969.64 However, in an interview, Doris Anderson recalled that Maclean’s drifted in the sixties, the victim of revolving editors, lack of direction, and numerous lawsuits while Chatelaine continued to function as the “milch cow... working away... always making a profit and never causing any trouble.”65 The Maclean Hunter Budget Summary for 1961 shows a cash basis profit (before income taxes, donations and other special charges) ranging from $11,952 to $118,892 for that year.66 Ted Hart’s 1971 speech draft for a Maclean Hunter Directors meeting included impressive figures for net advertising revenues—$1,997,000 in 1958 to $4,040,000 in 1970.67 It seemed likely that Chatelaine was a profitable enterprise in the sixties but that was overshadowed by the poor performance of the rest of Maclean Hunter’s consumer magazines. As well, when the company made presentations to the Senate Committee they
were looking for government protection from U.S. magazines or favourable postal rates and thus were inclined to present composite figures which showed blanket losses in the consumer magazine division. The published figures illustrated a "laughable" profit margin: "between 1905 and 1960, the company's consumer magazines collected nearly $130 million in revenues, and delivered a total profit, over the fifty-five year period, of precisely $410,604."68

Many factors accounted for the problems faced by Maclean Hunter and other Canadian magazine publishers. According to the report's authors, the overflow circulation of American magazines was primarily to blame for the lack of advertiser interest in Canadian periodicals. In other words, national advertisers (many of whom were either American or multi-national firms) had little desire, or reason, to advertise in Canadian periodicals when for the price of advertising in the American magazines they also gained entry to the Canadian market. Equally troubling was the realization that Canadians were far less likely to read magazines than were Americans. The report claimed that Americans read "60 percent more magazines per capita than Canadians."69 In general, Canadians were reading fewer magazines in 1969 than they had in 1959:

In 1959, we bought 147 million copies of American magazines. Ten years later the total had declined to 130.5 million copies. But the decline for Canadian magazines has been even steeper. In 1959 we bought 45 million copies of Canadian magazines. In 1969 we bought about 33.8 million copies.70

Another reason not addressed in the report, but mentioned in the Maclean Hunter archival papers was the impact urbanization had upon magazine advertising. According to Ted Hart, Advertising Manager of Chatelaine in the early seventies, "the most significant change influencing the health of magazines in both the U.S. and Canada has been the migration of people to the cities. . . . TV, added to newspapers and radio, gave advertisers an excellent network of media to influence people in urban markets."71

In addition, Canadian magazine publishers were engaged in a difficult battle with the Canadian versions of TIME and Reader's Digest for advertising dollars. Those two periodicals alone absorbed 56% of advertising revenue in all 'Canadian' magazines in 1969, a gain of 13% in one decade.72 The dire advertising situation for Canadian magazines was compounded by the success of television, in particular, as well as radio in siphoning off a large proportion of advertisers. According to the Senate report "Between 1954 and 1968,
magazines' share of total advertising revenues dropped from 4.2% to 2.4 percent. . . . In the same period, radio's share increased slightly. But the big winner was television, whose share increased from 2.5% in 1954 to 12.9% in 1968. The cost of advertising in the magazine rose during the decade. The cost for a one page, four colour ad in the combined English and French editions in 1961 cost between $7,860 (if the advertiser bought space in one to five issues) and $6,680 (for a commitment to purchase that space for 24 issues). By 1968, the cost had risen to $9,860 for a one-page insert in less than five issues or $7,395 if the advertiser bought more than 48 pages in one year. In light of all of these depressing statistics about the state of the Canadian magazine industry and the high cost of advertising in the medium, Chatelaine's success at attracting readers and advertisers was impressive.

The Competition

Aside from Homemakers, the new Canadian controlled-circulation women's magazine (launched in 1966), Chatelaine's competitors in the sixties were, once again, the American women's magazines. A Chatelaine Consumer Council Survey in 1960 found that the Councilors who filled out questionnaires were keen readers of U.S. women's magazines--primarily Ladies Home Journal (39.4% of those surveyed read the magazine), McCall's (38.8%), and Good Housekeeping (27.8%). Sixty percent of Councilors read Reader's Digest. In 1968 the most popular American women's magazines in Canada were: Family Circle (410, 275 Canadian sales/issue), Woman's Day (252, 898), Ladies Home Journal (232, 525), Good Housekeeping (184, 549), McCall's (178, 438), and Redbook (144, 846). On an individual basis Chatelaine's 900,000 plus circulation easily outnumbered any American rival, but the combined sales of U.S. women's magazines was huge.

In contrast to Chatelaine's success in Canada, the American women's magazines were finding the sixties a difficult time for them in their American markets as niche magazines began to chip away at the market for general (mass market) women's magazines. "Costs were soaring, competition from other magazines and television were increasing, and there was a tendency among advertisers to question how much they were getting for their dollars." Tebbel and Zuckerman report in "the good year of 1960" 40% of mass market magazines lost money while "in the bad year of 1961 a majority of magazines were operating in the red." The women's magazines were generally slow to respond with new innovations,
feverishly chased after new subscribers (yet with little financial return) and in some cases hired a quick succession of editors in the hopes of reviving their fading fortunes.

Bruce and Beatrice Gould, the long-time editors of Ladies Home Journal, resigned in 1962 but not before, according to James Wood, "the fresh ideas of the thirties had gone limp and frayed." The Journal was quickly surpassed by McCall's in the subscription race and as a result began to lose advertising quickly. In August 1968 the Curtis Publishing Company sold the Ladies Home Journal, along with American Home, to the Downe Corporation for the "distress merchandise" price of $5.4 million. McCall's rode the innovations of the late fifties into the sixties, and then under a succession of editors (including two women--Shauna Alexander and Patricia Carbine) found their circulation figures declining at the end of the decade. Under Carbine (who later participated in the founding of Ms) Gloria Steinem was a regular contributor. The situation at Redbook was similar--and yet despite rising costs, decreasing circulation figures, plus declining ad revenue the major mass market women's magazines held to their formula, making only minor modifications. Sey Chessler, Redbook's editor, claimed: "No matter what's happened, women are still responsible for their families in major ways that men are not sharing." The only bona fide success in the American women's mass magazines in the sixties was the revamped version of Cosmopolitan under editor Helen Gurley Brown (author of the 1963 bestseller Sex and the Single Girl). Cosmo had nearly gone under, but the new editor narrowed the magazine's focus to a "new audience whom Brown called 'mouseburgers,' young women whose main interest lay in catching a man." Brown's formula remains in place to this day.

Although McCall's was the frontrunner in the sixties, the experiences of senior editor Lenore Hershey, later editor-in-chief at Ladies Home Journal, were emblematic of the conservative, tradition-bound nature of the big American women's publications. According to Hershey, in 1968, she went to Herb Mayer, the president of the company, and asked about her chances of getting a promotion to editor of the magazine. Mayer's response was instructive: "He patted me on the head and said that despite my many talents, as far as he was concerned no women could ever edit a mass woman's magazine." So, she left to work at the Ladies Home Journal under editor John Mack Carter (now editor of Good Housekeeping). Despite her experiences she "took it for granted that even on a woman's magazine, there would be few if any top women...." Her eyes were finally opened on the morning of March
18, 1970—"the day on which 200 militant feminists walked into the office of John Mack Carter and staged the famous 11 hour LHJ sit-in." By coincidence, Hershey was in Carter’s office at the time and her description of the events—complete with Carter’s refusal to communicate directly to the protesters (he spoke to Hershey who then addressed the group), and her plans to pull a “dead faint” if it became “any more violent” (the protesters shoved Carter’s desk)—were both astonishing and quite revealing. The protesters demanded that the Journal devote one entire issue to the feminist movement but after negotiations that was whittled down to an eight-page section with these four articles: “Babies are Born, Not Delivered,” “Women Talk About Love and Sex,” “Women & Work,” and “How to Start Your Own Consciousness-Raising Group.” With the exception of the last article, the information provided in all the other articles was provided in Chatelaine magazine years before the LHJ’s pull-out feminism feature. For her efforts, and perseverance, Hershey was finally appointed editor of the magazine in 1973—the first woman editor at LHJ since Louisa Knapp Curtis had edited the magazine in the late-nineteenth century.

Another development within the field of women’s magazines, Ms. magazine, deserves mention despite the fact that it was founded in 1972. Both Gloria Steinem and Patricia Carbine had worked for the traditional women’s magazines—Steinem at Seventeen, LHJ and McCall’s and Carbine at McCall’s and Look (a general interest magazine like LIFE). They claimed that the sexist treatment they received at those publications, combined with the feminist movement of the late sixties, encouraged them to found a feminist women’s magazine. Ms. eschewed the traditional women’s magazine format—service material, fiction, and non-fiction pieces—for a mixture of feature articles with feminist topics and themes. Sandra Werner provided this assessment of the importance of Ms.:

“Ms. has proved itself unafraid to print articles on even the most controversial topics. A list of the subjects treated by Ms. reads like a syllabus for a survey course in women’s studies: family issues, politics and legislation, domestic violence, economic and employment issues, lesbianism, health concerns, women & religion, and more....As a pioneering magazine of the women’s movement and a forum for serious discussion on topics relevant to all people, Ms. is in a class by itself.”

Clearly, for American women’s magazines that was the case. However, one could easily replace the word Ms. with the word Chatelaine in the first sentence and the meaning would remain the same—despite the fact that the time period would be one decade earlier. Chatelaine could not be classified as a feminist periodical, despite its inclusion of a number
of feminist articles, yet for a general mass-market women’s magazine its wide variety of feature articles held up very well with those considered advanced for a feminist publication in the seventies. It was also instructive that part of the impetus for the creation of Ms. was due to the male-dominated editorial departments and the glass-ceilings in place at the traditional U.S. women’s magazines. This illustrated what a rare opportunity existed at Maclean Hunter—where women were the primary creators of Chatelaine’s material and where, under Doris Anderson, many liberal topics were published in the periodical. Maclean Hunter executives probably did not agree with these selections but given their penchant for hands-off management and happiness with the ever-increasing circulation statistics they usually did not or could not argue with the mixture of material.

In her written assessment of women’s magazines, Doris Anderson commented on Chatelaine’s feminism and compared it to its American counterparts:

In fact, now that I look back on the 1960s, I feel Chatelaine was a kind of closet feminist magazine. We had to be. We had a circulation of over a million women—the equivalent of 16 million in the U.S. (the top women’s magazine there was Ladies Home Journal, with a circulation of 7 million). Chatelaine had to appeal to all women in Canada. We also were frequently reminded through letters, of our middle-class, traditional audience. I was accused of ‘breaking up the family.’ For two years after we ran the first article urging that abortion be made legal in 1960, I was the target of a threatening letter-writing campaign aimed at closing the magazine and having me fired. But with the advent of the Women’s Movement and the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, Chatelaine could be much more open in its feminism. In fact, by this time we were getting letters from women suggesting that we were too conservative and not feminist enough!90

Regardless of what Anderson could accomplish within the unique situation at Maclean Hunter she was, ultimately, bound or prodded by the comments of readers.

Two letters from Chatelaine readers provided their personal assessment of how the Canadian magazine was different from its American competitors. An American reader, Mrs. Ellen O’Keefe of Racine, Wisconsin, was inspired to write the editor in 1962 when she noticed the critical letters on the reader’s page:

I have been very fortunate to have the pleasure of reading several copies of your magazine during the last year. They were given to me by a former Canadian now a U.S. citizen. During the more than 50 years of subscribing and reading our U.S. magazines it was a surprise to read in your excellent copy several critical letters to you. To me—I find your magazines most excellent in every way. The Ads are beautiful colours and makes me desire to purchase or make the wonderful pictures of everything. The stories are realistic. The articles well written so natural (not ponderous) and above all the print is clear and well spaced. Also the price of 15 cents compared to ours.... 91
Given O'Keefe's lengthy history as a reader of American women's magazines, she was amply qualified to comment on the differences between the periodicals. Above all, O'Keefe valued the periodicals' realism and affordability. In contrast, Mrs. Nellen Armstrong of Seattle, Washington, also writing in 1962, praised the magazine's more liberal approach to article and editorial content. Because she was a former member of the editorial staff at Canadian Home Journal, a doctoral candidate in sociology and resident of the U.S., Armstrong's letter was compelling:

Living just inside the American 'egotistic curtain' your magazine is a clean breath of common sense--especially your serious editorials, Christina Newman's... current affairs, and Galton's health news. And it's refreshing to see that your home articles and features advocate wise spending and long-term saving, in contrast with American impulse spending and quick and multiple glamour ads. And it's still nice to know that if I ever want a crochet or embroidery pattern, I can still get it at Chatelaine....

Armstrong did not intend to have her letter published, but rather had included an essay on the difficulties facing women in academe which she offered to the magazine for publication. Anderson declined claiming that "the fate of women academics is not a subject very close" to the readers. These letters, and others, make clear that the sixties version of the magazine continued to differentiate itself considerably from the American magazines.

The Readers

In 1969 the Canadian Media Directors Council, with the validation of the Canadian Advertising Research Foundation, published a study entitled Canada's Magazine Audience: A Study from the Magazine Advertising Bureau of Canada (CMA). This work provided a very detailed demographic profile of the readership of all the major Canadian magazines, the weekend supplements and the most popular American magazines (Saturday Evening Post, TIME, and Reader's Digest). During May and June of 1968, 6,000 Canadians from coast to coast were interviewed about their magazine reading habits. As with the readership surveys conducted in the fifties, these reports must be approached with some reservations; the nature and purpose of the reports was to provide statistical portraits of the magazine audience for advertisers. According to Raymond Kent such reports and ratings figures "constitute the currency for negotiating advertising space or time" and thus their use as indicators of how people actually interact with media is of more limited value. Their key importance lies in
the demographic profiles of the readership and in the advertising department’s belief that these reports were worthy of the time and money invested in generating them.

As in the fifties, the CMA reported that Chatelaine readers hailed from all regions of the country, were both men and women, and were from all major socio-economic groups.97 Ontario, the Prairies, British Columbia and Atlantic Canada accounted for the vast majority of readers (of both sexes), while the share of Quebec readers was much smaller.98 The introduction of the French version, Châtelaine, in 1960 cut into the English version’s readership in Quebec. This fact would account for the lower number of Quebec readers in comparison to the fifties survey. In 1968, the total female audience of the magazine was estimated at 1,851,000 readers while men accounted for 641,000 readers.99 Thus 23.2% of all English Canadian adults read Chatelaine, compared with 24.6% of English speaking adults who read Maclean’s or the 37.2% who read Reader’s Digest. In terms of households, other Chatelaine research reports claimed that in 1966 the magazine reached 37% of all households in Canada.100 While the magazine boasted of its younger audience, and attempted to reach the young housewife, the figures generated by the CMA report proved that they were not as successful as they would have liked.101 For both sexes, readers were most likely to come from the 35-44 year old age group, followed by the 55 and over age category while their most desired age group, the 25-34 year-olds, were in third place.102

With respect to education, Chatelaine readers were drawn from all educational levels, although generally speaking women had more education than men. That was consistent with the Canadian population in general. The figures for the number of female readers who had attended or completed high school, as well as those who had taken either advanced training, some university or college or had completed degrees was higher than the English-speaking Canadian averages.103 The vast majority of readers still listed their marital status as married (67.9%) although the numbers of single readers (23.1%) and those who were either widowed, divorced or separated (8.3%) were higher than they had been a decade previously.104

The male readers surveyed, when questioned about their occupational status, were most likely to be employed as skilled or unskilled workers (23%); retired or unemployed (17.7%) or in the service industry (15.5%).105 For women the most common occupation listed was housewife (57.3%) followed by student (11.7%) or clerical/sales work (10.7%).106
Chart 7.1 combines male and female occupations, classified by head of household, for a more representative picture of *Chatelaine* purchasers' employment profile.107

![Chart 7.1: Chatelaine Purchasers (by Heads of Household)](image)

Chart 7.1

To help their advertising and media clients put all of the statistical data in perspective the writers of the report included the appropriate statistical averages for English and French Canadians at the bottom of each table of information. Thus it was very simple to contrast the magazine averages with the Canadian averages. For both male and female *Chatelaine* readers their occupational categories mirrored the Canadian averages. That is, there were no glaring discrepancies in terms of occupation of the readers. However, it should be noted that the proportion of male readers who were from the professional or technical occupations or either retired or unemployed was slightly higher (roughly 2%) than the Canadian average. Correspondingly, the weighting of skilled and unskilled male readers was 4% less than their percentage of the male population of English Canada.108 Using the average figures provided for the number of female readers, and the number of English Canadian women in general who were housewives, the survey illustrated that 1 out of every 3 Canadian housewives read the magazine.109

If the statistical information on occupation provided a rather imprecise picture of the majority of English-Canadian *Chatelaine* readers, the household income and principal wage earner’s income clarified the situation. Although large groups of survey respondents did not report this information, the majority of *Chatelaine* households made less than $7,000 per year
Similarly, 52.5\% of Chatelaine readers listed the primary wage earner's income as less than $7,000 per annum. In comparison with the English-Canadian averages, the readership of the magazine is almost in line with the Canadian average.

The vast majority of Chatelaine readers lived in single family dwellings (79.2\%). They were more likely to do so than the average English-Canadian family (74.1\%) but not by a wide margin. The housing figures were often quoted in Chatelaine advertisements in CARD as an indication of a 'better-sort' or 'affluent' audience. In reality, it probably was due to the larger number of rural and small town dwellers amongst the Chatelaine readership because homes (whether owned or rented) were the most common forms of accommodation in rural areas and small towns. One third of all Chatelaine readers lived in a rural area which was proportionately higher than the Canadian average.

In contrast to the CARD advertisements which often used terms like 'better-sort', 'quality,' and 'affluent' indiscriminately and in comparison with the Canadian averages provided in the CMA study it was clear that Chatelaine readers were average Canadians. Readers residing in homes were divided into four groups: Class A (Upper Group); Class B (Upper Middle Group); Class C (Lower Middle Group) and Class D (Lower Group). The classifications were based upon wealth, type and style of home, neighbourhood, standard of living etc. The Upper Group were "wealthy" had the "best home in the area, well-kept grounds, high quality furnishings." Equally easy to identify were the Lower Group whose homes had a "poor appearance" with "sparse worn furnishings" and who often lived in the "oldest and commercial districts." The Upper Middle Group inhabited a "fairly good home in or near an A district" or a "suburban setting," and were "above average in possessions and spending ability." Finally, the Lower Middle Group was described as living in the "older less prosperous sections or in newer low-priced housing developments." They could "buy the necessities with little to spare" and had a "fair standard of living, with few luxuries." According to the report, 79.3\% of the readers of Chatelaine magazine (or 1,976,000 readers) lived in a household classified as lower-middle socio-economic (see graph 7.2).
In comparison to the other magazines in the survey Chatelaine had the lowest percentage of Upper and Upper Middle readers. In fact, they had the lowest rating of any of the Chatelaine family of publications—Châtelaine (19.9%), and Miss Chatelaine (18%) fared much better at attracting the well-heeled reader.

One complete volume of the report was dedicated to a detailed analysis of the ownership and purchasing patterns of magazine readers. Space limitations permit only a brief overview of the material world of the Chatelaine household during the sixties, but this picture is an important one, particularly in later sections where the advertising content and impact will be assessed. The relatively low level of discretionary spending enforces the conclusion that regardless of the fantasy quotient involved in ad readership, for many readers the advertised products were beyond their means. Over eighty percent of readers had one or more cars, although they were just as likely to have purchased a new one as they were a used car. The average weekly expenditure for groceries was $29. Family clothing expenditure for six months was, on average, $239. Cosmetics purchases were very low, the average amount spent was $4.35 per month, although 44% of women claimed to spend less than $3 per month. In terms of even more discretionary spending or ‘life-style’ issues most readers chose to consume very little alcohol, if any, preferred to vacation in Canada and often spent less than $250 per annum on their vacations.

In Section D, entitled “Media Patterns,” the report attempted to quantify the act of reading magazines. By providing figures for frequency of use (number of times looked in) and the amount of time spent with each periodical the report gave the advertisers some sense
of the reader's exposure to the material. They did not make any attempt to explore which parts of the magazines readers liked better or differences in terms of time and attention paid to advertising as opposed to editorial content. However, these figures while less than adequate gauges of how readers read the periodicals, did give some sense of how much time they spent reading the magazine. The average number of times female and male readers of Chatelaine looked into the periodical was calculated at three times, while the average amount of time spent reading each issue was clocked at 64 minutes per issue.\textsuperscript{125}

Thus to return to Kent's usage of the term "currency," Chatelaine's chief currency was that it attracted a mass audience of average Canadian women, and some men, from all regions of the country. The readers lived primarily in single family homes but they were more likely to live in a rural area than most Canadians. In terms of occupation, education, income level and household income they were fairly, sometimes slightly above, average. Certainly the socio-economic portrait illustrated convincingly that in comparison with other periodicals and with the Canadian averages, the English-speaking Chatelaine community were most likely to come from the lower middle class. In other words, in terms of advertising priorities, they represented women and families who had a small amount of discretionary spending and only a fair, not a 'better-sort' of standard of living.

Readers' Letters

The information contained in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3 provided a succinct analysis of the theories and difficulties surrounding reader-responses to popular culture. This much shorter section makes specific use of the richer material available on Chatelaine readers in the sixties to buttress the argument made in the fifties. The source base from which to draw conclusions about how actual readers of the magazine interacted with and responded to the material was, like the fifties, most consistently illuminated by the letters printed at the back of each issue. To print a wide variety of responses in the magazine the editors chose excerpts from an average of fifteen letters per issue.\textsuperscript{126} Two other sources greatly enrich an understanding of this decade. Of key importance was the collection of letters to the editor from 1962 which are preserved at the Archives of Ontario.\textsuperscript{127} While it is impossible to state with certainty that this is the complete number of letters received during that year, it does provide an excellent sample from which to assess how letters were chosen for inclusion in the
magazine. Anderson claimed, in the magazine, in interviews, and in this excerpt from her letter to a reader that “The Last Word is Yours” did represent the letters received:

I found your comments about our Letters Page very interesting indeed. Actually, the Letters Page of Chatelaine is one of the best read pages in the magazine. We receive many more letters than we publish, but we do try to give a fairly accurate representation of the many various opinions that are held by the people who write to us. Some of the letters we receive are constructive and very intelligent, and some are critical and often vicious. But since everyone who writes to our Letters Page wants to have his or her letter published, I feel we have a duty to print a representative selection of all types of letters. . . .”

The 1962 collection permits an assessment of this claim. The national, gendered and geographical range of letter writers permits conclusions about the ‘representativeness’ of those letters chosen for publication. They highlight the readers’ concerns about content and illustrate the editorial responses. Second, the statistical information contained in the Chatelaine brief presented by Anderson to the Status of Women Commission in 1968, is an important document which profiles readers’ political and feminist views at decade’s end. To aid clarity and utilize this material fully, the remainder of this section contains some statistical material taken from the published letters but otherwise concentrates solely upon the 1962 collection and the responses to the SWC Brief. Remaining chapters on the magazine’s content will make use of the letters printed throughout the decade.

The letters published in the magazine were most likely to come from female readers (82%) although men did contribute their share (13%). While the writers were from all regions of the country they were most likely to originate from Ontario (43%), the Prairies (24%) or British Columbia (14%). The tone and purpose of their letters varied considerably. There was almost an equal weighting of positive (46%) and negative letters (40%). A particularly Canadian trait of neutrality or caution pervaded the remaining letters. As mentioned in the corresponding section for the fifties, the purpose of the letters would appear indicative of the degree to which readers were engaged with the magazine’s content and found it worthy of commentary. The vast majority of letters were written in response to articles (71%). All of the components received written commentary at some time during the decade, but in comparison with articles the responses to these was considerably smaller.

The letters in the 1962 collection are numerous, lengthy and wide ranging. The vast majority address themselves to the articles, although this sample contains a great many angry letters in response to the ‘blasphemous’ nature of a fiction story run in the magazine. Using
the two January 1962 files as comparison, of the 164 letters 93 (57%) were positive.  
There were 71 negative letters (43%) and no neutral letters. Similarly, using the letters in the  
two September to December 1962 files it was possible to conclude the regional and national  
origin of the letter writers. All regions of the country were represented but writers were more  
likely to come from Ontario (41%), the Prairies (22%) and British Columbia (14%). Thus a  
comparison of the published and unpublished letters reveals that the published letters page  
was representative of the letters received. There was no attempt to skew the selection in  
favour of positive mail (indeed negative mail and the controversy it generated made for a  
more lively page) or to downplay representation from Ontario in favour of a greater national  
flavour. All regions of the country participated, as did a few readers from Britain and the  
U.S.

As the epigraphic letters at the beginning of the chapter clearly illustrate, readers  
often had different impressions of the magazine. One of the consistent themes was the  
difference between Chatelaine and its American competitors but readers also wrote more  
specific letters in response to certain fiction, articles, contests and departmental material. It is  
unfortunate that space does not permit the inclusion of all the wonderfully witty letters  
written to Anderson from the 1962 collection. Two case studies from the 1962 mailbag must  
suffice. Both “The Beloved Son” and “Mrs. Slob 1961” provide insight into the various  
ways readers read the magazine. A shorter section on general letters as well as a sample of  
letters seeking advice also receive analysis because they illustrate the more general, less  
content-specific letters. Where writers requested anonymity, I have deleted all identifying  
references but have included the province of residence.

One new feature that deserves special commentary given its success in the magazine  
was the “Mrs. Chatelaine Contest”. Begun in 1961, this annual contest was open to all  
Canadian homemakers. The preferred entrant was a married woman with children. Women  
who entered were required to answer questions about their families, thoughts about marriage  
and family issues, favourite recipes, descriptions of their homes and their interior design.  
According to E.H. Gittings, Assistant Advertising Sales Manager for Chatelaine, the  
contest’s popularity had exceeded Maclean Hunter’s expectations:

We received approximately 5,700 entries from our English edition and 400 entries  
from our French edition. Some of the entries were very elaborate indeed. They  
included such things as samples of pies, cookies, tape recordings of their voices, and
in practically all cases, it was obvious that these readers had spent literally days preparing their entries. Mrs. Saxton who won the contest last year, confessed after she had been selected that she had spent over 150 hours preparing her entry.\footnote{134}

By all accounts, both in number of entries received and in the amount of time contestants put into their entries, the contest was a success. Of course, the prizes were also very enticing. They included “two first class tickets via TCA DC-8 jet from Toronto to Paris; a ten day stay in Paris with $1,000 to cover expenses, complete spring wardrobe in Easy Care Arnel, three piece set of ladies luggage...; a Renault Dauphine car for your use during your stay in Paris.”\footnote{135} J.L. Adams, Chatelaine Manager for Eastern Canada, wrote that the first winner, Mrs. Joyce Saxton, of Plenty, Saskatchewan, was a “charming and delightful person,” even though in the course of the day she had remarked that “although she read Chatelaine every month from cover to cover, her favourite magazine was Reader’s Digest because it didn’t flop around when she was reading it in bed.”\footnote{136} Over the course of the decade an attempt was made to make sure women from all regions of the country were selected as grand prize winners. A farm wife and mother of three children, Mrs. Saxton was an energetic housewife as this description attested:

She teaches swimming in the summer, is a member of or on the executive of nine clubs and community groups, preserved 140 quarts of fruit preserves last summer, 60 jars of jellies, 260 packs of frozen fruit and vegetables; sews most of her children’s clothes and some of her own...in the winter, with no farming chores, they work on remodeling the house.\footnote{137}

Readers who entered the contest tended to be consummate wives and mothers and very service-minded.

However, that was not the case for all readers. For them, the Mrs. Chatelaine contest highlighted actual or imagined inadequacies in their various roles as wives, mothers and often workers. One woman, Mrs. Beatrice Maitland of Chatham, N.B., took matters into her own hands and decided to write to the magazine and nominate herself for the “Mrs. Slob 1961” contest. The following excerpt from her first letter to Anderson provided her humourous critique of the standards required of “Mrs. Chatelaine”:

Yesterday was the closing date for your Mrs. Chatelaine contest, but I didn’t enter. . . . I wish someone, sometime, would have a competition for ‘Mrs. Nothing!!’ A person who isn’t a perfect housekeeper, a faultless mother, a charming hostess, a loving wife, or a servant of the community. Besides being glamorous as a model, talented as a Broadway star and virtuous as a Saint. I have studied your questionnaire carefully but my replies are hopelessly inadequate. . . . To start with my appearance is absolutely fatal. . . . I am overweight, pear-shaped and bow legged. Consequently, not having much to work on I don’t bother and cover it up with comfortable, warm old
slacks. . . . Now, housework. Failure there too as I am a lousy housekeeper. . . . Entertaining? Practically never. . . . A game of cards or just talk with a few beers. No fancy food, drinks or entertainment. . . . Meals? . . . We prefer plain meat and potato-vegetable meals with no frills. For birthdays our children choose the dinner. What's the menu? Usually hamburgers and chips. You can't win. Make a fancy meal from a magazine and they look like they are being poisoned. . . . The decor is middle English European junk shop, especially when the children start doing their homework. Community activities? I have always belonged to and worked with other organizations... but I have become so sick of and bored with meetings I quit. . . . My philosophy as a home-maker--I guess that is, be happy, don't worry. You do what you can with what you’ve got when you feel like it. Consequently I'm never sick and I've got no nerves or fears. That is poor me. . . . So if you want to run a contest for ‘Mrs. Slob 1961’ I would be happy to apply and would probably win hands down. Thank you for your enjoyable magazine and my apologies for taking up your time.”

Maitland’s self-deprecatory style of humour and her obvious send-up of the conventions of the contest made for a witty letter. However, there was a considerable edge to this piece since she challenged the presumption that all Canadian women aspired to or could afford the easy affluence of suburbia. The “Mrs. Chatelaine” mantle was awarded on the basis of family life, community volunteer work, philosophy of marriage & child rearing, interior design and fashion sense. Many readers were quick to condemn articles which they felt were geared to ‘higher-income’ earners and not average Canadians. The tensions between the magazine’s middle class presumptions and the large number of working-class and rural readers was a constant source of friction. As an R.C.A.F. wife with three kids, Maitland was clearly not part of the ‘better-sort’ of reader the magazine’s advertisers and publisher sought.

Anderson’s response praised Maitland’s “wit” and “good humour” and acknowledged that the “Mrs Chatelaine contest sets up pretty formidable rules but, in our defense, the woman who won it last year was a fairly average homemaker in Western Canada who lived on a farm.” Neither Anderson nor Maitland anticipated the response that would follow the publication of her letter in the February 1962 issue. According to Maitland’s own description, having her letter published in Chatelaine was akin to having a “best-seller”:

When I wrote that letter to you, back in the fall, I never dreamed that such a furore would ensue. . . . My stars! It's as good as having a best-seller! Strangers have shook my hand and said, 'Welcome to the Club.' And it's buzzing all over our P.M.Q. I have also had a lot of letters all very much in agreement. Who would have thought there were so many slobs in the country? Who would have guessed so many slobs read Chatelaine? Despite the magazine’s attempts to encourage household perfection and reward the ideal Canadian homemaker, the Mrs. Slobs refused to re-create themselves in that mold. With Maitland’s treatise as their rallying cry
they wrote to her and to the magazine professing support and encouragement to all the other Canadian slobs. Anderson's reply acknowledged that Maitland's letter and the ensuing letters in her support provided a wake-up call for the magazine:

You certainly did stir up a furore. I for one found it extremely interesting to realize what a great load of guilt most of the housewives of this country carry around on their shoulders. It makes me a little guilty that women's magazines probably contribute as much as any medium to this feeling. Thank you for reminding us..."141

The letters professing solidarity with Mrs. Maitland came from all regions of the country. This brief sampling captures the spirit of the letters. Most continued Maitland's critique of the contest's middle-class bias and rather limiting role prescribed for Canadian wives and mothers. Mrs. F. Miller of New Westminster, B.C., wrote: "I received my issue of Chatelaine about one half hour ago and turned immediately to 'The last word is yours.' I say Three Cheers for Mrs. Beatrice Maitland."142 Mrs. C. Cserick of Ottawa deduced that the magazine was to blame for its unattainable style of homemaking and its focus upon the suburban family:

To be brutally frank I love Chatelaine... But dear old Chatelaine, you write very little about us--don't you--we don't have a home of our own--2 bedrooms is all, but we do like to read, listen to good music, watch good TV shows, take in a really excellent movie, drink gallons of coffee at odd hours, love our husband and kids, care for them and do 100 menial jobs a day... .143

Interestingly, none of the readers who sympathized and identified with Maitland decided that the magazine was not for them. They considered the magazine a general Canadian woman's magazine, not one oriented to homemakers or urban middle class women. Until Maitland's letter many of these respondents remarked that they thought they alone had difficulties coping with the demands of homemaking in the sixties.

Perhaps the pithiest letter received was from grade 6 student Victoria M. Haliburton, of Ville Lemoyre, Quebec, proving that a reader could be of any age and consider herself part of the Chatelaine community:

I agree completely with Mrs. Maitland... The most common meal around our house is my father's specialty. Corn-and-tomato-york, he calls it, and it looks exactly what it is: namely, a mess of corn, tomatoes and bread crumbs. The same with most of our meals. No fancy French names for us. Macaroni and cheese sauces is macaroni and cheese... .Entertaining? The closest thing we have to that, except on rare occasions, is friends dropping in and out while my mother does the ironing or washing... .Housework? If my mother happens to be in the mood... If you ran a Mrs. Slob contest, and my mother entered, there'd be some tough competition.144
It is apparent that Haliburton was familiar with the departmental fare and yet pronounced it beyond her family both gastronomically and financially. If from today’s perspective the departmental food material often appeared rather plain or uninspiring, these letters revealed that many readers were skeptical about the creations of the Chatelaine Institute kitchens. It would appear that the time requirement, the pseudo-sophisticated names, ingredients and tastes were completely foreign and un-enticing to many Canadian families. This letter from reader Greta Usenik of Paradise Hill, Saskatchewan, elaborated on the themes developed in Haliburton’s letter when she encourages the Chatelaine editors to get out and visit ‘average’ Canadian housewives: “Wish the entire Chatelaine staff could descend on me some afternoon and I’d show them how its done. Our homes are modern, from plumbing to electric dryer, but no pile carpet or Glamour. Also no patio, just the whole big outdoors.”

All the letters excerpted to date illustrate that these readers were adept at providing alternate interpretations of the magazine. They did not feel compelled to emulate the household perfectionism of the departmental material nor did the contest encourage them to become super-volunteers, homemakers and wives. Rather, the magazine was construed as out-of-step with the average Canadian homemaker. One reader, Mrs. W. Ockenden of Victoria, echoed Anderson’s concerns about the amount of guilt the Mrs. Chatelaine contest induced in the readership: “I am sure there are many more home-makers just like this except that many do worry because they can’t be more like that perfect being so often portrayed in women’s magazines.” Similarly, a letter from Mrs. Neil Ferguson of Dutch Brook, Cape Breton did not make specific reference to the ‘Mrs. Slob’ letters but her critique of the contest and her comments about the classist nature of the magazine provided an important commentary about readers’ class identifications:

In the last two Mrs. Chatelaine contests it was quite well to do women that won. Do people from the middle class income bracket ever enter these contests?...There are a lot of women that would certainly enter if they could fill out the entry forms but how can they say how well they entertain when they are racking their brains as to what to cook up for their family for a hearty good meal when maybe there is very little pay coming in to provide the proper ingredients for a proper meal....These women are the same ones that patch and do over the children’s clothes from year to year to have their kiddies warm and presentable for school while the mothers themselves are likely wearing the same coat for the last five or six years.

Clearly, many readers who identified themselves as average or middle income families were not. Regardless of their income level, they believed that the magazine’s contests and budget
planning specials should be accessible to all readers. Anderson's response was to state that the winners had both been in the $5,000 income bracket, "average" for Canadian families at that time and thus not beyond the realm of the majority of readers. Mrs. Ferguson probably thought that answer was a cop-out.

The furore created by the Mrs. Slob correspondence was minor compared to the magazine's decision to publish the story "The Beloved Son" by Cecil Maiden, as a piece of Christmas fiction in the December 1961 issue. The seemingly innocuous tale of Jesus's boyhood triggered a flood of angry mail from Catholic readers across the country. The chief concerns were that the author had used poetic license to interpret Jesus' boyhood--complete with siblings and boyish pranks--which were not detailed in the Bible. The controversy was heightened considerably by the publication in the March 1962 issue of a letter from Haligonian Miss Margeurite M. Burns, National President of the Catholic Women's League of Canada. Burns' letter proved that readers were often not amused by the material published in the magazine and that she, "as a business woman," was very aware that readers had the power of the boycott on their side:

Members of our 146,000 member organization have been sending me requests and suggestions for action regarding the novel "The Beloved Son"....Many of them have suggested a campaign to have a wholesale cancellation of subscriptions to underline our objection to what they believe to be MALICE, but I am not in favour of this drastic action--yet.... Why would you want to make 50% of your customers unhappy at Christmas--or at any time? And you surely did make them unhappy.... As business people, let us face it honestly: your magazine is a very simple one and hasn't too much to attract subscribers. It certainly cannot compete with some of the popular women's magazines. Aside from your recipes and household hints, what do you have to offer?... I feel that reliable magazines would have consultants on staff who would know whether or not certain articles or stories are offensive to Faith or morals; and that it would be good business to avoid hurting or offending half of your customers in a very serious degree.... If you could publish an apology for publishing this offensive novel...; and if you could promise all sincere Christians that you will give them a nice Christmas story next year, I think you will prove yourselves smart business people. If you disregard this situation, the readers will feel that all your material is just as unreliable and they will lose faith in your publication....

[Emphasis hers]

In her personal reply to Burns, Anderson wrote that "as the magazine in Canada with the largest circulation, we feel that we must edit the magazine for all our readers. This frequently means that we cannot please all of them at the same time...." Shrewdly, Chatelaine published an almost complete version of Burns' letter. There was no apology just this clarification:
Chatelaine certainly intended no offense to any of its two million readers. We published The Beloved Son simply as a warm, fictional account of the atmosphere and times in which Christ grew up. On points of doctrine, readers must of course look to the guidance of their own church. The editors.\textsuperscript{150}

The flood of mail which followed fell tidily into two categories, Protestant and Catholic, for which the editorial staff at the magazine drafted two form letters, naturally marked Protestant and Catholic. The Catholic readers continued to press for an official apology while the Protestant readers protested both Burns’ strong arm tactics and the inability of Catholic readers’ to view the story as anything other than fiction. Eventually, the magazine had to call a halt to any further letters protesting or supporting “The Beloved Son”.

The case studies provided by the Mrs. Slob and Beloved Son controversies illustrate how strongly many readers felt about the periodical while highlighting the different interpretations they made of the publication. A general letter from Ouida M. Wright of Weston, Ontario, criticized the content of the magazine and along with Anderson’s detailed response provide insight into how the periodical was read; the ‘type of reader’ attracted to the magazine; the editorial aims of Chatelaine; and how readers assessed its success. In her letter Wright wrote:

I have received the August issue of Chatelaine, and that has been even more disappointing to me....I believe that a woman’s magazine should be of interest to any thinking human being, with, of course, the woman’s point of view in mind--in other words, Macleans magazine with a feminine viewpoint....look back in your files to the magazine in which you had Madame Vanier on the cover. That’s the best you’ve done yet. I think you have potential to be a fine magazine--your editorials suggest as much; yet the more glossy and attractive in appearance the magazine gets, the less stimulating it becomes....\textsuperscript{151} (see illustration)

Although it would be incorrect to classify Anderson’s responses to readers’ letters as form letters (with the exception of ‘The Beloved Son’ incident), most of her responses were, of necessity, brief. In this case Anderson crafted a three-page reply largely because Wright’s critical letter came as a blow to the editor. She writes: “your letter depressed me considerably because you sound just like the sort of reader I feel I have been trying to reach and appeal to for the last five years.”\textsuperscript{152} What follows was an explanation, and defence, of a general women’s magazine. First off, she made clear the importance of advertising: “We just simply can’t ignore the facts of magazine life such as newsstand sales, advertising, and subscription sales. Our advertising, as you probably know is our life-blood which pays for the editorial features.”\textsuperscript{153} Most importantly, for our purposes, was Anderson’s outline of which components in the magazine were more popular with the readers:
What makes women unhappy?
Housework is a part-time job
16 pages for teens featuring Rick Nelson
Canada's First Lady—Madame Vanier

Photograph by Karsh
It’s true that we try to include in every issue at least three or four articles which are more or less general and sometimes could easily appear in a magazine such as Maclean’s, but the ‘service’ part of our magazine is very definitely wanted by women, and as a matter of fact the readership is usually higher in service articles than it is in general articles. I too would like to run pictures of prominent Canadian women on the cover, but the Madame Vaniers are fairly rare, and to be quite blunt with you, if we ran covers of secretaries, nurses etc., our newsstand sales would plummet. We know this because we tried this approach...Even a cover of Madame Vanier—and I quite agree with all the things you have to say about her—sells far less successfully than a cover of Juliette or Toby Robbins, and it is way behind a newsstand sales compared to Elizabeth Taylor. I agree with you that Your World Notebook is a fine feature, and I assure you that we will continue to run it, but it’s certainly not among the best read features of the magazine. It trails such regular features, for example, as Homemaker’s Diary, Meals of the Month, etc.¹⁵⁴

Anderson’s response was remarkably similar to the excerpt from her novel with which this section began. It exhibited the paradoxes and frustrations of editing the magazine. The pluses were the ability to reach a mass national audience of Canadian women and to offer educational and entertaining features. The problem, which many critics of general women’s magazines have overlooked, was the fact that the readership decided what they valued in the magazine, and what they want to read. The choice many women made was in favour of the departmental material.

One final component of the letters to the editor, those readers who wrote requesting advice on a variety of topics, has received little attention in this section. I stressed in Chapter 3 the importance of community, and the dialogue between readers and editors, readers and other readers and the magazine and Canadian women in general. The examination of the 1962 group of letters permits the unequivocal statement that many women did consider the editors (in particular) as their confidants or resources to whom they could turn for solutions to their problems. These problems varied considerably. Letters requesting help or information on parenting issues, dietary requirements, marriage counseling and sexual matters and health information were all included in the 1962 collection. Primarily, the letters indicate that the women felt they had nowhere else to turn. Or, conversely, they were embarrassed to seek help in their communities. As this letter from Newfoundland made clear, readers trusted Chatelaine and Doris Anderson to provide them with appropriate advice:

This month, for some reason my Chatelaine hasn’t arrived and I’M LOST. I so do look forward to it. Although I do not agree with all of the articles I find it a lift to me in every way. Of special interest to me was an article awhile ago by Ron Kenyon—“The pill nobody talks about”....Our religion forbids any birth control measures
except the rhythm method and it was with great pleasure I read of the new discovery
made by Fertility Tester Inc. of Illinois. However, I’m sure you realize that in
this...place these things are unavailable except by mail. Is it possible to advise me
where they could be bought? I realize this is asking perhaps a great deal but as I’ve
said I do look to Chatelaine for a great deal. Perhaps many women like me would
like to know these things....Thank you for the wonderful job you’re doing. P.S. Do
please look into my missing Chatelaine.155

Anderson’s return letter sent the requested address and financial information as well as
assuring the reader that her magazine was probably just caught in the mail.

Other readers used the magazine’s letters page as a forum for “community” news--
requests for information, jobs, and readers’ advice. As the examples of these letters indicate,
correspondents regarded the other readers as their friends. For instance, Mrs. C.R. Van
Dame of Toledo, Ohio, wrote: “Two of my hobbies are favourite recipes and cookbooks. I
am wondering if Chatelaine friends would care to exchange?”156 Or consider this request
from Clarence Gautreau from East Saint John, N.B: “I am a TB patient and have decided to
take up watch repairing. I would appreciate it very much if I could receive any old ones to
practice with. Thank you.”157 The editors rarely provided any feedback (in all likelihood
they did not know themselves) about the outcome of such requests. However, if the
responses were overwhelming, or the situation intriguing enough, there would be follow-up
information. That was certainly the case when Mrs. Patricia Perron of Rawdon, Quebec,
wrote her letter to the magazine:

   I wonder if your readers could help me out. I am expecting a baby this month. My
husband and I have agreed on a boy’s name but can’t decide on a girl’s. We like
unusual names but not far-out ones. As we both have Irish ancestry, perhaps some of
your readers could come up with something different from the current Irish names
which are so popular.158

In the “What’s New” section of the October issue the magazine brought the readers up-to-
date on Mrs. Perron’s situation: “Remember Pat Perron... We were swamped--letters came
from all over Canada and the United States and names such as Viva, Maeve, Moira...
delightedly awaited her baby daughter.”159 Instead of the “pixie-like little Irish Colleen”
Perron had given birth to a “hefty ten pound, three ounce baby boy”—but the editors assured
readers that she was keeping the names for future reference.160

Along with individual requests, readers’ letters to the “community” often included
service notices, or up-dates about their hometowns for benefit of far-flung former residents.
Ethel Cameron, from East River, Pictou County, N.S., wrote to the magazine (and other
readers) to describe how she recycled her old issues: “She sends Chatelaine to a hospital in
India where the director Mary Nichol, a medical missionary, uses it to illustrate nutrition and baby care to nurses and expectant mothers." Afterwards the used issues were sold to a local merchant for wrapping paper and the proceeds went to defray part of the cost of the nurses program. The address was provided so that other women could direct their magazines towards this charitable enterprise.

Finally this exchange between an English reader and a Canadian reader indicates how Chatelaine often functioned as a balm for homesick Canadians abroad. In the December 1963 issue Mrs. E. Spring of Harrow, Middlesex, England wrote this poignant letter:

> How pleased I was to see Grand Pre mentioned in August. I used to live there and have many happy memories of the place. Often my sisters and I would go to the memorial park and see the statue of Evangeline and admire the lovely gardens. How well I remember the Apple-Blossom Festival. Although I have been living in England since 1947, I still long to see Grand Pre again at apple-blossom time.162

Mrs. Spring was undoubtedly further saddened when this letter, from Mrs. Kenneth Harris of Grand Pre, appeared in the February issue. Mrs. Harris writes:

> Sorry to disappoint Mrs. E. Spring but Grand Pre would never rate any special notice for its apple orchards today. The elaborate system of spraying, so necessary in recent years has made small orchards impractical. Today, one could almost count Grand Pre’s orchards on the fingers of one hand... They were, indeed, a beautiful sight, and we miss them too.163

Clearly readers felt welcome to write to the magazine with their personal thoughts, requests and plans--confident that others in the community would respond. The intimate tone of the letters, and often the nature of the requests, contributed greatly to the creation of the community of readers and made the magazine a resource for readers, its letters page functioning as a community bulletin board.

**Reader Surveys--The Effects of Chatelaine?**

On an individual basis the letters, and the responses of the editors and readers alike indicated some of the effects of reading the magazine. However, a brief comparison of two reader surveys provides some indication of how readers’ views changed during the course of the decade. In March 1961 the magazine published “The Canadian Homemaker: What You Think of Your Job-- A Special Chatelaine Report.”164 This report was the result of a three-month survey involving 250 “carefully selected representative housewives” from the ranks of the Chatelaine Councilors.165 The purpose was to “find out whether the stereotype of the harassed North American housewife--tense, frantic, and frustrated--was fact or myth.”166
Jean Yack reported that there was “remarkably little evidence of ‘housewifeitis’... no whining martyrs wailed on our shoulders...” and pronounced the Councilors a “a cheery lot.” In fact, a “resounding 86.7% ...want your daughters to grow up to be housewives rather than working wives (4.9%) or unmarried career girls (1.8%)”. When they asked women if their desire to work outside the home would change if they had affordable or adequate childcare, only 6.3% stated they would prefer to work, 47% said no and 43% were in favour of part-time employment. According to this survey the Councilors, and therefore the readership, were depicted as happy, contented Canadian housewives and mothers.

However, this image had changed considerably by the end of the decade. In January 1968 the magazine published a lengthy questionnaire in the magazine which, once the results were tabulated, they planned to present to the Status of Women Commission. Over 11,000 women completed the three hour questionnaire. They were from all regions of the country and from “moderately comfortable financial circumstances” because the report discovered that only 17.2% of respondents’ families made less than $5,000 that year. Even though the majority of the women who replied indicated that they did not work, they stated that if they could choose, “marriage with children and a career” would be their preference. They were in favour of government-supported daycare (72.7%); equal access to employment (80.5%); enforced equal pay for equal work legislation (80.8%); government birth control clinics for women (74.8%) and wider grounds for abortion (55%) and divorce (94.5%). Intriguingly, the results from Quebec and the rest of Canada illustrated striking differences. Of the 3,245 francophone women who answered the same questionnaire in *Châtelaine* their replies showed “a far stronger desire for independence as persons than appeared in the responses of *Chatelaine*. In almost every case, Quebeckers swing ten to twenty percent higher in support of freedom of thought and action.” It was obvious from these answers and statistics that *Chatelaine* readers were well-versed in women’s political issues of the day and were very concerned that changes in Canadian laws and societal mores be made.

Although it seemed unlikely that there was any overlap between the first survey group and the second, they were both deemed (in their respective years) to be representative of *Chatelaine* readers. While it would be simplistic to attribute these changes solely to *Chatelaine*, I think it is clear that the magazine did play a role in this changing perception of the role(s) of Canadian women. As well, and in light of the commentary about *Ms*’ role in
the U.S., the evidence indicates that Chatelaine readers were very familiar with the key feminist demands by 1968. Furthermore, the vast majority agreed with those goals.

**Questionnaires**

All of the questionnaire respondents read the magazine in the sixties but the responses, and enjoyment of the material, varied considerably. Some remarked upon the forward-looking approach of the magazine while others criticized the traditional format. Many recalled their enjoyment of the service material—for instance, Barbara Wellspring, a registered nurse (part-time in the sixties) and mother of three, wrote: “I always looked forward to receiving it—ideas for decorating, sewing, knitting, cooking and gardening.” Jan Baldwin, then a resident of Winnipeg, provided an indication of how immigrants to Canada used the magazine and a criticism of its traditional content:

“I was not particularly impressed with the magazine and only subscribed for two years—I arrived in Canada in 1968 and was unfamiliar with telephone subscription sales methods. I only took the magazine for the shortest period available and did not renew. I had never read a Canadian magazine and found it left much to be desired compared with British women’s magazines and Australian Women’s Weekly. I was not particularly interested in the “woman in the home” approach of Chatelaine—in fact I found it rather tedious.”

Another recent immigrant recalled reading the magazine “with morning or afternoon coffee to try to add interest to a deadly routine.” And although she found the articles more interesting than American magazines, she reported being bored with the periodical in general. In short, “It helped to acculturate me to Canadian society. It taught me the role I had agreed to play by marrying a traditional man from Northern Ontario.” Conversely, a respondent who, at that time, was a teenage male in Cape Breton, described his experience with the magazine very differently: “light, interesting, fantasy, escapism from small town, straight, male-dominated, Catholic, Cape Breton.”

**Conclusion**

The sixties was a decade of continuity and evolutionary change at Chatelaine while events in the local and international scenes were often turbulent. The magazine got larger, a little glossier and had more general features articles and less fiction. Chatelaine expanded to become the “Chatelaine Group” as Châtelaine, Miss Chatelaine and Hostess magazines were
created, thus considerably expanding the circulation and market reached by this material. Readership, as it had been in the fifties, came from all regions of the country and all socio-economic groups. Women and men, girls and boys and teenagers of both sexes read the periodical. Thus the magazine could claim a mass audience of Canadian women and men. While other magazines floundered, and some failed, Chatelaine’s circulation figures and advertising pages rose. Its market breath, the fact that over the course of twelve issues it reached 1 in 3 Canadian women, was phenomenal.

The key to thriving with a mass-market magazine in the sixties—as Chatelaine’s success and the American competitors situation indicated—was the ability to adapt or modify the material to fit the times. The American magazines were slow, with the exception of Cosmopolitan, to recognize the changing reality of North American life. The business and editorial decisions at Chatelaine indicated that Maclean Hunter was quick to modify the formula— to secure a national audience for advertisers, to develop new types of advertising formats and with the editorial material, to provide greater variety, more material for youth, and to recognize the changing roles of Canadian women. Doris Anderson remarked in one editorial that editing a women’s magazine was a bit like making a salad—and that the role of an editor was to keep tasting the salad to make sure that the mixture of ingredients and the dressing were just right. If the fifties version of Chatelaine was a garden salad with Thousand Islands dressing the sixties version of the magazine was still a garden salad—but the editors had added some croutons and a garlic-vinaigrette dressing to provide more spice and make the product more appealing to new and old readers alike.

Readers responded to the material in the variety of ways they had in the fifties. Many claimed they read the magazine from cover to cover. The statistical information generated by the marketing surveys pointed to the enduring popularity of the departmental material. However, the articles continued to generate the largest number of letters to the editor. Many readers trusted and believed completely in the magazine. Others were skeptical, viewing the persistent middle-class bias of the material as unrepresentative of Canadian families. Still others took pleasure out of interacting in a more creative way with the material, creating things like the Mrs. Slob contest or laughing about the expectations of the Chatelaine Institute’s test kitchen. Even throughout “The Beloved Son” controversy few readers took the ultimate step of canceling their subscriptions. Most realized that a magazine with a huge
circulation like Chatelaine's could not always cater to everyone. Instead, most readers were selective—they read what they wanted, agreed or disagreed, played with the format or just ignored the sections they did not like. While they accorded the magazine a great deal of respect, perceiving the authors and editors as authoritative experts on many subject matters, that did not mean that they did not evaluate, criticize or ignore their recommendations. The next chapters will illustrate in greater detail what types of material the readers enjoyed and how they read specific texts.

1 Public Archives of Ontario (PAO) Maclean Hunter Records Series (MHRS) F-4-3-a Box 434, Mrs. Audrey Berisford, Wilmington, Delaware, U.S.A. to Doris Anderson, March 1962.

2 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Mrs. E. Martin, North Vancouver, B.C. to Doris Anderson, 25 August 1962.

3 PAO MHRS F-4-5-a Box 449, Ted Hart, Advertising Manager Chatelaine "General Presentation--Script October 14, 1971."

4 Based upon statistics generated from the General Survey Database page counts for the Fifties and Sixties. See appendix for greater detail.

5 "Chatelaine Circulation," Canadian Advertiser: The Media Rate and Data Authority (May-June 1961), Volume 34 #3, 103.


7 "Chatelaine Magazine Group," Presented by Lloyd M. Hodgkinson, Publisher; Submission to the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media; February 18, 1970, 1-2.


“Demography: Urban and Rural” Ibid., 186. “The urban population was defined as all persons living in incorporated cities, towns or villages with a population of 1,000 or over, as well as in unincorporated places of 1,000 or over having a population density of at least 1,000 per square mile.”


Ibid., 834.


“Average Weekly Earnings of Salaried Employees and Earnings of Clerical and Other Salaried Classes in Manufacturing, Survey Week 1965,” *Canada Year Book 1973*, 758.


Equality of opportunity was the rallying cry of liberal feminists and within established groups they have traditionally sought state intervention. Socialist feminists seek systemic changes and incorporate class, race, and sexual orientation along with gender into their analysis of discrimination. Finally, radical feminists identified women’s reproductive issues as the key to women’s oppression—women’s control over sexuality and reproduction were regarded as key to their liberation (they have focused on abortion, birth control, and daycare issues).


Ibid., 40-41.

Ibid., 5.

For more information, see Kay Macpherson, *When in Doubt, DO BOTH: The Times of My Life* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press); Kay Macpherson and Meg Sears, “The Voice of Women: A History,” ed Gwen

30 Adamson, et al., 51.


32 Ibid.


35 Callwood interview.

36 See Alison Prentice, et al., Canadian Women: A History (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988), 398-399; for a brief discussion of the Murdoch Case—Although she received a lump-sum payment in 1973, her claim for an equal share of the family farm, based upon her household and farm related work, was unsuccessful.

37 Callwood, interview.

38 “Current Developments in Education,” Year Book 1972, 368.

39 LaMarsh, 190-205.

40 Ibid., 195.


44 Miss Chatelaine Ad, Chatelaine (February 1964), 74.


46 Ibid., 4.

47 Ibid., 3-4.

49 Ad for Homemaker’s Digest, CARD (January 1968) Volume 41 #1, 133.

50 Ibid.

51 Chatelaine and Hostess Ad, CARD (February 1968) Volume 41 #2, 117.

52 “52% Selective Coverage of Canada’s Major Markets: Hostess Ad” CARD (1968?), p. ?

53 Walker, 230.

54 Homemaker’s Digest is still in publication today.


56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 Doris Anderson Interview with author, Toronto 1994.


60 PAO MHRS F-4-1-b Box 431, L.M. Hodgkinson to N.R. Barbour, 28 September 1961.

61 PAO MHRS F-4-1-b Box 432, Elaine Collett to DHA (Doris Anderson), LMH (Lloyd Hodgkinson) and J. Meredith, “Western Trip,” 2 October 1961.

62 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Doris Anderson to Mrs. A. Egerton, Dartmouth, N.S., 6 February 1962.

63 The Uncertain Mirror: Report of the Special Senate Committee on Mass Media Volume 1, Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1970; 154. It is impossible to locate the actual figures for advertising revenue in the 1960s as the company was not required to release this information and even when they did (for the Senate Committee) they were assured that those numbers would remain confidential.

64 Ibid.

65 Anderson Interview.


67 PAO, MHRS F-4-5-a Box 449, Ted Hart Papers: “Speech to Directors, Draft 1971.”

68 The Uncertain Mirror, 154.

69 The Uncertain Mirror, 156.

70 Ibid.

71 PAO MHRS F-4-5-a Box 449, “Ted Hart Speech to the Directors, Draft 1971.”

72 The Uncertain Mirror, 155.
73 Ibid., 157.

74 "Chatelaine Information: Colour Ads," Canadian Advertiser: The Media Rate and Data Authority (January/February 1961), Volume 34 #1, 106.

75 "Chatelaine Information: Colour Ads," Canadian Advertising Rates and Data: The media authority (January 1968) Volume 41 # 1, 130.

76 PAO, MHRS F-4-1-a Box 430, R.G. Scott to L.M. Hodgkinson, re: Weekend's Report on Chatelaine's Consumer Council, 19 December 1960. The questionnaire was completed by 1,048 readers.


79 Ibid., 247.

80 Wood, 115.

81 Ibid., 116.

82 See Fredelle Bruser Maynard, The Tree of Life (Toronto: Penguin Books Canada, 1988) for an overview of how one contributor to Good Housekeeping wrote articles for the magazine, particularly the section on Kay Berger, for an indication of the “tone” and “style” the periodical demanded. Maynard, a Ph.D in English from Harvard, is the mother of current Chatelaine editor Rona Maynard.


84 Stephanie Childs Sigala, “Cosmopolitan,” Ibid., 80.

85 Lenore Hershy, Between the Covers: The Lady's Own Journal (New York: Coward-McCann, 1983), 44.

86 Ibid., 82.

87 Ibid.


89 Ibid., 269.


91 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Mrs. Ellen O'Keefe, Racine, Wisconsin to Doris Anderson, 2 January 1962.

92 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 442, Mrs. Nellen Armstrong, Seattle, Washington to Doris Anderson, 6 August 1962.

93 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 442, Doris Anderson to Mrs. Nellen Armstrong, 27 August 1962.

94 Canada's Magazine Audience: A Study From the Magazine Advertising Bureau of Canada, Volume 1: Profile of Readers. Originated by the Canadian Media Directors Council. Validated by the Canadian Advertising Research Foundation Conducted by ORC International Limited, 1969. Studies such as this are
extremely difficult to locate, because few of them were ever purchased by libraries and most corporations have long since discarded them. This study is available at the National Library in Ottawa.

95 Ibid, 202-203. The country was split into five regions: Atlantic, Quebec, Ontario, Prairies and British Columbia. However, “the Yukon, N.W.T., institutions, Indian reserves and RCMP areas and other remote and sparsely populated northern areas were excluded at the outset.”


97 CMA., It should be noted that all statistics reported, unless stated otherwise, refer to the English version of the magazine, and do not include readership figures for Châtelaine.

98 Ibid., 63. The statistical totals by region were: Ontario (48.5%), Prairies (23.8%), B.C. (13.3%), Atlantic Canada (10%) and Quebec (4.4%). For comparison sake, the regional population percentages for all Canadian adults were: Ontario (36.1%), Quebec (28.7%), the Prairies (16%), B.C. (10%), and Atlantic Canada (9.2%).

99 Ibid., 12 & 10. Most of the male readers of Châtelaine read the periodical because their wives or mothers were subscribers. However, that was not always the case as this letter from J.J. Way of R.R. # 1, Wooler, Ontario to Doris Anderson attests: “I am sending back the June Châtelaine as I will not be taking it any longer. Not until I get a wife to read it as it is more for a woman than a man. I did have a lovely Christian wife, and she enjoyed reading Châtelaine but she passed away nearly 10 years ago and I have lived here in my nice home all alone for all that time. I can say that I am tired of trying to keep batch and keep house. I often looked at the nice cakes and things cooked and often wished that I had someone to try the recipes.... Thank you for your past years of service.” PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 446, J.J. Way, R.R. # 1 Wooler, Ontario to Doris Anderson, 14 June 1962.

100 “Châtelaine Advertisement,” Canadian Advertising: The Media Rate and Data Authority. (January/February 1966), Volume 39 #1, 108.

101 Claims about the youthfulness, above-average income and urban nature of Châtelaine’s audience were all trumpeted in the CARD advertisements throughout the sixties. Only with the introduction of Hostess magazine in 1968 did the advertisements in CARD acknowledge that the Châtelaine audience did not reach as many urban, affluent women as they would have liked.

102 CMA, 10 & 12. Of the total male audience of the magazine, the age breakdown was as follows: over 55 years old (21.9%); 35-44 years (20.8%); 25-34 years (16.7%); 45-54 years (15.1%); 15-17 years (10.8%); 20-24 years (7.7%) and 18-19 years (6.9%). For women, the age breakdown was slightly different: 35-44 years (22.7%); 55 and older (17.6%); 25-34 years (16.8%); 45-54 years (16.5%); 15-17 years (10.8%); 20-24 years (10.5%) and 18-19 years (5.1%).

103 Ibid., 18. Female Châtelaine readers were most likely to have some high school education (36.8%), have completed high school (22.6%), completed public school (14.6%), have special training (no university) (7.1%); have graduated university or done post-graduate work (5.8%), some elementary school (5.7%) and some college or university (5.2%) whereas the English speaking general female population of Canada were statistically most likely to have some high school (36.4%); completed high school (19.5%); completed public school (16.9%); some elementary school (11.0%); some special training after high school (5.3%) or some college/university (4.1%) or had graduated from university/done postgraduate work (4.1%).

104 Ibid., 20.

105 Ibid., 28. After the top three categories(these categories were determined by the surveys) the remaining male occupations were: clerical or sales (11.1%); students (10.2%); professional or technical (9.6%); farmers (6.1%); managerial (5.4%) or housekeepers (2.4%). These figures refer to the Total male reading audience not the primary male reading audience.

106 Ibid., 30. Once again, using figures from the total female audience, after the top three occupational categories the remaining female occupations were: service (8.2%); retired or unemployed (5.2%); professional
or technical (5%); skilled or unskilled (1.5%) or managerial (0.4%). No female readers listed their occupational category as farmer.

107 Ibid., 54. The figures were: skilled and unskilled workers (24.9%), service workers (15.7%), clerical and sales workers (13.2%), professional and technical (10.9%); retired and unemployed (10.5%); Farmers 8.9%; Managerial (8.2%); Housewives (6.7%); and students (1.0%).

108 Ibid., 28.

109 Ibid., 30. The figure for English-Canadian housewife readers of the magazine were listed as 1,061,000 of the total female audience. The comparable English-Canadian average was 3,257,000 women who listed their occupation as a housewife.

110 Ibid., 34 & 38. According to the report 44.3% of Chatelaine reading households made less than $7,000 per annum which was the exact percentage of the English-speaking Canadian population that made less than $7,000/year. These statistics combined both male and female readers and are taken from the total audience statistics. For “household income” 16.1% of respondents declined to report their annual income whereas for the category of “principal wage earner’s income” 18.8% declined to report the amount.

111 Ibid., 38.

112 Ibid., 55. For the total audience figures, while most preferred single family homes, 12.2% of Chatelaine readers lived in multiple family housing (defined to include semi-detached and duplexes) or apartments, flats or rooms (7.8%). In comparison, English-Canadian averages were 14.4% for multiple family housing or 9.8% for apartments, etc.

113 Ibid., 106. Total readers by community size: farm, rural, non-farm (30.1%); 1,000-29,999 (17.8%); 30,000-99,999 (6.1%); 100,000-349,000 (11.5%); 350,000 and over (34.5%). Only 25% of all Canadians lived in a rural or farming community.

114 Ibid., 212.

115 Ibid.

116 Ibid.

117 Ibid.

118 Ibid.

119 Ibid., 60

120 Canada's Magazine Audience, Volume 3: Ownership and Purchase Patterns. A Study from The Magazine Advertising Bureau of Canada, 1969; 2 & 8. The exact figures on car ownership were 85.6% of the total male and female audience owned one or more cars, 14.4% did not own any cars.

121 Ibid., 75.

122 Ibid., 77.

123 Ibid., 79.

124 Ibid., 47, 33 & 31. Monthly liquor expenditure on liquor from the primary male and female audience of English Chatelaine was under $5 (27.3%); do not purchase (24.8%); not reported (21.3%); $5-9 (13.5%); $10-14 (6.1%). Travel destinations were listed as U.S.A. (34.2%); Continental Europe (3.8%); British Isles (3.3%); Caribbean, Bermuda (2.4%); none of these(Canada?) (58.8%). Primary audience expenditure on vacation travel in the last twelve months was: under $250 (39.4%); between $250-499 (21.5%); 0 (15.8%); between $500-999
(11.2%); not reported (6.4%); between $1,000-1,499 (2.1%); between $1,500-1,999 (1.2%); $2,000 and over (2.4%).

125 "Section D: Media Patterns," in Canada's Magazine Audience, Volume 1, 152 & 153.

126 Chatelaine General Survey Database. The total number of letters published between January 1960 and December 1969 were 1,778. The average, for the 120 issues, is 14.8 letters per issue. This obscures a range of from 8-23 letters per issue over the period. Unlike the fifties, the letters column was never omitted from the periodical. See appendix for more detailed information.

127 This collection of letters is part of the Maclean Hunter Collection at the Public Archives of Ontario.

128 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Doris Anderson to Mrs. M.K. Paul, Caledon, Ontario, 7 March 1962.

129 The statistics are generated from the "Chatelaine Letters 1960" Database which includes 446 letters. In 5% of the letters analyzed the writer's gender was unclear. See the Appendix for more details.

130 A smaller proportion of letter writers were from Quebec (7.5%) and Atlantic Canada (7.2%). Very few letters were received from outside the country. Those that did were, with rare exceptions, from Britain (1.8%) or the United States (1.3%).

131 See Appendix.

132 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Files: "Letters to the Editor: January 1962" and "Letters to the Editor: January 1962, File 2." The letters were counted, and the tone of each letter was categorized as negative, positive or neutral.

133 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Files: "Letters to the Editor: Sept-Dec., 1962 File 1" and "Letters to the Editor: Sept-Dec., 1962 File 2." The letters were counted (total number is 169), and the region or country of origin was noted. The remaining results were: Atlantic Canada (6.5%); Quebec (5.9%); Canadian but with no address (3.5%); Britain (2.9%); U.S.A. (1.7%); Other (1.1%); Europe (0.5%).

134 PAO MHRS F-4-a-b Box 431, E.H. Gittings, Assistant Advertising Sales Manager for Chatelaine to Mr. F.D. Adams, 22 June 1961.

135 "Mrs. Chatelaine contest advertisement," Chatelaine (December 1960), 15.

136 PAO MHRS F-4-1-b Box 431, J.L. Adams, Manager for Eastern Canada (Chatelaine) to L.M. Hodgkinson, 14 February 1961.


138 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Mrs. Beatrice Maitland, Chatham, N.B. to Doris Anderson, 1 November 1961.

139 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Doris Anderson to Mrs. Beatrice Maitland, 10 November 1961.

140 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Mrs. Beatrice Maitland to Doris Anderson, 2 February 1962.

141 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Doris Anderson to Beatrice Maitland, 12 February 1962.

142 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Mrs. F. Miller, New Westminster, B.C. to Doris Anderson, 12 January 1962.

143 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Clara Cserick, "Slob par excellence", Ottawa to Doris Anderson, 27 January 1962.
144 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Victoria M. Haliburton, Ville Lemoyne, Quebec to Doris Anderson, 24 January 1962.

145 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Mrs. Greta Usenik, Paradise Hill, Saskatchewan to Doris Anderson, 19 January 1962.

146 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Mrs. W. Ockenden, Victoria to Doris Anderson, 16 January 1962.

147 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs. Neil Ferguson, Dutch Brook, Cape Breton to Doris Anderson, 25 September 1962.

148 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Miss Margeurite M. Burns, National President of the Catholic Women’s League of Canada, Halifax, to Doris Anderson, 26 December 1961.

149 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Doris Anderson to M.M. Burns, 8 January 1962.

150 “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (March 1962), 150.

151 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b, Box 446, Ouida M. Wright, Weston, Ontario to Doris Anderson, 22 July 1962.

152 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b, Box 446, Doris Anderson to Ouida M. Wright, 14 August 1962.

153 Ibid.

154 Ibid.

155 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 445, Newfoundland reader to Doris Anderson, January 1962.

156 Mrs. C.R. Van Dame, Toledo, Ohio to Doris Anderson, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (March 1961), 154.

157 Mr. Clarence Gautreau, TB Hospital, East Saint John, N.B. to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (March 1964), 90.

158 Mrs Patricia Perron, Rawdon, Quebec to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (April 1965), 108.

159 “What’s New,” Chatelaine (October 1965), 2.

160 Ibid.

161 Ibid.

162 Mrs E. Spring, Harrow, Middlesex, England, to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (December 1963), 84.

163 Mrs. Kenneth Harris, Grand Pre, N.S. to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (February 1964), 76.


165 Ibid., 54.

166 Ibid.

167 Ibid.
Brief # 346: Brief of the readers of Chatelaine magazine to The Royal Commission on the Status of Women, Presented by Doris Anderson, Editor, June 1968; p. 2.

In response to the question, ‘Are you a working wife?’ 53.82% answered no, 22.93% worked full-time and 19.36% worked part-time. 53.99%, if they could choose freely, would opt for marriage, children and career as compared to 32.62% who would choose marriage with children and no career.


Anonymous, Halifax, N.S. Questionnaire completed 8 June 1993.
Chapter 8: Commentary -- Editorials and Articles

Hello from Japan. I am a Japanese housewife with two young sons. Every month something pleasant comes to our home all the way from Canada. Yes, it’s Chatelaine. In 1962 we went over to Edmonton, Alberta, to stay one whole year on account of my husband’s business. Everyone we met there was so kindly and friendly that we were able to enjoy our wonderful Canadian life to the full. Now, once the issue comes to our hands we make it a rule to see it by turns and to talk about our good days of Canada.¹
--Mrs. Tsuyoshi Fujiwars, Sakai-city, Osaka, Japan

I am indebted to Chatelaine for correcting many false impressions fostered by English magazines. We are often given a picture of your women sunning themselves with the children all day long in summer. The devoted husband is reputed to rush home from work and cook a barbecue meal for the whole family, as he hates to see his wife slaving away at the sink... you are all presented as reactionary, of course... I have been more than relieved to read your controversial stories and articles and the outspoken, critical letters which follow them. I’m sure there’s nothing to equal an exchange of magazines to further world peace and understanding, especially when the publications are as sane and well-balanced as Chatelaine.²
--Mrs. Elizabeth Ring, Sawbridgeworth, Herts, England.

The editorials and articles during the sixties carried on the Chatelaine tradition of thought-provoking, informative journalism and opinion-pieces. As the editorial and article sections will demonstrate, no subject matter was considered taboo during the decade. Articles and editorials which addressed abortion, divorce, battered children, incest, drug abuse, inter-racial marriage, lesbianism, sexuality, and poverty all appeared during the decade. In the editorials, readers came to expect thoughtful essays from Doris Anderson that probed issues of concern to Canadian women. Most frequently, she highlighted feminist and political issues. The general feature articles were different because they were written by a cadre of talented staff and freelance writers. Amongst the journalistic luminaries who wrote for the periodical in the sixties were Christina McCall, Adrienne Clarkson, June Callwood, Barbara Frum, Jack Batten, Mordecai Richler and, infrequently, Doris Anderson herself. Unlike the other sections of the magazine which had limited appeal, it was the editorials and articles which appealed to women and often men, of all ages. They strove to present Canada to Canadians, and as some of the letters made clear, to Americans, Britons and even one Japanese family. While the magazine’s Starch studies and marketing reports belaboured the popularity of the Chatelaine departmental features (thus proving to the advertisers the value of advertising in the magazine), to my mind the magazine was defined by its feature articles
and editorials. That is what readers’ letters commented upon most vociferously and what accounted for the magazine’s popularity. It also differentiated the periodical from its American competition. The readers’ responses to these articles and editorials indicated that Chatelaine was, borrowing John Fiske’s terminology, a very “producerly text.” The letters illustrate the alternate, oppositional, and preferred meanings and messages that readers were quick to draw out because these features were open to a variety of “voices,” “loose ends,” or “meanings.”

Editorials

I’ve just finished reading this month’s editorial and as always I felt prompted to write and tell you how much I enjoyed it. Well, why not? For a periodical which offers so much to its readers for so little, in my opinion the editor’s column is the cream on the top. I start with this page—and always return to read it over!”

-Phyllis H. Meeks, Georgetown, Ontario

For many years I’ve read and enjoyed your magazine. Thank you for your many thought provoking articles. I read with interest your latest editorial re: margarine and ask permission to state an opposite point of view since so few of your words seem to consider the farmer’s wife. The income from dairy cows constitute many a farm wife’s only way of feeding and clothing her family. We are not a substandard type of citizen and yet you and many others expect us to exist on a sub-standard income. . . . We don’t ask for government help in this matter only that an inferior synthetic product not copy our natural product. Please also remember that the Canadian Magazine Industry asked and received protection in their rivalry with another similar product.

-Mrs. David Barr, Mono Centre, Ontario

While reading the editorial today I had the urge to write to you. Is it possible for a woman who has lived just a simple life on the farm to ever write for a magazine? I have written poems, true stories for my own pleasure. Just to send to the waste basket. I am 53 years of age the children grown. . . .

--Dora Flagg, Wainfleet, Ontario

It has been a long time since I enjoyed any article as much as your October editorial. . . . I came to Canada from Germany eight years ago where my sister and her friends are just as engaged as we are here in questions such as, “Should married women work outside their homes? in politics? etc.” Really women don’t have a choice any longer. Whether we want to or not, we have to go beyond the limits of our houses if we don’t want to sink into apathy or be reduced to mere machines. A magazine like yours is so very important in giving moral support to those still intimidated by former generations who, after all, didn’t have to live in our times.

-Mrs. Edith Sacker, Vancouver
The words of Phyllis Meeks, Mrs. Barr, Dora Flagg and Mrs Sacker were representative of the letters received about the editorial essays during the sixties. The importance of the editorials outweighed the fact that they were only a half page long. As the magazine’s opening salvo they offered important, authoritative commentary about issues of concern to Canadian women. As other letters will show, many women took inspiration from these essays to lobby their politicians, get involved in women’s groups or just to re-think a contentious matter. Others, like Dora Flagg, were inspired to try their hand at new things or to re-activate long forgotten aspirations. The vast majority of letters written about the editorials were positive and supportive of Anderson’s essays. However Mrs. Barr’s letter illustrated clearly that the editorials often offended some component of the mass audience. Most often (although not in Mrs. Barr’s case) the perturbed readers were critical of the changing nature of women’s lives during the decade or felt threatened by feminism’s impact on their own lives.

While the Canadian feminist movement during the sixties was neither as organized nor as large as those words would suggest, it had an unofficial leader in Chatelaine’s editor. Through her monthly editorials, readers across the country were given an education on all the key issues of second wave feminism: equal work legislation, birth control, abortion, divorce legislation reform, working wives and mothers, the hardships felt by working class women, and the high degree of sexism that pervaded politics, the workplace, and society during the era. For variety, she also included a number of articles on other injustices within Canadian society -- child abuse, single mothers and racism -- to name but a few. Finally, to lighten the mood, a few times per year she included humourous editorials, usually self-deprecatory in nature, in which she poked fun at popular culture, images of women in media and culture and her at-home persona. Thus it is clear that the editorials published during the sixties were substantially different than those the magazine had published a decade earlier. Most of the difference can be attributed to the fact that there were four different editorial styles during the fifties. Anderson’s early editorials were feminist in tone but did not make up the majority of her editorials as they would in the sixties.

The most popular editorial topics were women’s political issues, current affairs, women’s issues, feminism and mothering.8 Classified thematically, the most consistent theme throughout the decade was feminism, followed closely by politics, conflict in gender roles, women and media, family and international issues.9 These results differed
substantially from the fifties when both the subject matter and main thematic issue of editorials was Chatelaine and Chatelaine's importance, as well as the family, cultural and professional issues. Characteristically the topics and themes featured in Anderson's editorials from the fifties (Chatelaine magazine, feminism, women's issues and current events) exhibited a greater degree of continuity with the sixties results. As illustrated by the epigraphs and by the following letters, most readers were very fond of the editorial essays. The available Starch material claimed that 73% of Chatelaine's readers noted the editorial essay and 43% read most of each editorial.¹⁰ According to Doris Anderson, the publisher and corporate brass were not aware of the changing editorial content and tone until well into the decade-- at which point the magazine's success, in terms of circulation, could not be questioned. Apparently as long as the circulation numbers rose the corporation seldom complained about the editorial content. Anderson recalled:

"Well the advertisers never read the magazine. . . . They would look at the numbers, the number of readers, the circulation, the number of older women and younger women reading the magazine. . . . I would get some complaints from the publisher and from the top brass on the ninth floor about turning this nice little women's magazine into a feminist rag. But as long as the circulation continued to go up and as long as the advertiser was there they couldn't argue with it very much."¹¹

Even that notoriously conservative component, advertising, was able to put a positive spin on Anderson's feminist editorials as these excerpts from Ted Hart's presentation outline for both the Yardley Sales Meeting and the Proctor and Gamble Meeting illustrated:

The basic appeal is to her lifestyle. . . . as defined by her interests, her activities, her opinions, whether they be fashion, beauty, food, homes or woman's liberation. Chatelaine is the only medium relating to every facet of her life-style. . . . Doris Anderson's regular preface is concerned with the feminist movement. You will agree that woman's battle for equal status could affect not only her lifestyle. . . . but that of us all.¹²

Feminism was presented as just another 'lifestyle' choice and, of course, another way to sell advertising. Notice that Hart's prioritization of material was such that the editorial content followed the departmental material, as it did in all the advertising department literature (whether market research data, reports, speeches, etc.). Hart and the other business managers responsible for soliciting advertising material always strove to accentuate the departmental material as the core of the magazine with the other general articles, fiction and editorials as editorial ephemera. However, Hart's interpretation was clear: this 'lifestyle' was one that savvy advertisers and companies would exploit and conservative ones would ignore at their peril.
Editorial inspiration came from many places, from current events and other news media, from academic journals and American newspapers, from interactions Anderson had with the public and with magazine readers, from her own personal experiences, or in response to letters from readers. One such letter, from a North Vancouver reader, described her family's experiences with the drug thalidomide in the early sixties. Anderson's response to her gives an excellent indication of the process of editorial inspiration and how, in this case, one reader's letter resulted in an editorial essay:

Words cannot express my sympathy for you in the situation you describe in your letter. . . . I was so disturbed by the newspaper reports and then by your letter that I have written an editorial for our June issue on thalidomide. . . . Thank you again for writing to us and providing the final stimulus that prompted me to write the editorial.13

Readers' input, while often not directly acknowledged in the published magazine, was an important part of article and sometimes, editorial, conception.

Editorials with feminism as the subject matter were featured each year. An analysis of three of these illustrated Anderson's increasing confidence with both her editorial voice and the readers' reception. February 1960's editorial entitled, "We'll Do Our Own Censoring Thank You Very Much," profiled the CBC's decision to censor its interview with French feminist and philosopher Simone de Beauvoir. In a cogent defence of freedom of expression, Anderson listed the viewpoints expressed by de Beauvoir in the canceled show, and critiques the standardization of North American thought:

According to the producer of the show, Miss de Beauvoir said North American women have only a superficial freedom, that marriage in a way is obscene because couples are tied together and sometimes have to live in hell. . . . she was in favour of divorce because she thought marriage archaic in the twentieth century. She said women were equal to men and that the idea that women were only good for childbearing was a throwback to the Middle Ages. When asked about her religion, she said she was an atheist and that nobody had proved the existence of God. . . .the fact that some viewers—or even a majority of viewer—might not agree with her, is the best possible reason for giving her a hearing. In this standardized world of ours where so many things are pre-prepared and pre-digested, surely we should be allowed to do our own censoring in our own living rooms—with a snappy little twist of the dial. . . . Leave us this small decision, please.14

Anderson's style of editorializing was to grab a contentious issue, briefly explain the circumstances and substance of the debate, and then offer her views about the issue. Here, while never stating whether or not she agreed with the views expressed by de Beauvoir (remember the issue is censorship), she communicates her views to a mass audience of
Canadian women. In fact, the audience of Chatelaine readers was much larger than the CBC would have reached with its francophone talk show. Her contempt for the usual offerings of North American popular culture was clear as was Chatelaine's different path. Anderson quickly, and authoritatively, carved out the editorial space at Chatelaine magazine as a page for critical thinking, feminist analysis and commentary about social mores. The readers were not cowed by Anderson’s position or her valorization of de Beauvoir’s writings. The majority, “three to one,” agreed with the CBC.15 The magazine published six letters, five negative, about the de Beauvoir editorial. Margaret Sluth, of Ste. Therese, Quebec summarized the tone and content of the ‘no’ side: “I heartily agree with the CBC. You state that network time should not be given to irresponsible crackpots, etc. How can a woman of your supposed intelligence feel that anyone who denies the existence of God, and who thinks marriage in a way obscene, can be anything but a crackpot?”16 Other critical commentary was received from readers in British Columbia and Ontario. This lone letter of agreement, from Mr. B.E. Field of Flesherton, Ontario, took a congratulatory stance: “Your editorial was the most courageous and intelligent item I have read in a long time.”17

Perhaps in response to this angry outpouring of mail, in her next editorial, “A Timid Defence of Feminists,” Anderson wrote:

From time to time in conversation with a male friend or business acquaintance, my companion will recoil and with mingled shock and deep hurt exclaim: “Why you’re a feminist!” Actually, I am—and then I’m not. But since at least half the world are masculinists, I really can’t see why there isn’t at least a surface tolerance of us poor, lone, on-again-off again feminists.18

Equating a “true” feminist with the radical first wave British feminists who had chained themselves to buildings, Anderson preferred (at the time, i.e., 1960) to define an “on-again-off again feminist” as one who wants “a better and fuller life for women” and not, as she hastened to add, at the expense of men.19 In short, the demand is for equality. Her semantic game of calling men masculinists diffused the ire raised by the term feminist. Anderson enumerated some of the tactics used by the ‘masculinists’ throughout the world, and in comparison with these crimes (which range from foot binding in China to the deprivation of legal rights in North America) the demands of feminism seemed mild.

As the decade progressed and readers became more accustomed and more receptive to editorials on feminism and women’s rights, Anderson began to take tougher stands against women’s oppression and wrote in favour of parliamentary and legal reforms. “Women: a
chance for change" printed in 1969 highlighted the statements of American psychologist Dr. Richard E. Farson, who was convinced that a women's rebellion was imminent:

“I think we will see within the next two years a massive rebellion of women that is at least comparable in magnitude to the black revolution or the student protest,” says Dr. Richard E. Farson. . . “Women are oppressed,” he says, “But a new participatory mood is brewing. . . .” “Revolution always comes as the result of the work of a very small minority of the people affected. The rebellion is not only going to be women against men, it’s going to be women against everyone who holds women back--including women who discriminate even worse against women than men do. I think we’ll call the Uncle Toms of the women’s revolution ‘Doris Days.’” 20

The comparison with “A Timid Defense of Feminists” was startling. Even compared to the de Beauvoir editorial, this one packed a considerable wallop. Rebellion, revolution and the implication of the term ‘Doris Days’ were aggressive, radical words for any publication. For a mass market women’s magazine they are astonishing. By the end of the decade any regular reader of Chatelaine’s editorial pages had matriculated through a steady course of feminism and women’s studies courses; they were fully versed in the feminist critique of North American society. Many were not convinced, although their letters of protest (there was more anti-feminist commentary in the articles sections) astutely recycled the key-words used by feminists to critique the feminist agenda, like this letter from Mrs. G. Baiton, of Swift Current, Saskatchewan: “We hear and read a lot about the status of women. I consider myself to have a ‘special’ status, that of being a mother. The ‘now’ generation is blaming society for caring for maternal things . . . I sat behind a desk once. That desk never once said, ‘Hey Mom, I love you.’” 21

Similarly, Margee Hughes of London, Ontario, made it clear that she was not in favour of revolution:

I would never presume to disagree with a great authority such as Dr. Richard E. Farson. . . . But women in the majority seem more than content, even complacent, to carry on the old traditional custom in carrying out the king’s smallest command. . . . Once married we tend to walk a pace behind. 22

It was for writers like Margee Hughes that Anderson often penned editorials which criticized the backwardness of some women. Thus while she frequently educated readers about feminism, lobbied politicians about women’s issues, and censured chauvinistic men about their views on women, she also critiqued the complacency of women. In her May 1968 editorial “Not Chattels--But Chattel-Like Minds?” Anderson bemoaned the apathy of many women, and many readers:
One of the most discouraging 'dead weight' factors in changing any law concerning women is the apathetic attitude of many women themselves. Even though we no longer live in a simple society, their attitude seems to be 'My man, my child, my cave. Every week I receive, for example, letters from women who are bitterly opposed to some of the laws regarding women that are already on our statute books. "Why should a woman receive equal pay with my husband?" they ask. Why? If for no other reason (such as fair play and human dignity), because if an employer can hire a woman to do the same job at lower pay than a man, they quite likely will hire a woman and that would put men at a disadvantage....if married women working in the labour force aren't concerned about their own problems, why should legislators be? ...sometimes I think many of us, though enjoying all the freedoms other women and men have fought for, still have chattel-like minds. Or else, why the apathy?23

Her frustration was palpable. Clearly, the sub-text of Anderson’s editorial decried the magazine’s lack of impact. After all the editorials and articles detailing the mistreatment of women in the law, workplace, and society in general, many women were blithely content with their own, personal, situation. Any sense of solidarity or sisterhood with other less fortunate women was lacking. Published letters regarding this editorial were all complimentary. Mrs. V. Musgrave of Willowdale, Ontario, wrote:

Bravo! If every woman in this country who shares your views... were to write to her members of parliament in Ottawa, then the legislators might be concerned enough to see that the necessary laws are passed. I shall write asking for laws such as abortion, and divorce reform, expansion of public day-care centres, and broader civil rights for women. I thank you for your article in favour of woman, the individual.24

Mrs. Leona A Graham of St John, N.B., concurred, adding: “Since Chatelaine is so widely read by Canadian women of all ages, I am sure the thought-provoking editorials will have considerable impact especially among the young married women who will keep on working and campaigning for equality of status and wages. Please keep writing.”25 Noticeably, neither writer mentioned women’s groups or organizations. Their preference was for individual action.

Some of Anderson’s frustration came from her increasing realization of the limitations of a medium like Chatelaine for affecting change. Two editorials published in 1967 examined the purpose and limitations of women’s magazines. The first, “All Hair Combed and No Knotty Laces,” attacked the critics who claimed that women’s magazines instilled a perfectionist ethos of mothering, household maintenance and marriage:

Women’s magazines are often accused of setting all kinds of unattainable goals of perfection. We’re told we advocate perfect houses, perfect children, perfect meals which are perfectly served at perfectly appointed tables... But that isn’t the way life is at all. For myself, as a far from perfect cook, mother, interior decorator, hostess and conversationalist, I would happily settle for a lot less. In fact, perfection for me is... sending the children to school with their buttons on, hair combed and no knots in
their laces... arriving home from a once weekly shopping marathon and not discovering within an hour that I’m out of sugar or salt or peanut butter... checking the children after lights out and finding them—well, now, that is my idea of perfection.26

Apparently, the editor would never have won her own ‘Mrs. Chatelaine’ contest. It was editorials like this one, and the examples of humourous editorials which follow, that the bond between the editors and readers was most readily observable. Regardless of her position as editor, Anderson was ‘everywoman’ in her off hours. The self-deprecating humour did not set Chatelaine apart from American women’s magazines, but its overt rebuttal of the often ‘perfect’ world constructed by women’s magazines certainly did. Chatelaine’s willingness to poke fun at itself, or to lampoon its genre, encouraged readers not to take the magazine too seriously. Thus editorials such as these encouraged readers’ critiques, alternate readings and mocked the self-importance of many women’s magazines.

Taking a completely opposite approach, Anderson’s editorial “The snail-like battle for progress” bemoaned the magazine’s lack of success in encouraging legal and parliamentary reforms for women:

This magazine has often been accused of being a national nag harping on the ills that need to be changed in our society. Rightly or wrongly we consider this prodding a part of our job. (And we hardly have been alone in the task). For over twenty years we have been trying to push our stagecoach era divorce laws into the twentieth century. . . . Back in the fifties we started advocating reform of Canada’s rigid abortion law. . . . For almost twenty years we have been advocating that Canadian laws about abortion be changed. In 1960, this magazine came out with one of the first articles about baby beating. . . . These are just a few of the major issues we have tackled again and again. At times I’ve wondered what good we were doing. Nothing ever happened. Our legislators move with such Ice-Age slowness. . . . Apparently nothing happens in this democracy until everyone is in favour of it.27

Anderson would eventually cite, as one of her reasons for retiring in 1977, her belief that she had taken the magazine, particularly a mass market women’s magazine, as far as it could go. After all, to paraphrase her commentary in Rough Layout, the magazine was not the Status of Women News. On the other hand there was a tone of resignation which indicated that Anderson hoped the magazine’s educational campaigns had been more effective. Her faith in the power of a national women’s magazine to effect change, particularly legislative change, seemed rather naive. However, it indicated that the magazine’s mandate was larger than selling advertising space for salad dressing and hair colouring. The editors believed that one of the purposes of the magazine was to act as a mouthpiece, or champion, for Canadian women’s concerns and as a leader in the fight for equality for Canadian women. Of course,
that definition of Chatelaine's purpose applied most specifically to the editorial essays and the articles. On an individual level, the editorial content affected women greatly. In interviews Anderson reveals that "women keep coming to me to this day, one came up to me last night and said, you have no idea how you influenced my life."28

Many editorials and articles were devoted to legal and social issues of the day--abortion, divorce, birth control, single mothers, etc. -- as well as women’s role in a democracy as voters and political candidates. However, another aspect of the politicized editorials which appeared with great frequency throughout the decade were those devoted to the topic of a Royal Commission on women’s issues. In a 1964 editorial entitled “We’ve had all the studies of the problems of women we need. Let’s have action!” Anderson proposed that “we call a sit-down strike on all committees about women until something is done about the problems we know all too well about.”29 Reluctantly, by 1966 Anderson changed tracks and called for “a forward looking commission composed equally of impartial men and women, prepared to take a cool twentieth century approach to our problems. Because these questions affect us all--men, women and children, and for our own collective good, we should set about getting some answers.”30 The Pearson government’s refusal to grant a commission in November 1966 was derided, in a classically sardonic style of writing, in Anderson’s February 1967 editorial:

Finally, the setback. . . The brief calling for a Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada, which was taken with high hopes to Ottawa last November and had the backing of thirty-two women’s organizations, got as much attention at our nation’s capital as if we had asked to have all the postboxes painted shocking pink. . . . in the last ten years in Canada we’ve held thirty-one royal commissions on such subjects as Gerda Munsinger and freshwater fishing. Half the population of this country—the female half—is undergoing great change. The effect of this change will influence the family, the economy, and all of our lives for the next century. Yet we’re told the subject of women in Canada today doesn’t warrant a royal commission. If this is the final decision, it’s a setback to the nation—not just its women.31

Clearly, Chatelaine editorials were not prepared to back away from controversy or from harsh criticism of government neglect. Finally, in March 1968 Anderson wrote her last editorial on the commission (pre-tabling of the report), hopeful that the report would not become just another “dusty report on a shelf in Ottawa.”32 Anderson and Chatelaine’s role in calling for a Royal Commission on women has been noted elsewhere, but it should be stressed that the magazine was often very critical of political waffling and quick to call for action not merely study.33
Interspersed amongst editorials on feminism, politics, women’s issues and the role of popular culture were humourous articles in which Anderson poked fun at herself, the magazine and the expectations placed upon women. In lifting the serious tone which often hung over the editorial page, these illustrated that Anderson was a feminist with a well-honed sense of humour. In “A Summer’s Day Confession” Anderson wrote about the contrast between the perfectionist view of women expounded by the media and her own slothful ways: “As I go through life taut of throat, slack of muscle, my cupboards not partitioned, my plants unpolished, my sheets unclassified, trailing a trunkful of recipes that should be made, photographs that should be sorted, does it bother me?...I’ll settle for being a happy summer idler.” In response, reader Murial Kerr of Ottawa wrote:

I retired from teaching June 28. I’ve lived thirty years in this apartment and had set my alarm for 9 am., preparing to attack with vigour and ruthlessness some big walk-in cupboards. Well, bless you! I’m just going to ‘leave em lay’, put on some old clothes and drive out into the country to pick raspberries. Permission from Anderson to revel in relaxation was always greeted ecstatically by the readers. Perhaps the most engaging entry in this genre was the editorial entitled “Here’s Dirt in Your Eye, House.” Running counter to the advice printed in the departmental features in the magazine, Anderson confided that household maintenance was a never-ending burden, one to which women should allot only a certain portion of time and then do something more relaxing, fulfilling or stimulating. The essay concluded with this statement: “Here’s dirt in your eye, house! I’ve got a book to read, a poem to write, a thought to think.” Readers were in complete agreement, as this letter from Mrs. Margaret Reynolds of Edmonton illustrated:

Your June editorial, “Here’s Dirt in Your Eye, House,” pleased me to no end. Who dictates that a home must be shining clean and dust free at the expense of all other more worthwhile activities? A moment taken from a busy life can be better spent in a few lines penned to an absent friend with a message of cheer, congratulation or sympathy, rather than wasted on chasing dust which will only return anyway... I do try to establish reasonable priorities and housecleaning comes low on the list.

One wonders what Elaine Collett and the Chatelaine Institute staff, chief supporters of perfectionist housewifery, thought of the editorial. Editorials such as these were often clipped and pinned to family bulletin boards or posted on refrigerators and thus their importance lasted far beyond the issue in which they were featured.
Chatelaine used to be a wholesome family magazine, so why did you have to spoil it by riding the bandwagon of sex, sex and more sex? I'll venture to say that the majority of your articles are medical. When I have the urge to read detailed medical history, then I'll subscribe to a medical journal. Yours in disgust.38

--Phyllis M. Hodgson, Gibsons, B.C.

What on earth gives Phyllis Hodgson the idea that Chatelaine is becoming a sex magazine? What's wrong with a few love stories or articles on women and sex? Chatelaine does not contain much sex and the little it does contain would not be anything to start blushing about and feeling disgusted over.39

--Mrs. Ilse Levi, Edmonton

Your editorials are excellent. Why can't the other articles match them? Why do the most informative articles (e.g. "of consuming interest") get brief mention, while the high priorities are given to a few princes, cosmetic surgery and eye-makeup? [August]. With all the talk of getting older women into the work force, how about articles on things we could do, on clothes for women over forty? Volunteer agencies and their need for help? Or should we forget all these things and sit back in our rocking chairs and wait for the Grim Reaper? At least he will find me reading something more informative and interesting than August Chatelaine.40

--Name withheld, Victoria

Being a male member of the "under twenty-five swing set," I admit to a rather negative, satirical attitude when, out of sheer boredom, I picked up September Chatelaine. Wow! Jack Batten's article on Can. Pop was excellent, I then happened upon Annabelle King's decorating article, Condominium. Her ability to effect total environment in limited space decorating...completely blew my mind."41

--Bernard E. Morin, Ottawa

Reader commentary in the magazine continued to be as lively, and as varied, as the general feature articles themselves. As the letter excerpts published in "The Last Word is Yours" during the decade indicate, most readers were sufficiently intrigued or irritated by the general feature articles to write a letter to the editor. Frequently, the letters page was a boiling cauldron of commentary about articles or other reader's letters. According to Doris Anderson, it often did not stop there since readers regularly approached her at luncheons and dinner-speeches to criticize the articles.42 While articles had a prestigious place in the magazine during both decades, the greater space devoted to this material in the sixties allowed the magazine to publish a broader range of material. On average, each issue had ten articles which were anywhere from one half to more than five pages long.43

Unlike fiction, the vast majority of articles were written by Canadian women.44 Many were experts in their fields, or had completed a prodigious amount of research to
qualify as experts for the purpose of the article. This excerpt entitled "Diary of a Working Writer," provided a behind the scenes look at the amount of time and work writer Patricia Young spent preparing a three part series for the magazine:

Patricia Young, author of... "The Fabulous Dunsmuirs" kept an account of her labours on this fascinating tale of the famous west-coast family. Here it is: forty-five hours of interviewing, two hundred and eighty hours of research, twenty hours of telephoning, eight hundred miles of travel. She went through one thousand news clippings, five years of microfilm, five thousand pages of court testimony. She made four hundred pages of notes, typed seventy-five thousand words, used ten thousand sheets of paper, hammered her way through five typewriter ribbons and consumed four bottles of aspirin.45

Understandably, the amount of time required to research and write articles varied greatly from author to author, and with the nature of the piece. It was customary for the authors to write from the perspective of the expert and they were billed as such by the magazine. Of course payments for articles varied. Contributors of the short "What's New" features were paid $100 while those amateur writers who sent in "Personal Experience" articles were paid $250.46 Otherwise, first time authors were paid $300 and $400 for a second article. Regular contributors, like Eileen Morris, were paid $500 while "big names" like Margaret Mead were paid $600 for their articles. Commensurate with its emphasis on Canadian authors and photographers, most articles were set in Canada and concerned issues of interest to Canadian readers. It was not unheard of for American, British or European issues or locations to make their way into the general feature articles (particularly "Your World Notebook" or YWN) but they were always linked with the Canadian scene. The articles, like their fifties counterparts, aimed for national coverage. It was far less common for articles to focus upon one particular province or city. When limited to one province or region, the bias of the magazine's production base and authorship quickly became apparent--articles with an Ontario-centric locale were paramount.

The magazine printed an assortment of article topics although the favourite topics bore a striking similarity to the previous decade. The most popular topic category continued to be women's private lives.47 However, even with the inclusion of articles on the Mrs. Chatelaine contest winners, this category declined from that of the fifties. The number of articles devoted to political issues and current affairs as well as women's public lives (particularly career and educational articles) increased considerably. Graph 8.1 illustrates these and other changing trends in Chatelaine article topics.
The jump in articles devoted to history can be explained by the Centennial celebrations and the interest in historical articles generated by the nation’s birthday. The prevalence of a variety of topics illustrates that *Chatelaine* magazine concerned itself with different facets of women’s lives—including international and Canadian political events, career opportunities for women, medical discoveries, news about new books, musical recordings and movies, celebrity profiles, the magazine itself, travel, and humour. To appeal to a mass audience of Canadian readers the editors opted for a mix which contained educational, informative and entertaining articles in every issue. *Chatelaine* was not a celebrity-driven periodical, nor even a magazine devoted entirely to the world of the household, but an innovative combination which strove to appeal to as many Canadian women as possible. The Starch results indicated that article readership was quite high. Although the figures varied, the general range for most feature articles revealed that approximately 82% of readers noticed the articles while the range for those who read most of the articles went from a low of 36% to a high of 53%.49

Thematically, the sixties differed from the fifties in two important ways: a greater emphasis on money (or the lack of it) and the increasing emphasis on women’s employment. Any regular reader of the magazine in the sixties was inundated with articles about wives and mothers returning to work, the importance of education for young women and the increasing
likelihood of dual-wage earning couples. Far less emphasis was placed upon marriage and conversely upon issues of class stratification. Graph 8.2 lists the top themes in each decade and the changing focus from the fifties to the sixties. The primary factor which accounted for the rise in familial themes was the Mrs. Chatelaine contest features which had not existed a decade earlier. A greater emphasis on cultural issues, feminism, and politics in the sixties mirror changes in article topics. International themes declined mostly due to the decline in the number of travel articles.

Graph 8.2

While graph 8.1 illustrated that the largest percentage of general feature articles in the magazine were devoted to women's private lives, it would be wrong to construe that the magazine presented the stay-at-home mother and housewife as the ideal Canadian woman or that they were uncritical of the status quo. As the letters about the Mrs. Chatelaine contest indicated (in Chapter 7), even articles which did offer very rosy images of homemakers were often critiqued by the readers. Eventually even the Mrs. Chatelaine contest had to change with the times. In 1969 the headline announcing the winner proclaimed: "I Was a Working Mother When That Term Was a Dirty Word."

Having established the general outlines of topical articles and their thematic structure from the quantified sample, the remainder of the chapter delves behind those all encompassing categories to illustrate the diversity and the sophisticated nature of the material presented in the magazine. Like the material from the fifties, the readers' reaction to this material is a primary part of the analysis.

The first articles in each issue were the short (1/2 to 1 page long) columns in the "What's New" section. This regular feature included: "What's New With Us," (about the
magazine); “What’s New With You,” (about Canadian women); “What’s New in The Arts,” “Here’s Health” and later “What’s New in Health;” and later in the decade, “What’s New in the Shops.” Immediately following was either the “Your World Notebook”(YWN) page or (after that column had been abandoned by mid decade) a book review page. The short section allotted to the magazine allowed the reader to glimpse the work culture at Chatelaine offices. Frequently, this section was devoted to short biographies of contributing writers, updates on the staff's vacation plans, additions to their families or about the role of the magazine in the greater community. In short, these brief, gossipy tidbits of information usually strengthened the bond between the magazine and the reader. The readers came to regard the regular writers and staff of the magazine as friends, since regular readers would be well acquainted with details of their work, their families, and their annual vacations. In at least one instance, however, the breezy nature of these revelatory comments about the lifestyle of Chatelaine staff provoked an angry response from a reader. Mr. H.C. Stratton of Windsor, Ontario, wrote to complain about the seemingly double standard of the magazine:

For a magazine that’s always crying for sympathy against American periodicals swamping the Canadian people, this article really takes the cake. Also our government giving support to see “Canada First,” spend money at home etc. Then a prominent leading Canadian magazine boasting about their staff spending their money traveling abroad--now this is a free country and you can spend your money where you like and by the same token we can buy magazines where we like. We did like to believe you people were consistent.51

Stratton’s complaint was noteworthy for two reasons. First it indicated that readers could, and did, at times, resent the lifestyle of the staff represented in the magazine (“career girls” as they were wont to call them in critical letters) and that many readers scrutinized the magazine closely. Stratton was angered because six people out of a staff of twenty-five had vacationed in Europe or the United States--information that was conveyed in a small, two inch paragraph of print. Letters referring to royal genealogy, Canadian history and family budgeting articles in particular also received letters of complaint from readers who had spotted mistakes in figures, dates, names or other minute material. Readers who read so carefully and closely were able to interpret the articles differently, or to invest specific sub-textual meaning at odds with the preferred meanings or preferred readings of the material. To that end, often this section included directions on how readers were supposed to read the magazine as the section on the YWN demonstrated. Finally, for the purposes of analysis the “What’s New With Us” column permitted a rare window on magazine production.
The regular feature “What’s New With You” highlighted the varied lives of average, Canadian women, as opposed to celebrities or politicians. The section often profiled women engaged in non-traditional jobs or volunteer projects. This excerpt describes how the column was compiled each month:

How we find out what's new with you: Behind the ten or so items that appear every month in the column, What's New With You... is a prodigious amount of work and a lot of friendly letter writing. Jessie London, who has been editing the column, writes about thirty letters each month to check facts and fill in details. Among her forty correspondents scattered across Canada from Newfoundland to British Columbia are housewives, alert secretaries of women's clubs, schoolteachers, newspaper reporters, and two male free lancers. Along with the items of news for the column, she also collects information about the columnists. Thus this column featured an assortment of items with novelty, national appeal and women's lives as the prime criteria for inclusion. It is impossible to select a representative excerpt from the column because topics, personalities and locale varied considerably. However, this report about Mrs. Tonner of Fern Glen, Ontario, and her unique form of employment provided a graphic illustration of the folksy, inclusive nature of this column:

Disabled and the mother of twelve, Mrs. Clara Tonner, of Fern Glen, Ontario supplements the family income by sewing skins on baseballs for a Barrie, Ontario manufacturer. Since 1958 she's sewed skins onto five thousand balls--involving more than a million stitches--and now sews balls at the rate of a dozen a day. Mrs. Tonner, whose husband is arthritic and frequently unable to work, lost her legs in a chain-saw accident in 1946. This year her baseball sewing earnings paid for a new pair of artificial legs.

Mrs. Tonner’s fortitude in coping with her disability, her unusual job and her rural locale all contributed to her selection for the feature. This column preferred to feature women outside urban areas, focusing upon rural dwellers and residents of small towns. While I have argued previously that many of the Chatelaine features and Departmental material attempted to incorporate average Canadians in their features, they were still light years removed from including people like Mrs. Tonner and her family.

The cultural feature, “What’s New in the Arts” with Edna May highlighted developments in Canadian theatre, television, publishing, and radio. Her mandate was to review or interview Canadian celebrities, but items about American celebrities, American movies or American television often crept into the column. May resigned from the column in mid decade and it was then written by a group of Chatelaine insiders. The purpose of this column was twofold: to showcase Canadian talent, and to provide a space for high-brow and
middle-brow culture within a mass market periodical. Surprisingly (for a women's magazine) the column often featured only male actors, writers, producers or singers. Although the magazine infrequently published articles on culture, as opposed to articles on the entertainment industry (i.e. Hollywood) or celebrity profiles, when they did there was an implicit link between masculinity and high or middle-brow culture. One feature article in 1961, by Claude Bissell, entitled “The Intelligent Woman’s Guide to Books,” (which according to the author he had selected specially with Chatelaine’s readers in mind) did not contain one female author in his collection of the best twenty books of the century.54

“Shopping With Chatelaine” was also included in the “What’s New” section and it was a very basic compilation of new items, ranging in price from small ticket cosmetic, food and clothing items to the more expensive appliances and home entertainment products. The final component, “Here’s Health,” (HH) “Your Health” or “What’s New in Health,” continued throughout the decade although Lawrence Galton stopped writing the article in the mid-sixties. Thereafter, the article was rarely signed so it was probably compiled by the staff writers. The format did not change from the fifties. It presented approximately six to eight new medical developments gleaned from academic journals each month. Letters received in the Chatelaine offices indicated that HH was a very popular feature and that many writers believed that Galton would be able to assist them with their medical problems. One letter, from Mrs. L. Turk of Prince George, B.C. exemplified the faith reader’s placed in Galton’s expertise: “the first thing I read in Chatelaine is ‘Your Health’ by you. I am turning to you for advice. . . . Please could you give me any advice or say what could happen to my eyes or even give me any good specialist name who I could see. . . . ”55 To assist Galton’s diagnosis, Mrs Turk included a page of drawings of the images she saw. Obviously, because Galton was only a medical writer the magazine did not offer personalized medical advice to readers like Mrs Turk. Instead they were advised to consult their doctors. Rather surprisingly, another component of the Galton fan club was composed of medical doctors. They wrote to request the medical journal sources for Galton’s information. The importance of Galton’s column, particularly for residents of smaller communities, cannot be underestimated because HH provided a regular source of medical information on the common ailments of North Americans.
Another regular feature included in the introductory shorts at the front of the magazine, although not formally included in the “What’s New” section, was the political and foreign affairs page. Before the magazine officially changed the name of the political and foreign affairs page from “It’s Your World” to “Your World Notebook” in February 1961 the section was written by a coterie of journalists. Whether it was René Lévesque’s “Where Does Quebec Go From Here?” or Eric Sevareid’s “What Will Happen in 1960?” the purpose was to provide concise background information on the news headlines. Under Assistant Editor Christina McCall the page kept its original mandate to provide interpretative essays on current events as well as statistical analysis, maps and supplementary historical background for interested readers. Her first few columns, “Our Stubborn Stand on China,” “Nuclear Weapons: Why Can’t Canada Make Up Her Mind?” and “Our Troubled Dollar: What the Crisis Means” were representative of the diverse subject matter as well as the focus upon both national and international events. The brief statement about the new column on the “What’s New With Us” page notified readers of the purpose for the name change: “The Column’s name has been changed to Your World Notebook for a very good reason, because we hope you will cut the page out and keep it in a scrapbook.” Rather patronizingly the page came complete with a dotted line as a cutting guideline for readers and to reinforce the message of snipping the page out of the periodical. However, many letter writers mentioned keeping scrapbooks of this and other material and thus it appears to have been a common hobby at the time.

While evidence is slim, it would appear that although YWN had fans and regular readers, those who clipped the articles were primarily high school students. Adult clippers, as this letter from Mrs. D. Ross MacDonald of Hensall, Ontario indicated, were more inclined to keep the recipes and articles of more immediate concern than foreign affairs and politics:

I have been a subscriber to Chatelaine for a few years. I eagerly look forward to it each month. My husband tells me I devour every page, because I really do enjoy each and every article. When I’m finished with the magazine it looks slightly moth-eaten by scissor clipping of your wonderful articles on child care, teens and their problems, recipes, meal planning, home care. Many times articles appear on my husband’s study desk for his files (my better half is a minister)...
Mrs. MacDonald was not the only writer to comment on the magazine’s appeal or usefulness to men. Many wives reported clipping or highlighting important articles for their spouses to read.

Initially, the response from readers to YWN was favourable, or at least signaled that they were reading the column. The July 1961 reader’s page, “The last word is yours,” printed three responses to the column, all from readers in Ontario, two in favour of the feature and one opposed to Newman’s thesis. Mrs. A.W.F. McQueen of Niagara Falls wrote: “This is a real service to everyone who needs assistance in untangling the news. And who doesn’t?” Similarly, Mrs. Ethel Demaine of Powassan wrote: “Your World Notebook fulfills a dire need for Canadian women. In my opinion it is one of the best condensations of current world affairs.” Meanwhile, the lone dissenter, Elizabeth H. Marsh of Burlington complained: “Newman’s March notebook on Nuclear Weapons...is a piece of one-eyed reporting, drawing illogical and unfounded conclusions.”

As the years progressed, the infrequency of the YWN page and its eventual demise indicated that it was not a particularly popular feature. It was succeeded by the “bookbooksbooks” page of book reviews, written by Newman and then Adrienne Clarkson, which profiled Canadian books--non-fiction and fiction--with a particular emphasis on popular academic works, novels and best-selling non-fiction. This full page, regular stand-alone feature was, by 1969, included with the other “What’s New” columns.

The innovation that marked the “What’s New” features--i.e., their concentration on average women, general medical information, Canadian entertainment and cultural topics--was mirrored in the longer stand-alone general features each month. One of the most contentious articles published in the magazine during the decade exemplified the provocative style of writing most often employed by the women who wrote about women’s private lives in the magazine. Entitled “Housework is a part-time job,” the March 1960 article enabled writer Eileen Morris to examine the numerous canards about housework, the role of the housewife and the expectations fostered by women’s magazines (see illustrations). Morris eschewed the victim model of housewifery. Quoting from studies conducted in the U.S. which reported that the average housewife devoted “82 hours of household labour” each week to maintain her home and family, Morris provides her own “part-time” solution to this vexing issue. The article was accompanied by both a detailed time-breakdown of all
household tasks--food preparation, child care, cleaning and shopping--as well as a photo-essay. Peppered throughout the article were sarcastic quips about the perceptions of the housewife fostered by the media and advertising: 

"My philosophy is that housework is work--but work to be finished. It must be done automatically. . . . I would never coo over my freshly ironed wash and murmur at its polished whiteness. I just don't happen to have that kind of mind. There was a time when women took pride in being martyrs to their houses. The model homemaker then worked until she collapsed . . . . With young children you have to face reality. You live each day in a cluttered setting. With two small boys, our home has all the serenity of a sand and gravel pit. You can fight this and eventually be carried off in a straight-jacket. Or you can accept it and do your best . . . . Here in the lodge, let's admit it--you have but one left arm and one right arm, and you want time to use both for something more significant than scrubbing away at the pattern on the kitchen linoleum. This is the housewife's moment of truth." 66

Her comment "here in the lodge," was a particularly apt description of the magazine as it presented itself as a club or community centre for Canadian women to which men were not invited but welcome if they did choose to participate. Despite the fact that Morris’ definition of ‘part-time’ work was to work a ten hour day the readers responded vociferously to what many perceived as an abdication of her maternal and wifely roles. According to the editorial commentary which preceded the letters, "Never, but never, has an article drawn more mail in the past year." 67 Fifteen of the twenty two letters published in the May issue were devoted to this article, as were seven of the twenty letters in the June issue. In fact, invoking closure the editors announced that these letters (June) were the “final--resounding chorus on the rights and wrongs of Eileen Morris’ Part-Time Housework." 68

As expected, readers’ reactions were varied. Mrs. Myrtle Gallup of Danville, Quebec expressed the frustrations of many readers when she wrote:

"Having just completed a fifteen hour day when I sat down to devour my Chatelaine, the article was maddening. Lucky Eileen Morris--never mends anything, just throws the worn article out. Lucky, E.M.--never washes windows or curtains. Lucky E.M. never has to bake a cake or make an apron for a church sale..." 69

Morris’ solutions were from a suburban, middle-class perspective and for many lower income, small town or rural inhabitants they were not as applicable. Others, like Mrs. J.B. Hughes of Calgary, bragged of their hours on the job as indications of their dedication and prowess: "Fiddlesticks!...Yours till 8pm." 70 Mrs. F. Weeks of London, Ontario shrewdly observed the discrepancy between Morris’ article, the Chatelaine department fare and the nature of many women’s magazines: “Since Eileen Morris has so much time on her hands I
suggest she obtain a position as a saleswoman. Anybody who could sell a woman’s magazine that line could sell bathing suits to Eskimos...”71 Only Estelle Cooper of Red Deer, Alberta noticed the amount of work required even of Morris’ revised housework schedule: “I admit this schedule can be done—so can the four minute mile if you have the energy!”72 Those in agreement with Morris’ schedule, like Mary Daniluk of Windsor, Ontario wrote in her defence. Additionally, Daniluk’s commentary about why she believed other women were so vehemently opposed to the article was instructive:

Any mother of two and housekeeper of a normal home who bristled angrily at this article should check her motives for two reasons: either the truth hurts or she is afraid of spare time, not knowing how to use it. We often hear reference to man hours, lost through illness and accident, but never of women hours lost over coffee, cigarettes, TV, idle complaining and sleeping in. I have practiced Eileen’s method for a year and a half now and I certainly verify her article.73

Ruffled feathers and disgruntled readers aside, the magazine was making a statement about the changing nature of women’s roles within the home and attempting to provoke Canadian homemakers to rethink their household regimes. That many clung vociferously to working until 8 pm, or much later, was not as surprising as the publication during the decade of a number of housework articles similar in tone and content to Morris’ article. Those articles did not glorify the house beautiful and perfect; rather they attempted to advance the thesis that housework should be disposed of quickly and efficiently so that women would have time for other endeavours. That was not standard fare for a woman’s magazine to promulgate.

Commensurate with Morris’ housework article were articles on marriage and the role(s) of wives and mothers which, in a similar vein, were not paens to marital bliss but instead critical assessments of married women’s status. A series of three articles, all written by Christina McCall in 1961 and 1962 (they pre-dated Friedan’s 1963 bestseller), combined discussions of women’s private lives, particularly marriage, with a cogent feminist critique.74 In a biographical aside in her “booksbooksbooks” column in 1966, McCall referred to herself as “a onetime militant, sometime wavering feminist.”75 No time-lines were proffered but presumably her feminism was well entrenched when she produced this series of articles.

“Working Wives Are Here to Stay” began with this provocative blurb: “They’re labeled luxury-mad materialists. They’re blamed for delinquency and divorce. They’re accused of throwing men onto breadlines. But the fact is Canada’s 700,000 working wives are merely unrecognized pioneers in a social revolution. . . .”76 Utilizing an historical and sociological
perspective and supported by Dominion Bureau of Statistics information, the author explained the increasing entry of married women into the workforce (in Canada, the United States and Britain) as a result of financial need and not as a matter of personal fulfillment. To further accentuate her thesis the article was accompanied by a photo essay, executed in black and white photographs, of a “typical” working wife and mother: book-keeper Gertrude Carpenter of Scarborough (see illustrations). Readers learned that Mrs. Carpenter was the major wage earner in her family of five because her husband was on partial disability due to a previous heart attack. The photo essay depicted Carpenter’s dual workday (family and job demands kept her occupied from 7am to 11:45 pm Monday through Friday), her determination and the decidedly unglamorous, exhausting nature of her existence. There was absolutely no glorification of the “Super-Mom” of seventies and eighties fame who (so the media would have us believe) combined corporate jobs with childcare, gourmet dining and conspicuous leisure. According to Mrs. Carpenter she worked, “not for glamour and stimulus of a career, but to meet medical expenses and mortgage payments.” Reader commentary was not favourable. One reader, Mrs. Mike Levin of Selkirk, Manitoba, was angered by the feminist agenda of the Chatelaine writers:

A slop-pail full of sickening, conscience-lulling hogwash, cooked up by Chatelaine and a crew of two-faced social workers, eagerly devoured by those who put the Joneses ahead of their children--like the Carpenters. Poor babies! You career girls at Chatelaine are trying to incite a revolution that will end forever a happy childhood in the kind of home God meant them to have. From the nursery in the hospital, to the nursery down the street! Moms with a college degree or some kind of training belong in the outside world, not to baby!”

Mrs. Levin’s interpretation of the article, regardless of the apparent lack of glamourization of the Carpenter’s “lifestyle,” brought the voice of child welfare (that traditional concern raised by those opposed to working mothers), anti-feminism and the rural woman’s voice to the letters page. Of course, it was clear that Mrs. Levin perceived the valorization of the working mother as both a threat and an insult to her way of life. As a recurrent topic of interest, the world of the working wife and mother merited numerous investigations throughout the decade. The magazine consistently tried to direct women towards interesting and accommodating jobs (both part-time and full-time), offered suggestions about how women could re-orient themselves to the demands of the workplace, and profiled successful working mothers and various career women. Virtually every year the magazine devoted at least one
They're labeled luxury mad materialists.
They're blamed for delinquency and divorce.
They're accused of throwing men onto breadlines.

But the fact is Canada's 500,000 working wives are merely unrecognized pioneers in a social revolution and, like it or not,

Working wives are here to stay

By CHRISTINA McCALL NEWMAN

- This winter when Canadians are faced once again with the agony of rising unemployment, one sure-fire remedy is bound to be bandied about in the brouhaha of debate that follows: if only we could get married women back into their kitchens, there'd be plenty of jobs for men. For many thoughtful Canadians what will be most disturbing about this idea is not just that it's an outdated, unworkable approach to a serious social problem, but that it will be expressed, as it was last year, by some highly responsible, though sadly misguided, citizens.

Certainly, for those who see the trend of married women not in the uncertain terms of what ought to be, but in the light of what is, this kind of argument is a little like the old cartoon of the young expectant father, nervously asking his wife on the way to the delivery room, "Honey, are you sure you want to go through with this?" The belief... Continued on next page
Continued from page 31 that by legal decree or public disapproval married women — particularly those with children who've borne the brunt of recent criticism — could be persuaded to give up working is just about as futile.

The truth is that married women in Canada, as in most other Western nations, are in the labor force to stay. Twenty years ago in this country only one married woman in twenty was working outside her home. Today, one wife in five has a job; by 1970, economists predict, one in three wives will be in the labor force.

"What we must realize," says Eric Smid, head of the Family and Child Welfare section of the Canadian Welfare Council, "is that the employment of married women is now an established social pattern. It's a fact, not a fad."

Smid and most other professional people concerned with social welfare believe that there's no point in blindly trying to reverse this trend. Instead, we need to comprehend the social factors involved by finding out the answers to some important questions. Who are the married women who work? Why do they want or need to have jobs? What effect does their employment have on their families and on the economy? What kind of new responsibilities does the community need to shoulder because of this trend?

What started them working?

In the last decade many surveys have been launched to find out the answers to these questions, most of them in the United States and Britain, where the pattern of married women working is even more pronounced than in this country. The major Canadian survey of the problem was published in 1958, when the Women's Bureau of the federal Department of Labor revealed the results of a study of five thousand married women working for pay in eight Canadian cities. In all such studies, the beginning of the trend toward married women taking jobs is traced to the war years when a legion of Rosies-the-Riveters went to work to replace men who had joined the armed forces. This gained for working wives a

For this working mother most days are an exhausting grind of overwork and worry

Jim and Gertrude Carpenter of Scarborough, Ont., have been married for seventeen years, and for most of that time Mrs. Carpenter has worked in an office. Her reasons— as with most women like her—are entirely financial. The oldest of her three sons had spinal meningitis as a toddler, later needed costly medical care for a serious eye defect. The heart attack her husband suffered three years ago means he can only hold a light, low-paid job. So Mrs. Carpenter leaves her children and goes out to work, not for the glamour and stimulus of a career, but to meet medical expenses and mortgage payments.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOHN SHERET

7:10 a.m. Day begins as Mrs. Carpenter eats bacon and eggs, prepares baby's lunch and house dresses quickly

8:55 She begins daily job as bookkeeper in firm near home. To have her baby last spring, she missed six weeks' work

10:30 Jimmy leaves sitter's home for a lonely swing in school yard. Some days he says, "Let's all stay home together."
6:20 p.m. Dwight, 14, holds door as mother hauls basset hound out to car on way to sitter's.

6:25 At home of neighbor who minds two younger boys for an MBA weekly fee. Gertrude hands over baby Wayne, 4 months, and feels "a real wrench—all I want at that moment is to be able to stay home with my kids."

12:20 p.m. After quick sandwich in restaurant, Gertrude Carpenter spends lunchtime doing errands. Like many homemakers, she does most of her grocery shopping on Saturdays, but during her office work week she must supplement this with noon-hour purchases of bread, baby supplies, visits to shoe repair.

12:40 Dwight must fend for himself at lunchtime. He lets himself into empty house, washes the breakfast dishes, then makes his own lunch.

The two-job day of Gertrude Carpenter continues next page.
Evening for working mother means more work, little leisure.

6:15 Home from work, Mrs. Carpenter, still in her office dress, starts supper. Dwight helps by peeling vegetables. Later she changes into slacks, relaxes ten minutes with baby.

7:35 She finally gets supper for herself and sons on table, but her husband, who works for hourly rate as messenger, often doesn't return until 7:30, too tired to eat big meal.

8:30 She lingers at dinner table, savoring a few moments for coffee, a chance to talk over day with her husband and cuddle her baby. For both of them, the biggest thing in their lives is their children. "What we want is that all our boys get good educations," their only outside activities are church, teaching Sunday school, and Home and School.
8:30 Whole family works together to clean up supper dishes, trade stories about their days. Dwight is quiet, helpful, but sometimes rebels at having to spend hours amusing younger brother, Jimmy.

9:30 After tucking boys into bed, Gertrude Carpenter goes wearily to do quick baby wash in the basement. Later she may prepare part of next day’s supper, iron a blouse for herself to wear at office.

10:30 Once a week the Carpenters go carefully over their tight budget. The $60 she earns weekly means a combined income of about $7,000—barely enough for medical bills and mortgage.

11:45 She finishes last chore, fixing baby formula for next day, as her husband reads paper. Despite workload she rarely complains, says, “It’ll come out all right if we keep trying.”
article, usually a special pull-out feature or a lengthy regular article to various facets of women’s employment.

Despite critical commentary, McCall followed up “Working Wives” with “All Canadians are Equal Except Women,” an astute and pithy commentary about the ineffective equal pay legislation on the books in most Canadian provinces and at the federal level. According to the author “part of the fault lies in the innocuous wording of the legislation, but even more to blame are prevailing social attitudes and the general weak-kneed refusal by women to test the laws.” How did readers respond to another figurative call to arms? Reactions were mixed. Mrs. Eldon Finnell of Ponteix, Saskatchewan thought that it was “a wonderful article, but how much more effective if written by a man.” Conversely, Mrs Eugenie Ross of Don Mills complained that she did not “know of any force that does more to encourage the attitude women have toward themselves as being sub-standard than trashy magazines like yours....greatest service you could do Canadian womanhood would be to cease publication.” Conversely, Mrs Berchtold of North Vancouver applauded the magazine’s stand on contentious issues, although she did not formally state her agreement with McCall’s article:

Every so often letters appear in your magazine with instructions to cancel subscriptions as the writers have found a certain article or story ‘offensive.’ In other words, they didn’t agree with the opinion of that particular author. If Chatelaine is going to print only articles that they feel sure will offend no one, I will cancel my subscription as this would result in nothing but pap. Reading material with which one agrees is neither educational nor stimulating. Surely one’s convictions should be strong enough to take a bit of a jar. . . . How can we learn anything if we are afraid to examine new ideas?

The magazine offered their tacit agreement with Mrs. Berchtold by publishing the final installment of the feminist critique in the same issue as her letter.

“Why Can’t We Treat Married Women Like People?” made the earlier articles look mild by comparison. Based upon McCall’s own frustration about the changed nature of her status two years after marriage, she took umbrage at the stereotypical portrait of the married woman and the docile reaction of married women to the derogatory comments. According to her “before marriage you are regarded as a reasoning, responsible individual. After the wedding you are pigeonholed as an empty-headed, witless dummy, scarcely able to comment on the weather.” She was fed up with hearing the constant refrain “I’m just a housewife”
which McCall decoded, rightly, as “I’m just a nothing.” The fault lay, in large part, with Canadian society:

...the social attitude we seem to be stuck with: that every girl should find herself a husband as soon as possible after she reaches the age of eighteen. In meek compliance most Canadian girls tend to do just that. More and more of them marry at nineteen, have their first child at twenty, and are caught, all during what should be their years of self-discovery, in a round of housekeeping and childbearing. Then at age of thirty or thirty-five... they suddenly come to, to find that the world has gone right by and left them chronically bored and hopelessly fumbling... 

McCall’s solution, and notice that hers was different from the solution which was soon to be advanced by Betty Friedan in her 1963 book The Feminine Mystique, was not for women to leave their kitchens and homes en mass to enter the workforce. Instead, she recommended that “we try to instill both in ourselves and our children the belief that girls have as much responsibility to grow into fully formed opinionated adults as do boys.”85 To accomplish that she proposed that “we try to stave off the urgency to marry at least until the middle twenties and give girls time to work at something which they can either return when their children are grown or that will, at very least, bolster their self-respect through the years when they’re wholly domesticated.”86 Though these articles presumed that women were responsible for the household, they urged them not to limit themselves to the housewife role. One of the fundamental credos of many Chatelaine feature articles, and editorials, during the sixties was that there was life beyond dishpan hands and ennui. The authors continued to advance this agenda even when responses from readers were often critical, angry or bemused about the unhappiness of some married women. In what she probably considered the worst fate possible, Mrs. Maxine La Croix of Montreal decided that “Christina McCall... doesn’t deserve to be married or have the title of Mrs.”87 Conversely, Mr. Fred Olsen of Cumberland, British Columbia claimed that the “article really ‘sent’ me. Please write a book along the lines of your article and I’ll peddle two hundred copies personally.”88 According to Mrs. Helen Max-Duca of Vancouver the blame for this situation should be attributed primarily to women:

Married women don’t want to be treated like people. They like to be treated like women. It gives them a sense of security to hide behind the excuse men so generously give them, pampered and irresponsible, therefore dumb. We should not blame men for it—very few women desire to get out of this comfortable situation... 

Clearly readers were engaged and challenged, and often angered, by these articles. Their importance lies in the ideas they disseminated to a wide reading audience.
One indicator of the feminist commitment of the editorial staff was a memo declining the publication of a 1962 article proffered by Abraham Feinberg, D.D., Rabbi from Holy Blossom Temple entitled: “1962 Woman and Her World.”90 In her evaluative memo about Feinberg’s submission Associate Editor Jean Yack wrote:

This is so much nonsense...I am sik sik sik (sic) of jerks telling women “it’s all your problem dearie”... “now go home and think yourself into a better frame of mind and some worthwhile tasks.” e.g. say 100 times daily: doing dishes is GOOD for the world...blah. He says females should stay home and make it lovely...admits papa won’t spend much time there...suggests absolutely no help will be forthcoming from papa, mentally or physically...then says, but to stop war women maybe should take over government.... Really, how naive.... Also, I wonder what these guys think will happen if educated, and well-educated, women stay home, raise kids and, as these guys suggest, do study and think etc., to enrich and ennoble their minds...they’d soon outstrip their husbands who haven’t the time for self-enrichment and discovery, that’s what...so we’d have another problem: male worker bonehead drones, and charming, intelligent, noble, cultivated wives.... Ha! p.s. I don’t think much of this piece.91 [sic]

Despite the angry indictment of such articles, not all of the general feature pieces in the magazine were feminist articles-- far from it. Despite the editors’ own personal analysis they were cognizant of the fact that they were editing a general women’s magazine and had to include a variety of material. It was this concern for the general reader which resulted in their now famous decision not to publish advance drafts of Betty Friedan’s Feminine Mystique.

Although much has been made of the fact that Chatelaine passed up the opportunity to publish chapters from Friedan’s book, the acknowledged reasons for the magazine’s decision were that the topic had been well covered elsewhere and thus to print Friedan would be repetitious. However, the extant editorial commentary about this non-fiction work provided a different opinion about why the book was declined, citing a concern for the style of writing and the content. Jean Yack’s commentary was succinct: “This is a little too heavy for us...though some of the subject matter is interesting. On the whole, I’d skip.”92 Keith Knowlton pronounced it “heavy-footed” and asked “Anyone interested in a treatise on feminism and feminists?”93 After their editorial meeting Knowlton wrote this brief note to Almeda Glassey (Fiction Editor): “Thanks for letting us see this (Feminine Mystique) but we find it a bit too heavy-footed. Good material, but a little turgid in style for a general audience.”94 A large number of American and Canadian women soon proved otherwise, sending Friedan’s book onto the bestseller list. Charting a course to keep a mass audience of Canadian women reading the magazine meant that editors frequently opted for “commercial”
packages rather than challenging works so as not to offend, intimidate or overwhelm the “average reader.”

Despite the refusal to publish The Feminine Mystique, Chatelaine’s role as Canada’s feminism primer continued throughout the decade reaching its climax in Jack Batten’s article “After Black Power, Women Power” published in the September 1969 issue. The anti-feminist side continued to send missives to the editors, like reader Lia Lafontaine of Ville de Laval, Quebec who pleaded: “Please stop brainwashing every educated woman out of her home!” Accompanied by a full page black and white photo, dramatically set in a bold black frame, of a female demonstrator carrying a picket sign, the article’s subtitle declared: “A new breed of female: mainly young, brainy and North American, is calling for a new revolution. The goal: to free women from second-class status and sexual slavery.” Batten’s article, despite his concerns about representing “the enemy,” provided readers with a history of feminist literature and the history of the link between women’s liberation (as it was then called) and black and student protest groups in the U.S., the tenets of feminism according to each organization, short interviews with key feminist personnel in the United States and Canada, and a visit to the offices of the National Organization for Women (NOW) in New York City. Batten deconstructed the radical women’s libbers as well as the centrist, mainstream feminist groups’ demands and deduced that the focus was upon power and equality. All groups shared a determination to re-make society and not, as he had originally assumed, to dominate men. Included in Batten’s article was this quote from the Female Liberation Movement about the ‘purpose’ of the mass media:

The Female Liberation Movement [FLM] shares with most women radicals a streak of suspicion of the mass media. “We must enter communities, not use the political platform or the media,” Roxanne Dunbar recently wrote in the FLM newsletter. “The people do not believe anything they hear through these organs.” Ti-Grace Atkinson of The Feminists another New York based group, feels the same way about newspapers and magazines, men’s media. According to many radical, and not so radical feminists (remember Friedan’s jeremiads against American women’s magazines) the very organ of oppression was, for Canadian women, one of the most consistent disseminators of feminist ideology, history and information to a mass audience of girls and women. The responses, whether vociferous or congratulatory, indicated that “the people,” Chatelaine’s readers, did indeed believe that the information presented in the magazine was accurate. Naturally, agreement and action did not necessarily follow from reading articles like “Woman Power.”
The enthusiastic letter from sixteen-year-old Marie Kciuk of Winnipeg was representative of the letters in favour of feminist articles: "'Woman Power' was one of the best articles I have read in your magazine. I have been interested in the Feminist movement for a long time. Unfortunately, living in the 'wilds' of Manitoba, literature is scarce and I would like to find out more." Reader Colleen Fitzpatrick was perplexed about the magazine's choice of a male writer for such an important piece on women's liberation. However, other readers were angry and appalled by such an article. The revulsion described by this letter from Mrs. Aileen Sivell of Oakville, Ontario provided insight into her "feelings" as she read the Batten article:

That article made my flesh crawl in horror and revulsion. . . . The picture emerged of a hard-core group of emotionally crippled, spiritually sterile and physically barren. . . . (I hate to use the word) women. Dropouts, all, from their respective roles as women, wives and mothers, consumed with a hatred and bitterness and desire for revenge against men and society (for their own stupidity and ineptness), they now in their extreme frustration seek to deny, discredit and denigrate the unchangeable fact of their own biological functions and responsibilities in the cycle of life. I could pity more these wretchedly unhappy creatures were it not for their ruthless determination to sacrifice on the altar of their own wounded ego, husbands, homes and children, guilty and innocent alike.

Not surprisingly, Mrs. Sivell's graphic language attracted considerable attention on the letter's page and in the January issue, two women responded to her criticism. Mrs. Hazel Vogan, of Bath, Ontario applauded her efforts: "Cheers for Mrs. Aileen Sivell. . . . I, too, have become more and more repulsed by the Feminist Movement. I hope we will hear from more women, like Mrs. Sivell and myself, who still champion 'husbands, home and children.'" Feminist issues were not anathema to all of the correspondents from Ontario, as this excerpt from an "open letter" from Marily Jones of Ottawa to Mrs. Sivell indicates:

"Had you read the article more closely, you would have become aware that the Feminists "don't make the mistake of naming man as the enemy". . . . I can only shake my head sadly and quote Juliet Mitchell: "Women have to find their chains before they lose them." You seem to refuse to acknowledge their very existence." There was an on-going battle on the letters page of the magazine between women who welcomed and embraced the magazine's policy of encouraging a changing role for women, whether or not it was clearly defined as feminist, and those who, whether feeling backed into a corner, or proud of their maternal and homemaking status, defended women's traditional roles against all changes. Importantly, the two camps could not, and should not, be differentiated by marital status, region or class--pro-feminist commentary came from rural
women, married women, middle and working class women. Only women with children (or younger children) seemed more likely to advocate the status quo.

The paramount article in favour of women’s traditional roles was Marta Wasserman’s 1962 article “How Mothers Mix Up Daughters for Love and Marriage.” Printed in the same year as the McCall articles it offers an interesting comparison to her feminist articles (particularly since McCall was the ghost writer for this article). Wasserman, “an eminent Ottawa psychoanalyst,” contributed an article which, at its mildest, served as a counter-balance to McCall’s articles. It was the most reactionary example of the articles which reinforced the status quo—that urged women to be happy with their household roles. In this excerpt she described the primary reasons behind women’s unhappiness:

One of the most blatant and most widely perpetuated social lies of our time is the flat statement that women are equal to men. This just isn’t so. Of course women have as much value as human beings as men do... Women aren’t free to pursue self-centred lives. They have to do the drudgery. But the drudgery could be made bearable, in fact even pridelful, if only young girls were taught to look on it as part of their privileges as women, to realize that a country cannot do without capable mothers and wives (emphasis hers).

A modest proposal? A gender turncoat? Given the tone of the article it could have been read as satire but readers took it at face value.

The Wasserman article had fans like Mrs. D. Desmond of Vancouver who wrote: “perhaps the best article ever printed by a woman’s magazine, so packed with truth and help for women of all ages that it should be printed, over and over again.” Or Mrs C. Munson of Terrace, B.C. who found it “the wisest and truest piece I have read on the subject. Every word is a gem.” However Mrs. Ellenmie Melcher from Rockyford, Alberta thought Wasserman was wrong to blame mothers: “Mothers don’t deserve all the blame. How many men make their wives feel like partners and recognize their efforts?” Whatever the editors’ motivations for publishing Wasserman’s article, it was revealing that they chose this lengthy, angry letter from J.S. Cameron, of Etobicoke, as the first letter on the page:

Marta Wasserman’s article left me more than a little baffled. Apparently she would have all mothers lie to their daughters by telling them what a grand and noble profession homemaking is. I have a daughter...but she will certainly know all the facts of marriage and everything that goes with it before she marries, not after. Come down to earth, dear editors--look around you. Take a jaunt to the supermarket some morning. Take a look at the poor specimens of human faces and see if you see anything noble in them. I don't know of one intelligent woman who is happily married, not one. Marta says women have to be drudges. How true. In most cases, if they marry they most certainly will be drudges and worse. If you really want to do a
service to Canadian women why don't you do a series of articles on, "How to Escape Marriage," for girls who are not the maternal, homemaking type? To me the average woman wastes most of her life in stupid and senseless activity. Please do not tell us to lie to our daughters. Give them a chance to make a better life for themselves than most of us have had.109

In later issues of the magazine, other readers wrote to criticize Cameron's analysis of the Wasserman article. Mrs. Jean Griffin, Ottawa, wrote: "I simply cannot agree with J.S. Cameron...I am happily married and gave up a career as a chemist with no misgivings whatsoever....I trust Mrs. Cameron's letter was written on a 'blue' day...."110 The Wasserman article and the reader feedback indicated that many readers were proud housewives and mothers while others railed at the limitations of their domestic role. In the end, while Chatelaine played an important role in increasing knowledge about feminist issues the magazine continued to include articles which served as a counter-balance--which glorified the status quo or, ironically, advocated a more narrowly defined role for the majority of women (Wasserman herself was, as a career woman, disregarding her own advice).

Amongst the chains which held women back in the sixties was the lack of access to reproductive information, contraceptives--namely the Pill--and draconian abortion legislation. The campaign for greater access to birth control and safe, legal abortions was one of the causes Chatelaine supported. Although reproductive rights were clearly part of the 'feminist agenda' the magazine structured the articles--their content, tone and purpose--as medical articles, thus linking reproductive rights to women's health, the population crisis and new medical trends. Whether the magazine's policy was pragmatic or prudish was difficult to discern. The numerous articles on abortion, the pill, other forms of birth control--including vasectomy, and even test tube babies--all eschewed sustained commentary about freedom of sexual expression for women or the feminist campaign behind such medical news.111 At a time when many medical practitioners were reticent about providing their patients with contraceptive information and the criminal code prevented access to legal abortions for victims of rape, sexual abuse, incest or as a birth control measure (it was legal if the mother's life was endangered) Chatelaine's campaign was noteworthy.

Women's sexuality, of varying types, did make its entry into the magazine. Of course, this area was not neglected in the fifties, thanks to the cogent essays penned by the team of Dr. Marion Hilliard and June Callwood. The sixties articles mirrored the increased
sexual freedom and sexual awareness in that decade. Articles on children’s sexuality dealt frankly with the issues of masturbation, how parents should explain sex and ‘proper’ sexual behaviour to children, molestation, incest and infrequently highlighted concerns about homosexuality. If the Hilliard and Callwood pieces were startlingly open about sexuality—particularly the acknowledgment that women should experience pleasure from sex—then these sixties versions opened the remaining Pandora’s boxes about sexuality—the criminal kind and the deviant kind (as homosexuality was construed throughout the articles). One thing was clear, the articles in the sixties were increasingly more inclusive about the variety of sexual experience—children’s, heterosexual women’s, lesbian, gay male and men’s sexuality. Two articles merit closer attention, Renate Wilson’s “What Turns Women to Lesbianism?” and June Callwood’s “Sex and the Married Woman”.

According to Wilson, “unlike male homosexuality, there was far less fact and more myth about the causes and frequency of this sexual deviation among females.” The opening paragraphs introduced us to Jane “a slim, quiet spoken” twenty-six year old salesgirl and her partner Teresa a thirty year old “somewhat stocky figure” who “drives a delivery truck.” We learn that they have lived together for four years in their own apartment, that they love each other, “share the double bed” (Chatelaine’s genteel euphemism for sex) and that they “look forward to spending the rest of their lives together.” To make the situation perfectly clear, Wilson, as the expert, made this authoritative statement:

Jane and Teresa are lesbians—homosexual females. They are attracted only to women and find the idea of lovemaking with a man repulsive. On the surface this is all that distinguishes them from heterosexual, or normal, women. The real differences lie deep and concern both their evolution and evaluation of themselves as women. Clearly, heterosexuality was normal and lesbianism was abnormal. From that point onwards the rest of the article was composed of Wilson’s research findings, her interviews with North American psychiatrists and Canadian religious groups, as well as her discussions with Teresa and Jane’s friends from Vancouver. While the article aimed not to be merely sensationalistic, covering historical, medical, religious and personal issues, the emphasis was on the causes of lesbianism and how it could be avoided or treated. Jane and Theresa’s friends and rather ironically, the religious groups, advocated acceptance and thus both criticized and countered the dominant psychiatric angle of the piece.
Regardless of Wilson’s incessant question ‘Why?’, which runs throughout the article, for lesbians, for those unsure of their sexuality or for those interested in what a lesbian was, the article was thorough and informative. This was Wilson’s historical and contemporary definition of the term:

The word lesbian is derived from the Greek island of Lesbos, where poetess Sappho enjoyed and sang the praises of such relationships with women. Lesbians come in all ages and nationalities, professions and social classes. They can be married, single, childless or mothers of several children. They can hang out on skid row or live respectively in suburbia. They may never advance their sexual longings beyond an affectionate hug and kiss, or they may take part with another woman in sexual activity leading to orgasm.\(^\text{118}\)

Wilson’s was a rather inclusive, if classist, definition of the lesbian. She hesitated to unequivocally state the sexual nature of the relationship but she did admit that for many women lesbianism went beyond a passionate friendship. Wilson borrowed the statistical estimates of the American expert, Dr. A.C. Kinsey, whose report had estimated that 2% of women were exclusively lesbian, and 15% partially so.\(^\text{119}\) While Wilson was aware of the terms used in the community and in psychiatric literature, listing them in this order: “‘gay,’ ‘deviant,’ ‘invert,’ ‘homophile,’ ‘butch,’ or ‘femme’” her bias was evident when she stated that the women she met in Teresa and Jane’s apartment were not “distinguishable by appearance.”\(^\text{120}\) Her description of the women she met stressed, except for one butch, their normality or their ability to pass as normal in society. Ultimately, the emphasis in Wilson’s article was upon the homosociability of their world (their friendships and relationships with other lesbians) and the legal, religious and social pronouncements against lesbianism. No letters were published in the magazine about this article so it is difficult to gauge how readers, both heterosexual and homosexual, responded to the article.

In contrast, Callwood’s piece on married women’s sexuality provoked a maelstrom of letters to the editor which condemned the subject matter with special opprobrium saved for the author. Setting the tone quickly, the opening blurb bluntly promised a provocative article with this statement: “One in four wives (and that’s a low estimate) finds marriage is not a gateway to sexual joy—in fact, it may even decrease it. What goes wrong for women in sex and marriage?”\(^\text{121}\) Quoting Masters and Johnson, along with other experts, Callwood surveyed the theories of why so many couples had difficulty with sex, the conflicting advice on how women could attain orgasm, and the role sex played in marriage. Part of the problem with marital sex was familiarity. One housewife who had requested anonymity stated: “Sex
with your husband is comfortable, like house slippers, because he knows what to do. ... But for that sense of intense and delicious excitement that you once enjoyed when sex was new, you have to look outside of marriage." Ultimately, Callwood wrote that women's delivery from the "century of frigidity" into the age of "sexual revolution" was "marvelous." What she was clearly championing, unlike all of the articles on birth control and reproductive issues, was that non-procreative sex was a normal, desirable part of marriage. Additionally, the article acknowledged the existence of pre-marital and extra-marital sex although Callwood did not endorse either option. While these statements appeared far from incendiary, particularly for the focus upon the hippie lifestyle (complete with its free love mantra) in the late sixties, they provoked an eye-popping reaction in most readers.

For the most part, readers criticized the author, and the magazine, for printing "smut". A few indignant readers, like Mrs. J. Barkaman of Steinbach, Manitoba criticized the article's content and canceled her subscription:

Do you realize that the article "Sex and the Married Woman" contained some dangerous half-truths? For instance, the idea that sex is unsatisfying because a couple is married could be misinterpreted by unwary people. Many deep thinkers believe that the indiscriminate search for sexual pleasure is the beginning of the downfall of the family, and society. In view of that fact, I could not allow my teenage daughters to read this suggestive, half-truthful article, and believe you have forgotten your responsibility of honest journalism, I regretfully ask that you take my name off the subscriber's list.

Reader Audrey L. Wosley of Chilliwack, B.C. also felt the need to keep the magazine away from impressionable teenagers: "Chatelaine really scraped the bottom of the barrel when you printed Sex and the Modern Woman. ... This is the first time I have had to burn my copy before my three children were able to read it." As was often the case with such brouhahas, some readers went back to reread the offending article to see what the fuss was all about. Mrs. P.A. Robinson of Regina was one of those who wrote to complain about the negative commentary the article received. Her analysis of why the article infuriated so many readers was suggestive:

I decided I just had to read "Sex and the Married Woman" again to find out what all that howling was about. I found it very interesting. It's time someone woke the sexually frigid woman--apparently there are many, according to those who have written to criticize. Guess they don't like the truth. I think there should be more free and open discussions about sex, and I pat Chatelaine on the back for publishing June Callwood's article.
Meanwhile, reader Barbara B. Duncan of Markham, Ontario interpreted the venomous letters as an indication of readers’ jealousy: “I suppose there will always be those who hate success. But can’t any of your readers say a kind word about June Callwood? I’ve seldom read such venom poured forth against anyone....” As many controversial articles indicated, and this was certainly no exception, the commentary in the readers’ page became an intrinsic part of reading the article—half the fun was comparing your viewpoint with the plucky souls who had written in to the magazine. The re-reading and re-interpretation of articles encouraged by the letters page indicated that readers were actively involved in making meaning out of the articles and material published. It was clear that they interacted with other readers in print (and more than likely in person in their own communities) and that no amount of authoritative or editorial directives prevented misinterpretations, alternative readings, disagreements or canceled subscriptions over the material.

Another infrequent topic of discussion, and controversy, was men, masculinity and the differences between the sexes. In particular, the differences between masculinity and femininity were familiar ground since they were introduced in virtually all articles on marriage, marital problems, dating and relationships. Two articles, presenting both the positive images of masculinity (and the relationship between the sexes) and the negative relationship—and commentary upon both—were representative of articles devoted to this topic. The first, “A Husband and Wife Change Jobs,” provided a wonderfully reassuring article for housewives, in particular, about the demanding nature of their job. As an added bonus the husband’s inability to perform his wife’s role as well and the ease with which the woman re-integrated herself into the workforce gave stay-at-home wives and mothers validation and inspiration. The article employed a “he said–she said” format, allowing first Michael Cope and then his wife Pam to tell their respective stories. Michael’s two weeks as househusband proved revelatory: “For the first time I comprehended the really hard work involved in keeping up a house and family. The job is fraught with hazards....” Most of Michael’s hazards revolved around the three children—toddler Mark (2), Jane (5) and Richard (8)—and their diapering, feeding and bathing regimes. His description of the first morning on the job was priceless, and undoubtedly brought tears of laughter to the housewives who read the magazine:

It all began at 6.30 on the Monday morning Pam started as a filing clerk in a downtown Toronto office, fourteen miles from our home. No sooner had I donned
my houseworking uniform—wash and wear casual slacks, sport shirt and sandals—than young Mark woke up with a dirty diaper. I nearly gagged on an empty stomach. It was four diapers later that I learned to hold my breath. And it was only at the end of the week that I became sufficiently proficient. . . .

Despite his determination to be organized, to provide basic meat and potato meals and stick to a schedule, Michael discovered that even with half days on the weekends he still worked an 87 hour work week. Exhaustion, boredom and frustration quickly wore him down. By the end of the experiment he was glad to go back to work, promptly raised the housekeeping budget (since he found it inadequate), purchased a new iron for his wife (to replace the faulty one he couldn’t operate), and now voluntarily did the dishes each evening to ease the load on his wife. His relief at the role reversal’s end was palpable. Pam’s story was different. She enjoyed working in the office, and when she returned home at night could read the paper, watch television, or just unwind free from the demands of childcare. She wrote: “I didn’t work as long, nor think as hard, as I work running a home and bringing up a family; but because of the commuting I found it equally exhausting.”

Readers were quick to voice their analyses. All the writers had enjoyed the article, although for very different reasons. Mrs. F.W. Barret of Botwood, Newfoundland complimented the article’s authenticity: “It was so true to life. I didn’t realize just how hectic and demanding keeping a home in running order really was.” Mrs. Bonnie Heath of Stratford, Ontario enjoyed sharing the article with friends: “My January issue is pretty well worn out after all my friends finished borrowing it.” As letters indicated, articles such as this formed the foundation for much commiserating and conversation amongst Canadian women about their situation. For other female readers, however, articles such as these were part of a more sinister agenda on the part of the Chatelaine editors. Reader Carmen Bernard of Weston, Ontario complained: “Now Chatelaine has reached, I hope, the culmination of the new feminist campaign. What about some other topics for a change?” The only published letter from a male reader came from Stavely, Alberta househusband Gerald L. Morris, who wrote:

My wife started a hairdressing course last July. In turn, I am househusband as well as breadwinner for our family of five, ranging in age from 10 down to 1 1/2. Fortunately, my office is off the living quarters. My wife comes home Saturday nights and returns Monday morning. I cook, wash, scrub, wax, clean house etc. My hours are usually 7am to midnight, and I’ll gladly throw my vote with the ladies—a woman’s work is never done!
Articles such as this and their corresponding reader commentary provided rare glimpses into how ‘average’ Canadians negotiated work and family demands. Ironically, they also illustrated the entrenched nature of gender role division in the home--both Michael Cope and Gerald Morris--describe “doing women’s work” even though in Morris’ case he had been performing the household maintenance and childcare for ten months. Men might have, in rare instances, participated in household chores but their interpretation of such work was that they were “helping out.”

Frequently the articles on masculinity elicited negative commentary from both male and female readers. Male readers were most likely to respond to what they perceived as an anti-male agenda whereas women readers were critical of the masculinity articles which, they believed, in trumpeting high-octane testosterone behaviour, were unsuitable for a women’s magazine. One such article, by Mollie Gillen, entitled “Why Men Want Out of Marriage,” proved too candid for the readership’s liking. The problem, according to men like Gil Morrison and Eddy Harbett, was that Canadian men were chafed by the constraints of too much togetherness in marriage. The theme of over-domestication ran, subliminally, through this description of Morrison’s difficult life:

Gil Morrison is a Toronto advertising executive, aged thirty-five, with a split-level house in the suburbs, two children... and a wife who has kept her figure. The family four door sedan is left for his wife’s daytime use: Gil drives a Jaguar XKE in and out of town. His wife is popular with the neighbours, noted for her charm, her efficient management of home and children, her tasteful, well-planned dinners, at which Gil is a smiling, genial host. And Gil wishes he never had to see her again....here lies the crux of the problem for men like Gil. Have we put so much togetherness into marriage that it runs counter to a man’s basic instinct?136

Should readers have missed the problems, this statement from Eddy Harbett offered a red flag to the problems of Canadian men: “A man wants a comfortable home, nice kids—and let’s be frank--available sex in a socially acceptable way. But it isn’t his whole life.”137 Readers were equally frank in their comments.

Mrs. Marion Schaffer of Sudbury reported that she had recommended the article to her minister as reading material for the church’s pre-marriage courses. Furthermore, she wrote: “Many thanks for the perceptive article. ... It seems that fewer girls marry under the influence of rose-coloured romanticism nowadays, but it would be wonderful to set straight” any girls who still harboured those ideas.138 In a letter positively dripping with sarcasm and
thinly veiled anger, Mrs. Hazel Norrish of Thornhill adopted an alternate reading by claiming the wife as an endangered species:

We women have to face the fact that wives are fast becoming obsolete! The only function they can perform (or will not) is to work 18 hours a day, 365 days of the year for no pay! Think about it. A man can live in an apartment, eat well-balanced meals from the frozen food counter while the corner laundrette and dry-cleaning establishment attend his laundry. Pretty girls are a dime a dozen: now he can even have sex and respectability with the use of birth control pills....For slathering day in and day out devotion he can get a dog. For dignified, aloof and high bred love a cat—they are quite content to be thrown out of the house and left alone for hours on end with nothing to do. . . .Yes girls, it is becoming quite clear that dull well-behaved wives who love their husbands are a crashing bore. The emotions of love, trust and companionship that marriage entails are just a drag to the average man. Well, if they don’t like us that way--fine, there must be hundreds of better places to be than behind that eternally dirty sink!139

Whether Norrish’s feminist edge had been sharpened by the magazine’s articles, her experience as a suburban wife or angrily sparked by the article’s content and thesis was not clear. Whatever rise the magazine hoped to provoke in its readers with this article’s indictment of the suburban housewife worked--readers like Norrish were quick to see through the article and to use it as a sarcastic call to arms.

The magazine had a penchant for exploratory articles about those groups defined as “other,” such as men, those from diverse ethnic backgrounds, immigrants, the working class, and the poor. The purposes behind such articles were multiple--to offer readers insight into how other Canadians lived their lives, to provide a wider base of interest from which to encourage an enlarged subscription and readership base, and to highlight issues in need of social redress. If readers’ images of themselves, i.e., as not-men, not-ethnic or not-poor, were also reinforced or heightened that should be seen as an un-intended side effect. Articles on race and ethnicity in the sixties took two forms. Stories of race broadened out from their fifties emphasis solely on Black Canadians to offer recurring analyses of the situation facing Native Canadians.140 Meanwhile, ethnicity was divided into examinations of individual immigrants or their families in Canada, occasional articles on the ‘French-Canadian’ situation or articles which glorified multiculturalism (these were often printed at Christmas in a format such as “Christmas around the world”).141

Unlike the fifties when Native Canadian issues were never raised in the magazine the sixties witnessed numerous articles devoted to analyses of the plight of the First Nations.142 Along with the two articles examined here the issue of the magazine’s depiction of Native
Canadians and reader reactions’ will be addressed again in the section on provincial portraits and in the cover art component. In 1962 Anderson sent writer Frances McNab and a photographer to the Stony Indian reservation, west of Calgary, to interview the Poucette family and report on the living conditions on reservations. The Poucette family was pleased to be interviewed and photographed by the magazine; in fact the “What’s New With Us” column reported on the unusual circumstances which occurred while the Chatelaine team were at the reservation:

It’s not everyday that a baby is named after a magazine, but Chatelaine has been so honoured. When photographer Jack Long and writer Frances McNab. . .went out to the Stony Indian reservation at Morley, just west of Calgary to photograph the Poucette family, they discovered that a new member had been born to one of the Poucette daughters, Mina Left Hand. As a matter of fact, there hadn’t been time to go to the Calgary hospital and Mrs. Poucette had delivered her own grandchild. In honour of their visitors the Poucettes decided to call their new baby girl Chatelaine Left Hand--Laine for short.143

McNab was appalled by the living conditions on the reservation and her article “The Forgotten Canadians” was a stinging indictment of Canada’s policy with respect to the First Nations. Employing a combination of historical background and contemporary analysis, McNab was unequivocal about where the blame for this situation lay: “We self-righteously denounce nations that repress their native peoples... yet we force some 200,000 Canadians--our Indians--to live in segregation to preserve their rights, deny them control of their own affairs, do little to help them from near poverty.”144 This article passed without commentary, at least judging by the letters published in the magazine.

By decade’s end the approach was more ambitious, so the magazine devoted a special feature to Native Canadians “Canadian Indians 1968” complete with photographs and a lengthy, hard hitting article from Barbara Frum. To support the feature the cover photo was devoted to a portrait of a Native Canadian woman--film-maker Barbara Wilson (see illustration). Inside Frum’s article was framed by seven pages of black and white photographs of both successful Native Canadians (from a white, middle class perspective--i.e. upwardly mobile professionals and university students) along with those who preferred a more traditional lifestyle on the land. Whatever the case, even in pictures depicting bleak conditions on reservations, the images attested to Native Canadian pride and tenacity and provided photo evidence of the special’s subtitle (and thesis): “Playing the white game is out, being proudly Indian is in. This warmly perceptive series tells why Indians are angry, what
they believe in, what they seek."145 The title of the Frum article, “How Ottawa (And We) Slept,” set the tone for the piece as she angrily denounced white Canadian’s treatment of Native people:

The Indians of Canada are conquered people. Force this fact up out of your subliminal into your conscious mind and you will be ready to grasp what four hundred years of Indian policy has been about. We’ve ghettoized Indian people on special lands not of their own choosing, forced Indian religion underground, outlawed the speaking of native languages in Indian schools, attacked Indian culture, overruled honourable treaties in our courts of law....146

Colonization and assimilation--Frum stopped short of calling it genocide--were the two prongs of the Canadian Indian policy. The argument, the compelling photographs and the cover photo combined to make this feature a must read.

Accordingly, the editors reported that Frum’s article had elicited “raves.”147 W.J. Wacko, Research and Training Officer with the Community Development Branch in Alberta, sent his congratulations and assessment of the impact of such an article: “These well-documented and up-to-date articles will make a significant contribution in educating the Canadian public.”148 Mrs. B. Spence of Saskatoon was also delighted by the article: "I am a treaty Indian by marriage and was extremely pleased to see a positive article...I am glad Chatelaine took the initiative."149 “Just a note to say Kuyanamik (a great large thank you),” wrote David C. Ward the President and Managing Director of Team Products based in Edmonton:

Having lived with this all my life, reading your article amongst all the negative stories on Canada’s Native People is like a breath of fresh air and a flash of sunlight to one trapped in a cave. I feel positive that this article will be a great inspiration to many Indian people. We at TEAM have been fighting a battle for three years to stress the positive side of the Indian situation, and it is gratifying to see someone else, not only understand, but do something about it.150

Because of a positive portrait in Chatelaine and the perceptive, analytical commentary of Frum’s article, many people were prepared to believe that this would create some momentum on Native Canadian issues in the country, and that self-esteem of Native Canadians would rise substantially. Only one dissenting voice was registered about the article and the magazine published a lengthy excerpt of that letter--possibly to illustrate some of the differing approaches within the Native community or as a way to inject some central Canadian perspective into the debate. While applauding some aspects of the article Kahn-
Tineta Horn, of Caughnawaga, Quebec (a Native activist) criticized Frum, and the magazine, for not going far enough in its analysis of the problems and solutions:

...I am a Mohawk of the Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy and the only free Indian engaged in continuous welfare work for my people... There are some 250,000 Indians in Canada, but in your article there are only twelve Indians referred to... I find an article like this is amusing but confusing. The article was particularly successful in such wide views as the love of the land, which is the fundamental foundation of the whole Indian existence and culture... That is why such an article must not be construed to encourage a change at this time in the Indian Act, because the first thing that the politicians will do is to find some phony excuse to change the Indian Act to the extent of stealing the precious land of Caughnawaga away....

The ability of the magazine to generate discussion and debate on a variety of issues cannot be ignored. Of equal importance, the letters page served as a means by which dissenting readers could air their views with the readership, expand upon arguments addressed in the articles and seek a platform from which to expound their politics. The national audience provided authors, editors and letter writers through the pages of Chatelaine magazine was, at times, astonishingly diverse.

As mentioned earlier, the articles on ethnicity were primarily about the difficulties faced by immigrants in assimilating into Canadian society and their trials with the often prejudicial attitudes of other Canadians. Articles about French Canadians focused less on their ethnicity and more on the eternal Canadian question about the fate and demands of Quebec. In contrast to the fifties when the articles had featured, primarily, Eastern Europeans like the Meyer family, this time the focus was on Italians in Toronto and a Chinese woman in Vancouver. Additionally, at decade's end the magazine dispatched a Czech-Canadian writer to follow up a reader's letter to Anderson detailing her prejudicial treatment after her immigration from Spain. The reader's faith in the power and prestige of the magazine to address, or at least attempt to understand her situation, was indicative of the role accorded Doris Anderson and Chatelaine magazine. If one judges the popularity or controversial aspects of articles by the letters printed on the letters page, these articles did not elicit mass mailings. Some Canadians were pleased that the magazine publicized the plight of immigrants, or embraced multi-culturalism, while others thought that successful immigrants should assimilate Canadian ways (most importantly language skills) and leave their ethnicity behind.
Complementing the increase in the number of articles devoted to Native Canadians was a rise in articles devoted to poverty in Canada. One of the hallmarks of all of these articles was the thesis that poverty didn’t just happen to other people, increasingly it happened to people like Chatelaine readers. With the exception of a series of articles in 1969 written by Ian Adams, these articles favoured terms like ‘poverty,’ ‘welfare,’ or ‘public housing’ and avoided the vocabulary of class. For some the startling portraits of poverty, complete with dollar figures for annual income, shattered the mythology of the inclusive nature of middle-class existence in Canada. Writer Christina McColl Newman’s introduction to her 1965 article claimed: “They don’t starve, but they merely exist in an affluent society where the gap between them and the average middle class Canadians gets wider and harder to bridge.” For reader Bonnie Lee Morris of 100 Mile House, British Columbia the article proved profoundly upsetting:

I am horrified to learn that our family are among the invisible poor spoken about in your magazine of April 1965. I had always believed we were average in income and in the way we live. Only a short time ago I contemplated entering your Mrs. Chatelaine contest: I was proud of our status in life and what we are accomplishing. We are a family of five. The oldest boy just turned seven. Last year, our income was just barely over the $3,000 mark. I canned 400 jars of fruit and vegetables. I also made 54 jars of jams and jellies. I feel we are well dressed. I sew, making 99 percent of my clothes, including suits and coats. I make all our curtains, drapes, breadspreads, flannelette sheets. We were able to purchase crown land and have built our own home. It is not a shack, but a well-built three bedroom home. We have several electrical appliances, and are purchasing a 1965 pick-up and TV. As I stated before, I was proud of the job we were doing on our income. Now I find myself wringing my hands, saying “My stars, we’re poor. We are so poor.” At first I wished I hadn’t read this article, I almost decided to quit in despair. Now, I am determined to try harder.

By any definition an industrious housewife, Morris indicated in her letter the power of the Chatelaine article. As well, her letter indicated the self-loathing placed upon those who ‘discovered’, regardless of how many appliances they owned, that they were not ‘average,’ not middle class. While regional differences and the cost of living would make her family’s annual income go farther than it would have in the urban areas of central Ontario, nevertheless, according to the bald, statistical data presented in the article hers was a working class family. While focusing upon one particular family the article had nevertheless clearly stated that poverty, or the gap between the middle class, the working class and the unemployed, was not a matter of individual gumption and determination (as Morris believed)
but was systemic. In her defence, other readers had also formulated that opinion as this letter from Mrs. Patricia Stitson of Gravenhurst, Ontario illustrates:

I don’t think it’s quite fair to put Mr. Poulin in with the Indians of Hornepayne. If the Indians of Hornepayne spent a little less on taxis and liquor they would not have to pick in the garbage dump. Mr. Poulin and a great many like him are hindered by ill luck and lack of training not ambition....

Bad luck and race, according to Stitson, separate the poor from the middle classes. Noticeably, what angered her most about the piece was Chatelaine’s grouping of native and white poor together, the supposedly undeserving with the deserving.

The series on poverty: “The Real Poor Are Women,” (see illustration) “Life on Welfare is Hell” and “Can Anything Be Done About the Poor?” did not employ the semantic dance so common in other articles on this topic. In the first article of the series, writer Ian Adams was unequivocal about his particular bias and about the correlation between class and gender:

If you came out of the slums, as I did, you know all the jargon really means is that for a woman with three kids on welfare, a man is only a sometime thing....when all those nice middle class ladies with their association and service clubs pressured the government into the appointment of a Royal Commission on the Status of Women, they never thought for a moment that everywhere they went they would be hit by the simple fact: the real problem women in this country have is that they are poor.

Adams assumed the position of the angry journalist--a confrontational style full of moral outrage--to shatter some of the myths about poverty. Adams pointed to racial inequity as a further delineator of poverty: he indicated that the earnings of Indian women were “non-existent.”

The next installment provided an insider’s perspective of the welfare lifestyle. As the title suggested this was not an article about pulling oneself up by the bootstraps but a blistering indictment of systemic poverty and the inability of many well meaning do-gooders to fully comprehend the situation, much less make improvements:

I don't profess to know about solutions. Euthanasia? Overdramatic maybe in this big, gorgeous 'buy now, pay later' society. But sometimes you wonder if just 'existing' really is worth the tremendous effort involved. When there is no hope, only grim reality left, oblivion can seem like bliss....For God’s sake, do something! Don’t sit there on your Christian rear ends and mouth pious, meaningless platitudes! “They never had it so good.” “Damn abuses of welfare these days.” “Can't get them lazy bums to work no matter how you try.” Fiddlesticks! Balderdash! Go to hell. Do what you want, but I repeat, please do something.
Three million women in Canada – one half of all the women in Canada – are poor. Maybe it's time they stopped taking their economic beatings with a sweet feminine smile, and started to fight back. By Ian Adams.
These articles served numerous purposes. First they were exposé articles calculated to be shocking (in this case both language and content provide the readers with numerous jolts) and to peel back the layer of silence shrouding a contentious issue. The educational and informational value, as Bonnie Lee Morris' letter indicated, were another key purpose. They struck at the assumption of universal middle-classness in their attempt to enlighten and energize readers. To that end the final installment was the most successful. Adams' sights were set on exploding "the myth that Canada is a middle class country." Citing government surveys, statistical reports, and the Hellyer Task Force on Housing, Adams wrote:

If you take the $8,000 a year figure of 1961 as where the idealized middle class Canadian family-life begins...then you are confronted with the inescapable conclusion that in 1965 more than 60% of Canadian families lived below the economic level where middle class life begins.

Affluence, according to Adams, was chimerical. Most Canadians had to go into debt to participate in the 'good-life' and for some, even then, life on the installment plan was beyond reach. Faithful reader, these articles screamed, you are part of the silent majority of working class and poor Canadians. That articles so clearly at odds with the advertising would be a featured series in four separate issues clearly refuted Chatelaine's position as a primer on the good-life in Canada.

Readers' reactions to these bleak, gritty portraits were mixed and the article about the welfare mother elicited little sympathy. Mrs. K.M McNeil of Mabou, N.S. wrote: "I certainly didn't 'enjoy' 'The Real Poor in Canada are Women' but I am glad you printed it. It needs to be shouted from the rooftops!" Nina Leclerc of West Hill, Ontario thought that the article would have achieved greater effectiveness if it had been published in the business press:

Once again a heartrending feature on the plight of so many Canadian mothers in a woman's magazine and once again the usual advice: Women will have to...etc. Organizing takes time and strength, where will those overburdened and defeated women find either? The strong must take care of the weak, or what are men all about otherwise? If an article of such overwhelming importance were printed in the business sections of our papers...it might arouse some action.

Her assessment that Chatelaine was preaching to the converted was one that many readers would make but other evidence suggested that these articles did make their way through the system, ending up in university classes, government offices, on minister's desks all through the informal network of shared magazines, magazine clippers and letter writers. For
example, Miriam Hutton of Winnipeg assured the magazine “I am going to make your article required reading for all the social work students I teach... I wish it could be required reading for every women’s group in the country.” Conversely, Mrs. Gary W. Phillips of Creston, B.C, was affronted by the article, and she complained: “If your purpose was to turn the public even more against welfare recipients, then I’m sure you succeeded. The one and only question that woman should be asking herself is, Does any man or woman have the right to lay claim to the pay cheque of another? The answer is no!” However, Joan Gagnon of Ottawa wrote to attest to accuracy of the piece: “This is one of the most interesting and factual pieces of literature written. As a recipient of Mother’s Allowance I agree wholeheartedly. One interesting thing she failed to mention is the fact that there are a number of recipients, such as myself, who were taxpayers for over fifteen years.” Only Mrs. D.C. Kerr of Chatham, Ontario noticed the contradictions implied by the publication of such an article in a general interest women’s magazine as well as the jarring juxtaposition so common to popular culture between totally divergent articles and between article and advertising content:

Chatelaine always provides food for thought, but the May issue gave me indigestion with the combination of “Does the Queen Need a Raise?” and “It’s Hell on Welfare, a Mother’s Story.” I just couldn’t work up much pity for the Queen after reading about a mother and seven children living on $70 a week. Dignity is something every human needs. Why does it mean castles and servants for one and a washing machine that works for another? Both women are supported by taxes. I’m not against royalty--just for ordinary people.

Wisely, the magazine refrained from trying to answer Mrs. Kerr’s question.

In a similar vein, the magazine also probed the nature of regional difference and disparity. The featured series “Women in Canada,” which began in 1966, focused upon a region or province every few months. Writer Catherine Breslin made an effort to meet and interview a diverse lot of women for each region, both urban and rural dwellers, and representatives of upper, middle and working classes--although they were not referred to as such. Invariably the articles were usually popular outside of the region but those from the featured territory, province or region were highly critical. For instance, in the “Women of Nova Scotia” Breslin profiled seven women: Laney Kohler of Lunenburg whose husband was a sea captain; teenager Sharon Warner of Port Hawkesbury whose father worked as a toll collector on the Canso Causeway; Teresa McNeil, a Home Economist at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish; Ivy Bower of Upper Ohio, a single senior who worked as a
licensed hunting guide; Elizabeth Reddick and Maxine Gough from Halifax who were both school teachers and as Black Nova Scotians told a tale of bigotry and prejudice; and Catherine McKinnon, a Halifax singer and swing. This excerpt, complete with statements from Ivy Bower, gives an indication of Breslin’s style as well as the ‘characters’ she interviewed:

Ivy Bower laid down the rifle she had been cleaning and slid a pan of biscuits into the oven. “I’m one of those that always loved the woods,” she said. “But there ain’t no sport left to it."...Bower belongs to a vanishing breed too: the kind of Nova Scotian who has been called "hard as nails, soft as butter, and independent as pigs on ice." At 68, she is still scratching out a living as a licensed guide. "I don’t like the cities and I don’t like the towns and I don’t like anybody that does. But up here we got a lot of friends, and there’s always the open door."169

Outside of the region Bower et al. made for fascinating reading. The women profiled did not conform to the traditional style for this sort of regional piece (respectable housewives, volunteer workers and wealthy, demure elderly ladies of stature)—they were individuals, characters even, who represented a diverse group of Nova Scotian women. Reader Joyce E. McElroy of Calgary wrote “I am especially enjoying your women of Canada series,” undoubtedly because Breslin had not arrived in Alberta at the time McElroy posted her letter.170 For Brenda Bravery of West Ewell, Surrey, England the feature on Nova Scotia reminded her of her summer vacation and summoned up wonderful memories: “I was fortunate enough to visit Nova Scotia last year, and it was truly beautiful, and the women were incredible, wonderful hostesses, cooks, and homemakers. . . .I enjoyed every single minute.”171 Apparently she was not troubled by the discrepancy between the women she met and those she read about in the article.

Readers from Nova Scotia, however, were horrified. This letter from Marie Woodworth of Berwick, N.S. enumerated their complaints:

Catherine Breslin did a very poor job of representing the women of Nova Scotia. Tourists planning to visit our fair province may expect to see elderly ladies running around the woods with rifles, teen-agers hanging around corners with nothing to do, few young people with fewer dates, small fishing and steel-working villages, only one city, excuse the expression, Halifax, and lonely wives waiting at home for their husbands to return from sea. What of the other areas of the province: Annapolis Valley, Cabot Trail, South Shore, and the rising areas of the province? We are intelligent, happy, successful people with modern living facilities as other parts of Canada. I can’t wait to read your future articles on Canada. I won’t know whether to believe them or not.172
They felt the magazine made them look foolish, less “modern” and “developed” than they really were and that her profiles of unique individuals were unrepresentative of Nova Scotian women. Another reader, P. MacKenzie Campbell of Sydney, N.S., complained of the stereotypical portrait: “Why do writers harp on such exaggerated phrases as ‘the barren coal-and-steel stretches of Cape Breton Island?’ I have seen more scars along the Toronto waterfront adjoining the highway leading from the main city to Scarborough, and I don’t mean this as a pun.” Thus one of the special Centennial series quickly turned into an exercise in letter writing to defend-your-region-against-the-Chatelaine reporter and explain to readers from other regions just how unrepresentative the article was.

The other articles continued in the same style and usually elicited nothing but derision from the province of the profile. The most vociferous commentary came after the publication of “The Women of British Columbia” in February 1968. The sub-title “On this beautiful last frontier, there’s often hardship and loneliness—but the reward is a free and individual life,” was a fitting summation of six of the seven women profiled. It did not prepare readers for the seventh, Georgina Archie, a Native-Canadian resident of ‘Skid Row’ in Vancouver:

At 21...Archie can summarize her life with a small but appalling collection of statistics. She’s borne and lost three sons. She’s been arrested 25 times “by rough guess,” jailed about a dozen. She’s cut her wrists three times, once collapsed from an overdose of drugs. Angry, turbulent, compassionate, Georgina stands as a living indictment of the double bind of poverty and racism in Canada.

While the magazine’s purpose in including Archie was to highlight the plight of Native-Canadians not to pillory them, nor to suggest that Archie was representative of all Native Canadian women, Native and white readers alike were angered by the negative portrait. Ethel Brant Monture of Middleport, Ontario complained:

The article “Women of British Columbia” was a sadness to us Indian readers. Why was such a pitiful creature chosen to represent us when B.C. has many Indian women we could view with pride? The article was not a dissertation on prostitution in B.C. which ‘vocation’ has many other than Indian there. We continue to wonder why the Canadian news media deny us the racial courtesy given to other citizens.

The magazine’s goal of presenting diverse portraits of Canadian womanhood had backfired completely—each region (or in this case race) wanted the article to present a positive, glowing assessment of women in the region as befitted a special inaugurated as part of the Centennial celebrations. Miss Pearl Williams wrote to complain on behalf of the B.C. Conference Sub-
Committee of the United Church of Canada: “Surely Catherine Breslin knows that many Indian women are doing well in society and are making a fine contribution to Canadian life. To be fair, why did she not portray one of these?” One reader, Mrs. Beatrice Carroll of Wisteria, B.C. was angered by immigrant groups in B.C. who were, in sixties parlance, ‘living the good life,’ in contrast to Native Canadians:

The plight of Georgina Archie typifies the plight of many of our native women in beautiful British Columbia, where women from Germany, and China live the good life. “A log cabin out in the woods away from everybody”...Bless her, the dream of thousands the world over. I hope she attains it, it should be hers by legacy.

In defense of their series, the editors printed this afterward under the last letter:

The Women of Canada...has featured three Indian women: Phyllis Gibson of Regina, a part-time nurse and mother...Barbara Stevenson of Winnipeg, a high school graduate with a commercial art diploma....However, not all Indian women have happy stories to tell, and with Georgina Archie we presented the other side.

As these excerpts from the series, and reader commentary indicated, the articles on region and on Canada in general were seldom puff pieces which glorified the status quo unconditionally or presented idealized versions of Canadian womanhood. They epitomized the peculiarly Canadian trait of taking pride in diversity and difficulty and were not merely hagiographic articles about the bounty, beauty, or people of the nation. But for many readers, they failed to represent their regions as they wished to see them presented to other readers across the country--as modern, prosperous, safe, congenial and ultimately, as good places to live. As Audrey Berisford’s letter (in the epigraph to Chapter 7) revealed, often the readers wanted articles which overlooked the blemishes and instead provided air-brushed portraits of which they could be proud.

One place readers were usually assured of a “positive” piece of Canadiana were the historical articles. Profiles of famous families of Canada--the Molsons, Eatons, Dunsmuirs, etc., or of Canadian women- Susanna Moodie and Catherine Parr Traill--for instance, delivered the type of articles readers demanded. Positive, affirming articles which glorified the individuals and families, and paid tribute to Canada’s past.

The magazine resisted publishing articles on modern Canada which were purely complimentary or without critical commentary about improvements--whether political, cultural, economic or social--and many readers were offended by such statements. One of the most controversial articles published on Canada, written by a young Canadian author
named Mordecai Richler, was entitled simply “Why I Left Canada.” The bombast and sarcasm typical of Richler’s later essays are all present as he decried the “cultural and political backwater” where theatre and novels were classified as “amateurish” or “unspeakably bad,” “mistrust” prevailed and “prosperity on the installment plan. . .seems to be the norm.” His parting blow was reserved for the state of mind and growing similarities between Canada and the United States:

Look here, it’s indisputable that Canadians on all levels are better off materially than people are in Europe but they also seem less happy, more incomplete. Leisure is a chore. The people I know go about their pleasure with a dreary obligatory air. It appears to me that in America today, and in this instance (and indeed in many others) the difference between American and Canadian is negligible, everything must be good for you. . .It seems that little is done for its own sake or simply because it’s enjoyable.

Vintage Richler, the essay was intended to rile feathers and to get Canadians thinking about their, in Richler’s view, national self-absorption and smugness. Not surprisingly, some readers were irate, others were bemused and still others, although they represented the minority opinion, heartily agreed. Donna E. Gerlach of Regina, in an unintentionally ironic, yet no less delightful response, asked “Who is he anyway?” Miss K.M. Graws of Sydney, N.S. had a similar question: “Why did he come back, and when may we have the pleasure of his leaving again?” Mrs. K.A. Godenir, of Ponteix, Saskatchewan attributed Richler’s dyspeptic essay to his lack of exposure to all parts of Canada, and her belief that “Perhaps, to date, he has met and mingled with the wrong people.” No one was more affronted or disturbed by Richler’s article than Mrs. A. Hanley of White Rock, B.C whose passionate, angry letter stated:

If someone does not asphyxiate Mordecai Richler soon, I shall probably be forced to do it myself... When I consider how five generations of my family worked and suffered to make Canada a great country, I know just how the Congolese feel. The least you can do is protect your country from the insults of others.

She has, semantically at least, stripped Richler of his citizenship for writing such blasphemy. However, sprinkled amongst the anti-Richler letters were some complimentary ones. These were readers who while not necessarily in agreement with all of his comments, recognized that edge of satire and the purpose of such articles. Mrs. R.E. Clubbe of Ottawa sent this complimentary assessment: "I heartily congratulate you on a most amusingly written and very, very true insight into the Canadian way of life. I, a backward European (English), have lived here for five years, and if I had the gift of expressing my thoughts as you have, I would
have written exactly the same." Similarly, Mrs. J. Wiszniowski of St. Catharines, Ontario wrote: "Bravo! Many, many thanks for that genuine article. It was the most daring lecture and how very, very real." In a mass circulation periodical it was impossible to satisfy all readers, and as controversial articles attested, a little controversy was good for business--it drew in new readers, got faithful readers fired up, made the magazine a lively read, and the letters page an even livelier forum of correspondence. The magazine often embraced this tactic with respect to the country, whether to get readers to think critically about the nation’s attributes and problems or to provide jolts to their readers--many of whom were devoted nationalists--which then reverberated onto the letters page. Just because one of Chatelaine’s key selling features was its Canadian origin it did not necessarily follow that all articles reflected the country to the readers through rose-coloured glasses.

Although the magazine strove to push the Canadian angle in the majority of their feature articles, the annual family budgeting specials published each January and the Mrs. Chatelaine articles published each May also permitted readers a view of how women and families in different regions lived. One of the consistent complaints about the family budget special--where a family was picked from the mail-bag (these articles were very popular, and readers wrote in requesting the magazine to select their family as the budget family)--was that the families selected had higher incomes and thus were “un-representative” of the majority of Canadian families. Even when the magazine paid close attention to selecting families with the median Canadian income--a large portion of the readers were disgusted that such “high-income” Canadians were selected. This letter from an Ottawa reader, Mrs. J.C. Bradley, and the retort from the Associate Editor Jean Yack illustrate the tensions which surfaced each year around the popular, yet problematic, feature:

In January I was amazed that you spent nine pages on a family that rushed blindly into debt. [How the Daubeny Family Will Get Out of Debt, by Jean Yack]. In my neighbourhood when I was a child, the families had a cow, chickens, a garden and the mothers always baked their bread and cake, pies, etc. The clothes were always sewn by the mothers. Not so much money, but wisely used and planned.

[Today's urban middle-class families don't have cows, face stronger social pressures to own more, achieve more (hence spend--and sometimes borrow--more). The Daubenys, we felt, were typical of such families, and our suggestions for them would help many Canadians.--J.Y.]

Older readers, and readers from rural areas of the country were most likely to criticize the income levels and “planned consumption” that often categorized these features. Likewise,
they felt little compassion for those pressured into debt by their penchant for pacing the neighbours purchase for purchase.

In 1968 the featured family was the Craig family of Brampton, Ontario. Grace Craig wrote to the magazine after reading about the 1967 budget family, the Beausejours of Toronto, because her husband's detailed analysis of the Beausejours' budget and spending plans revealed that the Craig family of six ate for substantially less per week than the Beausejours family of four. In this update letter to the Chatelaine staff in 1969, Grace Craig provided insight into the fishbowl that budget families were thrust into and the un-real nature of the experience:

Doing the story was like a trip to a different planet where ordinary words no longer have the same meaning. Ask my husband. He's the one who noticed our food costs were just half of those of the previous budget family. We wrote to Chatelaine, and were chosen for the feature. The strangest day was spent taking fashion pictures. There was no one there I knew, not even myself transformed by a two hour makeup job, radically new glasses, and a professional hairdo. We were amazed at the variety of response to the article. We had inquiries about the procedure for overseas adoptions, exchange of ideas of coeliac diets, requests for knitting patterns used for my red dress. The funniest reaction was that of the people who said flatly we did not exist! We still feed our growing family of six for $75 a month... I revamped my whole wardrobe: five new knitted dresses, two new pairs of high boots, and a new winter coat... The children needed many new things and Alan needed new lab coats and trousers for school. Our total clothing bill last year for the six of us was exactly $373.37.192

This was a trademark of many budget families, Mrs. Chatelaine winners, and others accorded featured status in the magazine-- years later they were still writing update letters to the editors, or dropping by to see them, an obvious indication of their continuing delight with their own, personal, Chatelaine experience. Her brief commentary about the experience indicated that although many of the photos of real people (as opposed to models) were seemingly 'natural' or 'down-to-earth' they were still creations of the art director, photographers and of the departmental editors.

Alan and Grace Craig, as Grace's commentary above hinted, were a very different budget family (see illustration). This was a compelling story. The couple met as students at the University of Toronto. They bought their first “cash book” for logging all family expenses at the University of Toronto Bookstore; appropriately enough it was on sale, and ten years later they were reportedly still using that system. Along with their own biological children, Shelagh (8) and Geordie (6), the couple had adopted two more: Anitra (4) a refugee from Hong Kong and Theo (2) a “mixed-racial child.”193 Although they were currently
Alan and Grace Craig live the good life by ignoring status symbols for the things they really want, and make more meaningful investments, such as an education for their children.  

**Alan and Grace Craig live the good life by ignoring status symbols for the things they really want, and make more meaningful investments, such as an education for their children.**

By Mildred Istona

For the past ten years, Alan and Grace Craig, formerly of Huttonville and now of Brampton, Ont., have managed brilliantly on $6,500 a year. (As a United Church minister in Huttonville, Alan was earning $4,400 a year, but with a rent-free tax-free furnished house, paid telephone and car allowance, his income was roughly equivalent to $6,500.) Not that the Craigs adhered to a very sophisticated budgetary system. In fact, the principle they followed — and continue to follow today on Alan's new teacher's salary of $8,400 a year — is quite elementary: They simply itemize every cent they spend, and make sure they have money on hand to buy the things they want when they want them. In short, they budget behind, not ahead.

The Craig "system" has a charming and appropriate history. Alan married Grace in Toronto in 1957 when they were both students there — Alan was in his last year at Emmanuel College and Grace was studying at Covenant College, then called the United Church Training School. Budget-minded even as students, the Craigs responded to a bookstore sale, spied a cashbook, intuitively decided, "That would be useful," and bought the cashbook for $1.67, a markdown from $2.50. This was their first bargain together. And so the die was cast for at least the next decade. Their friends agreed that keeping a cashbook was a good way to learn about money, but were skeptical that the Craigs' good intentions would last. Ten years later, the Craigs still use this method — and it still works.

The system has remained largely the same over the years because the Craigs saw no reason to make striking changes. Whatever changes did evolve were minor. For example, summary sheets grew out of their desire to see "where the money went," and the nature of some of the summary-sheet columns changed. The Craigs used to have a Garden column, but now it is included under Groceries. And during the ten years Alan was in the United Church ministry, they had a Manse column to list legitimate manse expenses that could be charged off to the church. Last fall, when Alan went into teaching, this column was dropped.

Since their marriage, the Craigs have lived in Toronto, in Hardisty, Alta. (groceries cost more in rural Alberta, except for milk, eggs, beef, pork), and in rural...Continued on page 58

On a photographic romp, the Craigs with Shelagh, 8, Anitra, 4, Gordie, 6, and effervescent little Theo, almost 2. Last fall, Alan — a former research chemist — embarked on a third career, teaching, which he now combines purposefully with the ministry.
living in Brampton, Alan had held pastorates in Hardisty, Alberta, Toronto, and rural Ontario. The subtitle on the story: “Alan and Grace Craig live the good life by ignoring status symbols for the things they really want, and make more meaningful investments, such as an education for their children,” prepared readers for a budget couple with different goals than most. Quite simply, where other families were caught up on the consumption treadmill the Craigs preferred to steer their own course—they believed in saving up for purchases and not buying on installment plans, purchased much of their food in bulk or at discounted or sale prices, had simple tastes in home furnishings, clothing, hobbies and leisure (predominantly books, music and crafts) and tithed a whopping 11.2% each month to the church and other charitable organizations. The editors undoubtedly believed that finally—after two decades worth of criticism from readers about the profligate ways of budget families—they had found the perfect couple.

Most readers agreed. Mrs Elisabeth Harding of Nipigon, Ontario was delighted with the choice of the Craigs:

Congratulations. At last you have published a “how to live” article on a family, earning less than $8,000, that actually believes in giving to church and charities. I had wondered how many people, like ourselves, believed in sharing what they had. The Craigs have other similarities to our family also, in that they grow and freeze their own produce where possible.

Notice that one of the chief criteria employed by Mrs. Harding in her evaluation of the budget family’s “representativeness” was how similar they were, in income and beliefs, to her own family. Mrs. Etta L. van Nostrad of Gormley, Ontario hailed the Craigs as “a breath of fresh air” and concluded that there was “still some hope for the human race.” However, for Mrs. Edward Hiebert of Cloverdale, British Columbia the Craigs were just too perfect: “It is pure fiction, and I can’t think of many housewives that will back up this statement.” Although the editors were usually good about leaving the letters page, “the last word is yours” to the readers, in this case they quickly jumped in lest other readers accept Mrs. Hiebert’s alternate reading of the Craig budget article:

The Craig story is fact, not fiction. Four Chatelaine editors interviewed the Craigs and personally checked their statements and account books. A consulting nutritionist double-checked their menus and found them nutritionally sound. The Craigs do not regard themselves as nor did we say they were, “modern Canadians.” In fact they abhor the food waste so prevalent in developed countries....While not all of us may prefer to live as economically as the Craigs, it can be done. They do it—and that was the point of telling their story. The Editors
Although the Chatelaine editors rarely invoked closure on the letters page debates, in this case, after finding the budget family to answer all the critics, they were not prepared to tolerate any hint of alternate or negative commentary. After all, a family like the Craigs seldom ever came along—and they wanted to bask in their moderate, cautious approach to budgeting a little longer.

The Mrs. Chatelaine winners, as the Mrs. Slob letters in Chapter 7 enumerated, also suffered from questions of “representation.” Of course, one housewife and her family could hardly be expected to represent the goals, ideals, styles and dreams of all the readers, but many readers compared Mrs. Chatelaine to themselves and often found her either wanting or found her perfection repellent. Great care was taken in the selection of the winner, and of the runner-ups to avoid slighting one particular region or province. Thus the winners came from almost all parts of the country—only British Columbia and the Territories did not have a grand prize winner during the decade—although they did have runner-ups each year. The first winner, Mrs. Joyce Saxton hailed from the farming community of Plenty, Saskatchewan. She was followed by: Josephine Ouellet of Sillery, Quebec; Florence E. Holt of Regina, Saskatchewan; Ethelyn Mosher of Middleton, Nova Scotia; Leone Ross of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; Elsie Lee Fraser of Calgary, Alberta; Eva Hammond of St. Hilaire, Quebec, Diane McLeod of Toronto, Ontario and in 1969, Bettie Hall of Montreal, Quebec. All of them had a number of children and, with the exception of Bettie Hall, were very active in community, church and cultural events in their respective communities. According to the supplementary information the editors provided each year, the contest continued to be extremely popular and many women entered in multiple years. For example, Mrs. Henriette Van Der Bregen of Weyburn, Saskatchewan was selected as provincial runner-up three years running. For the winners, the “Mrs. Chatelaine” experience proved very enjoyable. This letter, from winner Ethelyn Mosher of N.S. gave some indication of the prestige, interest and even international acclaim accorded the winners:

Being Mrs. Chatelaine is one of the nicest things that has ever happened to me. When the excitement has died down, I know the memory of this happy time will give pleasure to my family and to me for many years to come. There have been letters, cards, and telegrams from every province in Canada, with the exception of Newfoundland, and many from the United States and Brazil.

One of the runners-up, Mrs. Marjorie E. Hallman of Pictou, N.S. (Nova Scotia’s runner-up for 1963) mentioned her involvement in the Mrs. Chatelaine contest in her questionnaire
stating: "Chatelaine has been resource, teacher, companion and friend. Also has reinforced my self-esteem when I made it as runner up in the 'Mrs. Chatelaine Contest.'"

For each Ethelyn Mosher and Marjorie Hallman, of course, there were plenty of sore losers and proud slobs who continued to share their views each year in the Letters page of the magazine.

One reader, Marianne Fenton-Marr, nominated herself as "Mrs Chatelaine" in her letter to the editors:

I hereby appoint myself Chatelaine woman of the year…I live in an ordinary bungalow. I have one child and two foster children. I bake all my own bread, cakes, pies and cookies. I make good nourishing soups. I make all the clothes. I make my husband’s shirts. I knit sweaters, make hats for myself. I do all my own washing and ironing. I take my boy to hockey, baseball and lacrosse. In summer holidays we go camping. I do lots of gardening, make fruit into jams and jellies. Oh, I almost forgot. I teach my children and several neighbours children the violin. Will you ever publish this letter? Of course not, but I got it off my chest.

Obviously a human dynamo around the home, either Fenton-Marr was a disconsolate loser in the contest or never entered, believing that her chances of winning were not good because she did not appear to be actively involved in volunteer or community projects. While Mrs. Houston of Bowmanville, Ontario complained:

How sweet, goody, goody and religious do you have to become to be able to measure up to your average Mrs. Chatelaine winner? How original, they all are, with their Home and School, Scouts and Guides, Sunday schools, etc... Well then, a big handshake to lousy housekeepers like me, who reads a book while she should be waxing floors.

Fenton-Marr got a response, although not the one she was looking for, from Mrs. John Barrett of Hearts Delight, Newfoundland:

Re. the last word is yours [August] and here’s happy reading to Mrs. G. Houston of Bowmanville, Ontario, from one lousy housekeeper to another. Long may she wave her book, and I don’t care if Marianne Fenton-Marr drowns in her good nourishing soups and balls herself up in her hand knitted sweaters. Here’s to our side.

The perfectionists might have won the contest, but it certainly appeared that those who sided with the "slobs" took just as much pleasure, perhaps more, in ridiculing it and sanctimonious writers like Fenton-Marr. The success of the contest had less to do with the number of entrants or the calibre of the winners but that it created a substantial amount of interest in the magazine—from both teams—and fostered the sense of community amongst entrants and letter writers alike. We will never know whether Mrs. Houston wrote to Mrs. Barrett personally after her letter appeared in the magazine, but it was clear that theirs was a friendship or alliance formed in response to and aided by the magazine—where they went from there was
up to them. As Mrs. Mosher’s commentary made clear, many readers having initially been introduced to other readers through the pages of the magazine did feel free to write personal letters to them and it was not fantastic to suggest that some pen pal relationships resulted from the magazine exposure.

If many average Canadian women were made into celebrities by their inclusion in various Chatelaine feature or departmental articles, then it was equally clear that many Canadian celebrities shared their personal lives, goals and sometimes autobiographies, with the Chatelaine community. There were profiles of American celebrities, Elizabeth Taylor that sixties-era vixen, was featured in two articles--much to the chagrin of readers--but the majority of featured celebs were Canadians. Juliette, Marg Osbourne, Don Messer, Fred Davis, Gordon Sinclair, Pierre Berton, Tommy Hunter and others all had their day in the magazine, usually accompanied by a cover photo. Other than the glamourous, over the-top Juliette Sysak or the blustery portraits of Sinclair and Berton, the majority of articles on Canadian celebrities stressed the quintessentially down-to-earth personas associated with many home-grown celebrities of the era. Jas. L. Allen of Bechard, Saskatchewan wrote: “My heartfelt appreciation to Christina McCall for her fine and appropriate write-up on Don Messer. Everyone in Messer’s outfit are real humans, no skittish malarkey or wisecracks to mar the human touch....”205 Even those who were not able to watch the show on television, were able to appreciate Messer and his Islanders on the radio, and thus enjoyed the article in the magazine as well. One such reader, Mrs. Henry MacArthur of Bonilla Island Light Station, Prince Rupert, B.C. wrote to thank the magazine: “Enjoyed your article on Don Messer. Have listened to the islanders on radio for years and agree they are tops. The program is often interrupted here. . . . I can imagine the consternation of some opera-loving fans if their favourite program were interrupted....”206 Her criticism of the CBC’s programming, the divide between high-brow and popular culture was also reflected in the critical letter of another reader. However, Mrs. Dennis Bude of Alma Saskatchewan’s criticism was of the prevalent urban bias in the article and in the magazine:

I wondered at the lack of consideration of the rural woman in so many of your leading articles. I don’t after this article. First of all, the music of Don Messer is not country corn. It is the very music of the pioneers. The country music which is on the hit parade may be called corn. The old reels and waltzes which Messer plays are not. Perhaps if Chatelaine were to delve more deeply into the countrywoman’s life, it would find less rubbish than it thinks. . . . We are homemakers before we are rubes.207
Like so many others before her, Mrs. Bude's commentary illustrated that readers believed the magazine should be aiming for readers just like them—when they missed the mark they were quick to write, claiming that the periodical was not representative of Canadian women. In the case of rural women this was often true: they rarely appeared in the magazine articles despite their continued presence on the letters page.

Conclusion

The editorials and articles printed in *Chatelaine* magazine during the sixties were wide ranging in their examination and critique of the role(s) of Canadian women. The editorials disseminated feminist ideas and proposals to a mass audience of girls, women and men. By the end of the decade all regular readers were conversant with the goals of second wave feminism, and increasingly many seemed to have become converts—particularly to issues like pay equity, changes in women's legal status and the importance of women's voice in the domain of politics and the workplace. The inclusion of an editorial, and particularly the subject-matter, differentiated *Chatelaine* from its American competitors.

While feminist ideas were prioritized in the editorial essays they formed only one of a number of issues and topics for the general feature articles. Similarly, the general feature articles educated and entertained readers on a vast number of topics—illicit drugs, sexuality, gender roles, employment opportunities for women, poverty, racism, reproductive issues and on the less contentious issues of national history, Canadian identity, regional differences, Canadian and American celebrities and changes in the private world of the household. The articles gave *Chatelaine* a breadth of appeal quite astonishing for a woman's magazine. A liberal tone of inquiry often permeated the article features but, as the Marta Wasserman article amply illustrated, other more conservative voices also appeared in the magazine.

The success of *Chatelaine*’s mass market appeal lay in its unique combination of editorials, feature articles, fiction and departmental material. This was a mass market women's magazine in which the vast majority of issues began with an editorial devoted to feminist issues, feminist concerns or more general complaints about women's status or role(s) in Canadian society. Then, the feature material provided insight into magazine production, gave readers a page devoted to accomplished 'average' women across the country—whether athletes, professional women, housewives who had started their own
businesses or the score of indefatigable women like Mrs. Tonner who resided in communities across the country, and then furnished up-to-date information on medical issues and Canadian cultural developments. Following these sections the magazine had a regular foreign affairs and national news column, later re-configured into a book review page. Then, the lengthier articles included a mix of exposé articles on social issues, or biographies of famous women, Canadian history, celebrity portraits, features on the Royal Family, marriage, employment or educational opportunities for women. This made for an incredibly diverse magazine. Some of the articles were glossy, entertainment features but many others were not--they adopted educational, informational or analytical tones.

The success of the magazine did not rest on the content alone. A key part of the continuing interest in the magazine was reader participation and the relationship between the editors, authors and readers. Readers wrote back to the magazine, offering their own commentaries about the merits and demerits of articles, series and editorials. In turn, these letters often encouraged others to re-read the articles or editorials in question. They wrote to criticize or compliment the views of other readers which were published on the letters page or they wrote to people profiled in the magazine directly. The active participation by readers made the letters page engaging and encouraged a steady stream of correspondents to the magazine. Although obviously much slower, the letters page bears a similarity to e-mail discussion groups as it involves lively discussion group topics (articles and editorials) and the interconnection of disparate individuals who communicate across great distances using the resources of the media, and different media of communication, as a facilitator. In some respects Chatelaine should be classified as an inter-active medium. Finally, the genesis of many articles and some editorials came from reader letters, questions and information. Thus it would be accurate to describe the Chatelaine editors, authors and readers as a particular community of Canadian women. The major commonality, of course, was the periodical but these groups felt free to discuss issues not directly related to the magazine--to ask advice, to give suggestions, to keep in touch like good friends do. In short the bond, although initially created by the magazine, went well beyond its bounds. Ostensible outsiders to this community--foreigners who lived in Britain, the United States and even Japan-- were also drawn into the fold, perhaps because it was a pleasant reminder of Canadian vacations, or because it permitted a window onto Canadian life, or because Canadian friends or relatives
had given them a gift subscription. Whatever their initial reason for purchase, many international readers also enjoyed reading the magazine and participating in the community.

1 Mrs. Tsuyoshi Fujiwars, Sakai-City, Osaka, Japan to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (October 1967), 132.


3 See Chapter 1 for commentary about Fiske’s cultural analysis.

4 Phyllis H. Meeks, Georgetown, Ontario to Editor, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (March 1966), 112.

5 Public Archives of Ontario (PAO) Maclean Hunter Records Series (MHRS) F-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs. David Barr, Mono Centre, Ontario to Anderson, 2 October 1962.

6 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Dora Flagg, Wainfleet, Ontario to Doris Anderson, 4 August 1962.

7 Mrs. Edith Sacker, Vancouver to Editor, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (December 1961), 108.

8 These results were taken from the Sixties Editorial Database, see Appendix for details.

9 Sixties Editorial Database, see Appendix for details.


13 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 445, Doris Anderson to reader, North Vancouver, 25 April 25, 1962. The reader’s letter is not extant, (and it is clear from Anderson’s letter that the letter writer requested anonymity), but it is possible to piece the situation together from Anderson’s return letter.

14 Doris Anderson, “We’ll Do Our Own Censoring Thank You Very Much,” Chatelaine (February 1960), 1.

15 “Do we Canadians need to have our television programs censored? Our February editorial on the CBC and Simone de Beauvoir said No. This month, readers take a stand of three to one for Yes...” from Introductory header-- “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (April 1960), 164.

16 Margaret Sluth, Ste. Therese, Quebec to the Editor, “The Last Word is Yours,” Ibid.

17 Mr. B.E. Field, Flesherton, Ontario to the Editor, Ibid.


19 Ibid.


21 Mrs. G. Baiton, Swift Current, Saskatchewan to Editor, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (December 1969), 76.

Mrs. V. Musgrave, Willowdale, to Editor, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (October 1968), 120.

Mrs. Leona A. Graham, St. John, N.B. to Editor, Ibid.


Doris Anderson, "We've had all the studies of problems of women we need. Let's have action!" Chatelaine (June 1964), 1.


Doris Anderson, "Can We Make This Royal Commission Count?" Chatelaine (March 1968), 1.


Letter from Murial Kerr, Ottawa to Editor, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (October 1963), 114.


Mrs. Margaret Reynolds, Edmonton to Editor, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (August 1968), 72.

Phyllis M. Hodgson, Gibsons, B.C. to Editor, "The Last Word is Your," Chatelaine (February 1961), 110.

Mrs. Ilse Levi, Edmonton to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (April 1961), 156.

Name Withheld, Victoria to Editor, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (November 1968), 128.

Bernard E. Morin, Ottawa to Editor, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (November 1969), 120.


The statistics for articles are taken from the Chatelaine Articles Database for the 1960s which includes 307 articles. See the Appendix for details.

Women authors account for 83.4% of all articles in the database. Statistics on nationality were not recorded because, with rare exceptions (e.g. Margaret Mead) almost all authors were Canadians. Canadian writers, and Canadian locales, were the two key selling features which differentiated Chatelaine from its American competition.
The Editors, "What's New With Us," Chatelaine (September 1961), 3.

PAO MHRS F-4-1-a Box 427, Doris Anderson to Lloyd M. Hogkinson, re. Prices for Articles and Fiction in Chatelaine, 7 June 1960.

This is an omnibus category which includes all articles on these topics: family and the home; mothering, marriage; housewife syndrome (fatigue, ennui etc.); children; family budgets; dating and relationship between the sexes; shopping; dieting; aging; sex and new in this decade, the Mrs. Chatelaine articles, see Appendix.

The statistics are taken from the Chatelaine Articles Database for the Fifties and the Sixties. For greater detail see Appendix.

PAO MHRS F-4-S-a Box 448, Starch Readership Results Taken from the June 1970 Report.

Bettie Hall, "I was a working mother when that term was a dirty word: Mrs. Chatelaine 1969," Chatelaine (May 1969), 34.

PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 446, Mr. H.C. Straton, Windsor, Ontario to Doris Anderson, 1 September 1962.


Claude Bissell, "The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Books" Chatelaine (April 1961), 49. In a list headed by J. Conrad's Nostromo and completed with Back to Methuselah by G.B. Shaw perhaps it is not surprising that Virginia Woolf, for one, does not make an appearance.

PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Mrs. L. Turk, Prince George, B.C. to Lawrence Galton, 26 April 1962.


The editors, "What's New With Us," Chatelaine (March 1961), 2.

PAO MHRS F-4-4-B Box 444, Miss Elizabeth Hardy, Welland, Ontario to Anderson, 3 January 1962. The letter reads: "I am a Grade 10 student at Welland High School and for a Geography report, we are to compile articles concerning the Common Market. In your December issue, I found an article about the above in Your World Notebook. I used the picture for a previous Geography note and threw away the rest of the page. Since the article was interesting and informative, I would be very pleased if you could forward me the information in the article, and also, if possible, the sketch...I used the November article, The Canadian Senate, in my History Notebook. . . ."

PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs. D. Ross MacDonald, Hensall, Ontario to Anderson, 25 September 1962.

Mrs. A.F.W. McQueen, Niagara Falls, Ontario to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (July 1961), 88.
62 Mrs. Ethel M. Demaine, Powassan, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

63 Elizabeth H. Marsh, Burlington, Ontario to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Ibid.

64 Eileen Morris, "Housework is a part-time job," Chatelaine (March 1960), 28-29. Housework was featured sporadically as a topic for the general feature articles. All writers share a critique of the ways in which women's work in the home was organized and structured and proposed changes in the amount, nature and purpose of housework. However, they all presume that women are responsible for housework. See: Jean Yack, "The Canadian Homemaker: What You Think of Your Job: A Special Chatelaine Report," Chatelaine (March 1961), 54-55; Anna Davies, "I Hate Housekeeping" Ibid., 56; Michael and Pam Cope, "A Husband and Wife Change Jobs," Chatelaine (February 1965), 28-29; and Beverley Morin, "How to Beat the Housework Rat Race," Chatelaine (February 1966), 22.

65 Morris, 29.

66 Ibid., 71-72.

67 The Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (May 1960), 158.

68 The Editors, "The Last Word is Your," Chatelaine (June 1960), 136.

69 Mrs. Myrtle Gallup of Danville, Quebec, to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (May 1960), 158.

70 Mrs. J.B. Hughes, Calgary to Editors, Ibid.

71 Mrs. F. Weeks, London, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

72 Estelle Cooper, Red Deer Alberta to Editors, Ibid.

73 Mary Daniluk, Windsor, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.


75 Christina McCall, "booksbooksbooks," Chatelaine (January 1966), 12.

76 Christina McCall, "Working Wives Are Here to Stay," 31.

77 Ibid., 32.

78 Unfortunately, space restrictions do not permit detailed analysis of all of the working women, particularly wives and mothers, articles which appeared during the decade. This list is a partial enumeration, to illustrate variety of topics published, and provides interested readers with additional sources in the magazine: Sheila Ward, "Going Back to Work," Chatelaine (September 1960), 37; Jessie London, "76 Best Jobs With a Future for Girls," Chatelaine (September 1962), 38-39 which was the "beginning of a Special three part Chatelaine report "The Revolution in Learning and Earning", "70 Best Jobs for Homemakers Returning to Work," Chatelaine (November 1963), 34-35 presented the results of a Chatelaine national survey which "pinpointed all likely job possibilities, the ways to train for and succeed in them."; Gwen Beattie, "Special Section: The Working Mother," Chatelaine (January 1965), 23; Michael and Pam Cope's "A Husband and Wife Change Jobs," Chatelaine (February 1965), 28-29; Those disenchanted with the grind of working found a voice in Bonnie Buxton's, "Confessions of a working girl: I Want to be Kept at Home!" Chatelaine (August 1966), 16; Barbara Pettit "87 Jobs Older Women Can Learn Or Do, Right Now," Chatelaine (April 1967), 49; Mollie Gillen, "Women at Work," Chatelaine (February 1969), p. 38; and the previously mentioned Mrs. Chatelaine article from 1969 [see footnote 50].
Christina McCall, "All Canadians Are Equal--Except Women," 89.

Mrs. Eldon Finell, Ponteix, Saskatchewan to Editor, "The Last Word is Yours." Chatelaine (April 1962), 150.

Mrs. Eugenie Ross, Don Mills, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

Mrs. R. Berchtold, North Vancouver to Editors, Ibid.

Christina McCall, "Why Can't We Treat Married Women Like People?", 26.

Ibid., 90.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Mrs. Maxine La Croix, Montreal to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (July 1962), 76.

Mr. Fred W. Olsen, Cumberland, British Columbia to Editors, Ibid.

Mrs. Helen Max-Duca, Vancouver to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (June 1962), 126.

PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Abraham Reinberg, D.D. Rabbi, Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto to Keith Knowlton, 8 December 1962.

PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Jean Yack to Doris H. Anderson, "re this submission from Feinberg," undated.

PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Jean E. Yack to Doris H. Anderson, re. Feminine Mystique, no date.

PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Keith A. Knowlton to Doris H. Anderson, re. Feminine Mystique, no date.

PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Keith A. Knowlton to Almeda Glasey, 29 August 1962.


Lia Lafontaine of Ville de Laval, Quebec to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (February 1967), 100.

Batten, "After black power, woman power," 37.
98 Ibid., 105-106.

99 Marie Kiciuk, Winnipeg to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (November 1969), 120.

100 Coleen Fitzpatrick, Burnaby, British Columbia to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (January 1970), 76.

101 Mrs. Aileen Sivell, Oakville, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (November 1969), 120.


103 Marilyn Jones, Ottawa to Editors, Ibid.

104 Marta Wasserman, as told to Christina McCall, “How Mothers Mix Up Daughters for Love and Marriage,” Chatelaine (October 1962), 31.

105 Ibid., 87.

106 Mrs. D. Desmond, Vancouver to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (December 1962), 84.

107 Mrs. C. Munson, Terrace, B.C. to Editors, Ibid.

108 Mrs. Ellenmie Melcher, Rockyford, Alberta to Editors, Ibid.

109 J.S. Cameron, Etobicoke, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

110 Mrs. Jean Griffin, Ottawa to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (February 1963), 80.


113 Renate Wilson, “What Turns Women to Lesbianism?” Chatelaine (October 1966), 33; June Callwood, “Sex and the Married Woman,” Chatelaine (June 1968), 25. Although some readers were under the impression that articles about sexuality were rampant in the sixties version of Chatelaine, proportionately the statistical information from the articles database does not indicate that. However, the larger number of articles meant that sexuality articles did appear with greater frequency. Interested readers, see: Dr. Sara B. Sheiner & Bob Allison, “Modern Woman: Is She Really Losing Her Femininity?” Chatelaine (February 1961), 27; Catherine Sinclair, “What is Sex Appeal?” Chatelaine (August 1963), 18-21; many other articles about marriage or adjustment to marriage have a few paragraphs devoted to sexuality but that was not the primary focus of the article.
Wilson, "What Turns Women to Lesbianism?", 33.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid., 130.

Ibid.

Ibid., 33 & 130.

Ibid., 25.

Ibid., 60.

Ibid., 25 & 64.

Mrs. J. Barkaman, Steinbach, Manitoba to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (August 1968), 72.

Mrs. Audrey L. Wosley, Chilliwack, British Columbia to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (October 1968), 120.

Mrs. P.A. Robinson, Regina to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (December 1968), 94.

Mrs. Barbara B. Duncan, Markam, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

Like the Fifties article and fiction components, masculinity while a minor theme did nonetheless have a number of controversial articles devoted to it during the sixties. See: Robert Thomas Allen, "Man the Next Best Sex," Chatelaine (August 1961), 29; Margaret Mead, "What Makes a Man?" Chatelaine (July 1963), 17; Michael and Pam Cope, "A Husband and Wife Change Jobs," Chatelaine (February 1965), 28-29; Eileen Morris, "The Masculine Mystique--How to Raise Your Son to Be a Man," Chatelaine (August 1965), 19; Mollie Gillen, "Why Men Want Out of Marriage," Chatelaine (March 1967), 28-29.

Michael and Pam Cope, "Michael's story", 63.

Ibid., 61.

"Pam's Story," Ibid., 65.

Mrs. F. W. Barrett, Botwood, Nfld to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (April 1965), 108.

Mrs. Bonnie Heath, Stratford, Ontario to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (May 1965), 104.


Gerald L. Morris, Stavely Alberta to Editors, Ibid.


Ibid., 84.
138 Mrs. Marion Schaffer of Sudbury, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (June 1967), 112.

139 Mrs. Hazel Norrish, Thornhill, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

140 Unfortunately, space limitations do not permit a discussion of the articles on Black Canadians or Black Americans during the sixties as I have opted instead to devote the space to articles on Native Canadians. Those interested in how the magazine dealt with Blacks and inter-racial relationship (and they are very similar to the fifties articles) please see: Pat Carrington, as told to Lloyd M. Lockhart, “The Marriage They Said Wouldn’t Work,” Chatelaine (February 1964), 20-21; Florence Jones and Doreen Mowers, “How Two Women Fought Race Prejudice,” Chatelaine (May 1965), 39; Thirza M. Lee, “How We Adopted an Interracial Family,” Chatelaine (December 1966), 33.


144 McNab, 34-35.


146 Frum, 48.

147 Editorial subheading, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (January 1969), 76.

148 W.J. Wacko, Research and Training Officer, Community Development Branch, Province of Alberta (Edmonton) to Editors, Ibid.

149 Mrs. B. Spence, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan to Editors, Ibid.

150 David C. Ward, President and Managing Director of Team Products, Edmonton to Editors, Ibid.

151 Kahn - Tineta Horn, Cauthnawaga, Quebec to the Editors, Ibid.

152 Sonja Sinclair, “Exposé,” p. 50. According to Czech-Canadian writer Sinclair (who had posed as Bozena Svobodova while researching the story) her article had been inspired by a letter from Maria W. “a Spanish woman who came to Canada as a bride.” According to a letter Maria wrote to the editors of Chatelaine, employers refused to recognize her educational qualifications because “Spain is far away”; a university professor consistently insulted her by telling his English class that Spaniards were imaginative but stupid; though she was trained as a secretary, the best job she could get was an inferior position in a hospital, running errands. Asked Maria “Is this the price I have to pay for having loved a Canadian?” Once again, Maria’s letter illustrates the perception of the power and prominence of the periodical in Canadian society.


Bonnie Lee Morris, 100 Mile House, British Columbia to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (August 1965), 68.

Mrs. Patricia Stitson, Gravenhurst, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (June 1965), 100.

Ian Adams, “The Real Poor in Canada are Women,” 111.

“Life on Welfare is Hell,” 56.

Adams, “Can Anything be Done About the Poor?” 60.

Ibid.

Mrs. K.M. McNeil, Mabou, N.S. to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (June 1969), 72.

Nina Leclerc, West Hill, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

Miriam Hutton, Winnipeg to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (July 1969), 64.

Mrs. Gary W. Phillips, Creston, B.C. to Editors, Ibid.

Mrs. Joan Gagnon, Ottawa to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (August 1969), 68.

Mrs. D.C. Kerr, Chatham, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

See: June Gibbs as told to Cathie Breslin, “We’re Bushed and We Love It,” Chatelaine (March 1961), 38-40; Edna Staebler, “The Village That Lives One Day At A Time,” Chatelaine (December 1961), 38-40; Edna Staebler, “Miner’s Wife,” Chatelaine (March 1962), 36-37; And beginning in April 1966 Cathie Breslin’s “The Women of Canada Series” which profiled a different region or province every month. This feature was the first to include the Yukon and Northwest Territories (as the North, naturally) as part of the country worth examination.


Ibid., 26.

Joyce E. McElroy, Calgary to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (November 1966), 124.

Brenda Bravery, West Ewell, Surrey, England to Editors, Ibid.

Marie Woodworth of Berwick, N.S. to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine, 180.
173 P. MacKenzie Campbell of Sydney, N.S. to Editors, Ibid.


175 Ibid., 32.

176 Ibid., 36.

177 Ethel Brant Monture, Middleport, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (April 1968), 126.

178 Miss Pearl Williams, B.C. Conference Indian Sub-Committee of the United Church of Canada, Vancouver to Editors, Ibid.

179 Mrs. Beatrice Carroll, Wisteria, B.C. to the Editors, Ibid.

180 The editors, Ibid.

181 The historical articles will not be analyzed, interested readers please see: Patricia Young, “The Fabulous DuSmuirs,” Chatelaine (September 1961), 38; Mary-Etta Macpherson, “The Eaton’s--Shopkeepers for a Nation,” Chatelaine (June 1962), 28-31; Catherine Breslin, “Famous Families: The Molsons,” Chatelaine (June 1963); Audrey Y. Morris, “The Amazing Strickland Girls,” Chatelaine (September 1966), 42: All of these were multi-part series. I have cited the introductory article and issue.


183 Ibid., 25 & 28.

184 Ibid., 64.

185 Donna E. Gerlach of Regina, to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (May 1961), 132.

186 Miss K.M. Graws, Sydney, N.S. to Editors, Ibid.

187 Mrs. K.A. Godenir, Ponteix, Saskatchewan to Editors, Ibid.

188 Mrs. A. Hanley, White Rock, British Columbia to Editors, Ibid.

189 Mrs. R.E. Clubbe, Ottawa to Editors, Ibid.

190 Mrs. J. Wiszniocki, St. Catharines, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

191 Mrs. J.C. Bradley, Ottawa to Editors, and the retort from Jean Yack, Associate Editor, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (May 1964), 86.


193 Mildred Istona, “The Good Life on $6,500 a Year,” Chatelaine (January 1968), 59.

194 Ibid., 35.

195 Mrs. Elizabeth Harding, Nipigon, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (March 1968), 96.

196 Mrs. Etta L. van Nostrand, Gormley, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.
197 Mrs. Edward Heibert, Cloverdale, B.C. to Editors, Ibid.

198 Editorial comment, Ibid.


200 Ethelyn Mosher, Middleton, N.S. to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (August 1964), 62.

201 Mrs. Marjorie E. Hallman, of Pictou, N.S. was one of the few people who completed the author’s questionnaire regarding reading the magazine in the fifties and sixties. Questionnaire dated, January 18, 1994.


203 Mrs. G. Houston, Bowmanville, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

204 Mrs. John Barrett, Hearts Delight, Newfoundland to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (December 1964), 80.

205 Jas. I. Allen, Bechard, Saskatchewan to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (March 1961), 154.

206 Mrs. Henry MacArthur, Bonilla Island Light Station, Prince Rupert, B.C. to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (April 1961), 156.

Thanks to my mother-in-law my copies of Chatelaine arrive fairly often out here in the Jungles of Peru. ... Although I do not agree with some of the stories it still is excellent reading. I have enjoyed the "Last Word is Yours" and feel a lot of Canadians have little to do when an article in a magazine will cause them to write some of the remarks they do but it does add for good reading. ... I am sorry to say that I like Sheila MacKay Russell's stories. Maybe some of them are a little far fetched but still good reading and think how much fun it would be to live like that.1

--Dorothy Paga, San Martin, Peru

How very much I enjoy your articles and stories.2

--Mrs. E. Quarrie, Palmerston North, New Zealand

Do you ever wonder why people in the United States subscribe to Chatelaine? I will tell you why I do. I am fascinated by your recipes, they are so usable, so readable, and so uncluttered--and most of the recipes call for ingredients you have on hand. Congratulations to the editor, thought that you'd like a Yankee observation.3

--Mrs. W.F. Bennett, Hutchinson, Kansas

For a long time I have intended saying how much I enjoy your magazine, which is subscribed by a friend. ... It is by far the best present she could make me. I avidly read the stories, articles, and the ads, I like especially the stories of the Martin Family. ... Your magazine even served as an introduction when I was in Ireland in June. I was "sorting out" my fellow passengers on a Coach Tour, and finding that one was Canadian, I asked her if she read Chatelaine, and was delighted to hear that she did. As she had just returned from the Congo, I realized how it got around. This conversation took place while walking up the steps of Blarney Castle. ... Best wishes for future success.4

--Laura Faulkner, Staffordshire, England

Part of Chatelaine's enduring appeal for readers were the fiction and departmental features. Features such as food and recipes, housekeeping, gardening, child care, fashion, beauty, house and interior design were the heart of the woman's magazine genre. As tempting as it is to set up an analytical dichotomy between the magazine's non-traditional material (articles and editorials) and this traditional material (fiction and departments), such an analysis would be dangerously reductionist. Fiction and departmental material was traditional because it often prescribed a more traditional role for women, one that was limited to the kitchen, garden, nursery and shops. However, one can find other messages and roles in these features. There was a substantial component which focused upon unconventional roles, ideas or topics. For fiction, unconventional stories, although usually within the romance fiction genre, depicted workplace sexism, masculine angst, and inter-racial relationships. Chatelaine service department material also made forays into previously uncharted territory by exploring such topics as ethnic and
gourmet food delicacies, pop-art decorating schemes, beauty features for older women, and penny-pinching fashion articles. These nontraditional stories and departmental features re-invigorated the sections, enticed readers with their novelty, and created a devoted national and international following. However, despite the inclusion of these less typical service department and fiction features the proportion of material which accepted the role of housewife and mother as the primary role of women was much higher in these sections than in other components of the magazine.

Thus the service and fiction components of Chatelaine allowed for diversity of experience, while assuming that most readers were solely responsible for their family’s welfare and household maintenance. This material speaks to an ahistorical generalization of the home and family as “women’s world,” a common experience shared by all women regardless of class, race, sexual orientation, region, or age. In the sixties increasing emphasis was placed on the working wife, and later, the working mother. Similarly, some service department material assumed that most readers had modest means and thus eschewed glossy commercialism in favour of planned economizing. As the letters from international readers indicated, this material fostered the notion of a “women’s network” through the presumption of the commonality of women’s experience. Women sent subscriptions to daughters, mothers, sisters and friends for birthday and Christmas presents. They chatted with neighbours and acquaintances about the material and shared their recipes, diet plans, before and after photos, and housekeeping hints through the letters and departmental pages of the magazine. The editors were shrewd enough to realize that reader participation was the key to continued success, but the intimate tone and participatory nature of the magazine should not be attributed solely to business acumen. While it attracted readers (and thus subscriptions or newsstand sales) the lack of a sustained consumptive or commercial ethos did little to encourage the purchase of products advertised in the magazine. The extant papers and memos of the magazine’s editors illustrate a commitment to service and their focus was on the reader not the advertiser.

Finally, the prescriptive nature of this material needs commentary. Although the departmental material was more didactic than other components of the magazine, readers were still free to implement these suggestions. Many of the comments from readers on the departmental material illustrated quite clearly what they preferred and what they did not find useful. Readers rejected styles of dressing, cuisine or household maintenance which they did not
enjoy or found too onerous. The fiction stories had a devoted following of readers but here readers seemed to seek escapist fantasy or fictional portraits of heroines with whom they could identify. The controversy over Sheila MacKay Russell’s continuing series The Martins of Alberta will illustrate that many readers did not respond well to stories which they interpreted to be unrealistic or overly moralistic—although some, like Mrs Paga—clearly enjoyed the “fantasy” aspect of the Martins’ lifestyle.

**Fiction**

At one time you could count on *Chatelaine* for interesting fiction...Now, the fiction is strictly second class....I wonder why *Chatelaine* does not take a tip from the prosperous American magazines and follow their set-up and spread on articles. Why do we not see more articles and stories by Canadians?5
--Miss K. Murphy, Grimsby, Ontario

May I congratulate you on having dared to publish such a refreshing and wholesome story as “The New Woman”, by Harriet Frank, Jr. In this day of so-called sophisticated fiction—which to me means only one thing, unadulterated smut—it’s a nice change to read so charming a piece.6
--Mrs. James Houlit, Montreal

I refer to that bit of fiction entitled “He loves Me, Loves Me Not”.... Your counterparts in the U.S. publish enough of this sort of garbage to keep a teenager’s appetite perpetually satisfied. Is it necessary to feed this soppy sentimentalism to your Canadian adult audience also?7
Mrs. L. Germaine, Ottawa

How much I enjoyed the short story “Paper Promises,” by Catherine Sheridan.... It left me feeling rather sad, but it was true to life and well written.8
Mrs. Eve Kenesky, Hamilton

During the decade a number of prominent Canadian authors wrote for *Chatelaine*, including Ernest Buckler, Alice Munro, Margaret Laurence, Roger Fournier, Yves Theriault, Ethel Wilson and Jane Rule. As well, the phenomenally popular American author Pearl S. Buck published a story in the periodical. Sheila MacKay Russell of Edmonton, author of the best-selling novel *The Lamp is Heavy* (which was made into a film), contributed two series exclusive to *Chatelaine*. The first was “The Martins of Alberta,” her saga about the trials and tribulations of a “Master Farm Family,” and the second was a series of nursing stories. Altogether Canadians contributed 25% of the stories published in the magazine.9 This was a ten percent increase from the fifties. Since New York continued to be the source for the bulk of the magazine’s fiction, one can presume that the majority of the authors were American. Regardless of nationality, most of
the authors were women—or had female pseudonyms. For their efforts writers were paid $400 for short stories and up to $1000 for condensed novels.

The types of fiction published in the magazine were, as in the fifties, primarily formula fiction—romance, melodrama and mystery. To aid prospective writers the magazine published this short description of their requirements in Writer's Digest:

Stories of 3,000 to 4,000 words are most in demand. Canadian settings are preferred. A story’s dominant character should be a woman, involved in a situation which Canadian women can readily recognize and with which they can feel identification.

Stories selected for publication in the magazine came through the Toronto office (less frequently the Châtelaine office in Montreal) or through their New York fiction editor and reader, Almeda Glassey. The composite portrait, taken from the formal sampling of stories, confirmed the description printed in Writer's Digest, although as letters and commentary will indicate there was considerable disagreement—both within Châtelaine and amongst readers—over how many women “identified” with either the protagonists or plots of some Châtelaine fiction. Throughout the decade, most fiction stories in the magazine were romances—either the traditional format or the marital/family romance in which the characters are already married and, in essence fall back in love rather than consummate a new love affair. In comparison to the fifties, the percentage of romance (both categories) fell dramatically from 88% of all fiction to 61% of fiction. Part of this decline was due to the decreased space allotted to fiction as well as the increased number of mystery fiction and protagonists’ quest storylines.

Most fiction was set in Canada, although the percentage of stories with Canadian settings was lower than the fifties sample. These romances, mysteries and dramas unfolded in urban, rural and suburban settings. The high number of stories with rural locales was in striking contrast to the relatively few articles which featured rural issues or topics but that mirrored the continuing popularity of the rural and small town setting in Canadian literature. Thus for rural readers the fiction component was the most reliable source for material which depicted a version (mainly Sheila MacKay Russell's) of rural life. The majority of all Châtelaine protagonists were Anglo-Canadian women in their twenties. They were equally likely to be married or single, and the majority of them were wives and mothers, or if unmarried—students, nurses or writers. Of the married female protagonists, only 25% worked outside of the home. Two other character classifications—Character 1 and Character 2—were most likely Anglo-Canadian men. These were, after the protagonists, the most important characters in the stories—although many stories
had more than three characters. Even though both of these secondary characters were usually white males, their ages, marital status and occupations did differ. Character 1 was usually in his thirties, married and working in either the corporate sector or as a professional. Character 2 was younger—usually in his twenties, single and held a variety of corporate, agricultural or blue-collar jobs. Thus most plots focus on some sort of triangle or tension between a lead female character and her interactions with two male characters—husbands, suitors, fathers, brothers or friends. For all of these characters, even men with jobs, home and family were the primary concerns. The gendered-construction of male and female characters’ personalities as varied—women characters were more likely to have dominant personalities and exercise agency than male characters; women were far more emotional; male characters were slightly more aggressive than women; and both women and men had an almost equal chance of being weak or submissive; and ultimately, of being victimized.

In 47% of stories the male characters had power—whether by virtue of patriarchal ideology or professional expertise in business, law or medicine—while women exercised power in 40% of the stories. However, it was the female characters that determined the outcome of the stories. The contradictory message given to readers was this: male characters often had more power than women but women had influence—they could resist, evade, outsmart or manipulate men to effect an outcome suitable to them. The fantasy aspect of such a contradiction in terms was apparent—in Chatelaine fiction the underdog often triumphed.

Whatever the plot or genre, the primary focus was upon gender relations—most authors used gender, age and class as their “resources” or plot-spinning devices. Similarly, whether one looks for the primary form of discourse in the story, or the binarisms which often served as hooks upon which to hang plot structures, the dominant focus was on male/female tensions, tradition versus modernity or adult/child friction. While themes were more varied, the most popular were: dating/marital problems; family issues; conflict in gender roles; violence or class stratification.

Although information on the behind-the-scenes editorial selection process, for fiction or for any of the article components, is limited, these excerpts taken from the archival papers for 1962 provide insight into the editorial decision-making process. They also reveal a certain middle-brow disdain for the “commercial” stories published in the magazine. In a memo to editor Doris Anderson, managing editor Keith Knowlton wrote:
Fiction. Another story by Mary Jane Roll's whose stuff we've bought before. Like the others of her kind, she writes a good commercial package, with all the right elements and all the correct stops pulled...the outcome is predictable from the word go. If it were not angled to a specific season, I'd pass it up without hesitation. As it is, though I'm not enthusiastic, I wouldn't be inclined to dismiss it too quickly: it's built for the Christmas issue and, no matter what my own views of it are, I know it would have appeal for many of our fiction readers. Worth considering on a strictly business basis.  

Gender played a role in Knowlton's critique because his statement about Roll's story implied that the story would appeal to female readers even though it did not appeal to him. Clearly the requirements were for saleable fiction and not "good" fiction. 

This letter from Anderson to writer W.O. Mitchell confirmed that while some of the stories submitted to the magazine were very good, it did not necessarily follow that they were published in the magazine: 

Dear Bill, Thank you very much for letting us see the enclosed story, but I'm afraid we are going to have to turn it down since we have a very limited amount of space we can devote to this kind of story even from such well known writers as yourself. Right now, we have a bit of an over-supply, and for this reason I am returning the enclosed story. 

No extant letter expressed how Mitchell felt about being declined by Chatelaine magazine, one of the few Canadian outlets for short fiction. The archival records did contain a letter of protest from one angry Canadian author, Jane Van Every of Waterloo, whose lengthy letter pithily criticized both the editors' judgments and their perception of what readers liked to read: 

Dear Miss Glassey: Re your letter of November 6th. How do you aim at a market? Read all that has been written in that magazine, and then try to write the same old thing? But I am bored with most of the stories in Chatelaine. Usually, I can't force myself to finish them. Edna tells me that they are mostly American stuff that can't find a market. There are no good Canadian writers. My God, why don't you give us a chance? Just for fun I have conducted a campaign to find out how other people like your stories. I have been asking people of all mentalities for a long time, and I have yet to find one who likes them. They read Chatelaine for the other stuff, and they are getting tired of that too. Too much sameness. The illustrations are the only things that really thrill. In that quarter Chatelaine beats them all, and for that reason alone I send my stories to you. How about a story set in a famous old Canadian House? No, it's New Yorker style makes it unsuitable for mass-circulation. But that is what's wrong with Chatelaine. They have a poor opinion of their reader's mentality, so don't blame readers if they have a poor opinion of Chatelaine. The New Yorker does not have to send all sorts of people to your door, asking for subscriptions in the name of charity. You send your money and that's it. You don't even mind sending a few extra dollars exchange. With the New Yorker and the Atlantic Monthly there is no circulation race, because they give you something worth reading. They do not look down on their readers. They lift them up, and not with a new way to paint your face or do your hair, or even a fancy recipe. 

Van Every was obviously bitter about her rejection--apparently not the first--from the magazine but her critique of the fiction component (presumably the Edna she refers to is Edna Staebler a
infrequent correspondent for the magazine) was a fair one. There was a terrific amount of repetition within genres. Glassey was “furious” with Van Every but wrote that she did not believe that there was “much point in getting down to her level of name calling.” Her formal letter encouraged Van Every not to place all the blame for her rejection letters on the editors and highlighted the differences between Chatelaine and the American high-brow magazines:

It’s impossible to compare Chatelaine with the Atlantic and the New Yorker. Both of these magazines aim at a small “class” market, the former heavily subsidized by its book publishing house, the latter mining a restricted and lucrative market. It would be nice to see the struggling literary magazines in this country get as much support from Canadian readers.

The editorial commentary about another story again stressed the importance of a “commercial” vehicle— in-other-words, not experimental fiction or “quality” short fiction but a genre driven story which, the editors thought, had appeal for their fiction readers. In a memo to Knowlton, Anderson wrote: “Fiction. Woman ill, gets a crush on her doctor, later (to her relief?) it’s all one-sided. A very likely item, I think—hospital atmosphere, illness (our readers dote on it), handsome doctor, and a situation with which many could identify.” In summary, a good commercial Chatelaine story delivered identifiable plots and escapades (preferably with a little romance), user friendly texts which were open enough to allow readers to participate in the process of “making meaning” and a happy ending. After all, Anderson’s comment revealed even she was not “sure” about the protagonist’s feelings. Many readers, as the epigraphs made clear, wanted “clean” fiction— no affairs, pre-marital sex or explicit sexuality. This letter from Almeda Glassey to Mrs. Sewell Haggard at the Curtis Brown publishing company in New York illustrated the constraints posed by reader’s demands: “I simply hate to keep sending stories back to you, but in spite of the charming French setting I’m afraid we can’t use this one. The heroine on the brink of an illicit affair is still an unsympathetic subject for our readers.”

A key component of the stories appeal were their illustrations. All fiction illustrations were full page, multi-coloured drawings depicting key moments from the tale. They provided visual appeal in the magazine and part of readers’ enjoyment. Mrs. L. Muise, of Welland, Ontario, would second Van Every’s assessment of the enjoyment some readers derived from the story illustrations:

I have for a number of years been an ardent reader of your Chatelaine magazine and especially enjoy your short stories. Both my friends and I agree that the illustration of a story plays an important part in attracting the reader’s interest. This clever job we have
noted was very well done in the past by a Mr. Wes Chapman. It would be interesting to see more of his fine work. Many thanks for a fine magazine.\textsuperscript{30}

Mrs. Muise was an especially close and careful reader to notice the illustrator’s name since this was printed, in very tiny print, somewhere within the illustration.

Although an assessment of the reader’s views of Chatelaine fiction was made difficult by the infrequency of published letters, or archival letters, which specifically commented upon particular works of fiction, it was clear that some “average” readers or writers were disenchanted with the editorial selection. Anderson herself, a self-confessed “fiction addict” waded into the controversy when she published an editorial about the un-real world of women’s fiction:

We need some new models and, believe it or not, real people are living great dramas everyday all around us....Anyone can be a heroine with tawny hair, green eyes and a thirty-nine inch bust. But it takes a real heroine to mouth classic clichés with all the confidence of Elizabeth Taylor, when her nose shines and her health shoes are double tied. Take your tawny haired heroines. I want to read about her.\textsuperscript{31}

Writer, and reader, Brigitte Sagmeister of Downsview, Ontario disagreed with Anderson’s critique of readers’ preference for the tawny haired heroine over the “real” woman. In a letter strikingly similar to Van Every’s (in content not in tone) Sagmeister wrote:

I very much enjoyed “Confessions of a Fiction Addict “.... However, it seems to me that this salvo in honour of the shiny-nosed should have been directed, not at the general public, but at the publishers. I know, because I've been trying to sell stories to them that didn't feature tawny-haired, thirty-nine-inch bust heroines...But they feel they're not of enough general interest. Wouldn't it be interesting to take a fiction-taste poll among women?\textsuperscript{32}

Interesting indeed: the few available Starch reports for the sixties did not include the fiction numbers in their general overviews of the most popular components of the magazine--presumably due to the low readership of the fiction component.

Despite such criticisms of the fiction-- the repetitious nature, the “commercial package” or formulaic structure of most of the stories, and the low readership-- some women (and men) did read the stories. A few times per year Chatelaine supplemented its usual complement of fiction (generally 2 stories per issue) with the “Chatelaine Bonus Novel.” Aside from the bonus novels, the majority of fiction in the magazine was comprised of short stories--completed in each issue--which featured some sort of romance or a protagonist’s quest as the focal point of each story. Due to the repetitive nature of the plots and the weak characterization evident in most of the offerings, the remaining analysis of the fiction will present a representative sampling of the various types of stories along with the prevalent themes and messages. Again much of the fiction component offered traditional fare-- judged by plot structure, genre or themes-- but some
did not and an examination of this nontraditional material allows for a less jaundiced look at the magazine's fiction component.

**Young Marriage and Generational Conflict**

After the heated commentary about "The Beloved Son" (see Chapter 7) the story which generated the most interest—as judged by reader letters to the editor—was Alec Rackowe's novel "Trial Marriage." "Trial Marriage" (1962) followed the family/marital romance genre (complete with happy ending) with a teenaged romance at the centre (see illustration). Employing a very didactic and moralistic style of writing, Rackowe's tale follows the relationship between eighteen-year-old Arlene Reeder, the privileged daughter of a bank manager, and her twenty-one-year-old boyfriend, Jeremy Banks. This working-class, former high school football hero was ambitious to scrape together enough money (working at a gas station and garage) to take an engineering degree at college. Set in the fictional suburban, northeastern U.S. community of Claremont, the plot is a simple one. An ultimatum from Arlene's father that she must stop dating Banks while living "in his household" propels the headstrong, sullen teenager into a hasty marriage with Banks. From there, the tale becomes very predictable: life in a rooming house proves far from ideal; penury and immaturity cause a rift between Jeremy and Arlene; they separate; find strength and maturity in adversity; and then reconcile to attend college together.

As the synopsis makes clear, "Trial Marriage" was not a romanticized view of young love but a thinly disguised morality play which illustrated the difficulties faced by those who married young—before their education was completed, before they could support themselves and to people below their class status. Although the outcome and perhaps much of the plot was not surprising—particularly in an era (and especially a magazine) where pre-marital sex and divorce were virtually unknown—the rigid gender stereotypes forced both Arlene and Jeremy into foreign, uncomfortable roles. For example, shortly after hearing of her daughter's marriage, Arlene's mother counsels her: "We're not just mother and daughter any more. We're two married women. We can talk to each other on that level." For Jeremy, the changes are equally stark: "You're a married man now. You've got obligations, bills to meet. It creeps up on you. Suddenly all the ropes are in place and you're tied down. Maybe you better think of a permanent job." Individuality is subsumed beneath the traditional categories of "wife" and "husband."
They were too young to be married. Everyone admitted it. And in the secret recesses of their hearts, they were tortured with doubt. themselves

CONCLUSION—Arlie loved her job. It was a brightness against what had otherwise become a drabness. It was a refuge from Mrs. Bricker's, from too many thoughts and fears that rose up to plague her. At Eric Lester's Booke Shoppe she could forget without trying.

She found that she could sell very well because she liked what she sold, felt friendly toward the people who came in. Eric said, "You have good taste," and against her modesty, "Why shouldn't you have? You've been used to good things, to the sort of possessions and surroundings."  

By Alec Rackowe

"I'm going to get out. I have to," Jere said hoarsely.
The story’s resolution depends not on their changing the categories—making them more flexible—but on “maturing,” on realizing that their lives are eradicably changed, that they have had to give up much of the excitement and dreams of youth in exchange for the conventions of marriage.

The published reactions to Rackowe’s story were favourable. According to the editors, “We usually don’t hear much from you about fiction, but Alec Rackowe's novel of young love, ‘Trial Marriage,’ touched the heart of a current and not uncommon problem, judging from your many letters. . . .” What the majority of readers praised was the moral of the story, not the fiction itself. For instance, Dr. B.F. Nixon of Moose Jaw wrote:

I wish to commend Alec Rackowe for writing such a fine story and Chatelaine for publishing it. We badly need such stories, pointing out in readable and plausible form the grief and disillusionment of early marriages. In this excellent story, sex isn’t even mentioned, which alone makes it unusual and outstanding.

Outstanding and also unrealistic since surely one of the primary motivations for early marriages was the inherent conflict between teenage hormones and pronouncements against pre-marital sex. A good story, according to these readers, was one with a message, not necessarily a piece of entertainment or an engaging work of fiction. Another reader whose name the editors withheld identified with the plot too well:

It points out two things wrong with today's teen-age society—the attitude of 'going steady' with one person throughout the teen years, and the mistaken idea that marriage works miracles. I, myself, made these two mistakes—but with no happy ending. Throughout my teen years I dated only one boy. Our parents tried to break us up for our own good, but we rebelled and got married, thinking this would end our problems. Reality set in, and my husband of three months enlisted in the forces. I am still legally married to him, and, at twenty, wish I had listened to my parents.

Interesting that the reader wishes that she had listened to her parents yet she provides no indication that reading stories like “Trial Marriage” would have averted her situation. Only Mrs. W. Hingston of Carswell, Saskatchewan commented upon the characterization (as well as applauding the moral to be learned):

Regarding your fiction, I fluctuate from very pleased to disgusted and back again. But I must write to you now to tell you how touched and thrilled I was with... “Trial Marriage.” It is refreshing to find a story whose characters have real depth of character, and yet are human. Would like to see all young people and parents of young people read it, for I’m sure many would receive courage and comfort from it.

In her reply Anderson confirms that others were equally impressed by the story: “we rarely get comments from our readers about fiction stories, but this particular story seems to have struck a responsive chord with many women.” For these readers, fiction serves as a sugar-coated
format to convey important messages—more enjoyable and more readable than a non-fiction article on the same topic but still worthwhile and educational.

A discordant note came from an Edmonton reader, who wrote to criticize a story in the September issue ("Good-bye, My Darling Daughter") which had also focused upon young marriages. The criticism highlights the views of a reader who was not delighted at the preachy tone of some stories, the repetitious nature of story topics, nor the fact that some of the fiction was aimed at younger readers:

Please do not print this letter in your letters column. (That only serves to convince me that most of your readers are idiots who want to see their names in print. You must have some intelligent readers.) I just feel a trifle annoyed about your last issue and the story (I have forgotten the name) about the young kids who eloped and then decided to strike out on their own...I am heartily sick of young marriage stories....There are other people in the world who deserve attention...surely other adult situations that are amusing (Oh, how I long for a cute, sophisticated story in your sometimes very ponderous "educational" magazine)...or adult stories that are profound. This was nothing....Please, something, else! By the way...by educational I mean I get the impression that the Good Ladies of Chatelaine (and men, of course) are setting out to inform and educate and "help" the poor little average Canadian woman. Oh well, small wonder you feel like that. Look at the letters you receive. Ever read any of the stories in McCall's or Good Housekeeping? For women's magazines they are unusually good.41

While it is impossible to know whether or not the low readership of the fiction components was attributable to criteria mentioned in this critique— the didactic nature of much of the fiction and the implication that the magazine's "commercial package" catered to the lowest intellect of their mass audience— it provides some indication that beneath the indifference and silence was considerable frustration about the quality, and content, of the fiction. Her letter also indicates how difficult it was to publish fiction for a mass audience. And yet, conversely some older women did enjoy the stories— Anderson's mother-in-law was a fan of Chatelaine's fiction as she recalls:

We always ran fiction, and believe me the fiction was pretty standard...I'd go down to visit my mother-in-law in Prince Edward Island and she would ask me the motivation of some character in a story, and I could never remember the fiction story because it never seemed very important, but women like my mother-in-law did. They wanted some romance and some escapism in their life.42

It seems likely that the criticism of the youthfulness of the stories indicates that former fans were perturbed (like older readers of the Departmental features) that some of the stories were not of interest to them.
Mysteries

Frequently, the Bonus Novel was a mystery as the two-part structure was particularly suited to that genre-- readers anxious to discover "whodunit" would be quick to purchase the next issue of the magazine or make sure that their subscriptions were up-to-date. Mysteries published in the magazine tended to be melodramatic tales, jam-packed with terrifying experiences for the protagonist--murder, kidnapping, automobile accidents, mysterious deaths and disappearances and family intrigue. They were often set in exotic or dangerous locales and the mood of these pieces was meant to be dark and terrifying. The following two excerpts illustrate the tone, language and the nature of these tales. Mignon G. Eberhart's introduction to his story "Speak of Love and Murder" reads: "Maggy's marriage to Kirk was just days away, when out of the past came Josh--with a kiss and a warning. Now two mysterious deaths had loosed dread whispers in the night-filled corridors." Similarly, Jacquelyn Humble's "Ominous Stranger" tantalizes readers with this introductory phrase: "She had learned to live with her own frailty, but why did this man terrify her so much?" To generalize, the protagonist (almost always a woman) endured one horrendous event after another. She was the archetypal vulnerable innocent--perpetually terrified and dependent upon men--boyfriends, husbands or the police--to protect her and solve the crime. At the end she usually "melted" into the arms of her protector. Women were victims and men fell into two categories: protectors and tormentors. It is possible that readers enjoyed the thriller aspect of these stories much as modern readers are so fond of the Stephen King genre of thriller fiction (although these stories were considerably less violent than King's). However, very few readers could identify with the fantastic plots or the perpetually terrified, helpless, overwrought protagonists.

Searching for a "Plain Gold Band"

A substantial component of the romance fiction followed a format that I have chosen to call "fluffy" or "fluffs." These were light, insubstantial, inconsequential stories. Women met men, had some sort of conflict--either the eternal love-triangle or some other obstruction--and once that was resolved they lived happily ever after which invariably meant that they married or made plans to marry. The appeal of stories of this nature probably resides with women seeking light, escapist fare. Some romance fiction, while still written in the breezy style which characterizes this genre, deviated from the conventions of "fluffs" to address complex issues.
For example, Eileen Jensen’s 1961 story “Whose Afraid of Love?” promised a light-hearted romance with this opening caption: “Take one bewitching island, add a handsome man who wants to forget, a beautiful girl who wants to escape. Mix under a sunny sky...and see what happens.”46 Perfect spring fare. However, as the story unfolds, and we are introduced to the “girl” in question we discover that she is not a bubble-headed teenager but a thirty-year old fashion editor at a woman’s magazine. The conflict in this story was between her professional success and her personal life:

The hat, like her apartment and the corner office with the window, was Harriet’s badge of success—visible proof that a bright, ambitious small-town girl with no one to lean on could come to Toronto, work hard, concentrate on her job, and achieve success. Now she was bucking for that other badge of a successful woman—a plain gold band. She had discovered to her dismay that she was a little late. Most of the eligible men are picked off by the time they’re thirty.47

Naturally, the search for the “plain gold band” forms a major theme of all Chatelaine romance fiction and female characters were eager to obtain that status symbol. The romance genre demands a happy ending which Harriet achieves— invited to her friends’ summer cottage (Muskoka naturally) she meets a biology professor from the University of Western Ontario and love blossoms. While this story encourages women to view marriage as their ultimate goal, Jensen’s story provides a more complex piece of romance fiction. It features an “older woman” (thirty) who has achieved professional success on her own merit. Although it was a classic Horatio Alger story, the biography of Chatelaine’s staff reinforces the “realism” of the story. Her definition of success is two-pronged—career and mate— not the singular focus upon marriage. Similarly, while the goal is achieved, and it is clear that at times she would give up all her professional success for the right man, once he is within sight there is no commentary—either between the characters or in Harriet’s mind— that marriage will unequivocally mean the termination of her career. The ending is ambiguous and resists the assumption that she will give up her career for the ring.

Marital Bliss?

Although the goal of most romance fiction was marriage, in “Regret” this resolution came as a bittersweet conclusion.48 This pattern was amplified in all the family/marital type of romance as most plots revealed the difficulties in keeping a marriage afloat. The preferred audience for this story, according to the editors, were “every woman and especially the bright
young glowing girl” who they promised “will find a part of herself and her life in this love story of today." Assuming that was the case the message they were given was exceedingly bleak. Our heroine, Bea aged 29, returns from an exciting life touring and working in Europe-- Paris, Venice and Rome, specifically--to Toronto were she gets a good job and a nice apartment. She starts dating Larry, a very organized, responsible young man but when she receives a call from Val her European boyfriend she realizes that life with Larry is dull-- no spontaneous adventures; no parties; in short, no excitement. The epiphanous moment in the story occurs while Bea and Larry are dining out in a restaurant. Bea is overcome with regret about lost friends, faded memories and growing old. Meanwhile, Larry is plodding along asking her to marry him:

Larry's voice came toward her with the hesitant words she had been hurrying toward all day. "...a good life," he was saying softly, his hand covering hers. “Not as exciting as you've been used to but...you and I...so wonderful to be with. Bea, don't cry. Why are you crying?" And her voice, with a new timbre that she did not recognize, with a tired tenderness that coupled the sweetness of acceptance and the inevitability of regret saying, “It's nothing--it's because I'm so happy.” She watched the young couple leave, the girl's eyes anxiously searching the faces in the bar, and sighed with relief and recognition.

As many a Chatelaine heroine before her, Bea makes what she considers to be the right decision and she opts for security and stability not passion or excitement. For stories within a romance genre these outcomes were depressingly unromantic. A good marriage, according to many authors, was one in which the heroine realized that her best option for a mate lay in selecting a mature, dependable candidate-- in essence, the selection of a “good provider.” These women followed their heads and not their hearts. The moral of the Goldreich’s story, and one endorsed by the editors of the magazine (in their introductory comment, above) was that regret was an inevitable component of marriage. In return, the anxiety of single life (the young woman in the bar) along with the passion and excitement of that world were gone forever. She had exchanged the excitement (and instability) of single life for the security of marriage. One reader, Mrs. E. Camochan of New Westminster, B.C., was pleased with the story: “I have read with a very great deal of pleasure your story ‘Regret.’ The other story, No Strings Attached, was not worth reading.”

The Working Wife and Mother

Once married, heroines faced other complications--to work or not, to have children, and how to acclimatize to married life. Two stories, “The Best Wife in the World” and “Couldn’t Any Mother,” illustrate the two sides of the working wife conundrum and illustrate strikingly
different, even contradictory messages at work in the magazine’s fiction. Barbara Holland’s story published in January 1965 is an interesting story about a woman’s determination to be “The best wife in the world,” although it is made clear from the start that that “was exactly the kind of woman Andy didn’t want.” The protagonist, Diana Belknapp, is a biologist who works for the Department of Lands and Forests studying the effect of suburban developments on wildlife. Ironically, she will soon be suffering from her own case of over-exposure to suburban life because she quits her job as soon as she marries Andy Tomlinson. His effort to dissuade her fails, as this exchange illustrates: “I stick to my guns,” said Dinah.... ‘Nobody can do a really good job on two jobs at once.’ ‘And I’m you’re new job?’ ‘Of course. I’m going to be a wife. A housewife.’

While still on their honeymoon in Jamaica, Dinah starts buying an assortment of women’s magazines to educate herself about her new job. With her razor and paste pot at her side she cuts out pertinent information from these magazines, pasting them in one of four scrapbooks with titles like “Entertaining” or “Love and Marriage Relations.” Beneath this gentle spoof of women’s magazines (and the act of reading women’s magazines) is an important critique of the purpose and effect of this prescriptive literature since Dinah’s constant attempts to “be perfect” result in her own, and her husband’s, unhappiness. Once back in suburbia, her days revolve around meals and housework. Liberation comes in the form of an orphaned baby raccoon who turns up at her friend’s back door. Having volunteered to raise it, she quickly realizes the folly of her ways. However, it is Andy who must voice this realization and encourage her return to work:

“You know what would make me happy? If you’d go back to work....” “But Andy, what about the house? What about the cooking?” “He laughed, and...kissed her. “The house will be a terrible mess, I hope. And we’ll send out for corned-beef specials, with coleslaw. We’ll have a standing order, two corned-beef specials every night. And a great big basket of fresh fish, for the fattest raccoon in Canada. And you’ll be the worst wife in the world, and I’ll be the happiest man in town!”

The wish-fulfillment nature of this story is apparent-- many readers could only fantasize that their husbands would be happy married to “the worst wife in the world” or that their husbands would encourage, almost order them, back into the paid workforce. Still, it illustrates an issue familiar to many readers, particularly the difficulties in balancing career and marital obligations when much of the contemporary commentary encouraged women to view work and marriage as undesirable if not incompatible. Had this story taken a more traditional format, Dinah’s
experience with the baby raccoon would not have prompted a return to work but rather the
determination to have a child. Consequently in many ways this unconventional story-- in topic,
themes, meaning and resolution-- turned the tables on readers expecting a light-hearted romance.
Since there was no author's biography at the front of the magazine this story, despite its nominal
Canadianism, was probably written by an American. Thus the women's magazine format which
Holland criticized was the American one. Although Canadian readers were both familiar with
the American format and could easily find parallels in some of the material published in
Chatelaine the preferred meanings of the article, departmental and fiction material were never so
black and white.

A year later, Barnett Kleiman's "Couldn't Any Mother" (see illustrations) covered the
same territory--the role played by women's magazines and the difficulty in balancing paid work
with family life. The key difference here is that Kleiman's heroine Jan wasn't just married, she
was also a mother. A major emphasis in the story was on the disorienting effect feminism, or
women's liberation as it was then called, had upon women like Jan who were happy, contented
stay-at-home wives and mothers. This passage illustrates the effects of "liberated" women's
magazines articles:

The world however, kept stirring her up. The TV forums on wasted intellect, the latest
books on feminine potential, the magazines... "Who Am I?" one magazine article
demanded. "Look in the mirror and ask yourself honestly: Who am I? The tragedy of the
wife and mother is her Lost Identity. You have a right to be a person," the article
said....She often slapped the magazines shut by way of rebuke, but the words kept
thumping around in her mind, and she began casting uneasy glances into the
mirror. Maybe the real me is buried, after all, she began to worry. Maybe it isn't enough to be
content. What good are needle-point chair seats to the world?

The story is predictable-- Janice Ann Mason gets a job as a nurse in a doctor's office because the
magazine articles, television, and her next-door-neighbour Doris (a liberated instigator) thinks
she should now that all of her kids are in school. Naturally it does not work-- Janice "mothers"
people at the office, her kids get sick, and she has no time to host spontaneous dinner parties on a
week-day evening nor to keep her house spotless. All of those events conspire against her and
undermine her determination to work to "improve her mind". The solution, and there is only one
solution advanced in this story, is simple. The story ends with Janice happily telling her husband
Ken that she has been fired:

"Darling, darling, don't you understand?" Jan held out her arms as though to encompass
the house and everything in it. "I've got a job!" "Yes, but women these days are
entitled--" Ken persisted, "My girl Wilma keeps saying--" Jan faced him squarely.
ANY MOTHER?

The last thing in the world Jan wanted to do was go back to work. The capital-letter kind of work — you know, A Job. Nothing appealed to her less. 

Of course there are worse jobs than being an office nurse, and Dr. Flander had laid the offer right in her lap. She should have said no, and handed it promptly back; instead she had promised she'd let him know tonight. By nine o'clock.

OF COURSE, SHE COULD DO IT — RUN A HOUSE. TWO KIDS (AND A HUSBAND), CLEAN, COOK AND BAKE FOR THE HOME-AND-SCHOOL. PLUS DOUBLE DAILY AS YOUNG DR. KILDARE'S BRIGHT-IN-WHITE GIRL FRIDAY . . .

COULDN'T ANY MOTHER?

BY BARNETT KLEIMAN

The last thing in the world Jan wanted to do was go back to work. The capital-letter kind of work — you know, A Job. Nothing appealed to her less.

Of course there are worse jobs than being an office nurse, and Dr. Flander had laid the offer right in her lap. She should have said no, and handed it promptly back; instead she had promised she'd let him know tonight. By nine o'clock.
"Good for Wilma!" she said, her eyes flashing. "And Miss Knox and millions of other women!" I know who I am, I'm Janice Ann Mason! I'm all the terrible things writers scorn: a family tool, a mommy. And you know what? I love it."...Jan had never felt so over-flowing with satisfaction. If Doris were here she'd tell her a thing or two about fulfillment. 57

The next-door neighbour with the same name, a far from popular name, as Chatelaine's feminist editor was a subtle rib on Kleiman's part.

Two competing issues are at work in this story. The first, with which many historians of second wave feminism would agree, is that "women's liberation" of the sixties and seventies did ignore or deride the stay-at-home wife and mother (a situation feminists from the eighties and nineties have tried to remedy). Many women were, as the articles about feminism and feminist issues in the editorials and articles indicate, feeling unsure of a world where being "just a housewife" had become a disparaging phrase. However, this unease is also skillfully, and not too subtly, manipulated by the author of this story. Male characters pay lip service to liberation while referring to women, even married women in their thirties, as "girls." Janice is an insecure heroine, one who is quickly influenced by what she reads or watches on television-- letters from readers to Chatelaine indicate that they were not gullible, mindless vessels into which Chatelaine poured information. This story reads like a married, male fantasy-- give your wife the freedom to explore the workaday world and she will soon head back to the homefront. Most married women who resumed working in the sixties worked because they had to, or because they wanted to increase their families' standard of living and not for their own personal fulfillment or "their mind." Finally, had the character really wanted to develop her mind-- instead of serving the devices of a writer out to illustrate how unhappy "liberation" made women-- she wouldn't have taken the job she did. Kleiman's description of her work portrayed it as purely clerical in nature- and surely, suburban wives and mothers could handle telephone calls, appointment books and scheduling-- after all those were tools of their trade.

Male Angst

In contrast to the fifties component, the vast majority of stories in the sixties featured female protagonists, although there were a handful of stories with male protagonists. Once again, these provided insight in the male experience-- particularly of domestic life-- although they were free of the often violent imagery expressed in the fifties. In the sixties, the primary location for violent themes was the mystery fiction. John F. Wallace's story "The Wedding"
published in 1965 was a largely internal monologue of the thoughts of the father-of-the bride on his daughter's wedding day: "It was the day of Nele's marriage, a frantic, fluttering head-losing day--and a heart-finding day, too." 58 Our protagonist spends much of the story and almost the entire day in his den ruminating, over a few scotches, about the differences between men and women. This exchange, at the end of the story, between Saunders (the father) and his son Jim provides a flavour for the piece:

“I don’t know,” Jim said. He shook his head and then looked at his father. “Have you ever thought,” Jim said, “that it must be real tough to be a woman?” Saunders considered it. He had always tried to be truthful with his children, but right now it seemed best to him to shade the truth. A little. “Well,” Saunders said to his son, "it has occurred to me." 59

Of course, since the story was published in a women's magazine, the effect is just the opposite—readers (mainly women) are given insight into how difficult it is to be man. This upper-middle class male world of dark wood paneled dens, leather wing back chairs, and the restorative properties of expensive scotch is supposed to illustrate the difficult role faced by husbands and fathers. Emotionally detached and unsure of themselves in the "women's world" of domestic life and familial relationships they are relegated to their dens, awaiting their walk-on-roles and then promptly sidelined again. The story, like many in the fifties and sixties, echoes the prevalent theme of many articles and stories that men and women were quite different species and thus their patterns of communication, thought-processes and emotions were all expressed differently. No story of the mother-of-the-bride would have depicted her hiding out in her sewing room, kitchen or bedroom—she would have been reveling in the action. Ultimately, the suburban male was a person considerably removed, or a person who believed himself removed, from the family machinations. He exists on the periphery of his children's lives and keeps his emotions, and feelings (particularly about his marriage) to himself.

The Martins of Bright Hills, Alberta

While the romance stories and family-marital romance sub-genre examined love, dating, marriage and the joys and difficulties of married life, most of the protagonist's quest stories (which often had romance sub-plots) were issue driven. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the work of Sheila MacKay Russell's hospital stories or her "Martin Family" series. The protagonists were not necessarily feminists, although in all cases their abilities to think for
themselves, and to stand-up for what they believed in, certainly meant they were assertive women. These women were usually the dominant characters in the stories, the characters with agency, and the characters who affected change. An examination of these protagonists’ quest stories will begin with a general story, and then narrow the analytical gaze to focus upon issues of feminism, race, ethnicity, queerness and age. Class was a constant category in the Martin stories and will be discussed in each story in which it plays a role.

“Have Gun Will Shoot” was one of the earlier stories in the Martin series and illustrates some of the conventions of this type of fiction. The plot was simple. Nan Martin, the matriarch of the Martin clan, defends her family’s grove of blue spruce trees against the highway department officials and their plan to raze the trees to build a new road. The title refers to the climactic moment of the story when Nan takes the shotgun out of the hands of Milly the maid (who had it trained on the highway department officials) and informs the men that they will not, under any circumstances, cut down the family’s trees. In this excerpt she reflects upon the importance of the moment and what they (the blue spruce trees) mean to her:

Later, they remained an integral part of the inner vision she held of herself and her family. Stately and beautiful, they announced to the world that here lived the Martins, a truly exceptional family, a Master Farm Family of Alberta. Without them, the vision lost its perfection, and the house with its remaining occupants was exposed and vulnerable to the critical gaze of the world passing by.

“Have gun” is the story of one woman’s stand against development and government bureaucracy in defence of her family, their home and their place in the community. Nan is a far from perfect heroine--she is a privileged member of the community and believes that her upper-middle class status and her family’s expertise as “Master Farmers” should accord them respect and deference from other less wealthy or accomplished individuals. However, in this story she does learn to drop some of her aloofness, her perfectionist ideology and her controlling ways--after all it is she and the family’s hired maid Milly who defend the trees—not her husband, sons or daughters. The secondary theme of the story features an oddly prescient concern with the environment and the dangers of rapid development of agricultural and crown lands.

Race and Class in Bright Hills, Alberta

Not all of Russell’s story about the Martin family were quest stories-- some were romances or family & marital dramas-- but one of the themes and topics that she would repeatedly return to throughout the decade was race and ethnicity. Racial tension also played a
role in her series, subtitled “the human drama in a hospital.”64 Two of Russell’s stories which proved most controversial with readers, “Sari in the Kitchen” (see illustration) and “The Hutterites,” examined racial issues and specifically the prejudicial attitudes of Canadians.65 Additionally, “Sari” contains a persistently classist commentary which, despite the obvious concern for valuing ethnic diversity, is completely acceptable. The plot of “Sari,” published in 1962, concerns the decision of Milly Schmidt, the Martin’s live-in maid, to wear the saris given to her by acquaintances who had recently returned from India. This decision causes considerable upset within the family and it forces the Martins to undertake some painful self-examination of their hypocritical attitudes toward ethnic difference. This excerpt provides a sample of Russell’s writing style, and illustrates the Martin family’s first encounter with the saried maid:

Accustomed to her solid jarring tread, they were subconsciously aware of something amiss when she floated into the dining room on noiseless feet, deposited her toast and floated out again to the whispered accompaniments of ankle-length garments....For a moment the room was pregnant with silence as one of Alberta’s more prominent Master Farm families digested the fact that it was facing a crisis. Then...four pairs of eyes swiveled to Nan Martin who looked back at her family with an expression of strained concentration on her patrician features....Such an exotic getup had its place, Nan conceded, but that place wasn’t on their hired girl.66

The entire story is consumed with the Martins, particularly Nan’s, soul searching about how to handle the situation. They decide to support Milly’s unconventional behaviour. Ultimately, Milly’s victory is a hollow one because of the apoplectic reaction of the townspeople of Bright Hills, Alberta. She decides to remove the offending garments. Milly’s major concern is that the “Master Farm Family” not suffer further embarrassment or find themselves the butt of community chin-wagging by the townspeople who she calls the “crumbs in town.”67 While it is clear that Russell intended “Sari” to function as cautionary tale about the range of bigotry and prejudiced behaviour which existed in all strata of the community of Bright Hills (a good stand-in for Canada), the unexamined classist commentary proves much more troubling. Once again it is the proud, vain Nan Martin (described as “the daughter of an English remittance man whose attempts to transfer British social strata to Canadian soil had been met with good-natured ridicule”) who must wage a battle of wills with her hired maid from Muskrat Crick, as well as preserve her family’s dignity and social-position as “Master Farmers.”68 Nan and the family conquer their bigotry but they do not re-consider their classist beliefs. Even as unlikely a candidate as Milly sides with the Martins over the “town crumbs.”
Reader commentary was divided. This letter published in the magazine from ex-Albertan Mrs. Janet Campbell of London, Ontario explicitly critiqued the classist nature of the Martin stories:

How much longer must we be subjected to the insane fiction of Sheila MacKay Russell.....I was born and raised on an Alberta farm and lived on a farm for twenty years, and I must say that the Martins do not even remotely resemble any farm family I have ever seen or known. To me the Martins are snobbish, pretentious, ridiculous, non-people with non-problems, who look down on and snicker at their poor, dumb, ignorant, foreign hired-maid--all of which is as hilarious as thalidomide. Mrs. Russell would do us all a favour, if, in her next installment, she has the Martins nominated as Master Canadian Farm Family, and then as they fly to Ottawa in their private plane to accept their award, the plane crashes in the northern wilderness. Exit the Martins. R.I.P. No one will mourn.69

Campbell’s letter is similar to the Mrs. Slob letters, although she is far angrier. But it illustrates vividly how some readers re-interpreted the material or used their own creativity to interact with the material-- in this case a very plausible, and for some tired readers, undoubtedly a fitting ending to the Martin series. However, Mrs. B. Larsen of Edmonton disagreed, and her letter to Doris Anderson (and Anderson’s response) provides the “correct” interpretation of “Sari”:

It is to be hoped that all your readers do not exhibit the inability of Mrs. Janet Campbell to see below the surface of a gentle and intelligent satire....I think she has entirely missed the point of Sheila MacKay Russell’s story, “Sari in the Kitchen.” It was my impression that Mrs. Russell did not intend us to laugh at Milly and her harmless desire to wear out her saris but at ourselves and our horrified rejection of anything that violates our slavish need for conformity. I’m sure that no one but a superficial reader would find the Martin stories inane. Their thoughtful themes show the author’s deep understanding of life and human nature. I’m delighted that we’re to see more of her work with the new hospital series. I enjoyed the first story immensely....I do hope that you will give us more for the thinking woman in your magazine, not less, as Mrs. Campbell would seem to suggest.70

Reader commentary about Chatelaine components certainly proves the subjective nature of “interpretation.” While Mrs. Larsen’s letter indicates that she is not a “surface reader,” the way in which she ignores the classist commentary in the work illustrates that not all “thinking” women readers would comment upon all aspects of a piece of fiction. In her response Anderson praised Larsen’s “excellent letter,” and her “thoughtful comments.”71 As well, she wrote: “I believe that you interpreted the story “Sari in the Kitchen” correctly, and Mrs. Campbell did not....your letters, and letters like yours are a welcome encouragement in our efforts.”72 Class was a persistent blind-spot in the magazine: unless articles were specifically about poverty, or lower-income women, Chatelaine failed to adequately deal with the fact that not all readers identified with the persistent middle-class emphasis that masqueraded as classlessness.
“Drama in a Hospital”: Feminism

The next two Russell stories focus on the nursing series and address, respectively, feminist issues and “queer” issues. The subtitle of “The Crisis Summer” published in June 1965 provides an effective summary of this issue-driven tale: “The trouble with Julia Mathews and the hospital’s new administrator was simply that he treated her too much like a woman. Now the board faced deadlock that it had helped to create.”

The crisis is that the poorly paid nurses, particularly the student nurses, under head nurse Mathews were determined to fight the financial administrator’s decision (one supported by the entirely male board of directors) to pare their salaries. Skirmishes between Mathews and Mr. Morgan are vintage battles of the sexes, complete with minor sexual harassment, patriarchal ideology and paternalistic advice:

-“Underpaid?” The Morgan eyebrows had shot up again. “We pay the same scale as the other hospitals in the city.”

-“The fact remains that nurses are underpaid in relation to people in other professions who have comparable number of years of training and more attractive hours. When our nurses are expected to work themselves to death on top of that, I really can’t blame them for leaving.”

-“Come now, Miss Mathews! Where’s the old Nightingale spirit? The idealism, the dedication?.... Well look, can’t we part friends?” Detaining her with a hand on her arm, he had held up the other, his smile becoming heavily playful, “I solemnly swear that you’re my favourite director of nursing. I’ve never known one before who wasn’t old enough to be my mother, let alone one with green eyes and magnificent red hair. No, it’s not red exactly, is it? Sort of strawberry blond?”

-“The colour of my hair really isn’t important, is it?” Julia had said icily, unable to control her exasperation. “You’ve no idea how much I’d appreciate it, Mr. Morgan, if you could get over the idea that flattering me will solve the problems in the nursing department. We’d be much better friends if you’d just forget that I’m a woman and remember that I’m an equal in the administration of this hospital.”

Morgan cannot and the crisis escalates. Mathews submits her resignation, the student nurses threaten to strike-- over their pay, poor working conditions and Mathews’ resignation-- and the board is forced to re-instate her and drop the proposed pay cut. Taking the loss personally, Morgan submits his resignation. However, the story ends with Mathews convincing Morgan to stay on (a rather unlikely development but proves that women, unlike men, can be charitable in victory). Her vindication comes in the form of administering her own oath to Morgan asking him to swear to forget that she is a “mere woman” and to agree to treat her as an equal. He does and the story concludes with them sharing a “fraternal” handshake.

Neither the words feminism or women’s liberation were used in the story, yet the tension in the depicted situation involves sexism and the devaluing of a traditionally female profession. The resolution is a little too pat-- and too easy-- yet Russell’s examination of workplace sexism
provides a portrait with which many working women could identify, even if the happy ending isn’t realistic. Readers had less critical comments about the nursing stories than they did the Martin saga. Mrs. Patricia Yates of Cornwall, Ontario wrote to compliment the authenticity of Russell’s hospital stories:

I am a registered nurse...I so enjoy all of Sheila MacKay Russell’s writing about hospitals. The background settings and all the characters portrayed are so very true to life, and the stories completely believable. So many times after reading one of her stories, I have thought back to situations during my training and subsequent work in different hospitals and have wondered if maybe she had been hidden somewhere, observing it all!! Please keep the stories coming.

Other readers, like Mrs. Eleanor Spalding of Dauphin, Manitoba, appreciated the issue-driven nature of her stories: “How much I-- and my two daughters and many friends-- like Sheila MacKay Russell’s stories....To get across such an important message in story form...well, I think you’re doing women a wonderful service.” This letter from Ruth Sonderegger of Gfheld, Switzerland enumerates the anti-Russell contingent: “As a Canadian, I’m all for Canadiana, but are we the sole support of Sheila MacKay Russell? Your devoted fiction readers have surely had too much of a good thing.” Chatelaine’s editors did not agree and her stories continued to be published throughout the decade.

“Drama in a Hospital”: Queerness

In “Mr. Nightingale” Russell turned her attention to queerness. This story was considerably different from “Vixen in the Snow” although it mirrors the use of “queerness” as a novel topic-- one sure to attract even the most jaded readers-- much like the artwork and language used in “Let Della Do It” and “Off Men.” The author’s use of the term “queer” is deliberate, for the story explores the character and background of Leslie Norland, a male nurse: “A man nurse? Obviously, he had to be a weirdo, and obviously, Karen had to let him know it.” Russell utilizes an androgynous name, a little ambiguity about his sexuality and appearance (he is slight and very attractive) along with the adjective “queer” to get readers speculating about Norland’s sexual orientation. Not surprisingly, he is not gay and the story turns into a case study about gender stereotypes and reverse discrimination. By story’s end, he and Karen have shared a kiss proving his heterosexuality. Similarly, his life story has been fully revealed-- his previous job as a hospital orderly, his lack of money to finance a medical career and hence his decision to study nursing, and his determination to support his younger brothers
and sisters—all of which add up to a rather saintly portrait of a misunderstood man. Once again, this story fits within the wider Russell canon since it encourages readers not to pre-judge characters based upon their ethnicity, race or gender. Some readers were quite tired of these “issue” stories, as this letter received the previous April from reader B. Millway of Burnaby, B.C. indicates: “Many thanks for Frances McCormick’s ‘The Countess Asked Us to Tea.’ May we expect to have more such bright intervals in the overall gloom of health and social problems thinly disguised as fiction?”

**Ageism**

Other writers also wrote stories which were issue, as opposed to romance or mystery, driven. While the Russell stories varied in degrees of sophistication and writerly ability, many of her protagonist’s quest and “issue” stories were fairly transparent. Ageism, an issue she did not address in any sustained way, was a minor component in a handful of stories during the sixties. A critique of ageist assumptions forms the centrepiece of Agnes Ridgeway’s 1964 story “Tin Can Garden.”

Set in the fictional rural, Nova Scotian community of Rock Bridge, Ridgeway’s story depicts a pastoral visitation between “Old Miss Yeaple,” an elderly spinster, and the minister’s wife, named Alison. Assumptions abound in Rock Bridge about the miserly, crotchety personality of Miss Yeaple and Ridgeway skillfully enumerates Alison’s anxiety and apprehension about making this pastoral call as the day approaches. When she does go, she discovers that the woman is not miserly, but extremely poor and that she was unable to get to church services because of her lack of access to transportation. Her pride and joy was a small collection of flowers and vegetables—all potted in tin cans—which she grew on her small, balcony window. It is Yeaple’s pride, not miserableness, which has caused her to live a hermit’s existence and prevented her from admitting the adverse conditions under which she lives. Alison and readers are meant to feel remorse and guilt for their premature judgment and assumptions about the elderly. Ridgeway’s sentimentalism was calculated to pull on reader’s heartstrings, and this letter from Charles P. Stokes of Ottawa indicates that it was very effective: “I am now wiping away tears from my tired old eyes. Like Alison, I was blinded. I had to call out, ‘So am I...So am I.’ Agnes Ridgeway has the talent to move readers deeply.” Ridgeway’s moral was less didactic and transparent than some of Russell’s which made it easier—and more enjoyable—for readers to swallow.
As this analysis of the major themes, issues and genres in Chatelaine’s sixties fiction indicates there was a considerable change from the fifties. Romance and family/marital dramas declined in popularity, particularly the teenage romance (fluffs) which featured the girl meets boy and gets married format. Mystery stories and protagonists’ quest tales were more popular, and within all of the stories hospital, medical and nursing situations were fashionable. The most important change was in the large number of stories which featured an “issue” as the central plot device, although these often included a romance or humourous secondary plot. These issues mirror the rise in attention paid to “social problems” in the articles, particularly the emphasis on racial and ethnic topics. The growth in Canadian stories, largely due to the regular installments from Sheila MacKay Russell, increased the Canadian content of this section, although it continued to be dominated by American writers. A devoted coterie of readers seem to have followed the fiction--for entertainment, for education, for fantasy and escapism--and what the few letters made clear was that they were not bound by the printed text but felt free to provide their own assessments about character motivation and plot structure as they made “meaning” out of the Chatelaine fiction.

Departmental Features

Just to let you know we keep up with fashions in the Cariboo. My sister bought her New Year’s dress in Prince George last year. It was featured in your December issue of that year. I meant to write this letter last year, but it got sidetracked. 84

--Audrey Vogt, Quesnel, British Columbia

Just a short note to voice my appreciation of “Meals of the Month” and the smart idea (in July) of marking with an X those that are not for over-weights. M-of-M go up inside my cupboard door—not to be followed slavishly, but for good suggestions. 85

--Mrs. C. Flagg, Medicine Hat, Alberta

Having just finished “Five Smart Girls Who Sew” I can’t for the life of me figure out just what is so smart about them. There are thousands of women who make their own clothes, so it can’t be that. You show one that must be at least twenty-five with a skirt about three inches above her knees. Aren’t there any bricks in Ontario you can tie to the bottom to bring it down? If these women want to dress like teenagers, why not send them back to high school, but please don’t try to shove them down our throats as “smart women.” They’re anything but. If this is considered “smart” in the east, I am glad I am a plain old westerner. 86

--Mrs. A.F. Pearce, Colfax, Saskatchewan

I enjoyed your Home Chic Home decorating pages...but someday I would like to see a home decorated for the people in the bracket of six to eight thousand a year,
of which there are a great deal, especially in Nova Scotia. We have nice homes here, but not decorated in the styles mostly seen in magazines. How about a home built for $18,000 for a family of six?  
--Mrs. R. L. Orchard, Lunenburg, Nova Scotia

Departmental features in the sixties were very similar, in topics, form and writers to the magazine’s departmental features in the fifties. These features were the most consistent of all the magazine’s components. On average, about 21% of each magazine (the same as the fifties) was comprised of food, fashion, beauty, home design, home-making, gardening and parenting columns. Starch results for this material were mixed, but the percentage range for readers who remembered noting the material ranged from 55% for “Freeze Away” (a food feature) to “Cool in the Swim” (beauty) and “Think Summer” (fashion) where 88% and 80% (respectively) of those polled noted the material. However, the “read-most” figures indicate that substantially fewer readers actually read these articles (obviously, the visual appeal of the sections made them highly recognizable but most readers did little than peruse the photographs). The food features had the highest reading figures: “Freeze Away” (43% of those “Starched”) and “Stay Cool/Easy Party Menus” (47%). The fashion and beauty features had lower numbers: “Cool in the Swim” (30%); “Think Summer” (28%); and “Real Cool--Tie and Dye Fashion” (28%).

Although the number of letters on the departmental material paled in comparison with articles, editorials and fiction, the few letters received indicate that readers, their friends, and their family, were fond of these features—particularly the food features. Another indicator of the popularity of the service departments was the phenomenal success of the Chatelaine Cookbook. Launched in 1965 the cookbook was a collection of the magazine’s most popular recipes. The book sold for $6.95 in bookstores or, if ordered directly from the magazine, was available for $5.50. The Chatelaine Cookbook sold 110,000 copies. At that time, any Canadian book which sold more than 10,000 copies was deemed a “bestseller.”

Clearly many readers demonstrated that they enjoyed this material yet it is difficult to summarize why or to determine the effect, if any, of these articles. What the readers’ commentary indicates is that very few readers enjoyed all of the departmental material—some complained about food but loved crafts or conversely, the food fans were not pleased by the fashion features. On a basic level, the departmental fare was supposed to create “ideas” which advertisers and the business department at the magazine hoped would translate into sales—of food, fashions, beauty products, craft patterns, gardening paraphernalia and baby food. But this
letter, from Mrs. Ursula McGowan of Smiths Falls, Ontario illustrates how “reading” and “action” were two entirely different things:

My reasons for buying Chatelaine are varied. I enjoy the recipes even though I try only a few of them. I like the advertisements even though my income makes them only something to dream about in the far distant future. I like the health and advice columns there is something to be learned from them. The stories are interesting and the illustrations delightful. I buy for comfort and economy. If there is a harmony in the colours it is more accidental than intentional. As for favourite dishes, when there are seven people in a family there are seven favourite dishes and they all make their appearance at one time or another. Sketching floor plans is fine for the amateur architect, for me, it's a complete waste of time and effort, we push all the furniture back so the floor has the necessary space for assorted arms, legs, and paws watching TV. 

McGowan’s letter shows that while she enjoyed reading, and fantasizing about some of the recipes and decorating features, she seldom used them. The decorating articles were hopelessly out-of-sync with her family’s lifestyle and probably not an affordable option. For her, the realism of the material was not important—she wanted glossy images to fuel her fantasies.

In contrast, Mrs. Irene Makins of Ayr, Ontario wrote to compliment the magazine on the practical nature of departmental features. Here she indicates which features she enjoyed most:

I have received my first copy of my subscription to Chatelaine, and am enjoying it from cover to cover—even the ads! I had always bought the occasional copy. But I decided it was time to give encouragement to a good Canadian magazine. I believe that Canada has a great many talented people in the arts... Your magazine has articles which are of practical use to homemakers in almost every subject. Of special interest to our family in the May issue are: 1) Here’s Health; 2) What’s wrong with nursing 3) Homemaker’s Diary 4) Food ideas 5) Accent on accessories 6) How to build your own patio 7) Let’s not have a buffet supper. And of course the fiction. I can’t say that I always enjoy them—but it takes all kinds to please all people....best wishes for continued progress and growth. And may more Canadians as well as people of other countries grow to appreciate Chatelaine.

First she comments upon the articles, but then the rest of her comments are about the departmental features—food, fashion, and home features were her favourites. Noticeably last on her list was fiction. Makins’ letter illustrates that often readers were very selective—creating their own mix of articles, departmental features, and fiction—which they read and enjoyed. The rest of the magazine’s contents they only skimmed, disliked or did not find applicable. In this way it was possible to “customize” the magazine to each individual’s interests. The magazine, in the cliched phrase of marketers, attempted to provide “something for everyone.”

However, the departmental material exposed two of the fissure lines within the magazine’s community of readers—age and class. While most readers could be accommodated in the general articles, departments had a definite bias— in favour of married, middle class
women. The material also presumed that women were the family’s consumers and that a large
degree of women’s creativity and worth was predicated on buying and using products for
themselves and their homes. In the case of fashion and beauty youthfulness was the primary
demarcator of interest and teenagers and twentysomething women (with sufficient disposable
income) were the preferred audience. One of the most persistent complaints about departmental
fare, in particular interior and house design, fashion and beauty, was that it only catered to
affluent readers. This letter from an angry reader from Harris, Saskatchewan illustrates the
frustration many older, rural, working class women felt when they read this material:

I have been a subscriber to your magazine for many years. However, I doubt if I’ll
continue. I find that your magazine...is not now as good as either our old Chatelaine or
the Canadian Home Journal were. All the Chatelaine seems to contain is recipes of
expensive fattening foods or pages of expensive furniture and houses. Gone is the old
magazine we all went to, to relax and enjoy the reading....What do I care about the
furniture, houses and recipes you represent? How far would $225 a month go with a
family of five in those mansions? Do come down to earth and remember that your
readers are Common Canadians (We haven’t even plumbing nor electricity and I know
many more of your readers haven’t). We are not rich enough for the Chatelaine’s ideas--
Could you take a poll and find out what price range your ideas should follow....I’d like to
see a house--small compact--attractive enough for an older couple to build to retire to
after spending years in company houses on small salaries and not going to have pensions
or savings to bolster their old age pensions. Ask your staff. Are they all nobility to
have such expensive ideas--what incomes do their parents have? We aren’t bums--All around
us are people in the same boat--young and old. What has Chatelaine to offer us?”

Other readers, defining themselves primarily as older readers, rather than “Common Canadians”
criticized the ageist nature of the departmental material-- particularly the beauty and fashion
features. Miss Ruth C. Baxter, Annapolis Royal, N.S wondered where older women were
supposed to get clothing and fashion information:

I wish there were a magazine that would cater to the needs and interests of the older
woman, say from fifty on. The most difficult problem for senior women is clothes. Is
there any good reason why the older woman should be obliged to flaunt before the world
her bony knees, her broad thickened thighs, her sagging upper-arm muscles? Wouldn't
everybody feel a little happier to have those concealed?96

Similarly, a letter from Bertha Scott of Edgewood, B.C. critiques the lack of any departmental
material for older women:

I offer some constructive criticism. In most magazines of today, Chatelaine included,
there are very few articles or stories written for the older woman by older women,
therefore they are lacking for the older women’s interests.... Take myself for instance,
first I read your column, and the next few pages, then I turn to any helpful article,
biography, travel, cooking, handicrafts, hints etc. and lastly I turn to the stories should the
theme please me I read them through, but more often I do not read them.97
Anderson's response acknowledged Scott’s complaint but did not promise that the magazine would rectify the situation: “I realize that we carry a small amount of material addressed to the older woman, but the majority of our readers are mothers with young children...with different problems of food preparation, child care, decorating their homes...we naturally tend to cater to them....”98 The reply is gracious and yet, subtly informs Scott that she is outside of the intended demographic group—and thus the material is not supposed to be of use, or interest, to her. The concentration on younger women with children was due to the advertiser’s, and the business department’s belief, that those women were the prime consuming market in Canada. Older women, rural women, and lower income women--consumers all--were not usually worth targeting with their own departmental material. However, not all older readers felt excluded from this material. For instance, Mrs. Alice Rishworth of Agincourt, a grandmother, probably surprised the editors when she wrote to the magazine to compliment an article on acne:

Just a line to say how much we enjoy the Chatelaine....I’m not housebound but I do have a lot of time on my hands.... I enjoy Lawrence Galton very much. I would like him to say something about acne since I have a granddaughter 17 who is having a hard time with it although she went to a skin specialist....I hope I’m not bothering you too much.99 “Canadian woman” had a narrower definition in the pages of the departmental material. She was defined as a young, married housewife and mother, with the purchasing power of a middle income or higher family income, and presumably from an urban or suburban locale. It was not impossible for women outside of that definition to read, use or enjoy the departmental features but they often had to actively work to tailor the service material to their own situations.

The largest departmental section was the food department, headed and written by Elaine Collett, and her staff at the Chatelaine Institute. The format changed slightly from the fifties—the family food contest remained until 1967, famous Name Brand recipe features were dropped (instead, advertisers purchased inserts or booklets full of recipes featuring their food products), the regular menu page “Meals of the Month” (see illustration) continued, and most food features were one issue articles. The 1967 Family Favourites contest was the last because it had become far too time consuming and labour-intensive to test and adjudicate the entries. In addition to her regular features and specials, Collett was also responsible for editing the Chatelaine Cookbook published in 1965 and the Chatelaine Adventures in Cooking cookbook published in 1969.

Despite some readers’ concerns about affluence in the pages of the departmental features, the predominant themes in the food features continued to concentrate on thrift in articles entitled:
mely Tips

Five for fifty-five dollars with our member menus. Usually we balance our menus with some low-cost foods, but this month of budget menus will please many readers who have requested it. You want to splurge a bit, one way would be to substitute more costly cuts—instance, salmon steaks instead of fish. Apply applesauce with added lemon or orange rind and a sprinkling of cinnamon. Or rosy sauce add cinnamon candies. Twinkle pork chops take on a new flavor stuffed with a mixture of equal parts nut butter and bread crumbs. Or disperse two tablespoons peanut butter in the gravy just before serving. Tiv vegetables a nutlike taste with butter and a shake of poppy seeds.

Juté chicken wings and a chopped onion. Add curry powder to taste and 2 cups of tomato sauce. Simmer for thirty minutes and serve over fluffy parsley rice.

DINNERS OF THE MONTH

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<th>THURSDAY</th>
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<td>3 Smoked Shoulder Ham</td>
<td>4 Holiday Picnic</td>
<td>5 Margarita and Cheese</td>
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Recipe of the Month

Cinnamon Pear Mold

1/2 cup sugar
2 cups water
1 tbs cinnamon candies
Juice of 1/2 lemon
3 fresh firm pears
1 pkg lemon jelly powder
1 teaspoon plain gelatine
1 pkg coconut, banana or vanilla pudding (to be cooked)

Simmer first four ingredients toge-10 minutes. Add quartered, peeled and simmer until just tender and dissolve jelly powder in th. Slice 8 quarters of pear into an o and cover with gelatine mixture. Meanwhile, add plain gelatine to pudding powder and make according to package directions. Cool to room temperature and spread over jellied fancy set and unmold. Garnish with pear quarters and whipped topp.
"98 Cent January Specials;" "Ten New Ways With a Pound of Hamburger;" or "Eat Thrifty Meals." Many of these features were part of the January family budget specials although a concern with thriftiness permeated most of the food articles. The key, as Collett repeatedly informed readers, was planning--weekly menus and shopping lists were completed only after women consulted the weekly supermarket specials. The casserole and other meatless or meat-extending meals were the focal point of many economical food articles. This excerpt from "How to Eat Better and Save $200" is a good example of Collett's style of writing and some of the issues they addressed:

Even a good manager like Rita Rose (and you) can learn new moneysaving cooking habits without sacrificing one ounce of taste appeal or sound nutrition. She was providing simple, fairly economical and nutritionally balanced meals for her family. But because she'd kept certain cooking habits she'd developed as a working wife in her early marriage, Rita was spending more than she needed to. We showed her how to achieve the same result--tasty meals and balanced nutrition--on $3.85 less a week....Because as a working wife she had come home late and put dinner on the table in a hurry, Rita relied on the convenience foods (cake, pie, pudding mixes, canned soups and vegetables, heat-and-serve meat pies) and on meats that could be fried or broiled--usually the expensive cuts...

Although the primary food advertisers in Chatelaine were processed food producers--prepared meats, canned soups, processed cheese and some cake mixes--the magazine did not wholeheartedly endorse this material in their food features. Indeed, 56% of the recipes featured in the magazine did not call for processed food products but were made from scratch. Even so, the 44% of features which did use processed food products was still far too high for some readers. Mrs. John Ensen of Seven Persons, Alberta listed that as one of her reasons for canceling her subscription: "I find the magazine becoming most uninteresting....who is interested in how some very wealthy lady spends her leisure time and how she arranges her expensive clothing budget....The recipes may be good (many are), but must one continuously buy canned goods to make a satisfactory meal?"

With the majority of readers these economical food features, along with their corresponding material in the Family Budget Features, were very popular. A letter from Donna Atcheson of Saint John, N.B. provides an assessment of the popularity of these annual features:

What are women most interested in? MONEY! How to make it spread around one's rent, food, clothing etc., and still come out on top. Articles on this subject have intimate and universal appeal. We are all interested in how other women meet these same problems and master them or go under, and we are always willing and even eager for helpful advice on the subject....In January 1962 an equally interesting article "101 Ways
to Save Money" told us how Stan and Rita Rose and we too could eat better, dress better, live better! Similarly, Mrs. Margaret N. Davies of Cobourg, Ontario attributed Chatelaine's attention to thrift to their Canadian values:

"102 Ways to Save Money" your January issue is a gem. There is another way to save money -- buy Chatelaine! I have purchased various American publications through the years but it is no longer necessary to part with 35 or 50 cents per month in order to have the latest in good living, and variety of reading. Chatelaine is geared to the Canadian Way of Life and Miss Collett's recipes are in line with Canadian tastes and economy.

"Canadian tastes" had begun to shift away from the meat and potatoes and Anglophone casserole combinations in the fifties.

Affordable meals in the sixties were slightly more glamorous than their fifties counterparts. The magazine strove to present more novel food ideas to their readers, such as "Try These Strange Fruits" which introduced readers to the joys of ugli fruit, persimmons and mangoes. One of the quickest way to interject novelty into the food pages was to feature "ethnic" food and in the sixties the number of ethnic food features were five times higher than the corresponding fifties sample. Anglo-Canadian housewives were urged to incorporate "ethnic" recipes (Italian, Chinese, Spanish, and European were the most common) into their family's diet as a way to provide diversity and new twists on economical eating. The ubiquitous tuna casserole was replaced by lasagna or curried chicken dishes. In features such as "South Seas Foods to Enchant Your Natives" which included recipes like "Native Drums Barbecued Chicken, Yams Tahiti, Montezuma Casserole and Muu-Muu Punch," the magazine combined ethnic food (or at least Chatelaine's version of it) with affluence and an increasing interest in gourmet cuisine. Multiculturalism and the desire to appear more cosmopolitan encouraged this interest in different cuisine particularly for parties and special occasions. A synopsis of the types of food submitted for the 1965 Family Favourites Contest illustrates that many Canadian housewives were incorporating ethnic cuisine into their meal plans: "Chinese food is the most popular foreign dish, followed by Italian...."

Another major thematic shift in the sixties was the emphasis placed on speed of preparation which acknowledged that working wives did not have time for elaborate meal preparation and intricate recipes. "Thirty Dinner Menus," or "Quick Casseroles From Cans," both promised meals that women could prepare-- although they were little more than combinations of canned products-- and serve within thirty minutes. Even though the magazine encouraged and touted the value of processed food products for their simple and quick
recipes, they were critical of their cost. In all the budget articles, Collett pared away all of the processed and deli counter foods from the women’s grocery lists, stating: "Save money by doing food-preparation work yourself. Every added convenience provided in foods you buy—or in the packaging of them—increases the costs". There was no indication of what advertisers thought of this message, one so at odds with their reasons for advertising in Chatelaine.

The food section attempted to provide a resource for wives—in paid employment and those at home—to provide them with a variety of different meals (primarily supper dishes) which were economical or fast or different. The large readership of these features is reflected in this letter from Ruth E. Moyle, Director, Consumer Section, Department of Agriculture and Food for Ontario:

> On my return from the CAC Convention in Ottawa, I learned what a readership Chatelaine has. Our mailbag has been bulging with requests for our 'Mail-A-Menu'!... Regrettably, due to the overwhelming response we have reached our quota, and have been forced to close our mailing list until further notice. Even in our wildest dream we didn't picture the project becoming so popular.

Meanwhile letters from readers indicate their appreciation. Mrs K. Norman, Islington, Ontario writes: "For many months I have been meaning to thank you for Meals of the Month. They are a great inspiration for what could be a tedious job of meal planning, 365 days of the year."

Readers complimented the individual features and recounted their successful use of the recipes, like Mrs. Jean Rousseau, Ste. Foy, Quebec: "Your recipes are interesting, easy to follow, and the approximate price and calorie value are a great help. I tried your Chicken Gruyere Tarte...as a late-evening hot buffet and was voted a wonder cook by friends. Bravo for Chatelaine." Pat Ferguson of Camp Wainwright, Alberta was eager to share with other readers how she had customized Chatelaine recipes to fit her own situation:

> "The October issue was most beneficial. The article on freezer management and accompanying recipes...were very good. As the wife of a 'great white hunter' I found the Braised Beef recipe good, but substituting moose for beef, it was superb. I hope you'll pass along my suggestion to hunting widows who find themselves with hundreds of pounds of 'free' meat to prepare."

The food features were adaptable, and useful, to readers in rural, northern, and urban settings and hence Chatelaine was a source in many Canadian kitchens.

In the sixties the magazine featured a series of regular columns on housekeeping and household matters—Una Abrahamson’s “Homemaker’s Diary” which was later replaced by “Of Consuming Interest” and Carol Taylor’s “Shopping With Chatelaine” and the “Seal of Approval”
features. Usually a maximum of one page long, these articles were collections of hints about household maintenance or advice on how to purchase products for the home--linens, appliances, clothing, etc.--under the "Shopping" and "Seal of Approval" banners. For example, one "Homemaker's Diary" contained the following tidbits of information: "capsule guide to veal, keep food bills down, start Christmas cactus blooming; sour cream secrets; muffin pan trays, no-jell Japanese quince."¹⁶ "Of consuming interest" was similar, although it often had one and half pages enabling Abrahamson to examine more issues. A sample column included "Help for the working girl...watch the canned milk labels...felt pens not for freezers...solid state appliances...homes and furnishings...poultry facts...consumer protection...roses and thorns."¹⁷ In "roses and thorns" Abrahamson handed out fictitious roses to those manufacturers, products or retailers with superior value or service while the thorns went to inferior products or ineffective marketing schemes. Thus these two columns combined educational features and advice with subtle product endorsements. In the Chatelaine Seal of Approval individual products were endorsed--although readers were always informed about the rigorous quality control testing, plant visits and questionnaires manufacturers had to pass before the "Seal" was approved.

Chatelaine included a few features on housework in the sixties. These were usually written by Elaine Collett and were included in the articles section, although in tone and content they were service material. One feature, "A Streamlined System for Housekeeping" by Una Abrahamson, was part of the "mother who works" special feature and thus was geared to assist working mothers plan their housekeeping. The emphasis was on efficiency and new appliances to help working mothers cope with their dual day:

Are you aware of the revolution that has taken place in housekeeping? In recent years homemaking has changed for the better; it is simpler and less time consuming. There are so many new appliances and new cleaning aids that you can take a more flexible approach. Women going back to work and even those who aren't should take a look at their housekeeping schedules and eliminate the unnecessary work that is repetitious and doesn't satisfy.¹¹⁸

Unfortunately, the revolution did not involve a challenge to the almost exclusive relegation of responsibility for housework to women, but it did advocate that women simplify their routines--eliminating overly fastidious routines, upgraded appliances, planned shopping and menu plans. These were practical suggestions (although limited to those with the means to follow them) yet most of the household work was still performed by wives. Husbands could help with the yard-work, take out the garbage and if they were very helpful, assist with childcare. Children did not
take a very active role in the household, although the article urged that they should be responsible for their own rooms and for simple chores like setting the table. This article did not, and could not, advocate the extremely time consuming, perfectionist style of housework that had been recommended in the fifties. Furthermore Abrahamson (herself a working mother) urged working mothers not to feel remorse about all the things they could no longer do in the house. In short, it urged them to be realistic--not revolutionary--a welcome change from the tone of other articles in this genre. Readers were not receptive to this revolution. Mrs. Victor Kenziora of Windsor, Ontario wrote: “Home at five-thirty and supper at six-fifteen? What if those darling boys, Mark and Martin, have a story to tell Mommy? Does this upset the schedule? Please, Susan, wait fifteen years, then work...”

Eveleen Dollery was the doyenne of Chatelaine’s beauty features. As Beauty Editor she wrote all the copy for the magazine’s makeovers and regular articles. Her advice was almost always the same: women should maximize their appearance through good haircuts, effective makeup, and exercise and toning regimes. These short articles were mostly illustrations or photos with minimal text. They concentrated on illustrating techniques, products or styles that readers could try at home. In the November 1960 “What’s New With Us” column Dollery and her “expertise” were highlighted:

In her career as a beauty editor Eveleen Dollery has “made over” -- personally and through Chatelaine’s Beauty Clinic-- about fifty thousand women. This month for the first time in her life, she made over four men, and proved they really are the weaker sex. (In the excitement of being photographed, one of them fainted!) Eveleen also noted that men are more adventurous. Not one of our models balked at suggest changes in clothing or haircuts. But women often have to be coaxed and wheedled into new colours and hairstyles. Final conclusion: “Men, poor things,” says Eveleen sadly, “have a lot less scope about changing their appearance than we have.”

As Dollery’s comments make clear, she was often thwarted in her make-over attempts by women who feared radical change. Beauty was hard work and Dollery was ruthless in her determination to transform all make-over candidates--in spite of their reluctance. Part of the appeal of the beauty makeovers for readers was the fantasy of transformation. In the capable hands of the Chatelaine beauty expert, a “homely girl” could be transformed into a chic, fashionable woman. Other articles like “Beauties are Trained Not Born” Dollery informed readers that “from the first toothbrush to first lipstick, here’s a phase-by-phase program to help your little girl make the most of her natural assets.” The most consistent theme in all of this material was that girls’ and women’s “natural assets” were all visual—skin, face, posture, figure and the tools of maximizing
these assets were makeup, exercises, and beauty-regimes (creams, hair-colouring, astringents etc.). Intellect and education were not part of the beauty equation.

One of the services Chatelaine and Dollery provided was the “Chatelaine Beauty Clinic.” Participants received a beauty questionnaire which, once completed and returned, was analyzed by Dollery and her staff. In short order the reader received her own, individual “beauty analysis” in the mail. The service cost women one dollar. This advertisement for the service, “Which Side of Your Face is More Beautiful?” (see illustration), provides an example of the narcissistic and exceedingly detailed examinations Dollery encouraged readers to undertake:

When you next look into a mirror, hold a piece of paper so that it divides your face in two, brow to neck. Study this half of your features. Good? Move the paper over and examine the other half. Better or not so good? Is one eyebrow crooked, the other smoothly arched?....Is the right side of your upper lip thinner than the left?....For useful picture guides to help you enhance all your features write to Chatelaine Beauty Clinic for personal beauty analysis. It includes up-to-date information on make-up changes and beauty products. We show how to care for your hair and style it to suit your face. If you have a figure problem, we’ll send along diet and exercise sheets, also a calorie chart....

It is this sort of material for which women’s and fashion magazines have been routinely criticized-- and with good reason. Women were always encouraged to look for flaws. Once discovered, these flaws warranted immediate action. Notice that the return beauty analysis includes “up-to-date” information on beauty products and their application. Cosmetics and toiletries advertisers in the magazine got a tremendous boost from this material and although the magazine usually refrained from explicit recommendations of a particular type of makeup, cold cream or lotion, undoubtedly the “beauty analysis” contained considerable product endorsement and information.

One major difference in the sixties beauty material was the increased emphasis on dieting. Metrical, the first liquid diet product, was introduced to American consumers in 1959-1960 and by 1961 the product and other copycat products were selling $350 million worth of dieting products annually. The use of increasingly thinner models-- remember that British model Twiggy was the fashion-star of the late sixties-- valorized thinness. Chatelaine began to feature an increasing number of dieting features, with titles like “Three Dazzling Diet Successes,” “Three Diet Winners Discover New Beauty,” or “A 212 Pound Girl Becomes a Hundred Pound Bride” all written by Dollery. Women submitted their personal “diet-success stories” to the magazine, and the winners (the women with the most dramatic weight loss) were featured in the April issue. Naturally, the articles included the requisite before-and-after photos.
"Which half of your face is more beautiful?"

When you next look into a mirror, hold a piece of paper so that it divides your face in two, brow to neck. Study this half of your features. Good? Move the paper over and examine the other half. Better or not so good? Is one eyebrow crooked, the other smoothly arched? Are the lashes of one eye more luxurious than of the other? Is the right side of your upper lip thinner than the left? It is true that every face has one side in better proportion than the other. So use the better side of each feature as a guide to shape the other not-so-well-shaped half.

For useful picture guides to help you enhance all your features write to Chatelaine Beauty Clinic for a personal beauty analysis. It includes up-to-date information on make-up changes and beauty products. We show you how to care for your hair and style it to suit your face. If you have a figure problem, we'll send along diet and exercise sheets, also a calorie chart. Send us the coupon below. We will mail you a questionnaire. Then fill in the questionnaire and return it to us with $1 for a complete beauty analysis.

Chatelaine Beauty Clinic, 481 University Avenue, Toronto 2

Please send me a beauty questionnaire to complete for my beauty analysis.

Name

Street

City

Provence

Chatelaine * November 1962
Dollery's commentary concentrated on the women's diet secrets, and invariably contained patronizing commentary about how they had discovered their "inner beauty" during the process. With stock phrases like "Tired of looking far older than her years Dawn lost 123 pounds" or "revealed her hidden prettiness," the message was clear that whatever the circumstances large women were unattractive. Often, part of the vibrant new life awaiting the recently reduced were dating opportunities. Only one feature linked weight loss with marriage: "Here's the Cinderella story of Barbara Diamond who once wore size 42 dresses, avoided mirrors, and was frustrated with loneliness. Today this pert schoolteacher picks her dresses off the size eight rack, enjoys her new good looks and is happily engaged to be married this August." The message was simple, lose weight--it could change your life dramatically. Given the unbelievable amount of weight these women were said to have lost, readers were often skeptical. Mrs. Ronald Hatch Sr., of Red Head Cove, Newfoundland asks: "Did this really happen to Dawn and Nina? Did they really lose this much weight [123 and 146 pounds respectively]? It's really unbelievable. A doctor gave me these pages from Chatelaine and says that I too can be like Dawn, I weigh 196." The editors assured Mrs. Hatch that Dawn and Nina had lost that much weight.

To assist Chatelaine readers in their battle with weight-loss the magazine endorsed two diet programs in the sixties: "Chatelaine's MM Diet" in 1962 and the "LP Diet," a liquid diet program in 1966. It was a compromise, according to the editors, born of the realization that dieting was here to stay and that the magazine should do its part by providing a safe diet for their readers: "If dieting's here to stay--and in our affluent North American society it begins to look that way--the best diet is one that's nutritionally sound, shows results fast enough to be encouraging and teaches us the kind of food we should eat for the rest of our lives if we want to stay slim." Canadian and international readers were enthusiastic about the results possible on the LP diet. According to Mrs. Margaret Devine of Ballycastle, Northern Ireland the diet was effortless: "Thanks for a diet that works. I didn't need even to apply will-power." Others were quick to report how many pounds they had lost, like Mrs. B. Eugenie Terrell of Mallorytown, Ontario: "I have been on the LP diet for two weeks and have lost ten pounds." To paraphrase Susie Orbach's famous phrase of the seventies, fat was not yet a feminist issue in Chatelaine.

Like many of the other "experts" who wrote Chatelaine's departmental material Beauty Editor Vivian Wilcox was an award winner. In 1963 she was honoured at the Garment Salesman of Ontario Market banquet for her work in the fashion industry and presented with the "Jugy
Wilcox attended the European fashion shows and wrote reports of them for the magazine, she profiled new fashions available in the stores, pinpointed each season’s “in look” and instructed readers about how to build their fashion wardrobes, accessorize themselves and, less frequently, purchase or sew affordable clothing. Most fashion features were photographic essays with very little written commentary except a few adjectives describing the garments or “looks” and the product information: manufacturer, retailer and price. This format was not unique to Chatelaine but followed the convention of most women’s magazines. Although some manufacturers of women’s clothing advertised in Chatelaine, there was no correlation between advertisers and those products profiled in the articles. Despite a few articles with titles like “Fashions for Your Golden Years,” teenagers and women in their twenties were the primary focus of the articles. The aim was identical to the beauty material—in this case, the transformative power of fashionable clothing. Being in and being thin were important—the right clothes could translate into better career and personal opportunities, and ultimately unlimited happiness. Many articles in the magazine were written by the team of Dollery and Wilcox—they combined to do the makeovers, the family budget specials and often for less prominent articles. In “Whatever Happened to the Homely Girl?” Dollery and Wilcox combined forces, writing: “She’s vanished into prettiness, thanks to make-up and clothes magic! Here’s how three smart working girls use modern beauty and fashion knowledge to turn their average faces and figures into above-average good looks.”

Very few letters were received about the fashion material. Some readers were enthusiastic about the fashion pages, like Audrey Vogt (epigraph) or Mrs. Phyllis Poulter, of Montreal, who wrote: “The fashion pages keep me aware of the latest style trends.” Most readers were critical. The negative letters depicted Wilcox’s selections as out-of-touch with Canadian women living outside of Central Canada or far too expensive for the more limited budgets of most readers. Mrs. P. Allen of Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan wrote: “I feel Vivian Wilcox, your fashion editor, is talking out of turn in ‘worst mistakes.’ ...if Miss Wilcox lived in Saskatchewan in the winters of 30 and 40 degrees below zero, I’m afraid even she would wear slims, carcoat and kerchief for shopping.” Meanwhile, Mrs. Dorothy Brown cautioned the magazine not to forget the budgetary restrictions of most readers:

I have one complaint, that is in regard to the teen aged clothes advertised. They are much too expensive....As a mother of three girls in high school and two younger children also, I cannot afford ten or fifteen dollars for a sweater...and neither can most of my friends, and
certainly the girls themselves do not earn enough to buy such items. The clothes selected
are attractive but I have noticed for quite some time that the price quoted are far more
than what most white collar families can afford, and I should imagine most of your
readers would be in this class. This is not merely my opinion but have heard it from other
women as well. My daughters are twelve, fourteen, and fifteen and they read your
magazine from cover to cover. Would suggest a sample wardrobe some of which could
be made by the girls themselves as a feature of your fashion department. A recent copy
had a budget wardrobe for an adult which was excellent.138

Like the fashion department features, the homes and decorating articles were often
criticized for their depiction of an affluent style of living. Every year the magazine, first under
Home Editor Alain Campagne and then Home Editor Annabelle King, produced a “Homes”
feature for the May or September issue (see illustration). Although some home and interior
design features were produced throughout the year they were relatively small features on
household do-it-yourself projects. The big feature of the year was the homes annual which was a
very lengthy (10-15 pages long) special covering the latest household and interior design. If
readers commented in the fifties that many of the Homes features were far too affluent and well
beyond their means, this was even more so for the sixties. The homes produced were larger (one
had over 4,000 square feet of living space), they featured opulent furnishings and were not
geared to the average first time buyer but instead the upper-middle class family or the mature
home purchaser in search of a larger, grander home. Only those groups would have the
necessary income to buy a “Design Home.” For example, in May 1967, the special Expo feature
issue, the magazine profiled their “Chatelaine Expo Home.”139 The house was the “prize-
winning architectural design” from a contest sponsored by the Canadian Lumbermen's
Association.140 The house was built on the Expo site and then decorated and furnished by
Chatelaine. According to the rules of the Lumberman's Association, and commensurate with the
magazine’s mandate, the house was designed for an average Canadian family-- “a couple with a
son, fifteen, and two daughters, ten and five” -- and in the words of Campagne it had a “serene
dignity.”141 However, the magazine’s definition of “average” was quite exclusive. The house
included a fully equipped workroom for the man of the house, an intercom, formal dining-room,
three bedrooms and a den. Now, undoubtedly this was meant to be a showcase--for Canadian
manufacturers, for the magazine, and for Canadian designers. But the magazine’s implication
that average Canadians could afford to live this way was a bias that ran throughout much of the
Homes and interior design material. The presumption that their readers were all upper-middle
class urbanites or suburbanites ignored the very large component of working class, rural, and
senior readers.
Your cross-country report on
the latest in
* house designs
* new furnishings
* decorating trends
* ideas to adapt
* exciting colors
* distinctive
  accessories
All visitors to the Expo site were given a raffle ticket to win the house and a car—if the winner lived too far away to collect the actual house they would receive $30,000 and the blueprints so that they could replicate it in their community. In the January 1968 issue the winner was announced:

Before it was too late, 17 year old Douglas McEachen, a grade-12 student at Sheldon-Williams Collegiate in Regina, dug into his savings and flew down, alone, for his first look at Expo the weekend before it closed. He visited Chatelaine's Man in the Home Pavilion, deposited his ticket on the house draw—and won. Since he lives more than 30 miles from the site, Doug received $30,000 cash in lieu of the house. The money went straight to an investment agency, and eventually will finance Doug's university music studies.¹⁴²

McEachen's win is more than just another interesting anecdote about the magazine—it illustrates that incredible range of people attracted by the variety of the magazine's content, and to its external promotions. This letter from Saul Field of Willowdale, Ontario confirms that interest and provides commentary about the perceptive ness of the visitors:

Shortly after the opening of Expo 67, our postman began to bring us a steady stream of inquiries from all over the world from people who had visited the Chatelaine Expo Home. The reason? Our colour engravings decorated the interior—my wife Jean's, in the bedrooms, and six-year-old daughter Martina's, in the child's room. My own prints hung in the living room, foyers, basement and stairwells. We would like to express our heartfelt thanks for their interest. Most of the letters inquired whether the work was for sale. The answer is 'no' for Martina's prints, but 'yes' for Jean's and my prints.¹⁴³

Each year visitors, in the cities in which the Design homes were located, were able to walk through the fully furnished houses and see, in detail, the latest trends in Canadian design, furniture and decorations. However, the location of the design homes was limited to suburban areas in British Columbia, the Prairies, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec. The Atlantic Provinces and the North were completely ignored. Chatelaine spent a considerable amount of money producing these features but readership lagged, and advertising followed. By the end of the sixties and into the seventies the number of editorial pages outnumbered the number of advertising pages. Thus the purpose—to provide a conducive environment for home building supplies and manufacturers to advertise in Chatelaine—failed.

The homes department also included the "Chatelaine Decorator Service". Barbara MacLennan, Decorator Service Consultant, was responsible for providing readers with individual "interior design" advice. This worked on the same premise as the Beauty Consultant—only here readers submitted their roomplans, sketches of their present furniture and design problems and
awaited MacLennan's return sketch. According to Mrs. E. Armstrong of Etobicoke the service worked very well:

Since 1957 I have used Chatelaine Decorator Service for our various apartments and houses, always with pleasing results, but never as outstanding a plan as Barbara MacLennan recently did for our living-room. The first time my husband looked at the plans he exclaimed that the high-back swivel chair was exactly what he wanted. It was a very affordable way to get a "customized" design plan (cost $1) and for the magazine it was a way to promote its service department features and provide greater exposure to their advertisers.

The gardening component of the magazine was considerably smaller in the sixties since the position of Garden editor was vacant until 1964 when horticultural writer Lois Wilson was hired. She continued on in the same spirit as Helen O’Reilly producing sophisticated articles on a wide variety of gardening issues--perennials and annuals, fall gardening preparations, winter indoor gardens, landscaping and fence construction, and Canadian wildflowers, among others. Enthusiasts were ecstatic that gardening had returned, and that it maintained the high calibre established by O'Reilly. Mrs. G.S. Morris of Victoria wrote: "About a year ago I wrote to you requesting an article on African violets. I have just received my November issue and must tell you how delighted I am with it." Mrs. Louise Johnson of Hudson, Quebec, another of the legion of African violet fans in Canada, wrote: "As I belong to the class of super enthusiasts I might as well confess: African violets have become a way of life for me. May I congratulate Lois Wilson for such an excellent article...and you for publishing it." Wilson was recognized by professional organizations and horticultural professionals, for her work:

She recently served as one of the three judges of Bermuda's Floral Pageant. Also this year, the National Council of State Garden Clubs, with a total of half a million members in the U.S. and other countries, presented Lois with a Certificate for Horticultural Literature "in recognition of the distinguished service in literary effort of horticultural interest."

Similarly, the next year Chatelaine published a letter from Leslie Laking, Director of the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton, praising Wilson's work: "I have just read Lois Wilson's article, "Our Centennial Heritage of Canadian Garden Plants"...It is a magnificently produced article which will be appreciated by every horticultural-minded person in Canada. Congratulations. The results are exciting magazine fare." Chatelaine's Craft Editor during the sixties was Wanda Nelles. In contrast to the American magazines which often printed a sewing or knitting pattern in their magazines,
Chatelaine published a small, usually quarter of a page advertisement—a photograph and brief description of the craft, plus the price and the address. Readers had to send away for the pattern, or sometimes a kit. Prices for patterns ranged from 50 cents up to $3.00. Several readers letters commented upon the absence of (free) craft material in the magazine, including M. Siemienska of Montreal: "I think your magazine is wonderful BUT—every issue contains pages of recipes, and absolutely no knitting. I am not much of a cook, but I love knitting which I find very relaxing. Please do something." For many, such as this reader from Prince Rupert B.C., pleasurable departmental material meant craft ideas and projects not recipes:

When one tries to buy McCall’s Needlework magazine, one is told, ‘that came out last week and we are all sold out.’ We pay from thirty-five cents to five dollars for petit point charts, knitting books etc. One year’s subscription to certain English and American magazines may produce one usable idea, we keep buying them. Some of them have neither stories or recipes. Why can’t we have Canadian ideas? Your petit point picture of Halifax Clock Tower deserves more space in your magazine....If you run a Mrs. Chatelaine contest and judge it from a hobby angle, you might find the results most interesting. Most women of my acquaintance are not too interested in recipes because they come in every magazine, and cooking is not a hobby to us at all. If we ever managed to make something look like the picture, our husbands would still demand a square meal on the side. The pretty pictures are fine to look at but how about some good old fashioned tips. Weights, measure and substitutions for cooking. Changes in recipes for sea level dwellers and etc. We live with modern conveniences but still have old fashioned troubles....No faults to find with Chatelaine but give us more to chew on. Make it a magazine we can refer to, not one we read and discard....

Although the letter was addressed to Anderson, it was Jean Yack who had underlined the particular section and wrote in the margin “good point.” Also noteworthy was the importance the reader placed on “Canadian” crafts and affordability. In this case “Canadian” meant identifiable motifs, buildings, flora and fauna or scenes— which were then featured on a variety of needlework patterns. Undoubtedly the letter from Prince Rupert played a role in the magazine’s design to implement a craft contest the following year. The winners received a prize, had a photograph of their craft featured in the magazine and then had their object turned into a Chatelaine pattern. This letter from English reader M. Mawson describes the excitement created in her community by a winning Chatelaine entry:

Thank you for your letter...returning my stamps and appreciation for a pattern of W. Cottontail from the Craft Department....The interest in the toy is quite personal as it was at my suggestion the entry came to your competition—the result of which gave so much pleasure over here. Miss Irving’s vicar congratulated her in the Church Magazines notes and very soon the local press paid her a visit and took photographs for a splendid article in the Gazette. I can get any of her toy patterns from my friend so shall not bother to seek Canadian funds...as I’d have to go into Whitehaven our nearest town which isn’t very convenient and it was purely out of interest to see how you formulated the pattern that
prompted me to write for it....Your magazine is gifted to me by a friend in Kentucky, U.S.A.--and I couldn't ask her to find Canadian 35 cents. Pardon an old person (I'm 73) for intruding on your valuable time.151

This letter illustrates the Chatelaine community at work. First, the magazine is a gift from an American friend. After Mawson read her Chatelaine she shared the highlights with her friends in the community and at her church. In this particular instance, Mawson draws the attention of Miss Irving to the magazine's craft contest and Irving enters W. Cottontail in the competition. Miss Irving shares her excitement and pride in winning with Mawson and her friends. When the article appears in the magazine Irving is treated to an additional round of publicity and attention since her feat is publicized in the church bulletin and local papers. Finally, Mawson wrote to Chatelaine to tell them, and through the letters page other readers, the delightful story. As these letters indicate, the crafts advertisements, like the gardening features brought enjoyment and hobby ideas to the departmental pages.

Elizabeth Chant Robertson continued to write her “Your Child” columns on childhood illness and parenting issues until January 1964. After her, the magazine had a series of “experts” who, with the exception of Dr. Johanne Bentzon and Marguerite W. Brown of the Institute for Child Study, never wrote more than a few articles for this venerable column. It was still a useful resource for mothers (the various writers almost invariably presumed that mothers were the sole readers of their column) and featured topics in the sixties included vaccines, common childhood illnesses, skin rashes, household poisons, headaches and earaches. Brown’s articles examined child psychology, particularly issues of development and parenting: praising children, disciplining, temperament problems, the role of parents and the role of fathers. Although few letters were specifically about the “Your Child” column, many readers did include this column in their list of what they enjoyed in the magazine. This letter, from Vancouver doctor Gladys Story Cunningham indicates her pleasure with the contents of this column:

It is such a satisfaction to read an article on Sex Education which asserts that sex education is really part of the education of the person as a whole; that sex is a part of the personality and not a 'thing apart.' Marguerite Brown's article...is a fine contribution to the thinking of many parents and others associated with growing people.152

The importance of the “expert” writers for Chatelaine department fare cannot be underestimated since it gave readers confidence about the legitimacy and accuracy of this material. Although the departmental features were supposed to encourage readers to take action--to buy flower bulbs, dresses, food, furnishings or baby food (and the particular columns were usually surrounded by appropriate advertising, for instance all of the baby food and children’s
advertisements were situated around the “Your Child” column) the experts gave the material integrity and distanced it, as much as possible, from the advertisements. Equally important was the nature of the advice, information or “ideas” conveyed to the readers. The most successful service material-- food, gardening, household advice and the parenting column--provided readers with practical information. In those features the commercial nature of the material was very subtle or absent. They also provided glimpses that women’s roles were changing-- with their articles on food for working women, or how to cope with a dual day--there was some effort put into changing the most traditional of women’s magazine components. While these articles link gender and consumption, as all the departmental fare does, most of the suggestions, recipes or garden plans called for affordable products. The least successful features-- fashion, beauty, and homes features-- were those which featured the most persistent middle class biases, that presumed that all readers were urban or suburban dwellers with considerable disposable incomes. The commercial ethos was strongest in these features, because the articles were calculated to create a desire for the products on display. Yet, these features did not function as well as the other departmental fare because they were primarily aimed at the smaller, affluent group (or class audience) of Chatelaine readers and were not accessible to the mass audience.

Conclusion:
This examination of the “standard” fare of Chatelaine magazine in the sixties illustrates the variety of themes and messages as well as the different audiences for this material. Within the fiction component, the large number of issue stories and the decline in the number of conventional or family/marital romances indicates a shift in favour of dramatic fiction, and with the increased mystery fiction component. While the material presumed that for many women marriage and the household were their lot, a number of conflicting issues-- paid employment, workplace harassment, feminism, even the difficulties in adjusting, or reconciling oneself, to married life indicate that the stories attempted to cover some controversial topics. The endings were always happy, because readers seemed to prefer them, but they were never so iron-clad that readers were prevented from imagining and formulating their own alternate conclusions. Letters from readers, particularly the intense and detailed commentary about Sheila MacKay Russell’s Martin series, verify that many readers were attentive and capable of sophisticated commentary
about character motivations, plot structure and the author's purpose in writing the stories. The fiction component had a lower readership than the general articles or departmental features due to the uneven and often repetitious character of the stories, and perhaps to the editor's decision to opt for "commercial" packages--complete with happy endings and identifiable situations (although that is a debatable point)-- rather than more challenging works of fiction.

In contrast to the often gritty or problematic personal lives of Chatelaine heroines, the departmental pages presented a charmed world of nutritious and economical recipes, fashion and beauty tips, affluent interior design and home features, gardening columns, parenting advice and craft patterns. Along with the presumption that all Canadian women were housewives and mothers-- and responsible for the care of their children, husbands, and houses-- this material spoke most directly to the middle class, suburban and urban readers. Older readers, single women, rural women and working class women, were largely overlooked, except for the food features where economical meals were always the primary focus. While the content of the material had not changed substantially from the fifties it had gone "upscale." Despite criticism from readers, the editors stuck to their preferred audience for this material-- because it matched the demographic group determined by advertisers, and the business department, as the one most likely to purchase the products advertised in the magazine. While the magazine aimed at a mass audience of Canadian women, and certainly included enough diverse material to attract a broad cross section of women, it was the young, married middle class housewife and mother that they courted most assiduously. That the readership numbers always (at least for the fifties and sixties) illustrated that the bulk of their readership did not come from this demographic group did not deter the magazine. Whereas Doris Anderson was prepared to publish quite different material in the editorials and articles section, she was not prepared to (and probably could not) change the focus of the departmental material--in favour of older, less affluent readers. Part of the restraints of the traditional women's magazine format is the departmental material. It must provide a conducive environment for the advertisers-- yet it need not push their products directly. By and large, Chatelaine opted for the more subtle approach, although the emphasis on consumption was still apparent. Ultimately, the price Anderson, and the readers, had to pay for the often eclectic mix of issues addressed in the editorials, articles and some fiction was the departmental material. In written comments Anderson stated: "Women's magazines will really become liberated when they no longer have to devote so many pages to 'service' editorial in order to attract supporting
advertising in food, fashion and beauty products.”

The food, child care, gardening and housekeeping material was far too traditional in its insistence that no matter what other tasks women accepted, their role in the household was still their primary concern. However, the beauty, fashions, home and decorating features were the site of a far more narrow and restrictive (at times almost debilitating) focus on appearance, body image, beauty, fashionable clothing, posh homes, and affluent furnishings.

1 Public Archives on Ontario (PAO) Maclea Hunter Records Series (MHRs) F-4-3-a Box 435, Dorothy Pag, San Martin, Peru to Doris Anderson, 12 December 1962.

2 Mrs. E. Quarrie, Palmerston North, New Zealand to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (October 1964), 106.

3 Mrs. W. F. Bennett, Hutchinson, Kansas to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (July 1964), 74.

4 PAO MHRs F-4-3-a Box 435, Laura Faulkner, Staffordshire, England to Doris Anderson, 27 September 1962.

5 Miss K. Murphy, Grimsby, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (November 1961), 134.

6 Mrs. James Hoult, Montreal to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (July 1963), 84.

7 Mrs. L. Germaine, Ottawa to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (May 1968), 100.

8 Mrs. Eve Kenesky, Hamilton to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (September 1968), 132.

9 The editors only provided biographical information on authors who were Canadian or were prominent writers. The editors identified the authors as Canadian by virtue of their birthplace, citizenship or primary residence. Statistics are taken from the Sixties Fiction Database, please see Appendix for details. Of the fifty-nine stories in the sample, fifteen were written by Canadian authors.

10 Of the sixty authors who wrote the stories in the Sixties Fiction Database (one was co-authored)--49 were women, ten were men, and one andrognynous name could not be classified. Thus 82% of the stories were written by female authors. The Chatelaine Correspondents Inventory dated December 31, 1961 lists the author for item number 4450 as Susan Seavey=John Schaffner. PAO MHRs F-4-1-b Box 432.

11 The Chatelaine Correspondents Inventory--December 31, 1961: lists the amount paid for articles, photographs and fiction. Stories #4413: Fiction; Easy as Pie and #4450: Fiction: The Big Mouth were each worth $400. The condensed novel “The Spanish House” or #5713 on the inventory list cost $1000. PAO MHRs F-4-1-b Box 432.

12 PAO MHRs F-4-4-b Box 446, Keith A Knowlton to Elizabeth Stewart, Editorial Assistant of Writer’s Digest, 31 October 1961.

13 The breakdown for the fiction database was: traditional romance--18 out of 59 stories; family/marital romance--18 stories; protagonist’s quest (melodrama--see fifties fiction) 15 stories; mystery--7 stories; and medical drama--1 story. See Appendix for more details.

14 Statistics from the Fifties Fiction Database, see Appendix.

15 In the fifties, stories in the genre “protagonist’s quest” accounted for 7.3% of all fiction and mysteries represented a negligible 1.47% while a decade later the number of stories published from each genre increased--“quest” stories represented 25.4% while mysteries represented 11.8% of all Chatelaine fiction.
Canadian settings account for 66% of all the sixties fiction (it was 83% in the fifties). Generally, while the locale was “Canadian” (22.8% of all stories) this was a vague, generalization—meant to be “anywhere”—and hence accessible to readers across the country. The specific settings were quite different from the fifties. Western Canada was most popular (21%); followed by Ontario (12%); Quebec (5%) and the Maritimes (5%). The large number of Sheila MacKay Russell stories—all set in and around Edmonton—account for this shift to Western settings. After the Canadian locales, American settings were most popular (22.8%) followed by Europe (7%); the Middle East (1.7%) and Australia (1.7%).

Characters were equally likely to live in urban (37.5%) and rural areas (37.5%) while less likely to live in suburbia (25%).

See Appendix for more detailed information and statistical breakdowns.

From the sample, the resolution was determined by female characters in 34 stories (59%) while male characters determined the outcome in 23 stories (40%). Only one story was jointly resolved by women and men.

See Appendix.

See Sixties Themes Table A.16 in Appendix.

22 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Keith A. Knowlton to Doris H. Anderson, 23 April 1962.

23 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 444, Doris H. Anderson to W.O. Mitchell, 25 June 1962.

24 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 445, Mrs. Jane Van Every, Waterloo, Ontario to Miss Almeda Glassey, Chatelaine Fiction Editor, 9 November 1962.

25 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 446, Almeda Glassey to Doris Anderson, undated.

26 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 446, Almeda Glassey to Mrs. Jane Van Every, 22 December 1962.

27 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Doris H. Anderson to Keith A. Knowlton, no date.

28 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Almeda Glassey to Mrs. Sewell Haggard, Curtis Brown Ltd., New York, 23 August 1962.

29 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Mrs. L. Muise to Doris Anderson, 29 October 1962.


31 Almeda Glassey, Downsview, Ontario to Anderson, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (September 1965), 170.


34 Ibid., 123.

35 Editorial commentary, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (January 1963), 86.

36 Dr. B.F. Nixon, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan to Editors, Ibid.
38 Name Withheld, to Editors, Ibid.

39 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs. W. Hingston, Cawell, Saskatchewan to Doris Anderson, 22 November 1962.

40 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Doris Anderson to Mrs. W. Hingston, Cawell, Saskatchewan, 30 November 1962.

41 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 445, Edmonton reader to Keith A. Knowlton, 15 September 1962.


44 Eberhart, 44.

45 Humble, 28.


47 Ibid., 79.


49 Ibid.

50 Ibid., 117.

51 Mrs. E. Carnochan, New Westminster, B.C. to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (December 1965), 88.


53 Ibid., 59.

54 Ibid., 61.


56 Ibid., 38.

57 Ibid., 42.


59 Wallace, 90.

Russell, “Have gun, will shoot.”

The Martin Family was accorded the “Master Farmer” designation by the provincial government in honour of their successful farm, their expertise and their position in the community of Bright Hills, Alberta. To the best of my knowledge this was a fictional designation created by Russell.


Editor’s note on Russell’s “One Shining Moment,” 41.

The commentary on “Sari” will be examined in the text, however space does not permit discussion of “The Hutterites.” Readers interested in reading a selection of critical, and praiseworthy, letters received by the editors and published in the magazine see “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (January 1967), 72.


Ibid., 104.

Ibid., 100.


PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs. B. Larsen, Edmonton, Alberta to Doris Anderson, 29 October 1962.

PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Doris Anderson to Mrs. B. Larsen, Edmonton, Alberta, 6 November 1962.

Ibid.


Ibid., 56 & 58.

Ibid., 62.

Mrs. Patricia Yates, Cornwall, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (April 1964), 88.

Mrs. Eleanor Spalding, Dauphin, Manitoba to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (December 1967), 100.

Ruth Sonderegger, Gfela, Switzerland to Editors, Ibid.

Queer imagery refers back to the discussion of “Vixen in the Snow” in Chapter 5. The two suggestive story titles, and the accompanying art works played with the conventions of pulp novels of the era where lesbianism was a common and lurid theme. The illustration for “Off men” featured a butch-femme pairing of roommates while “Let Della Do It” featured an extraordinary illustration of two women—one completely naked (with her back to the readers) facing the other seated women. Only in the text is the fact that they are sisters revealed. Interested readers, please see Rosalie F. Wilson, “Let Della Do It,” Chatelaine (January 1950), 10 and Isabel Langis, “Off Men,” Chatelaine (July 1952), 14-15.

81 B. Millway, Burnaby, B.C. to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (April 1967), 128.

82 Agnes Ridgeway, "Tin Can Garden," Chatelaine (September 1964), 35.

83 Charles P. Stokes, Ottawa to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (November 1964), 108.

84 Audrey Vogt, Quesnel, B.C. to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (March 1960), 148.

85 Mrs. C. Flagg, Medicine Hat, Alberta to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (October 1962), 142.

86 Mrs. A. F. Pearce, Colfax, Saskatchewan to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (October 1965), 164.

87 Mrs. R. L. Orchard, Lunenburg, N.S. to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (November 1969), 120.


89 Ibid.

90 Ibid.


93 PAOMHRSF-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs. Ursula McGowan, Smiths Falls, Ontario to Doris Anderson, 27 October 1962.

94 PAOMHRSF-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs. Irene Makins, Ayr, Ontario to Doris Anderson, 12 May 1962.

95 PAOMHRSF-4-3-a Box 434, A Subscriber, Harris, Saskatchewan, 5 March 1962.

96 Miss Ruth C. Baxter, Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia to Editors, "The Last Word is Yours," Chatelaine (May 1966), 106.

97 PAOMHRSF-4-4-b Box 446, Bertha E. Scott, Edgewood, British Columbia to Doris Anderson, 8 June 1962.

98 PAOMHRSF-4-4-b Box 446, Doris Anderson to Bertha E. Scott, 29 June 1962.

99 PAOMHRSF-4-4-b Box 445, Mrs. Alice Rishworth, Agincourt to Doris Anderson, 9 January 1962.


102 This statistic was compiled from the Chatelaine Sixties Food Database. 44% of recipes did call for processed food products, usually soup or canned food products and not biscuit mixes, frozen food or prepared pasta or noodle packages. There was a slight decline in recipes which required processed food products, the comparable figure from the fifties was 47%. See Appendix for more details.

103 PAOMHRSF-4-3-a Box 434, Memo from J.M. Donovan to Chatelaine Editorial Department, 19 January 1962: "Mrs John Enslen, Box 23, Seven Persons, Alberta requested cancellation of her subscription and refund of remaining portion. She has some comments in her letter concerning the contents of Chatelaine which we thought you might find interesting...."
Ethnic cuisine as a theme of food features, accounted for 15% of all sixties food articles. Thus it ranked, third behind thrift (26%); and new and improved (21%). In the fifties the theme “ethnic cuisine”in the food features was ranked in eighth spot (2.6%) of all food articles, behind: thrift; traditional values; new and improved; entertainment; special; speed of preparation; and ease of preparation. Sources: Sixties Food Database and Fifties Food Database. See Appendix for more details.


Mrs. K. Norman, Islington, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (January 1960), 80.

Mrs. Jean Rousseau, Ste. Foy, Quebec to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (May 1964), 86.

Pat Ferguson, Camp Wainwright, Alberta to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (January 1967), 72.

Una Abrahamson, “Homemaker’s Diary,” Chatelaine (September 1963), 84.


Mrs. Victor Kenziora, Windsor, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (April 1965), 108.


127 Mrs. Ronald Hatch, Sr., Red Head Cove, Newfoundland to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (July 1964), 74.


129 Ibid., 17.

130 Mrs. Margaret Devine of Ballycastle, Northern Ireland to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (May 1966), 106.

131 Mrs. B. Eugenie Terrell, Mallorytown, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.


136 Mrs. Phyllis Poulter, Montreal to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (February 1966), 90.

137 Mrs. P. Allen, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (January 1965), 72.

138 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Mrs. Dorothy Brown, to Doris Anderson, 3 November 1961.


140 Ibid.

141 Ibid.


143 Saul Field, 69 Banstock Drive, Willowdale, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (January 1968), 68.

144 Mrs. E. Armstrong, Etobicoke, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (February 1964), 76.

145 Mrs. G.S. Morris, Victoria, B.C. to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (February 1966), 80.

146 Mrs. Louise Hudson, Quebec to Editors, Ibid.

147 Editors, “Honeybees on Bikes in What’s New With Us,” Chatelaine (September 1966), 2.


149 M. Siemienska, Montreal to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (July 1961), 88.

150 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 444, Anonymous writer, ----Lighthouse station, Prince Rupert, B.C. to Anderson, 3 May 1962.
151 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 444, M. Mawson to Jean Yack, 8 April 1963.


Chapter 10: Cover Art and Advertisements

I enjoy Chatelaine vastly. The articles in it are so down to earth and from my scrutiny of other American magazines I feel Canadians and Australians have more in common...Maybe this kindred feeling springs from my early love of the books of L.M. Montgomery...I should dearly love to have some of the free recipes which firms advertise in Chatelaine, especially since overseas food firms are taking over here at a great rate.¹

--Mrs. A.S. King, New South Wales, Australia

Many thanks for your prompt attention to my request for a sample copy of Chatelaine. I must say I was pleasantly surprised by your publication, and enjoyed reading it immensely. As you probably know, here in the States we are accustomed to much higher priced magazines, so I could hardly believe the price of Chatelaine. It’s been years since any of our women’s publications cost fifteen cents! My two older boys enjoyed the advertisements of your Canadian products, and compared them with some of ours, such as your Red Rose Tea, and our White Rose Tea, etc. One of them even sneaked the copy to school, since he is studying Canada at present....² [emphasis mine]

--Mrs. Marie K. Fredrick, Jersey City, New Jersey, U.S.A.

The enjoyment Mrs. King and Mrs. Fredrick’s children received from perusing the ads in Chatelaine indicates that readers were able to re-interpret, evade, resist or enjoy the intended meanings of even the most overtly commercial material in the magazine. Some readers took pleasure in the imagery, information or the fantasy aspect of the pages. Another reader, June Callwood, remembers assuming that the advertisements were a necessary part of the periodical, one most readers accepted yet generally ignored.³ Comments from other readers, the editors, and the advertising department will illustrate Chatelaine cover art and advertisements were some of the most contested terrain in the magazine. Advertisers and editors intended these pages to speak to the readers. The cover was supposed to function as the magazine’s advertisement and newsstand face— an appealing, intriguing, entertaining picture to which Canadian women were drawn. In contrast, the advertisements were not selling Chatelaine (in fact they were paying for Chatelaine, note Mrs. Fredrick’s comment about the low price) but were supposed to sell brand name products— appliances, cosmetics, food products, clothing and other assorted items—to Chatelaine readers. Additionally, the cover art and the ads were both highly visual components of the magazine which provide a contrast to the text-heavy articles, editorials, fiction and departmental material (although with the exception of editorials all features had photographs or illustrations). Text was minimal in
most ads, and certainly on the cover of the magazine hence, these were some of the most lavish, colourful and visually exciting pages in the magazine.

**Cover Art**

Your covers often go so well with my living room décor, but why do you have to spoil the good-looking cover with that nasty-looking address tag? Would a brown wrapping that could be slipped off be too expensive?  
-Mrs. Alex Henry, Woodstock, Ontario

Congratulations on your November cover. This is the first pretty cover you have had for months and months. Let's not have anymore of these women printed green or purple or yellow or like that apparition rising out of the water we had some months ago.  
-Mrs. Florence M. Riches, Calgary

My husband is terribly disappointed with Chatelaine--to my amusement! Seeing “Prize-winning cheesecake” on the February cover, he quickly looked through the magazine. Almost as quickly he laid it down. “Wrong kind of cheesecake!” he grumpily commented.  
-Mrs. Cynthia Ritchie, St. John’s

The cover art sought to differentiate the magazine from others on the newsstands and coffee tables of the country. The prime identifiers were gender-- all covers featured women, or couples (seldom men alone). Once purchased, the magazine’s cover art identified those who owned it (and often displayed it on their coffee tables) as part of the Chatelaine community. Unlike the fifties covers, which had featured a variety of children, women, and food on the cover, sixties covers stuck to a much narrower formula. Food was banished from the cover, and except for a few exceptions so were photographs or illustrations of babies and children. Maclean Hunter paid more attention to the cover in the sixties (and opted for a more sophisticated look) with a view to increasing newsstand sales as this memo from Anderson to Lloyd Hodgkinson indicates: “the cover as it was designed three years ago has served us well, giving us a distinctive, different look from all other magazines on the newsstands....” The typical sixties cover featured a photograph of a woman’s head and shoulders—usually a white model in her twenties. All the covers featured glossy photographs, on a variety of multi-coloured backgrounds. Illustrations, either paintings or drawings, were abandoned. Besides female models, cover photographs of celebrities or Royalty were increasingly popular. Featured celebrities were representatives from the world of Canadian television or Canadian popular music. The celebrities had huge followings
throughout the country: Juliette Sysak, Fred Davis, Betty Kennedy, Marg Osborne, Adrienne Clarkson, Julie Christie, Ian and Sylvia Tyson and Joni Mitchell. The American celebrities were the Hollywood movie stars of the era such as Elizabeth Taylor or Debbie Reynolds. Royal family covers were more popular in the sixties than they were in the fifties. In the sixties the magazine branched out, featuring the various permutations of the House of Windsor-- the teenaged Prince Charles was particularly popular-- although Queen Elizabeth (alone or with Philip), Princess Anne, the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret (with and without Lord Snowdon) were also featured. The definition of “royalty” was expanded to include Madame Vanier, wife of the Governor General, and Queen Farah Diba of Iran (wife of the Shah of Iran). Male politicians also made an appearance as first Lester Pearson, accompanied by his daughter and grand-daughter, and then while the country was in the throes of Trudeaumania the magazine featured Pierre Elliot Trudeau on the cover twice.

The selection of cover art, the preserve of the Art Director, was linked with a featured article or else was chosen to highlight a departmental material. The few extant memos from the early sixties illustrate the links between the cover art--the model, the design, the colours and the backdrop--and the magazine content:

Cover: Ties in with the article on femininity, shows head and shoulders of a pretty girl, pink predominates... Cover: Mother and child looking at frosted cake, ties in with bonus cookbook. Colours mainly pink, accented in purple... Cover: Head and shoulders of model, crossbeams of house in the background, tying in with Homes '60.9 (emphasis mine)

The intended link between the cover art and the content was never very difficult to ascertain. Despite the above commentary, cover colours varied considerably and “feminine” colours (pinks, and other pastels) were used less frequently than bold, multi-coloured covers or singular bold background colours-- black and white, blue, green, or red.10

The magazine viewed the cover art as the way to attract new readers, particularly newsstand readers, while the subscribers were most concerned that the cover prove pleasing and enjoyable for the month that it graced their livingroom coffee table. Since the cover was “on display” in the livingrooms of the nation, many readers were quite opinionated about what they disliked (most letters about the covers were from disgruntled readers). Obviously, the kind of cover designed to “jolt” or attract readers at the newsstand was often in direct conflict with the subscribers’ view of the cover’s purpose. This exchange between reader
Jean Young of Edmonton and Doris Anderson illustrates the conflict between the multiple purposes of the cover:

Your cover designer is not in a rut--he is in a GORGE! I am so sick of the insipid females he has on the cover that I refuse to look at another one. The only cover that has been different in the last decade is the one with the stained glass window. I intended to write and compliment you on it. If you can not find anything else to put on the cover just print the table of contents and the month in large letters so one can at least tell which issue is which.11

--Jean Young, Edmonton to Doris Anderson, June 20, 1962

I am sorry that you disagree with our Art Director on covers. As a matter of fact you say “he,” whereas our Art Director is Miss Joan Chalmers.... The reason we run so many large heads of young women on our covers is simply because from exhaustive surveys we find that these are the covers that sell best on the newsstands, and since we are in a very competitive business... we just simply can't afford to deviate from what we know makes good business sense. However, I hope our readers like yourself will not judge us solely on our covers, but on our contents.12

--Anderson's reply, June 29, 1962

Young was probably not impressed with this logic, since she was one of a number of readers who would criticize the inconsistency between the ideals expressed in the editorials and articles--Canadianism, pro-women commentary and intelligent journalism-- and the obvious pandering to youthfulness, exaggerated femininity and superficiality conveyed on the magazine’s cover.

The liveliest cover controversy involved Chatelaine’s decision to feature the by-then infamous, scandal-plagued Hollywood actress Elizabeth Taylor (see illustration) on the cover of the July 1962 issue. Readers from across the country were livid. From Moncton, Jennie L. Kennedy wrote: "June Callwood's article on beauty...is acceptable, but why did your magazine have to publish the cover picture of Elizabeth Taylor? This might be acceptable by readers of low-rated magazines, but adds no distinction to yours."13 The Taylor cover had debased the magazine, in Kennedy’s opinion, from a respectable, middle-class journal to a “low-rate” trashy magazine. Others protested Taylor’s Americanism and her failure to function as an appropriate role model for women, and thus her unsuitability for a women’s magazine. Mrs Elizabeth Saunders of Truro, N.S. did not mince words stating: "Surely there must be other subjects for the cover of a Canadian magazine than a homewrecker."14 From the west, Mrs. T.H. Field of Edmonton pronounced the Taylor cover “...unworthy of your excellent magazine,”15 while Mrs. A.J. McDonald of Winnipeg concluded that “She is a disgrace to womanhood.”16 The most striking commentary about the “values” behind the
Are you really a good mother?

A NEW DIET THAT WORKS

Part II of the Eaton family's story

BEAUTY does it always bring UNHAPPINESS?

Elizabeth Taylor—typical of unhappy
Taylor cover were expressed in this letter from “A Shocked Reader” who wrote: “It was certainly in bad taste. Just when the old cow is moving for a fresh bull and stealing another woman’s husband. It’s too bad to condone legalized prostitution. Let her stay where she belongs.” Finally, Mrs. Eleanor M. Scott of Ottawa provides a valuable description of why she disliked the cover and how she coped with *Chatelaine*’s poor taste:

I have subscribed to the *Chatelaine* since its earliest days because I believe in encouraging a Canadian magazine and have enjoyed it. But really, are you so hard up for covers as to sink so low as to have Elizabeth Taylor on the July issue! Recently, on a newsstand in Toronto, there were eight magazines with her face. Then to come home and find her in the mail on *Chatelaine*. UGH! If you must have girls, take a look at *Women’s Own* or *Woman*. Think of all the nice looking, decent Canadian girls you could have or babies and children are always acceptable, or tropical subjects...Princess Margaret was visiting Canada and school was just out. I had to tear off the cover and put it in the waste basket and leave the magazine coverless, on the dining room table. *Chatelaine* is a Canadian Woman’s Magazine. Please do not make it a Movie Magazine. Mrs. Scott’s age was undoubtedly a factor in her criticism of the cover, but other readers (who were either younger or did not identify their ages) also wanted the magazine to abandon their cover formula and feature Canadians, then respectable celebrities like the Royal family, or innocents--children, babies and “decent” young girls. Equally important is the way in which Mrs. Scott coped with the lurid covers (or other offensive material) by removing it or, in extreme cases, by throwing out the entire magazine. The signal was clear: *Chatelaine* could print covers designed to sell copies on the newsstands but readers and subscribers were equally free to complain, remove them, cancel their subscriptions or toss out the entire magazine.

While there was consensus about the atrocity of a Elizabeth Taylor cover on a respectable Canadian magazine, the editors were also criticized for their depiction of “Canadian” women. In April 1960 *Chatelaine* featured a photo of a dramatically coifed and made-up brunette with the phrase “Is she a typical Canadian beauty? (see illustration)” The photo was cropped so that only the head and shoulders of the naked model were visible, along with her sole prop-- a yellow rose. It is undoubtedly a sexual photo-- her nakedness, her dramatic make-up and prominent red lips, long eyelashes and sultry stare (unlike most cover models this one doesn’t smile)-- all combine to create a very different cover photo. This is a strong female sexuality--the model looks directly at the reader instead of coyly averting her eyes. Joan Chalmers’ exposure to the artistic milieu her parents (Floyd and Jean
Is she a special Canadian beauty?

Women's TV shows—good or bad?

I'm tired of being a New Canadian

Exclusive: The Queen's sister tells her story
Chalmers) supported and enjoyed, her training at the Ontario College of Art, and perhaps her sexual orientation were all at work in this photo. The photo was supposed to tie-in with Eveleen Dollery’s article, of the same title, which profiled a “beauty” from each region of the country.

Reader commentary was scathing. Mrs. Audrey Phillips of Ottawa writes: “If this cover appears outside Canada, the flow of immigrants to Canada will be set back fifty years. Can you honestly visualize the typical, average Canadian husband arriving home in suburbia and being met by this typical Canadian beauty, complete with rose?” Mrs. Guy Fortier of Montreal was even more outspoken: “If looking like a squaw is your idea of looking Canadian, you have succeeded.” The next month, A.I. Haincy of Beauharnois, Quebec wrote: “En garde! You have probably alienated all of your Quebec readers with that atrocious cover photo. We think you have depicted a really early-Quebec beauty—probably one of Pontiac’s daughters.” The racist tone of the negative letters is all the more disturbing since the “Elegant, femme du monde” model was clearly identified within the text of the article as Jacqueline Gilbert who “epitomizes French charm and glamour”. The infrequency with which women who did not fit the racial stereotype of Anglo-Canadians, Americans or British royalty made it onto the cover of the magazine (three times in the sixties: this cover, a 1968 cover with Native film-maker Barbara Wilson, and Adrienne Clarkson’s 1969 cover) did not matter— for many readers “Canadian woman” was a narrowly defined category. Only two readers wrote supportive letters about the cover. Miss Ann Arthur Hitchcock of Cowansville, Quebec wrote: “In June’s Last Word one of your Montreal readers said....She has apparently forgotten that the true Canadian beauty would be an Indian.” Meanwhile, pride was the motivating force from this reader from Hagersville, Ontario, Mrs. Henry Swig: “All she needs to do is come up to our Six Nations Reserve to see some of the best looking girls in Canada.” Although there were numerous articles in the sixties, and editorials, which examined ethnic diversity in the country, or refugee issues (and readers could have positive reactions to those articles) they were not prepared to accept racial “difference” as representative of Canadian beauty.

Commensurate with the readership’s dislike of lurid covers (Taylor) or unrepresentative covers (Gilbert), and coupled with their strong desire for Canadianism was
the call for covers which depicted either the landscape or great Canadians. J. Balint of Toronto complains:

Why, when you dare to be Canadian in content, when you stake your life as a publisher on the premise that Canadians care about themselves, do you continue to hide behind covers which, with their brassy and beatnicky wenches are about as Canadian as a herd of crocodiles? Give us our mountains and our forests, the light at Peggy’s Cove, and the Peace Tower in Ottawa.28

This demand for the natural beauty of the country was repeated throughout the decade yet the call went unheeded by the editors. Other readers wanted great Canadians, and were most impressed when the magazine featured someone like Madame Vanier on the cover. However, according to Anderson, despite their popularity with some subscribers those covers did not sell well on the newsstands (see commentary in Chapter 7). While the critics savaged the Taylor cover, the newsstand shoppers gobbled it up, which was an indication of the difficulty in creating, and successfully marketing, a mass market women’s magazine.

Other readers requested that the magazine provide special seasonal covers--particularly for Christmas and Easter-- which reflected the special religious, cultural and seasonal influences at those times of the year. This letter from Mrs. Brian Marshall, of Midland, Ontario reflects an ongoing concern throughout the decade, whenever the magazine did not publish a “special” Christmas cover: “What a disgusting and disappointing December issue. Why did you print Betty Kennedy’s picture on the cover? At Christmas time we’d appreciate a picture more suitable to this special season....”29 Five years later, Mrs. J.A. Ferguson’s complaint was almost identical: “The December Chatelaine arrived recently and the cover prompts me to write with strong objections. With many beautiful Christmas themes to choose from was it necessary to produce a mop of hair, which we can see any day, anywhere?”30

As the decade reached its end, many readers criticized the models which, in retrospect, functioned as stereotypical icons of the sixties with their mini dresses, hippie stylings, and the “mop” as many referred to the long, tangled-looking manes of hair. The magazine was obviously aiming the cover to appeal to the youth market, and some of their established readers were resistant. Mrs. J. MacArthur of Red Deer Alberta complains about the September 1969 cover which featured Joni Mitchell: “September Chatelaine looks very good inside but the cover is nauseating. That mousy long hair is ugly and the girl herself is not even pretty. You should come west where there are really pretty girls.”31 Poor Mrs.
MacArthur was probably crestfallen when the editors pointed out that Mitchell was a Westerner, and realized that her letter was published more for its unintentional humour than for its criticism.

The controversies over Chatelaine covers during the sixties illustrate the multiple roles played by the cover art. It was to function as an eye-catching advertisement for the magazine on the newsstands. It had to differentiate the magazine from its American rivals and position it so that readers, Canadian women, knew this was a magazine for them. To do that it consistently featured young, white Canadian models, Canadian and American celebrities or Royalty, assuming that these three categories would attract their prime audience of Canadian women in their late teens and twenties. The emphasis was on youthfulness and attractiveness, and on keeping a steady stream of younger women subscribing to the magazine. According to their surveys, once readers' began subscribing they usually stayed with the periodical for years and thus the cover need not attract women outside the prime target group. The cover was also supposed to lead readers into the magazine—by providing a visual clue to the issue’s prominent feature or article, as well as a partial list of the top non-fiction articles in that issue. Finally, and seemingly in direct competition with the newsstand appeal of the magazine was how the placement of Chatelaine on the coffee tables, dining-room tables, kitchen tables or bed-stands of the nation sent a message to husbands, family and friends about what sort of woman the reader was and the nature of their magazine. Women who commented on the at-home display value of the covers wanted a magazine that was attractive as well as respectable. They eschewed lurid covers, “beatnicky wenches,” and discordant images in favour of appropriate seasonal covers, Canadian personalities (preferably as saintly and decent as possible) and positive reflections of Anglo-Canadian women. These women wanted the magazine to convey a certain status to all who would glance at it, pick-it-up, or borrow it. The last thing readers wanted was for friends and family alike to think they were reading a sensationalist, low-brow magazine which catered to the lowest common denominator.

Advertisements

Chatelaine is all woman: start an affair.
Chatelaine does more than reach a woman--it involves her. When a woman sits down to read Chatelaine, it’s usually in a free moment when there are no demands on her time. It’s a personal thing she doesn’t have to share with the rest of her family. She’s relaxed, receptive, in the right frame of mind to absorb information and new ideas. Chatelaine’s editorial pages provide a wealth of information and new ideas on homes, food, fashion, travel, beauty as well as intelligent comment on current events, entertainment and family affairs. Chatelaine touches every aspect of her life--from her point of view. We believe this environment, this rapport benefits advertisers. When a woman’s in the right frame of mind, share of mind, and share of market can’t help but follow.  

--Chatelaine ad from CARD

Have enjoyed your magazine for years and have often intended to write to you, this September issue has given me much food for thought... could you gloss things up just a little? On thumbing through this issue the advertisement for salmon is positively insipid--due entirely to poor colouring in the foreground. The setting is excellent. Libby’s fruit cocktail is more attractive than is pictured here. Is the paper at fault? Is it not possible to make the coloured pictures more attractive?  

--Sheelage M. Sheeran, Sherbrooke, Quebec

The discrepancy between the confidant, seductive advertisement placed in Canadian Advertising Rates and Data (CARD) and the letter from Sheelage M. Sheeran glaringly illustrates the difference between advertisement and reality or between business exuberance and consumer shrewdness. In the fifties the Chatelaine CARD ads had promised advertisers that Chatelaine was the best medium to sell women, whereas in the sixties the text and the advertising metaphors utilized in CARD eschewed bold pronouncements for more restrained, yet very seductive, promises. Advertising copy writers who wrote the ads for Chatelaine which were printed in CARD began to utilize the metaphor of heterosexuality to describe the relationship between advertiser and reader. That metaphor is particularly apt in this case as the majority of advertisers, business staff, consumers, and editorial staff continued to fall into sexually segregated groups. Despite the men’s club or locker-room bravado of some of the CARD advertisements-- particularly apparent in their comments about the receptive and ready readers of Chatelaine-- the heterosexual drama of the advertising pages is best understood not as conquest, or defeat, but rather, as a seduction. The men had the financial and creative power to make and pay for the advertisements. But the women readers were used to such a constant barrage of attention and thus were capable of avoiding the ads, enjoying their visual (and often humourous) appeal, or of planning future family purchases based upon the ad pages of Chatelaine. The relationship was unequal but it was not one-sided. At some point, no matter how much attention, money, study and planning went into
an advertisement it could still end up in the hands of an inattentive, uninterested reader who
for a variety of reasons was unable to buy or did not want to buy that product. Or, as
Sheeran’s letter indicates, it could easily be criticized (and dismissed) by the reader for its
poor colouring, ugly presentation and lack of verisimilitude.

*Chatelaine* advertisements in the 1960s had, to borrow a classic advertising cliché, a
bold new look. They were larger, more colourful, and interestingly contained far fewer
people than the comparable sample from the fifties. The magazine continued to publish
editorial and advertising material in what they referred to as a 50:50 ratio— in reality 53% of
the decades’ pages were full of advertising. Of the close to 13,500 pages of material,
7,083.75 were advertisements. For the average issue size of 112 pages that meant 59 pages
of advertising material. The two most noticeable changes from one decade to another were in
the sizes of advertisements and the greater use of colour. The number of full page
advertisements nearly doubled, to 30% of all ads while ads larger than one page accounted
for a healthy 4%. There were considerably fewer 1/8 page ads (or smaller) in the
magazine. Visually, this meant that the magazine was less claustrophobic. There were
very few pages with numerous small ads and lots of pages with only one advertisement.
Advertisers were spending more money to advertise in the periodical and that translated into
a more affluent look as the smaller ads had always appeared thrifty and visually unappealing.
The growth in full colour advertisements (38%) and partial colour ads (10%) also added to
the glossier, more affluent sixties look. Even a black and white advertisement (52%) could
look more visually appealing if it was larger, more dramatic, or included more white space in
its layout. Layout of the ads also changed considerably, as the majority of advertisements
were primarily graphics and illustrations (53%) or had an equal amount of graphics and text
(26%). The magazine altered the placement of ads so that the first quarter of the magazine
doubled the number of advertisements from its fifties counterpart (18%) and the last quarter
also had a greater number of ads (38%) while the second quarter (13%) and third quarter
(28%) had less advertising content than before. In other words, the magazine was favouring
a more modern type of ad placement— putting the majority of the ads at the beginning and
end of the magazine where the reader traffic was highest while the least desirable pages
(from an advertising perspective) in the middle of the magazine were left for editorial.
Finally, 48% of the ads in the magazine contained no photographs or illustrations of people—
just a variety of product shots.\textsuperscript{38} These ads were much less imaginative than those with people--usually just photographs or illustrations of the products or their packaging. According to other advertising studies of the era, this change affected all periodical advertising in North America so the changes at \textit{Chatelaine} were part of a larger trend.\textsuperscript{39}

While the mixture of products was similar to the fifties sample, there were noticeable changes in tone, cost and reasons touted for purchasing the products on display. The new products--in particular, diet products and pet food--and the increase in the number of ads for processed and convenience foods (11\% of all ads in the magazine), for wine and liqueurs (Canadian and foreign), for British and European travel, for European cheeses and for New Zealand lamb indicate that the magazine's advertising was moving up-scale. Canadians had more discretionary income and this is reflected in the greater range, and cost, of products. In the \textit{Chatelaine} advertisements this affluence was linked with sophistication and greater leisure time. The top eight product categories were the same as the decade earlier, yet there were some surprising changes in their order. Building supplies, household furniture and household entertainment (22.4\% of all advertisements) had supplanted food products (15.3\%) as the number one advertised category in the magazine--largely due to the tremendous increase in the number of building supplies advertisements. As well, leisure products (hobbies, crafts and travel) rose to third place (13.6\%), followed by medical and feminine hygiene products (11.6\%); beauty (cosmetics, toiletries) (7.8\%); general household products (cleaners, paper products, etc.) (6.9\%); clothing (6.6\%) and housewares (5.4\%).\textsuperscript{40} Despite the fact that \textit{Chatelaine} was the only women's magazine in Canada, the percentage of cosmetics advertisements, clothing, household cleaners and household products all experienced a decline. Regardless of the type of product almost all the ads were for brand name items (97\% of all ads).

The people depicted in the sixties sample bear some similarities to those of a decade earlier. Most ads had only one (32\%) or two (12\%) people, although groups of people were not uncommon--one ad for Sanderson drapery and textiles featured 26 men and women proudly displaying the company's products. Women--alone, in groups and with children--were the stars of most \textit{Chatelaine} advertisements. The popularity of male models increased however and they appeared with women, alone, or, less frequently, with children.\textsuperscript{41} Youth, in this case interpreted as people in their twenties and late teens were the select group,
although the multi-generational grouping (predominantly parents with children) continued to be popular. Racially, the people depicted in advertisements continued to be very homogeneous (96% were white) -- only nine ads featured non-whites -- five multi-racial groups; three featured blacks and one advertisement featured native Canadians. In terms of class, although there was a slight increase in the number of ads depicting working-class models (2.3%) and upper-class models (8.6%), the majority of people depicted in the Chatelaine ads were solidly middle class (73.26%). Although the incidence of advertisements set in the home decreased by 13% they still account for the majority of advertisements (48%) followed by Play settings (21%) and Work (8.9%).

The narrow range of people represented in the advertisements -- primarily white women (and men) in their twenties -- was matched by their style of dress, appearance, mood and body language. The clothing worn by advertising models tended to favour casual outfits, moderately dressy clothing or business wear -- exactly the clothing favoured in the fifties. However, there was a noticeable increase in the number of models wearing lingerie, or nothing at all. Partially and totally nude models account for 13% of all ads with people. Maternal images in advertisements dropped precipitously while ads with sexual images (some quite graphic) increased.

In short, the ads featured in Chatelaine in the sixties were visually different from their dowdy fifties predecessors. An increased use of the full page format, coupled with a greater use of full colour and partial colour plates resulted in a less parsimonious appearance. They were clustered at the front and back of the magazine, with far fewer ads sprinkled throughout the interior pages. Many only featured the product or its packaging. A far larger proportion of ads were for building supplies, while food advertisers were demoted to the second most popular product category advertised in the magazine. Likewise, leisure and travel products increased, while cosmetics, clothing and housewares popularity dimmed. The composition of adworld people changed slightly to include more men, although they were most frequently accompanied by women, sometimes children, but otherwise they were, as they had been in the fifties, mostly white, middle class, people. They were more sexual than they had been in the fifties, but in the campy, humourous, psychedelic way of the sixties -- soft focus, decorative blond women, more stylish homes or breezy shots of people at play or less frequently, at work. The products, the campaigns, the model’s clothing, and furnishings all
bespoke greater affluence, more discretionary spending and a desire to appear more sophisticated—capable of buying imported cheeses, making an "ethnic" dish (from a pre-packaged mix, of course), serving an appropriate wine, or jetting off via Air Canada or Air Italia for a vacation in Europe. They were white, middle-class, Anglo-Canadians trying to live the Chatelaine version of "the good life"—a Chef Boyardee spaghetti dinner, served with Bright's Manor St. David's Claret, accompanied by a tape from the Columbia Record and Tape Club, served on a linen tablecloth hand-embroidered from a Chatelaine pattern.

The statistics from the sixties sample represent the overall trends in the decade, but the trends obscure the numerous codes, messages and images inherent in the individual ads. This critical analysis of some of the more eye-catching and interesting ads of the decade illustrates the multiplicity of meaning -- either overt or covert-- in the ads. Perhaps the most ubiquitous and conventional of advertised products for a magazine which targeted housewives and mothers as their core readership were the food advertisements. The prominent food advertisers—Kraft, Swift, Canada Packers, Sunkist, E.D. Smith, Green Giant, Libby's, Dole and Aylmer—placed the majority of the ads for prepared foods such as jams, cheeses, pre-packaged spaghetti dinners, prepared meats, canned fruits and vegetables. Far fewer food advertisements were for less processed foods like eggs, meat (roasts, steak, etc.), or citrus fruit. Advertisements for baking supplies and baby formula and prepared baby foods rounded out the complement of Chatelaine food ads. Most food ads were little more than product shots—closely cropped photographs of the product, its packaging or an evocative exotic photograph. Dole Pineapple, for example, favoured photographs of lush tropical waterfalls to entice winter-weary Canadian consumers to purchase their product. Along with the large, often full colour, photographs the companies increasingly included recipes in their ads to attract reader attention.

Mom Knows Best:

Food advertisers relied on two motifs to encourage consumption of their products. Either they linked the product with an emotional appeal to the housewife and mother about the importance of her role or they stressed the novelty of their product -- its ease of use, quick preparation, and as a new solution for mealtime ennui. In 1965 Magic Baking Powder ran a very simple yet powerful advertisement which featured a photograph of a contented-looking
blond woman, half a page of text, and a mouth-watering chocolate cake sitting with a tin of the product. The title read: “Baking is a simple thing. Yet women who bake get three kinds of joy.”42 The admakers appealed to women’s craft pride, their pleasure in preparing foods for their family and to their femininity: “The joy of seeing how the family loves the good things you make. The pride when guests are frankly impressed. And a subtle, very feminine feeling...something to do with a womanly art, a caring about people, a homeyness.”43 The “feminine feeling” may be subtle but advertisers certainly were not as they went right for the emotional jugular vein. The ad attempts to create the impression that women who did not bake were uncaring, unfeminine and their households were certainly not homes. To help women get back into the swing of the “womanly art” they provided the recipe for Magic Mocha cake-- a tested recipe. Food, and its preparation, was equated with maternal love, pride and nutritional concerns. There was little concern for the labour-intensiveness of cooking, for instance Fleischmann’s Yeast regularly included recipes in their advertisements that required half a day’s worth of labour to create. An ever increasing number of women were entering the workforce but food advertisements stuck to their traditional version of Canadian women-- the full time, stay-at-home wife and mother who had both the time, and the inclination, to spend hours in the kitchen to demonstrate her love, abilities and “womanly arts” for her family and friends.

The increase in the amount of processed food advertised in the magazine resulted in a contradictory message. Here the emphasis was case of use, speed of preparation, and guaranteed perfection. These advertisers also touted the nutritional value of their products to allay fears that they were not quite as good as meals made from scratch. Although it seems natural that advertisers might link these products with images of working women, particularly since working women were most in need of quick meal-time solutions, they never did. Instead they linked processed foods products with successful mothering (the ‘kid appeal’ of these products was readily apparent), more time to spend with family, or standardized food which appealed to all members of the family. As well, even though such food products were supposed to save women time, these corporations (Kraft in particular) included recipes which allowed the products to be combined in recipes-- simplified versions of North American and European cuisine-- casseroles, fondues, spaghetti dinners, cookies and desserts. Perhaps this was done to assuage women’s guilt for using processed food
products, and not as the Magic Baking Powder ad instructed, preparing their families’ meals from scratch. Thus, women were “creating” meals with these prepared products (although in far less time) as they had from scratch. In 1968 Kraft ran a series of ads for Velveeta Cheese which touted the nutritional value of the product by depicting young athletes and the woman behind their success, their mothers. One version of this ad deserves commentary for its unconventional imagery. The ad copy proclaimed: “Behind every successful little girl is a mother who serves Velveeta” (see illustration) with an accompanying photograph of a proud mother and daughter (dressed in her baseball uniform and holding her glove and bat).44 Given the conservative nature of most advertising material this was certainly an untraditional, image and guaranteed to catch the reader’s eye. The rest of the ad featured the recipe entitled “Big League Casserole”—Velveeta, milk, green pepper, Parkay Margarine, potatoes, and frankfurters—a quintessentially American meal calculated to appeal to children.

Dieting Dramas:

The sixties ushered in a fixation with body image, weight and fad diets. This made way for a new product category which combined food producers and medical and chemical companies in the creation of diet products. This was unheard of in the fifties when Chatelaine beauty features had profiled women who “cut back” to 1500 calories a day. The new ads were not coy. Slim-Mint Gum proclaimed “Don’t Be Fat!” while an ad for “Miss C’s Diet Book” (complete with dancing anorexic teenage-girls on the cover) asked mothers “Is your daughter overweight?”45 Metrecal, the new American diet drink, ran a series of ads in the early sixties. One featured a Toronto legal clerk named Hilda Lang, a former model, who was “turning her dainty hand to such seemingly unglamorous chores as searching titles and serving writs.”46 Few women worked in the Chatelaine advertisements, and those who did were usually in traditional female employment although the advertisers applauded such women, like Lang (in the pink collar clerical ghetto) for attempting what they considered to be “non-traditional” work. Although Lang was identified as slim (5’5”, 109 pounds) she was meticulous (today we would consider it obsessive) about keeping her weight down because, she “still knows the value of a slim figure. She knows she works better and feels better when she’s not carrying any extra weight and an active social life makes it clear that her lack of excess pounds has the approval of a number of young men.”47 The link between thinness,
Behind every successful little girl
is a mother who serves Velveeta

Any girl or boy who sits, stands, runs, jumps, throws or grows can use the
food energy that mild-tasting Velveeta Pasteurized Process Cheese provides.

Big League Casserole

1/2 lb. Velveeta Process Cheese, sliced

Heat Velveeta and milk in double boiler; stir until smooth. Cook

Nutritious because
it's made from milk.
greater sociability, better careers, and personal well-being was repeated in virtually all of the diet product advertisements. This product category was diverse, including dietetic foods from Aylmer, E.D. Smith, and D-Zeerta Diet Pudding; artificial sweeteners like Sucaryl; Resistical diet pills and Slim-Mint gum; along with diet plans and diet programs like Metrecal.

Most diet advertisements utilized the dual prongs of wish fulfillment and scare tactics—either offering readers images of the thin “good life” or frightening phrases to encourage the complacent, overweight readers to start a weight-loss regime. Some of the scare tactic ads could rebound and offer readers, unintentionally, very silly and amusing ads. Ads featuring women enduring the drama of zipping up their too-small party dresses could be read as terrifying almost as easily as they could be read as humourous foibles about human nature. Sometimes diet products offered readers intentionally humourous ads, like this 1967 ad for Aylmer Diet Fruit Cocktail which asked “Why be a martyr on cottage cheese...when you can have Diet De Luxe fruit meringues instead? (see illustration)” The woebegone look on the model’s face as she glumly holds up her plate of cottage cheese and ice-berg lettuce is meant to catch our attention. The melodramatic look, complete with mascara tear lines under her eye, is hilarious—a send up of spartan regimes which encouraged women to eat cottage cheese salads at lunch hour. This ad, and other diet ads which were far too melodramatic, mock the diet advertisements and encourage readers to question the practice (and the products)—the ridiculous toll affected by the starving, restrictive diets and fad products.

The clothing advertisements, along with the fashion and beauty departmental features, also focused attention on body image, which in these ads meant the “correct look.” By far, the largest advertisers of women’s clothing in Chatelaine were for foundation garments—bras and girdles—followed by Kitten and Acrilan sweaters, dresses and pantsuits; and Jantzen swim and leisure wear. As in the fifties, the bra and girdle manufacturers stressed the flawed nature of women’s bodies and thus the need for their products. Unlike the fifties which had offered fairly conventional, if silly, images of women in bras, girdles and control-underwear jumping, and cavorting, around the sixties ads were very dramatic. A 1960 “Distinction” ad depicted the model wearing a sexy looking blue bra, girdle and satin pumps while surrounded by five women dressed in full length black negligees preparing to plunge swords into her
Why be a martyr on cottage cheese...

when you can have

Diet De Luxe fruit meringues instead?

There's something pretty grim about making do with cottage cheese when your sweet tooth longs for something gooey. So why make yourself miserable when Aylmer Diet De Luxe allows you to have Fruit Cocktail meringues and cut calories too!

You see, Diet De Luxe packs Fruit Cocktail that contains one-half or less the calories of sugar-packed varieties (1/4 cup serving Diet De Luxe Fruit Cocktail—42 calories, regular—101) because Diet De Luxe is sweetened with Sucaryl® instead of sugar. Yet we're sure you'll love the fresh fruit taste! Diet De Luxe packs 36 kinds of fruit, fruit drinks, spreads, dessert toppings and pickles—all equally low in calories.

Just remember, to lose weight and keep it off, you'll really have to start a new calorie-reduced way of life. Diet De Luxe just helps you do it without giving up a lot of good food.

Diet De Luxe isn't magic, but it sure makes nice things, like Fruit Cocktail meringues possible. Give it a try!

Fruit Meringues

4 medium size meringue shells
1–15 fl. oz.* (or 1/4 fl. oz.*) can Diet De Luxe Fruit Cocktail, drained
1/2 pt. vanilla ice-milk dessert (calorie-reduced ice-cream)

Fill each meringue shell with 1/4 cup vanilla ice-milk. Top with Diet De Luxe Fruit Cocktail. Serves 4. Calories per serving—approximately 221.

For free calorie-reduced recipes and menu suggestions, please write to: Canadian Canners Ltd., 44 Hughson St. S., Hamilton, Ont.

*There is no difference in color. New Government regulations require minimum fluid ounces to be shown. This size of can may show either declaration for 1 can.
back. The byline states: “Now Europe gives you a figure so beautiful...other women will hate you! (see illustration)” Like many ads for food, cosmetics, furniture and building supplies, the Distinction ad emphasized ethnicity as a way to make their product appear more sophisticated and thus more appealing. The overt meaning of the ad utilizes the sexist message that women are, by nature, competitive and vindictive with each other and that body image, appearance and male approval (un-acknowledged but implied) are all-important.

Envy, hatred and perhaps death were depicted as a small price to pay for a perfect body.

The Perfect Body--Worth Dying For?

This theme was pushed to a shocking extreme in the ad for Exquisite Form which instructed that women should “Do something dramatic. Demand Exquisite Form or nothing! (see illustration)” Here the model was fully clothed, in a white knit dress, but she was photographed kneeling on the beach with her hands behind her back while her right leg is tied with thick marine rope to a wooden buoy. Soon, the evening tide will drift in and she will be completely submerged. The troika of body image, sex and death are all invoked in the ad. Highly dramatic, sexually charged advertisements like this are meant to catch readers’ attentions. But they also offer disturbing imagery, however imaginary, melodramatic or eye-catching their intention. These ads, coupled with all the more generic ads for bras and girdles which utilized phrases like “correct-shape,” or “perfect” bodies implied that there was only one standard-- an artificial, almost completely unobtainable one for most women. The clothing ads, the diet ads, and the cosmetic and beauty ads which follow, constantly strove to create feelings of inadequacy amongst readers--bodies needed foundation garments to correct problems; bodies needed diets to keep them thin, and faces and skin needed innumerable creams and potions to keep them young, un-lined, and spot-free. They can be humourous, both intentionally and un-intentionally, but then the message is only muted, not abandoned. The admakers have provided a particular image of female sexuality-- a submissive play-thing courting male approval-- which they obviously believed Chatelaine readers’ would find appealing.

Blonds Have More Fun:

Beauty products-- cosmetics, toiletries and depilatories-- were dominated by hair
Vivid imported silks and satins, dripping Valenciennes lace... this is Distinction. Feel more female than ever in this triumph of corsetry, with its hand-detailing, unique nylon boning and the new split-hip construction control from Europe's largest foundation manufacturer. Don't dare think Distinction is too expensive. All of its many styles are affordable by you now! From $5.95 to $45.
Next to nothing, nothing is as comfortable as Exquisite Form. Try this X-POSE BANDEAU. Special cross-over front separates the Kodel lined cups, gently supports over, around and above. Stretch straps and low-cut Lycra back add comfort and style. $6.

The SLIMETTE LONGLEG has side panels of Lycra stretch satin—for a smoother hip line. Front and back panels give extra control where it's needed without restricting movement. $12.

Do something dramatic. Demand . . .

Exquisite Form or nothing!
colouring products, dramatic new eye-makeups and depilatory creams. General cold cream, moisturized soaps and moisturizing creams were still advertised but they were not as prominent as they were in the fifties. The inside front cover of almost every sixties Chatelaine issue was devoted to Miss Clairol products. These ads were remarkably consistent and the May 1961 ad was representative (see illustration). It was a full page photograph of an attractive, well coiffed redhead and her baby lying on a blanket on the grass, presumably taking a nap after a picnic lunch. The photograph is cropped so that all that is visible is the woman and child’s head. The trade-mark phrase of these advertisements was the suggestive “Does she or doesn’t she.” In this case, and in all cases in Chatelaine, the sexual pun of the phrase was undercut by the presence of children. The ad copy informs us why this young woman has decided to give herself a new look by changing her hair colour—“Happy young mothers always look beautiful. But she has something special. A fresh, shining quality, an endearing warmth and radiance. See how her hair sparkles with life!” The makeup and beauty products promised that women would look younger and that they would sparkle yet look natural. In this case “Does she or doesn’t she” with its colourful imagery was placed beside Anderson’s editorial “Being feminine is not enough.” This was often the case with the Clairol ads and illustrates the glaring difference between the magazine’s components. Reading Chatelaine in the sixties meant learning to negotiate these jarring juxtapositions with ease for the feminist or intellectually challenging articles to be placed, surrounded or punctuated by the ads which were the antithesis of everything many of the articles advocated. In ads for another of their hair coloring products, Silk and Silver, the ad featured an elegantly dressed, well-coiffed older woman— but her face was obscured by the dark lightening of the theatre setting. All that was clearly visible was her gleaming silver hair and her pearl necklace.

Forever Young:

Most of the ads for hair colouring, various creams and potions guaranteed to ward off the onset of wrinkles, and some forms of makeup repeatedly linked their products with youthfulness. The standout advertisement, for Nivea Creme, was a full page ad which featured a naked, blond baby girl (identifiable through text and by the white bow in her hair) smearing the product over her legs and stomach (see illustration). The phrase “Most
Hair color so natural only her hairdresser knows for sure!

Happy young mothers always look beautiful. But she has something special. A fresh shining quality, an endearing warmth and radiance. See how her hair sparkles with life! The color is rich, vibrant yet the effect is soft, ladylike and the hair itself silky, delightful to touch. And this is the wonderfully reassuring thing about using Miss Clairol. It keeps hair color bright and hair in beautiful condition.

That's why hairdressers everywhere prefer Miss Clairol to all other haircolorings... recommend it as the haircoloring that truly lives up to its promise. It's quick, easy, its automatic color timing is dependable. And Miss Clairol really covers gray. But best of all, it keeps hair lively, lovely, so natural-looking! Try Miss Clairol, yourself. Today. Creme Formula or Regular.

HAIR COLOR BATH
THE NATURAL-LOOKING HAIRCOLORING • MORE WOMEN USE MISS CLAIROL THAN ALL OTHER HAIRCOLORING COMBINED

[Image: Advertisement for Miss Clairol haircoloring]
Most English girls start using Nivea at a very early age.

Perhaps that's why so many English girls grow up with peaches and cream complexions. Nivea Creme restores natural moisture to the skin. It can't work miracles, but it can and does keep skin beautifully soft, moist and supple. And that's all the help nature needs—Nivea.
English girls start using Nivea at a very early age” accompanied the image and led in to the textual explanation about the famous English complexions and a smaller photo of a woman in her twenties. Doubtless the intention of the admakers was for the advertisement to be decoded as cute--baby gets into mother’s creme and makes a mess--but there is another, disturbing undertone. The phrase “it can’t work miracles” suggests that one is never too young to start protecting one’s youth. Furthermore by visually depicting the standard of youthfulness as the unwrinkled, perfect skin of an infant such an image was guaranteed to make even a teenager look “old” and in need of commercial assistance. The definition of youth was a highly malleable one--ever changing to suit the needs of the advertisers who portrayed younger women using creams, hair colourings, and makeup--and suggesting that by mid-twenties the battle against “looking old” had begun in earnest.

Sex Sells:

Besides youthfulness, the beauty and toiletries ads placed considerable emphasis on sexuality. One collection of ads, for Neet hair depilatory cream (from 1960-1963), featured a series of humorous and very sexual photographs of partially clad women underneath the phrase: “Shave lady?... don’t do it! (see illustration)”54 The display of skin, particularly of legs, which the models had spread out or held aloft in risqué poses were intended to show the effectiveness of the product but they also clearly tied the product to sexual attraction and sexual availability. In each advertisement the scantily clad model was holding some sort of phallic object—a straight razor, a razor strop---or standing near barber’s poles, perched on the edge of barber’s chairs or seductively lounging in a hammock. In sum, the emphasis was always upon the playful, sexy nature of the ad and upon the models’ spread legs--whether she was standing, sitting, or lying down.

Although it is not surprising that cosmetics and beauty products would employ sexuality as a major theme in their advertisements, many other product areas also began, increasingly, to rely upon the ‘sexual sell’ to hone their commercial message. Whereas the fifties had portrayed the world of housewares--linens (bedding, towels, and tablecloths), glasswares and silverware--as tantalizing products which signified marital happiness, in the sixties these advertisers adopted sexuality and affluence as their two chief advertising codes. The number of crystal and china makers who advertised in the magazine expanded
shave, lady? . . . don't do it!

Cream hair away the beautiful way . . . with new baby-pink, sweet-smelling Neet — you'll never be embarrassed with unsightly "razor shadow" again (that faint stubble of hair left on razor-shaved legs and underarms). Gentle, wonderful Neet goes down deep where no razor can reach — actually beauty-creams the hair away. And when the hair finally does grow in again, it feels softer; silkier; there's no stubble at all! So next time, for the smoothest, neatest legs in town, why not try Neet — you'll never want to shave again!

Neet
considerably beyond the fifties standbys of Oneida and Royal Doulton to include: Spode, Rogers Brothers Silverware, Royal Worcester China, Minton Bone China, Aynsley Bone China, Dorchester Fine Bone China, Wedgwood Earthenware, Waterford Crystal, and Bohemian Crystal. All of the ads, with the exception of Bohemian Crystal and Oneida, stressed the firms’ British (or Irish) pedigrees as indicators of excellence and as assurances of quality—a code word for affluence. Those ads were however, rather plain, as they were primarily photographs of plates, glassware, or other items, along with some smaller graphics of the English countryside or castles. For this section I have chosen to concentrate on the advertisements for Tex-made sheets which provide evocative examples of both codes (sexuality and affluence), along with peculiarly sixties style of advertising with respect to colours and the use of fantastical images.

In the fall and spring of 1962 and 1963 the magazine ran a series of ads from Tex-made called “Lo and behold! Fashion invades your bedroom in Tex-Made Sheets! (see illustration)” These ads featured a sultry looking brunette wrapped, ball-gown style, in a Tex-made sheet which the ad copywriters had coyly called “the evening dress of the year for under $5.” The ad and the copy seem most calculated to appeal to men. The gorgeous woman with the seductive smile, and perhaps most importantly, the “evening-dress of the year” was not only affordable but it was designed to come off quickly. For heterosexual women readers the appeal of the ad lay in its fantasy value—imagining the impression they would make on their husbands, or boyfriends, wrapped in Tex-made’s “orchid, pumpkin, lemon, limelight and peacock” colours. Of course this ad is also quite humourous—and readers undoubtedly laughed at the absurdity of the woman’s pose and predicament, perhaps imagining their own discomfiture in such an ensemble?

**Biology is Destiny:**

At mid-decade Tex-made employed the codes of affluence and the biologically determined interests and passions of women in an eye-catching advertisement called “Since the dawn of time...” This was a dramatic ad with a series of photographs which traced the evolution of women’s bedrooms from the cave-dwelling era to the present printed on a black background. Although the bed furnishings change—the cave-woman sleeps on fur while the modern woman chooses Tex-made—that is the only real change, after all “Since the dawn of
Lo and behold! Fashion invades your bedroom in Tex-Made Sheets!

(...it's the evening dress of the year for under $5)

Revealed...Tex-Made Sheets in new high-key colors! Eleven vivid colors including orchid, pumpkin, lemon, limelight and peacock! And the second most beautiful thing about Tex-Made Sheets is long wear! Each sheet has extra threads for strength, extra inches for length. That means after hundreds of washings (years and years of use) a Tex-Made still looks good as new. Wear the evening dress of the year for under $5. A Tex-Made Sheet in brilliant new high-key colors...made right here in Canada! Dominion Textile Co., Ltd., 1950 Sherbrooke St., W., Montreal, Quebec.
time, women had adorned the place they sleep in. Women haven’t changed... a bit. Bedrooms have. Thanks to Tex-made, today’s woman can adorn her bedroom in a thousand pretty ways. Complimenting the ahistorical nature of the advertisement, the ad’s creators employed a eurocentric gaze, so that our “cave woman” and our “modern woman” were both white-skinned brunettes. Finally, the company reveals that “with Tex-made, you can change your mind, change your mood, change your bedroom, week after week, after week....” This patronizing, sexist tone was often employed in Chatelaine ads in the sixties-- where women were portrayed as gorgeous yet vacuous souls whose chief interests were fashion. Fashion became a catch-all phrase which had less to do with clothing styles and more to do with being up-to-date on the latest marketing crazes-- the colours, the styles, decorations, make-up, hairstyle, etc. In striving to create visually appealing advertisements which would catch the reader’s attention, and ads like this one surely did, the ad makers often offered very vapid, sexist or patronizing images of women. This analysis is, of course, in retrospect. Given the images of the sixties--particularly from Hollywood--of the “dumb blond” (Goldie Hawn on “Laugh-in”), the Bond girls from the movies, and the vacant-eyed look of the British fashion models Jean “The Shrimp” Shrimpton and Twiggy the Chatelaine ads are not out of step with their cultural milieu.

“Husband-Coaxing” Ads:

Similar in product type and nature to the housewares advertisements were the largest group of ads in the magazine-- the building supplies ads. These ads, for products as diverse as carpeting, copper pipe, vinyl flooring, roofing tiles, air-conditioners, paint or other materials for the construction or renovation of the house, also employed the codes of affluence, sexuality, fashion and often included very patronizing or sexist imagery, or text, to help “sell” their products. The sixties, as the Tex-made advertisement above illustrates, was the decade where an explosion of colour, and fanciful names for those colours, really captured the enthusiasm of manufacturers and consumers alike. Avocado green bathroom fixtures, harvest gold washing machines, and mauve walls were all the rage. As the colour list from this McClary refrigerator ad for “The Refrigerator of the Future” indicates, fashion colours were appearing everywhere: “available in white, palomino, coppertone, avocado, and as illustrated, verd antique.” These names and the corresponding colours were supposed to
appear new and exciting in addition to tapping into desires for a more affluent, cosmopolitan style of living. After all, the mellifluously evocative “verd antique” cannot compare with “green” or, the more accurate description of the corresponding colour, “swamp green”.

One of the key features of all building supplies advertisements was that they were targeted at couples; even if the initial reader was a woman, the ad was structured so that when she “showed it to him,” as countless ads told readers to do, he (the husband) would find the ad appealing. Thus these advertisements usually depicted couples, if they featured any people, and often included some material of interest to men—either humour, deprecatory remarks about women’s passions for household renovation, or very technical information about the type of product advertised. An ad for International Paints proclaimed: “Behind every ‘Man in the Home’ (the name of Chatelaine’s model house at Expo,) there’s a woman who has her heart set on Interlux paints.” Since these were large ticket items, or involved considerable work, women were expected to require their husband’s agreement and his money, although the inspiration and influence of the purchase was hers alone. Thus the central drama of many of these ads featured the poor, tired-out husband, being pestered by his wife to renovate or add an addition. Therefore these product manufacturers were in a dual role— to provide enough information and excitement about their products to get women interested and to help them build a case to purchase the product while still appearing to stress the things held dear by men—affordability, technical issues, design and ease of installation or operation. Women had the influence and the persistence while men were the arbitrators and holders of the cheque-book.

The best example of this often humourous style of advertising was the four page, full colour Domtar ad placed in the September 1965 issue of Chatelaine (see illustrations). The first page featured a photograph of a resigned husband, in his shirtsleeves, with the caption: “Okay Chatelaine. I’m impressed. And so’s the wife. But how can we fit that dream palace into our plans?” The exasperated, grudging look on his face was meant to convey that the magazine’s special Expo house and the advertising featured had worn him down. Finally, even he was interested in duplicating these new ideas at home. The next two pages featured the husband looking over a variety of Domtar products—tiling, wood paneling, brick work, etc. By the last page of the ad the skepticism and grudging interest have metamorphosed into excitement—our average husband is pictured smiling, while his ecstatic wife stands behind
Okay Chatelain.

I'm impressed.
And so's the wife.
But how can we fit that dream palace into our plans?
The best idea to wrap things up. Cooksville-Laprairie burned clay brick from the ground up. Rugged and suitful for walls all around the house. No other building material captures the warm, ageless beauty of red clay brick or its matchless durability. C-L brick never needs painting or refinishing after 10 years. 100 years. It's built for a lifetime into the walls of the Design Home. Because it's for keeps, the planners gave careful consideration to their choice of color and texture. Good reason for you to do the same.

The C-L brick and solar screen fence adds its own contemporary touch to the property. As it can to ours. And for life-long freedom from a damp basement you can be guided the planners' choice of Domtar No-Co-Rode foundation drainage pipe. For the best approach to the Design Home they chose Domtar Ch Emulsion to keep the driveway surface looking like new.

Naw, can't you see some Chelaine Design Home ideas working our home?
You and Domtar are going to be living under the same roof!

---

**HUSBAND-COAING COUPON**

To: Domtar Construction Materials Ltd.
Suite 2210, 1 Place Ville Marie,
Montreal 2, Que.

NAME ____________________________________________
ADDRESS ____________________________________________
CITY ___________________________________ PROV. ______

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**DOMTAR Construction Materials Ltd.**

Ville-Laprairie, Vinyl-Kote, No-Co-Rode, Domacora,
and Arborite, registered trade names of Domtar
Construction Materials Ltd.
him. Beside the couple, the ad copy read: “P.S. An aside to impatient wives. Need a little extra something to get that man of yours moving on these Domtar ideas for your home? Just mail the coupon and we’ll speed back a package of colorful brochures...that’ll really get him off and running. Or our name isn’t Domtar.”62 Women were, in many of the building supply ads, the manipulators behind their husband’s wallets— they had the ideas, brought the ads to his attention while he was the one who either closed the deal (purchased the product) or not. Thus the company skillfully negotiated the often contradictory motives and interest ascribed to husbands and wives. In practice, this often meant that women in the building ads were portrayed as overly-excited housewives, eager dreamers who had little difficulty conjuring up the latest “fashions” in carpeting, wallpaper or paint and in manipulating, in a good natured way, of course, and with the company’s assistance, their husbands. Husbands were the repositories of common sense: they understood all the technical jargon and reveled in it as a display of machismo. They knew the importance of a dollar or “investing” in upgraded products and ultimately they had the final say.

The Good Life:

Other building and supply advertisements took a different approach and employed codes of affluence—assurances that quality was worth the price, and that “success” increasingly meant moving up to more opulent surroundings. Brinton carpets used an anniversary theme, coupled with male career success, to impart an affluent, exclusive aura to their carpets. In an ad titled “For a bronze anniversary...you deserve Brinton “Seigniory” carpet” the company included this short essay about the dignified couple relaxing on their new carpet in front of the fireplace:

It’s a very special evening. Their eighth wedding anniversary and the first day with their new carpet. Last year, Blake was promoted to captain with the airline. Now he’s flying the Bermuda run. Sally keeps busy with the local drama group, the hospital auxiliary and...oh yes, their four children. Now that they can afford it they have decided to enjoy the finer things in life. That’s why they chose a Brinton “Seigniory” carpet. “Seigniory” combines all their needs at once—soft and elegant to the touch and yet durable enough to hold its beauty long after the children have grown up....”63

This appealing advertising fantasy appears to cover all the angles of upper middle-class success—excellent job, artistic-volunteer oriented wife who has time to mother her brood of four on the side, elegant home furnishings and to celebrate their eighth anniversary they have
donned evening-wear to lounge in front of their fireplace. However, some of the aspects of this ad fantasy are disturbing-- the wife “keeps busy” she doesn’t work, the amount of time and effort it takes to care for four children (all under eight years of age) is casually dismissed, and it is really Blake whose success-- career success-- is reflected in the glow of their Brinton carpet. Where ads in the fifties were proud to portray the housewife in all her glory-- and she was a force to be reckoned with within the homes of adworld-- by the sixties, in many ads, the female characters were increasingly uncertain of how to define themselves (except for their role as chief consumer). In the next Brinton ad the wife was merely an attractive bauble to her surgeon husband as the ad concentrated on his career and hobbies, without providing any information about what she did. Women’s roles, as depicted in advertisements, were becoming increasingly negligible and fickle as their only role became the selection of “fashionable” products.

**Mechanical Servants:**

Household appliance ads were similar to the ads for fashion and building supplies because they also strove to position their product as an indicator of the affluence of the purchaser or of their “fashion” sense. Manufacturers of refrigerators and stoves, in particular, but also washing machines, had to change their advertising tactics from the fifties and late forties when many families were upgrading old appliances or purchasing these products new for the first time. In the sixties appliance manufacturers had to try to convince consumers to replace perfectly serviceable appliances with newer models-- to that end they introduced innumerable gadgets and styling changes to encourage people to buy the “latest model.” As well, as part of this general move upscale--naturally all the new timers, self-cleaning features and fashionable colours came at a price-- they increasingly attempted to get people to perceive these appliances as mechanical servants. Whether it was Thor Ranges (see illustration) or Bell Telephones (primarily extension phones for the kitchen or bedroom) companies strove to illustrate that although middle-class Canadians could not afford servants they could afford these new, mechanical servants which would enable them to live a life of greater ease and luxury.64 For example, a Thor appliances ad featured an elderly cleaning lady holding a bucket of water and a can of cleaner standing in front of an array of ranges, rangettes, washers and dryers with the phrase “52 kinds of household help--51 from Thor!”
52 kinds of household help - 51 from THOR!

Automatic washers □ gas and electric clothes dryers □
wringer washers □ electric ranges □ built-ins and low-cost
rangettes. In all, 51 new models bear the old and trusted
name THOR, so at least one is bound to be designed and
priced just right for you.

See what's in store for you from THOR!

Made by BRANTFORD WASHING MACHINES LIMITED, Toronto • Montreal
An all Canadian company established in 1920
The classist and ageist implications of the ad, primarily the value placed upon the new appliances versus the out-dated skills of the old cleaning lady, were used to provide a sharp visual image and to illustrate that modern living, and affluence, were primarily electrical. Household cleaners also claimed that the purchase of their products, whether Javex or Hagerty Silver Cleaner, was the affordable way to purchase the cleaning power previously available only to the upper class who could afford maids. Otherwise, the life of ease promised by small and large appliance manufacturers as well as manufacturers of household cleaners in the fifties was replicated in the sixties.

**Leisure:**

Although products had often stressed the link between less time spent house-cleaning or in food preparation with leisure the meaning of the term, and the sizable increase in leisure products advertised in the magazine, changed in the sixties. While the fifties families and housewives of adworld used leisure time to spend more time with their children or husbands usually within their home, leisure in the sixties became associated with life outside the home. Ads for Air Canada, Air Atalia, the British Tourist Authority and various Canadian provinces began to associate leisure with travel, certainly with an increase in air travel. It is some of these advertisements, most notably Air Canada, which depart from illustrating happy contented housewives consuming products in, or for, the home. Instead, since the travel and hobbies advertisements were for products to take people away from their humdrum existences they addressed issues like suburban ennui, or sought to assuage people's boredom with their products—the innumerable *Chatelaine* craft advertisements, the Columbia Record Club, Maclean Hunter's series of books and records (similar to Time-Life promotions today).

In 1965 Air Canada ran an advertisement with an ecstatic looking housewife screaming “Whoopee! He's off on another business trip! (see illustration)” followed, in smaller print, by the phrase “and I'm going with him.” The humour and excitement of the housewife's cutting loose once she knows that her husband is going on a business trip—thus providing her with time to slack off, attend to projects or interests of her own—was quickly brought down with the second phrase. This ad is noteworthy, and enjoyable, on a number of
Whoopee! He's off on another business trip!
(and I'm going with him by AIR CANADA)

Suddenly, you're Alice in Wonderland—Queen of the May—Cleopatra. And AIR CANADA is your escape route to a holiday from apron strings—a change of scene—a kind of no limit charge account for blue skies and happy times. So, be prepared for a quick getaway. Get on the phone and ask your Mother to baby sit. Have your hair done, Pack for sight-seeing, shopping and, hopefully, a night on the town. One more thing. Give your husband a hero's welcome tonight. He deserves it.

Ask your Travel Agent to tell you about AIR CANADA's economical Family Fare, exciting Package Tour and Fly Now — Pay Later Plans. Or just phone us.
levels. First off, and at its most overt, it serves up a classic advertising fantasy for the 
housewife reader:

Suddenly, you’re Alice in Wonderland--Queen of May--Cleopatra. And AIR 
CANADA is your escape route to a holiday from apron strings--a change of scene--a 
kind of no limit charge account for blue skies and happy times. So, be prepared for a 
quick getaway. Get on the phone and ask your Mother to baby sit. Have your hair 
done. Pack for sight-seeing, shopping and, hopefully, a night on the town. One more 
thing. Give your husband a hero’s welcome tonight. He deserves it.66

Unlike ads for household products and cleaners, the Air Canada could readily acknowledge 
the drudgery of household work--as they promised a release from all mundane tasks. While 
they promise release, excitement and new experiences, these ads also manage to conform, in 
some ways, to traditional (what we would label sexist) values. The sexual reward implied by 
the “hero’s welcome” was a characteristic of the more overtly sexual ads of the sixties (like 
Texmack’s $5 evening dress) which often made links between the husband’s income and 
wife’s sexuality--particularly as a form of repayment, reward or tangible benefit (for men) of 
matured life.

Medical Dramas:

The only discordant note in the advertising pages was that of the medical 
advertisements whose stark, dramatic, primarily text based advertisements pitched a variety 
of products to cure medical maladies. The numbers of ads for medical products and feminine 
hygiene products increased in the sixties. The medical advertisements used humour and 
drama to catch reader’s attention. For example, Lanacan frequently ran ads which 
proclaimed: “I nearly itched to death for 7 1/2 years,” while Dr. Fowler’s Extract of Wild 
Strawberry warned mothers and housewives: “It’s as old as civilization--this nuisance 
ailment that can suddenly strike some member of the family....”67 These sorts of ads 
eschewed models, probably out of discretion, and were primarily textual ads, located at the 
back of the magazine. In contrast, ads for feminine hygiene products, or for cures for 
menstrual maladies (particularly Midol) always used models. As they had in the fifties Midol 
ads featured black and white photographs of women’s faces, with the phrase “Bonnie’s 
Blue....Bonnie’s Gay with Midol” living proof of the product’s medicinal power. Tampex 
and Kotex advertisements always relied upon models to illustrate the “peace of mind” their 
products brought, a sense of relaxation increasingly tied to affluent leisure time. Other
medical ads exploited readers' fears of illness and body odour to drive home their message. Dettol antiseptic was particularly astute in their spare, yet no less effective, ads featuring children, usually boys, in need of medical attention from Mom: “Help keep him sweet and safe.”68 Or Dr. Scholl’s ad copy, which read: “Before you put on your stockings THINK are your feet going to stay ‘bath-fresh’?”69 After fostering insecurity these ads implicitly, and explicitly in the case of Dr. Scholl’s, promise to “dust your doubts away” if readers purchased the product.70 This negative, anxiety-producing type of advertising was less common in the sixties than it had been in the fifties, since more companies sought to have their products associated with “good times.”

Affluence:

Along with the specific product type of advertising there were a number of thematic and stylistic variations in the sixties that cut across product categories: affluence, ethnicity and Canadiana were the most versatile themes while the use of men and children in the ads provided a considerably different flavour from fifties ads. Affluence was omnipresent in the sixties and the companies striving to associate their products with the good life ranged from Kimberley Clark (Kleenex’s “boutique” collection) through to the manufacturers of mink coats.71 Representative of this genre was a Johnson and Johnson ad for Modess in which neither the product nor the packaging is on display (see illustration).72 With the title “Lead the Soft Life” and the corresponding image of a woman admiring her fur coat in a full length mirror the admakers were determined to link their product with luxury. Equally important was the fact that a large variety of companies-- regardless of how utilitarian or basic their products-- sought this seductive, luxurious appeal. Remember, the advertised product was a feminine napkin not a mink coat. Advertisers increasingly believed that any product could be positioned as an exclusive product, and that the appeal to “exclusivity” or affluence however defined was an effective way to sell their product.

Ethnicity:

Another extremely important thematic approach used in the Chatelaine advertisements was ethnicity. Food products were the first to use ethnicity as an advertising and marketing tool. Kraft foods provided “an authentic Dutch dish using Velveeta” (see
Any place—any day,  
new Modess makes sure that being a woman is wonderful.  
No other napkin whatever it may offer you provides the  
double-safe protection of new Modess.  
The reason: Exclusive Modofilm* moisture-proof barrier.

*Trademark C. J&J '67  

Learn to say Modess' instead  

Johnson & Johnson
Illustration), Green Giant promoted “Niblets Italiano” while Uncle Ben’s “Spanish Rice” and Aylmer’s “Pea-ella” strove to link their products with Spanish cuisine. A little spice to break the monotony of the processed foods products. The food manufacturers were not alone in these, often far-fetched, attempts to provide an ethnic-tie-in for products. Pond’s Lipstick produced a line of makeup called “Mexican Holiday Colours” which they photographed on a blue-eyed blond—either hesitant to use a Mexican woman in their advertisements or quick to illustrate how the make-up could provide Canadian women with an exotic new look.

Similarly, Max Factor introduced a line of make-up called “Pacific Sunset,” marketing their version of Hawaiian beauty (see illustration). Hair colouring products (like Max Factor’s “Coiffure Italienne”) also employed ethnicity as a marketing tool as did some manufacturers of women’s clothing. Finally, while the house and building product manufacturers were most likely to emulate American stylings (the California look was increasingly popular) they did occasionally venture into more “ethnic” patterns or names, like Donico Flooring’s promise that their new linoleum flooring will add a splash of “La Dolce Vita” to your life. These attempts were not geared to attract ethnic and immigrant shoppers, as they were little more than promotional stunts— the recipes, the cosmetics, the flooring and building supplies products were all very “North American” products to which their marketers had attached ethnic monikers in the hopes of making very traditional products appear more novel or more exciting. The advertisements sought to exploit ethnic cuisine, imagery and far less often, other racial and ethnic groups to sell products.

Unlike the new-found fascination with ethnicity, the Canadian theme remained as popular as it had been in the fifties. Companies, like E.D. Smith, Gibbard Furniture, Five Roses Flour and marketing boards, like the Canadian Wood Council, were quick to link their products with Canadian geographical images, or with history. The historical link was new, probably inspired by the Centennial, and tapped into the new-found pride in Canadian heritage.

**Masculinity:**

The increased use of male models in the advertisements, as mentioned previously, was a departure from Chatelaine ads of the fifties. One of the major advertisers who consistently utilized male models, and sometimes children, was Swift’s Meat Products. In
Potatoes Amsterdam
(an authentic Dutch dish using Velveeta)

Children all over the world eat Kraft Velveeta Process Cheese in so many different ways. It's full of important milk nutrients...and, all children love its mild taste. In Holland this is a favorite Velveeta Recipe (Dutch children will tell you so!)

2 cups med. cream sauce
2 tbsp. minced onion
8 oz. of Velveeta, thinly sliced
6 cups sliced cooked potatoes
2 tbsp. chopped pimento

To hot seasoned cream sauce, add thinly sliced Velveeta. Stir till it's melted. Add pimento and onion. Place alternate layers of potatoes and cheese sauce in greased, 1 1/2-qt. casserole. Bake in moderate oven, 350°, 20 min.

Nutritious because it's made from milk
Fashion's farewell to the pale look!

Sun-blushed make-up gives you the glow of summer all year long.
countless ads men were depicted playing football, and then eating steak; drooling while carving the roast beef; or biting into six inch thick sandwiches— all demonstrating the healthy appetites of Canadian men and the importance of meat on the housewives shopping list. Other ads featured men sheepishly helping out around the house, humourously modeling underwear for overweight men (a rare male entry in the body shape ads), or in ads for home building supply products. The May 1961 Swift’s Premium ad (this time for Swift’s Meats for Babies) provides an excellent example of the typical Chatelaine man depicted in the advertisements (see illustration). He was almost invariably a husband or dad, and in this case our ruggedly handsome, virile model is photographed feeding his twin daughters. The daughters, like all women in Chatelaine are getting the best of him (“On the double, Daddy! You’ve got to keep up with these dinner dates.”) but he is a good sport. In short (whether in food, building supplies, clothing, medical or leisure advertisements) Chatelaine ad men were handsome, well-groomed, good-natured and helpful and thus they provided perfect fantasy fodder for women readers. However, it is also clear from the ads that they were “real men”—they liked sports, consumed large quantities of red meat and were awkward around the home—they could help out in a pinch but it was clear from their sheepish looks that feeding babies, helping in the kitchen, or purchasing clothes was not part of their normal day.

Children—The Introduction of the Brat:

Children were less popular in the sixties adworld than they had been in the fifties, but they were still an important presence. In the fifties, most advertisements with children had played upon their innocent and cute appearance. Admakers believed, probably correctly, that they had tremendous visual appeal to consumers with young children. The cute advertisements remained, but a new style—featuring “the brat”— was inaugurated in the sixties. In general, boys were more popular than they had been in the fifties. The dominance of boys as adworld children was clear although they were portrayed in a variety of ways: they were the more delicate children, in need of extra help with their schooling (educational products), more prone to illness (medical products), and the more needy beneficiaries of nutritional meals and supplements (food products and vitamins). Where beauty or decorative value was prized, girls were used (i.e. the Nivea ad discussed above). Not surprisingly, boys also had the starring role as the brat. In these ads gender overrode their youth, and like male
Daddy! You've got to move fast to keep up with these dinner dates. Swift's Meats for Babies are on the menu. They taste so good. And their valuable nourishment is just what babies need for sturdy growth and glowing health. That's why so many mothers turn to Swift, the meat specialist—for the wealth of complete, high-quality protein that babies especially crave in the extra value, the extra goodness you always get when the label says "Swift's Premium Meat."
advertisers and a few male models, they were allowed to patronize readers, to demand that readers purchase a product or to behave badly in the ads. This General Motors ad featuring little Jimmy “The Safest Gun in the West” illustrates how advertisements with male children were shockingly different from the innocent, cute images of the fifties (see illustration).78 Dressed in his western gear, and pointing his shiny six-shooter at the reader from the front seat of his father’s new GM car, “little Jimmy” is an arresting image. The ad copy, after requisite comments about Jimmy’s cowboys and Indians role-playing, informs readers that Jimmy, like his father, understands quality: “Jimmy and his Dad know that wherever they go in the West...or East or North or South...they travel safely with GM.”79 The implication, of course, is that you (the female reader) do not know this information since as a male preserve (regardless of age) you couldn’t possibly be expected to understand. Thankfully, “little Jimmy” could point you in the right direction. The brat appeared in wallpaper and carpet ads (as a destructive force) and as a know-it-all in a china ad. While intended to be decoded as cute, these ads could easily be understood as patronizing and sexist as young males instructed, cajoled and forced female adults to notice the ad and purchase the product.

Reader Response:

One of the difficulties of advertising analysis is attempting to determine intent and impact of the advertisements. Obviously, the advertisers definition of success was a purchase while the magazine’s definition of success, judged by Starch figures, was readership. The readers’ impressions are more difficult to ascertain. According to indicators in CARD and archival material, American and Canadian corporations were devoted advertisers in the periodical throughout the decade, often according it the top spot for advertisements in the categories for food and food beverages, clothing and dry goods, drugs and toilet goods, furniture and furnishings and soaps and housekeepers’ supplies.80 Furthermore, from 1960-1970 Chatelaine attracted between 23 -28% of all the magazine advertising placed in the country.81 However, the magazine did not have a steady increase of advertising but experienced a decline of 4% in 1964, indicative of some advertising disfavour or lack of return from advertisements in the magazine.

The Starch numbers, available only for the early seventies, indicate that “noted” scores (women who remembered noting the ad but could not identify the product) were very
SAFEST GUN IN THE WEST!

Our young buckaroo lives in an exciting world, packed with imaginary perils… make-believe gunfighters and Injuns springing up at every turn. In reality, though, young Jimmy rides the trail the safest way his Dad knows… in the solid dependability of a General Motors car.

For Jimmy’s Dad has learned over the years that GM means quality in motor cars, in trucks and buses, in famous Frigidaire appliances.

General Motors people achieve quality by using the finest materials with painstaking care and infinite attention to detail. The results are extra dependability, extra performance and extra beauty for you.

Jimmy and his Dad know that wherever they go in the West… or East or North or South… they travel safely with GM. They—and you—can take General Motors quality for granted because we don’t!
high for the four page, full colour inserts of advertisers like Kraft, Canada Packers and Dairy Foods Service Bureau but that “read-most” scores were much lower. For instance, a four page advertisement for Kraft had a noted score of 73% for June 1970 and a noted score of 60% for December 1970 while the read most scores were, respectively, 30% and 11%. Now, each of those ads would have contained at least one Kraft recipe, which the Starch reports confirmed, increased the “read most” readership. Of course, not all ad placements in the magazine were of the four page, full colour variety like the Kraft ads. The drop in readership, even to one page full colour advertisements was sizable. The average, of all the full page, full colour food ads Starched between 1966-68, indicated that noted scores were 44% for both recipe and non-recipe ads but for read-most scores the recipe attracted a 21% score while the non-recipe ad attracted only 11% of those interviewed. Recipe booklets were another way that advertisers were able to attract reader attention, although for the cost involved in including tear-out booklets in the magazine the “readership-return” was not very much higher. A Canada Packers, four page, full colour advertisement which included a 16 quarter page booklet insert had a noted score of 78% for the ad and booklet combined and read-most for the ad-booklet combination of 38%. By far, the booklet was the more popular as its read most score (alone) was 38% while the ad garnered only 14%. Asked by the Starch interviewers whether or not they had kept, or used the booklet, 47% of survey participants claimed to have kept the booklet (58% kept it in their kitchen drawer) yet only 20% had tried the recipes while 63% “intended to” try the recipes. Similar to the fifties, the Starch scores indicate that readership—as opposed to noting the page—was quite low, considerably lower than any of the editorial components. Give-aways, like booklets, or coupons increased reader participation but in terms of product purchase (judged by those who tried the recipes) the results were far from overwhelming.

Another indicator that the magazine’s advertising was often not very effective was the amount of support given to advertisers’ products by the magazine. The section on Chatelaine departments has discussed the “environment” that the food, beauty, fashion and particularly homes sections created for advertisers of those products. A few letters in the archival material relate to the “advertising” value of departmental material and illustrate an interesting difference of opinion on the part of Chatelaine advertisers. A letter from a displeased advertiser, The Wabasso Cotton Company (who had complained that Wabasso sheets were
not featured in a Homes special) prompted L.M. Hodgkinson, the publisher, to send this apologetic reply:

Thank you for your letter...which clearly outlines your opinions regarding our use of Fieldcrest products in Chatelaine Homes 60. The points you make in this letter are very well taken and I know that you can appreciate the problem involved in trying to keep track of everything that our editors are doing. We do not like to place restrictions on them...I will, however, review your feelings with Mrs. Reynolds and will make every effort to avoid duplication of the practice of Chatelaine featuring imported products when satisfactory Canadian products are available.\(^7\)

While many Homes features did make use of products advertised in the magazine (or with new products an ad appeared for the item in the Homes feature and then never ran again) long-time advertisers were not guaranteed a spot.

Similarly, new advertisers were keen to find out whether or not they would be given “free” advertising in the pages of the departmental material as well as in-store promotional material (“As Advertised in Chatelaine” support). Witness this memo from Hodgkinson to Vivian Wilcox indicated:

“They have contacted us with the hope that they can participate in some of our Editorial-Promotion Fashion Features. I do not know anything about their products and I am sure that you are qualified to assess them. However, I do know that they are an organization in Canada which is interested in establishing a brand name for their dress and they are planning to do this partly through advertising in Chatelaine. I pass the information on to you and hope that in your selection of fashion you will give consideration to this Company’s product particularly when we have a feature which can be promoted and merchandised through the Department Stores across the country. Would you therefore, keep this in mind and if there are any reasons why we can’t work with them will you let me know.”\(^8\)

Clearly, for many companies the difference between paid advertising and the departmental material was often indistinguishable. That was a reasonable deduction given the emphasis of the fashion, beauty and homes features. However, not all companies believed that this “blurring” between paid advertisement and departmental material was to their advantage. The opinion of the Advertising Manager of the Dominion Oilcloth and Linoleum Company was that such tie-ins lessened the integrity of the departmental features:

I am of mixed feelings about whether or not I want Chatelaine editorial material to be exactly the same as advertising. For special promotional features this is good. But for regular editorial it is bad and will, in the long run, create loss of faith in your editorials--as an advertiser that is important to me. Even if the ads appear after your editorial, which promotion wise is not as good as at the same time, this will still brand your future editorial material with commercialism. As I said, for special promotions only, this is not bad, because you are not implying a lie to your reader. You are coming right out and saying ‘we worked with these advertisers--this is a dual
concentrated educational--selling campaign directed by you.' But for regular features, no. The companies and their advertising executives had different approaches to the departmental and in-store promotions run by the magazine, but with the high number of dual campaigns their concern was well placed that the reader might reach the saturation point.

Those joint initiatives were only part of the assistance Chatelaine advertisers received. Advertisers were eligible to apply for the "Chatelaine Seal of Approval." In almost every issue of the magazine there was a page devoted to the Seal which explained the lengthy process of assessment products underwent before the Seal was granted (testing in the Chatelaine institute, plant visits and interviews with the manufacturers); encouraged readers to look for the Seal on products they purchased; and, in addition, provided a list of all the products which had been granted the Seal. In effect, this was free advertising. In Chatelaine Consumer Council Survey 30 in 1961 the magazine had questioned the Counselors (approximately 2,000 readers from all demographic groups and regions) about the Seal of Approval. Ninety percent of the respondents claimed that Seals of Approval did have an "influence on their choice, all other things being equal." When questioned about what they thought the Seal stood for they selected a number of different definitions: "It has been tested in the Chatelaine Institute (90%); Represents good value for price (21.7%); Best value available (7.1%); Advertised in Chatelaine (3.3%)." Finally, 46.9% of the Counselors reported that they had seen the Seal on products when they were shopping. Ironically, many products which advertised in the magazine (particularly American companies) proudly displayed their Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval-- and never applied to be evaluated for a Chatelaine Seal. Obviously, they believed that the prestige of the American periodical was much greater than Chatelaine's.

Along with the Seal, the Brand Names Foundation and the Magazine Advertising Bureau (MAB) both placed ads in the magazine, as they had in the fifties, encouraging readers to purchase the products advertised in the magazine. The MAB advertisement "To anyone who has ever driven a car" is representative of this genre and indicative of the advertisers' message. This was primarily a text-based advertisement with a small inset photograph of a Model A Ford. The message was simple: advertising was a progressive force in society:
Somebody is always trying to get you to make a change. No sooner do you get a new dishwasher or clothes dryer or car than someone says “Here’s a newer and better one. Try it!” If you tried to buy everything that was offered, your money wouldn’t last long. So, you become a smart shopper. You choose which things you are going to buy. Isn’t it nice to have choice? Isn’t it good to see so many people trying to please you by turning out ever-improving things? Of course, if it weren’t for advertising, you wouldn’t know what choices you had. As a matter of fact, if there weren’t any advertising we might all still be driving Model A’s. And that was a fun car.

Clearly, although they would never be so ideological as to specifically mention capitalism, through the use of the term “choice” the advertisement alludes to the joys of capitalism (represented by choice, and advertising). These ads weren’t just filler to increase the advertising content of any particular issue, but placed to assist advertisers. Ads such as this encouraged readers to look at the ads closely (perhaps even to re-read the magazine looking specifically for advertisements) to purchase the products which advertised in magazines, to appreciate the power of advertising and generally reinforced the advertising component of the periodical. Ultimately, it seems unlikely that advertisements such as this would have been placed in the periodical unless the advertising manager and publisher felt that the magazine’s advertisers needed more support.

While all of these efforts point to the magazine’s attempt to provide considerable service to their advertisers-- Seal of Approval, in-store promotions, annual dual-focus campaigns, and MAB and Brand Names educational advertising-- coupled with the often small Starch “read-most” scores indicates that advertisers and the magazine tried to bolster ad readership (and hopefully product purchase) as much as possible. This evidence suggests that the ads were not read as closely as advertisers might like nor were they very successful at increasing sales of the products advertised. The ineffectiveness of advertising was not unique to Chatelaine but a problem that plagued advertisers in various forums. Maclean Hunter had memberships, and thus subscriptions, to a number of advertising newsletters and reports (for instance, Dichter’s Motivations: Monthly Psychological Research Reports for Business). One report, “The A.A.A.A. Study on Consumer Judgment of Advertising--Phase II” undertaken by the American Association of Advertising Agencies in 1964 (and included in the Maclean Hunter archival material), concluded “that advertising is not a central issue in the day to day lives of consumers.” The report included five reasons “why people feel unfavourably toward advertising-- Fake or misleading (21%); Too much advertising (19%); Interrupts entertainment (12%); It is repetitious (6%); High pressure advertising (6%).” Along with their stated dislikes of advertising and the admission that they paid little attention
to it, the Association was forced to conclude that “a great many of the physical opportunities
which consumers have for exposure to advertising pass them by.” Despite the barrage of
ads, their colourful, bold style and their eye-catching imagery many consumers were resistant
to or consciously ignored their messages.

Few readers thought to send letters to the magazine stating their impression of the
advertising material. Along with the epigrams at the beginning of the chapter which illustrate
alternate readings, or uses, of advertisements the few letters on the subject were quick to
criticize the editorial decision to include liquor advertisements (1962). Mrs. Harold Taylor,
of Truro, N.S. wrote: “One of the features of your publication which tempted me to subscribe
in the first place-- I was told it never had any liquor advertising. Was this statement ever
true?” Other “anti-liquor” letters were received from Swift Current, Saskatchewan and
Vancouver. In reply, Anderson stated that since the magazine began publishing recipes using
wine they reconsidered their policy for wineries. However, she assured the readers that the
magazine would never take “hard liquor” or beer advertisements. Despite her critique of the
liquor and tobacco ads, this letter from Mrs. George Putnam of Vancouver indicated that she
was a fan of the magazine’s advertising:

> Am enjoying your new Chatelaine immensely-- after a lapse of many years, it is new,
> and very much improved. Your advertisements are magnificent and I don’t see how
> any one could ignore them! Especially do I enjoy there being no liquor
> advertisements, and no tobacco--hardly--would like to see none....Again, your
> advertisements are most intriguing and compelling and beautiful, material.

Mrs. Putnam’s enjoyment of the ads, primarily for their visual display, colour and imagery
confirms the enjoyment some readers derived from the “fantasy” component of the ads and
her comments about the omnipresent nature of the ads provides an interesting counter-point
to the often low Starch results.

Another letter from Mrs. Edna Hall of Ottawa made a link between the images of
baby bottles and formulas pictured in some advertisements in the magazine and the
decreasing number of young mothers who chose to breast-feed their infants. She wrote:

> In the past week I have seen advertisements for the following products--baby powder,
soup powder, evaporated milk and refrigerators. These advertisements had one thing
in common--all showed baby bottles filled with formula. It is advertising such as this
which is largely responsible for the present-day attitude that bottle feeding is the
“natural” thing to do and that breast feeding is old fashioned....
Notice that Mrs. Hall's comments are not restricted to baby-formula manufacturers but that she comments on the smaller images contained in ads for refrigerators, baby powder, soap powder, etc. Thus, her letter confirms that some readers paid particularly close attention to the ads and were making conclusions about the "effect" of this material. Anderson's reply stated that she thought Hall's "comment is a good one, and we will probably use your letter in our Letters Page."102

Chatelaine advertising in the sixties was considerably different from a decade earlier. The advertising mix had changed slightly, with the rise in the number of household, furniture and building supplies ads, which demoted food advertisements into second place. Leisure and medical product ads increased, at the expense of cosmetics and clothing ads. The visual appeal of these pages was different, as the number of full page ads and full colour ads increased along with the decline in the number of very small, text-heavy ads. In short, sixties ads were more colourful, often had more sexual or fantastic imagery, featured fewer models (although more men) and consistently employed themes of affluence, ethnicity, sexuality and sometimes Canadiana to great affect. The bustling, efficient, well-coifed housewife of the fifties had been replaced by the often vapid looking, sexy young woman of the sixties--a woman who was often married, seldom employed but equally unlikely to be pictured doing housework--a decorative, sex-symbol. Only the food advertisements stressed maternal, housewife and craft pride in food preparation. At a time when many Canadian women were heading back to the workforce the women of Chatelaine's adworld were usually uncertain of any role beyond that of sex-symbol or consumer. If the adworld women were featured in a work setting (like Metrecal's Hilda Lang) they were clerical workers or sales people. For the most part, adworld women did not do anything except look alluring, worry about their figures, scheme how to influence their husbands to renovate the house, or colour their hair.

The larger number of men in the advertisements, particularly men who were depicted as the final arbitrators of product purchase, reduced the female role further--she was responsible for understanding the "fashion" of cars, refrigerators, furnishings, and paint while he was responsible for evaluating the technical information and the financial expenditure. Even children, particularly male children, instructed their hapless mothers in the art of consumption.
Conclusion

Clearly the cover art and advertising pages of Chatelaine were unlike any of the other material in the magazine. In these two components the emphasis was on youth, appearance and sexuality. They were similar to the beauty, fashion and homes features, but even there women were credited with more intelligence and abilities than in the advertising pages. As the most visual component of the magazine the ads and cover art provided large, colourful images which created much of the glossy appearance of the magazine. These components differed from the others in that readers, particularly subscribers, were actively critical and dissatisfied with them (cover art) or indifferent, irritated, and less often, intrigued by them (advertisements). They were also different from other Chatelaine components: it was here that the magazine did not (cover art) and could not (advertising) differentiate themselves from other magazines, particularly other women's magazines. Thus the discrepancy between the untraditional fare that the magazine offered in its editorial and articles with this material—which portrayed very conventional, particularly sexist imagery in the advertisements -- exposed the incongruities and odd juxtapositions within the magazine.

The cover art brought the techniques of magazine marketing, particularly for newsstand sales, and the desire to reach a “target audience” of young (20-35 year old) women into conflict with the magazine’s often older, more established subscribers. The Art Director, helped by insight from Starch reports and business department surveys, designed a cover which was supposed to be dramatic, eye-catching and different. To that end, particularly with Joan Chalmers’ covers in the early sixties, there were a variety of models striking interesting poses or celebrities and royalty, on a variety of boldly coloured backgrounds. This was supposed to position the magazine as a Canadian women’s magazine which was youthful, interesting and lively. Some subscribers saw “beatnicky wenches” and preferred that the cover reflect their status and offer respectable pictures of Canadian scenes, Canadian girls and children, the changing seasons or Christian religious holidays.

The advertisements, the largest component in the magazine, offered a seductive array of products to the readers and hoped, largely through a more affluent, sexual and increasingly leisure-oriented approach, to get Chatelaine readers to part with some of their household and discretionary spending. The sixties commercial message, like its fifties counterpart, appears to have been less than successful, as the Starch numbers, the variety of services provided
advertisers (Seal of Approval, in-store promotional displays, etc) and the MAB advertisements indicated. Readers like June Callwood claimed that they accepted their presence, and generally ignored the advertising content. However, that did not mean that the codes and meanings, both overt and covert, in the advertisements, did not have an impact on some readers. After all, the advertisements accounted for 50% of the magazine's content. A few readers, like Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Putnam and the anti-liquor writers indicated that they believed the ad messages could be highly effective. The messages and codes of the advertisements were even more dramatically opposed to the messages contained in the editorials and advertising than had been the case in the fifties. If the adworld housewife of the fifties conformed to the stereotypical image of that decade, she nevertheless demonstrated, in a variety of advertising dramas, her competency (in the household), pride in her family and seemed secure in her role while a decade later the advertisers replaced her with an increasingly sexualized woman whose function, in most ads, was purely decorative.

According to advertising historian Roland Marchand, advertised images do not mirror reality but instead offer consumers "a Zerrspiegel, a distorting mirror" which reflects the collective fantasies and dreams of the consumers rather than their day-to-day realities. The images provided in Chatelaine magazine certainly confirmed that thesis as the portrait of "Canadians" offered (white, middle-class, suburban women) along with the primary motif (the decorative consumer) do not reflect the varied realities of Canadian women during the sixties. However, the allure of the vapid, attractive, decorative woman—as a symbol of increased sexual freedom for women, as an icon of affluence and increased leisure, and as a male plaything—indicates an interesting trend. In this seductive fantasy advertisers offered Canadian women a release from the daily grind faced by women like Mrs. Carpenter (the working mother profiled in Christina McCall's "The Working Wife is Here to Stay). The fantasy was of an affluent lifestyle (purchased by the husband's professional wages—like the Seigniory carpet ad) where women had the luxury of leisure time, the ability to spend money on a wide variety of household and personal items, and were free to transform themselves into more sensual, sexual beings. Paradoxically, this fantasy offered women a more liberated form of sexuality at the same time that the parameters were clearly defined.

During a time of considerable flux in women's roles, the advertisers were safer projecting images of women which were not restricted to the household or the office—but
rather depicted the private world of sexuality, consumption and affluence. As well, these Chatelaine ads did not stand alone but were part of the North American and European re-fashioning of women's images. Yet if the fantasy of a perfect life in the fifties rested on the shoulders of the super-housewife who cleaned, dusted, vacuumed and cooked her way to happiness, the “soft life” of the sixties fantasy seduced women with dreams of wealthy (or at least comfortably middle-class) husbands who worked so that their wives and families might play and shop.

1 Public Archives of Ontario Maclean Hunter Records Series, F-4-4-b Box 445, Mrs. A.S. King, New South Wales, Australia to Doris Anderson, September 1962.

2 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 443, Mrs. Marie K. Fredrick, Jersey City, New Jersey to Kris McKenzie, 30 April 1962.


4 Mrs. Alex Henry, Woodstock, Ontario to the Editors, “The Last Word is Yours.” Chatelaine (September 1960), 154.

5 Mrs. Florence M. Riches, Calgary to the Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (January 1962), 88.

6 Mrs. Cynthia Ritchie, St. John’s to the Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (April 1963), 120.


8 All magazines from January 1960-December 1969 were entered in the Chatelaine Survey Database. See Appendix for more details.

9 PAO MHRS F-4-1-a Box 429, Series of Memos from Joan Meredith to L. Hodgkinson (publisher); 19 December 1960, 16 August 1960 and 19 July 1960.

10 From the Sixties Chatelaine Survey Database, the predominant cover colours in the decade were: Multi-coloured primary/bold colours (30 covers); Black and White (14); Multi-coloured pastel colours (12), see Appendix for additional information.

11 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Jean Young, Edmonton, to Doris Anderson, 20 June 1962.

12 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Doris Anderson to Jean Young, Edmonton, 29 June 1962.

13 Mrs. Jennie L. Kennedy, Moncton, N.B. to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (September 1962), 144.

14 Mrs. Elizabeth Saunders, Truro, N.S. to Editors, Ibid.

15 Mrs. T.H. Field, Edmonton, AB to Editors, Ibid.

16 Mrs. A.J. McDonald, Winnipeg Manitoba to Editors, Ibid.

17 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, “A Shocked Reader” to Doris Anderson, July 1962.

18 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs. Eleanor M. Scott, Ottawa to Doris Anderson, 7 July 1962.
See Veronica Cusack, “Patron Saint,” Toronto Life (January 1995), 46-52. Although Chalmers reluctantly agreed to be interviewed by Cusack she refused to comment “on many aspects of her life: her nine-year relationship with lover Barbara Amesbury, her spell in England in the fifties and her career as an art director.” (49) During her tenure at Chatelaine she was closeted (as were virtually all gay and lesbian professionals in the era). Although readers were never privy to this information about Chalmers nevertheless, from a modern perspective, it does factor into an evaluation of the covers she designed for the magazine—particularly since most of her covers featured assertive female models, very artistic compositions and differ considerably from the male cover designers who preceded and followed her.

Mrs. Audrey W. Phillips, Ottawa to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (June 1960), 136.

Mrs. Guy Fortier, Montreal to Editors, Ibid.

A.I. Hainey, Beauharnois, Quebec to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (July 1960), 84.


Miss Ann Arthur Hitchcock, Cowansville, Quebec to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (August 1960), 112.

Mrs. Henry Swig, Hagersville, Ontario to Editors, Ibid.

A few readers, like Mrs. Archer Hay-Roe, were supportive of racial diversity in Chatelaine’s models (a tactic the magazine utilized very infrequently), she writes: “It was a joy to see the little Oriental baby modeling the baby set in Crafts (February). What a sweetheart! Such a friendly gesture toward the kind of cooperation we want in this world. Why should all our models have white skins?”; Mrs. Archer Hay-Roe, Edmonton, Alberta to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (April 1961), 156.

J. Balint, Toronto to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (December 1960), 116.

Mrs. Brian Marshall, Midland, Ontario to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (February 1963), 80.

Mrs. J.A. Ferguson, Ottawa to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (February 168), 88.

Mrs. J. McArthur, Red Deer, Alberta to Editors, “The Last Word is Yours,” Chatelaine (October 1969), 120.

Chatelaine advertisement,” Canadian Advertising Rates and Data (October 1969) Volume 41 Number 10, 75-77.

PAO MHRS F-4-1-b Box 431, Sheelage M. Sheeran, Sherbrooke, Quebec to Doris Anderson, 28 August 1961.

Chatelaine survey database: page counts for every issue published in the sixties were taken. In total, there were 13,459 pages of the magazine and 7,083.75 pages of ads. Thus, on average 53% of the magazine was comprised of advertisements. This ranged from a low of 31% in the August 1963 issue (summer issues were always very lean) to a high of 65% advertising content in the April 1966 issue. That issue had two advertising booklet inserts.

The Sixties Ads Database has 998 advertisements (9 less than its comparable fifties database). In the fifties only 18% of advertisements were a full page and very few (1.1%) were larger than one page. Unless otherwise identified all statistics about advertising in Chatelaine are taken from this sampling. See Appendix details.
36 The number of 1/2 page ads (sixties figure/fifties figure)-- (21% 29%) declined slightly but the number of 1/4 page advertisements were fairly consistent-- (22% 21%); the largest declines were in the 1/8 page category (10% 13%) and > 1/8 page size (7% 12%).

37 In the fifties, most ads had an equal amount of text and graphics (41%); mostly graphics (38%); mostly text (18%) or no graphics (3%). The sixties were more visual--ads with mostly text (15%) were less common, although the number of ads without graphics (6%) doubled.

38 In comparison, only 33% of the fifties ads did not have any people in them. Although all types of products utilized ads without people, the majority of ads without people came from these six product categories: 1) Building supplies, appliances and furniture (26% of ads without people); 2) Food products (21%); 3) Leisure--including travel, hobbies and crafts (14%); 4) Medical (11%); 5) General household (8%) and 6) Housewares (7%).


40 In contrast, in the fifties the top eight categories were: Food (15.98%); Household Appliances, Furniture and Building Supplies (14.59%); Beauty (13.39%); General Household (11.02%); Clothing (10.72%); Medical and Feminine Hygiene (9.53%); Leisure (7.74%) and Housewares (5.16%). Statistics from the Fifties Ad Database.

41 In the sixties, the gender breakdown for advertisements (with people) were: women alone (51.6%); followed by women and men (14.2%); men alone (7.8%); mother and children (7.6%); parents and children (2.8%); boys and girls (2.6%); boys alone (2.6%); girls alone (2.4%); unrelated adults and kids (2.4%); unidentifiable gender (2.3%); teenage girls (2.1%); fathers and children (0.5%); teenage couples (0.1%); and finally, teenage boys (0.1%). In the fifties the order was: women alone (56.5%); women and men (14.7%); mothers and children (6.8%); girls alone (3.8%); unidentifiable (3.2%); men alone (3.1%) etc.

42 “Baking is a Simple Thing.” Magic Baking Powder Advertisement, Chatelaine (September 1965), 61.

43 Ibid.

44 “Behind every successful little girl is a mother who serves Velveeta.” Kraft advertisement, Chatelaine (September 1968), 21.

45 “Don’t Be Fat,” advertisement for Slim-Mint Gum, Chatelaine (May 1967), 169; “Miss C Diet Book,” advertisement, Chatelaine (September 1968), 104.

46 “Staying Slim-- Is it worth the trouble?” Metrecal Ad, Chatelaine (May 1961), 4-5.

47 Ibid., 5.

48 “Why be a martyr on cottage cheese...when you can have Diet De Luxe fruit meringues instead?” Aylmer Diet De Luxe Fruit Cocktail Ad, Chatelaine (May 1967), 19.

49 “Now Europe gives you a figure so beautiful...other women will hate you!” Distinction by Triumph of Europe Ad, Chatelaine (October 1960), inside back cover.

50 “Exquisite Form or Nothing!” Exquisite Form Ad in Chatelaine (May 1967), 5.

51 “Does she or Doesn’t She?” Miss Clairol Ad, Chatelaine (May 1961), inside front cover.

52 “Seems to Shine--Even in the Dark” Silk and Silver (a Clairol product) Ad, Chatelaine (December 1961), inside front cover.

For the complete selection of Neet Ads, see: “Shave lady?...don’t do it!” Neet advertisements, Chatelaine (May 1961), 124; Neet advertisement, Chatelaine (September 1962), 20; Neet advertisement, Chatelaine (January 1963), 4.

Tex-made Advertisement, Chatelaine (January 1963), 71.

Tex-made Advertisement, Chatelaine (January 1966), 15

Ibid.

There were a number of blatantly patronizing, sexist advertisements that portrayed women as fickle, essentially fashion-driven consumers. Ads for Chevrolet Camaro: “Go ahead. Let him drive it once in a while,” Chatelaine (May 1967), 138; ecstatically promised: “Colours? Emphatically yes! To provide a contrast with your favourite outfit or to match your favourite hair colour!” Or ads featuring long-suffering men (usually husbands) such as this ad for Femcin tablets with the phrase: “I used to suffer from menstrual cramps.” After explaining how much his wife, and thus he suffered (from her “black moods,” depression, and complaining) the ad ends with this relieved note: “Well, life has been different for my wife, and for me, ever since she first used FEMCIN...she now acts like the woman I married everyday of the month.” Chatelaine (September 1968), 82.

McClary Advertisement, Chatelaine (May 1967), 17.

International Paints Advertisement, Chatelaine (May 1967), 113.

Domtar Advertisement, Chatelaine (May 1967), 99.

Ibid., 102.

Brinton Advertisement, Chatelaine (May 1967), 108.

Thor Appliances Advertisement, Chatelaine (September 1962), 100; Bell Telephone Advertisement, “Once Upon a Time” in Chatelaine (September 1965), 157.

Air Canada Ad. Chatelaine (September 1965), 63.

Ibid.

Lanacane Advertisement, Chatelaine (January 1963), 84; Dr. Fowler’s Extract of Wild Strawberry Advertisement, Chatelaine (May 1967), 148.

Dettol Ad, Chatelaine (May 1967).

Dr. Scholl’s Advertisement, Chatelaine (May 1961), 112.

Ibid.


“Lead the soft life with Modess,” Chatelaine (May 1967), back cover.
73 "Velveeta—Dutch children thrive on it...so can yours!" Kraft Ad, Chatelaine (September 1965), 15; "Niblets Italiano," Green Giant Ad, Chatelaine (January 1963), 15; "How to be famous for your Spanish Rice!" Uncle Ben’s Ad, Chatelaine (May 1964), 71; "Buena! Aylmer Peasella" Aylmer’s Ad, Chatelaine (May 1961), 63.

74 "Mexican Holiday Colours" Pond’s High Lustre Lipstick Ad, Chatelaine (May 1961), 115; and "Pacific Sunset," Max Factor Ad, Chatelaine (May 1964), 5.

75 "New! Coiffure Italienne Color Highlight Shampoo by Max Factor" Max Factor Ad, Chatelaine (September 1965), 19.

76 "Tomorrow you can whoop it up in Cherokee Territory...Tomorrow you can entertain in Spain...Tomorrow you can splash à la Dolce Vita...because today you discovered Domco Solid Vinyl Tile" Domco Ad, Chatelaine (September 1968), 106-107.

77 "Swift’s Premium" advertisement, Chatelaine (May 1961), 22-23.

78 "The Safest Gun in the West!, GM" Chatelaine (September 1962), 130-131.

79 Ibid., 131.

80 "Chatelaine Ad,” Canadian Advertiser: The Media Rate and Data Authority (May/June 1961) Volume 34 # 3, 103. "The MAB (Magazine Advertising Bureau) Revenue Summary for the first quarter of 1961 shows Chatelaine ahead of all magazines in Canada in the following major advertising classifications: Clothing andDry Goods: Combined revenue $107,041; Drugs and Toilet Goods: Combined Revenue: $299,989; Food andFood Beverages: Combine Revenue: $569,364; Furniture and Furnishings: Combined Revenue: $111,237;Soaps and Housekeepers’ Supplies: Combined Revenue: $42,605.”


83 Ibid., 14.

84 Ibid., 24.

85 Ibid., 21.

86 Ibid., 23.

87 PAO MHRS F-4-1-a Box 430, Lloyd M. Hodgkinson to Mr. H.T. Markey, Advertising Manager, The Wabasso Cotton Company, 23 June 1960.

88 PAO MHRS F-4-1-a Box 430, Lloyd M. Hodgkinson to Vivian Wilcox, 18 August 1960.

89 PAO MHRS F-4-1-a Box 430, Militza Anich, Advertising Manager, Dominion Oilcloth and Linoleum Co. Limited, Montreal to Barbara Reynolds, Home Editor, 18 April 1960.

90 PAO MHRS F-4-1-b Box 431, Lloyd M. Hodgkinson to J.E. McDougall, Cockfield, Brown and Company Ltd., Montreal, 24 March 1961. Cockfield, Brown and Company Ltd. was an advertising firm.

91 Ibid.

92 Ibid.
Ibid.

94 "To anyone who has ever driven a car—The Magazine Advertising Bureau of Canada Advertisement," Advertisement for MAB, Chatelaine (September 1968), 102.

95 PAO MHRS E-2-3-e Box 336—A collection of these reports, all from the fifties, is in this box.


97 Ibid., 11.

98 Ibid., 14.

99 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs. Harold Taylor, Truro, N.S. to Doris Anderson, 30 November 1962.

100 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs. George Putnam, Vancouver to Doris Anderson, 16 October 1962.

101 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Mrs Edna Hall, Ottawa to Doris Anderson, 18 August 1962.

102 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 434, Doris Anderson to Mrs. Edna Hall, Ottawa, 27 August 1962.

Chapter 11: Conclusion

As a reader of your aggressively feminine magazine for a year now I find it interesting and very controversial. Living as we do here where jobs for women, whatever your colour and qualifications are hard to come by (except nurses) women are left very much to their own devices.\textsuperscript{1}
--Mrs. Stella Kerkhoven, North Rhodesia, 1962

It was very interesting to read your letter the other day and to learn that Chatelaine is "aggressively feminine." Far from feeling aggressively feminine, I sometimes think we're a little behind the times in comparison with readers who are looking for ways to make their lives more meaningful. It's perfectly true that raising children and keeping a home is a full-time job but it often isn't a full-time job for an entire lifetime. It seems too many Canadian women, and I agree with them, in times like these which are very troubled and where many parts of the world...are trying to work out new destinies for themselves that women can surely take a more active part in community and national life than they are now doing. To tell them to sit happily in their homes and make potholders for church bazaars and polish the brass once again just isn't going to satisfy them, and that's why we try to give them other suggestions. It isn't a case of Chatelaine trying to incite a rebellion in Canadian homes. It's a case of a magazine trying to meet a need on the part of its readers.\textsuperscript{2}
--Editor Doris Anderson's reply to Mrs Kerkhoven, January 1963

Your editorials keep demanding: why aren't Canadian women better informed, more excited over vital issues, more of a force in politics, etc., etc.? The balance of the magazine continues to take it for granted that over-weight is more of threat than starvation, that fixing food attractively is more important than producing it, that over-population is not a danger but a joyful duty and that pampered princesses and promiscuous movie queens are more deserving of our tender sympathy than--well, for instance, unmarried mothers drawing welfare. So go on informing your readers they are complacent, vapid, empty-headed clucks, the four corners of whose world are the supermarket, the beauty parlor, the school and the maternity ward. But tell them you have a lot of money invested in appealing to them as they are, and you wouldn't want them different for the world.\textsuperscript{3}
--Miss O. Gaprist, Toronto, September 1962

The excerpts from these letters, and Anderson's reply, indicate the contrasting views of Chatelaine and the magazine's mandate. Kerkhoven's and Gaprist's letters also exemplify the difficulties in determining the effect of popular culture on its consumers. Like the parable of the blind men and the elephant, these letters and all of the other letters printed herein illustrate that readers interpreted the magazine based upon their expectations of what a Canadian women's magazine should include. This definition varied according to readers' age, class, gender, regional or ethnic background, and marital status. Also affecting their
analysis was their occupational status—whether or not they worked in the home looking after their families and husbands, whether they worked part-time, whether they were community volunteers or whether they were single "career girls" or high-school students. Thus, there cannot be one assessment of readers’ response to the periodical. Readers’ responses to Chatelaine were filtered through their analysis of their own, and other women’s, lives. Mrs. Kerkhoven’s experience of the racially and sexually segregated world of North Rhodesia had thrown her assumptions about women’s roles into question and thus she was responding to what struck her as “aggressively feminine” articles and editorials in the magazine. However, for readers like Miss O. Gaprist (and editor Doris Anderson as well) who were more radical or politicized, Chatelaine’s material did not seem to go far enough.

Regardless of readers’ experiences, it was clear that Chatelaine contained a paradoxical mix of material, messages and meanings for a mainstream women’s magazine. As the assessment of the fiction, editorials, articles, advertisements and service material illustrates, it is necessary for researchers to evaluate all the components of a periodical. Had this study concentrated solely on any one component it would have presented an incomplete analysis. The art of reading a mass market women’s magazine must include an assessment of how the elements function in their entirety. A case could be made for the “feminist” agenda of the editorials just as easily as one could be made for the sexist, patronizing images of women portrayed in the advertisements. Chatelaine magazine was a combination of all those elements. The “grand sweep” (to paraphrase Raymond Williams) of all 240 issues illustrates that the magazine’s material varied greatly from year to year, and decade to decade. Any analysis which concentrated solely on a much smaller number of issues would miss much of these changes and it would miss, perhaps more importantly, the continuity between the fifties and the sixties. The seeds of sixties issues and discontents—abortion, the pill, racial and ethnic discrimination, women’s sexuality and feminist issues—were all evident in the fifties.

Equally important to the analysis of all the components in the magazine has been the attention to the commercial imperative which created and coloured Maclean Hunter’s impression of the periodical. From H.V. Tyrell’s first memo to Colonel Maclean about the financial feasibility of a new Canadian women’s magazine—particularly its attractiveness to advertisers—the company and the business department’s ethos was clear. The publisher, the Maclean Hunter company and the men who worked in the business department of the
magazine all sought to maximize returns at the magazine. To that end, they solicited as much advertising as possible and offered advertisers a wide variety of services to improve their chances of selling their products in the pages of the magazine (or to reinforce the advertising in retail stores). As well, the circulation department aggressively marketed subscriptions to the magazine (even if it meant spending more obtaining subscriptions than they brought in from newsstand and subscription sales) to increase the number of subscribers. Finally, they commissioned a number of studies of the magazine and paid for the magazine to be "Starched" regularly. The commercial imperative was evident in the cover art, the ads and it sometimes crept into the editors' commentary about fiction stories. The business department's focus was on the bottom-line and they concerned themselves with the numbers - advertising pages, subscribers, Starch figures and readership surveys. When those numbers went up, the publisher, the business staff, and Maclean Hunter executives were happy.

In contrast, the editorial imperative was not about numbers but instead about people—the editors, the writers and the readers. It would be far too deterministic to dismiss women's magazines, and Chatelaine in particular, because it was a commercial product intended to produce a profit. That is only half the story. The other half is that the editors had their own agenda-- to interest and speak to the readers-- which meant that they were committed to creating a magazine which had the broadest possible appeal for Canadian women. There was some interaction between the publisher and the editor, and even some of the departmental editors, but as archival letters indicate, the editors' authority in their realm was secure. Remember the CARD adage: "Please the reader first, serve the advertiser best!" The editorial and business staff were separated from each other by convention--business and editorial are two distinct and often antagonistic divisions within commercial magazines-- and by gender. The result was a segregated pocket of female editors and writers at Maclean Hunter who were pretty much left to their own devices when it came to planning, creating and commissioning editorial material. As well, the editors and writers worked, not for the advertisers, but for the readers.

This situation was not the case at Chatelaine's chief competitors-- Ladies Home Journal, McCall's, Good Housekeeping, or Redbook --the American mass market women's magazines. There female editors were the exception to the rule and, as the experience of Lenore Hershey indicated, men were in the top positions at most of these magazines. The
frustration with the glass-ceiling and editorial practices at the mass-market women's magazines formed part of the impetus for the creation of Ms. magazine. With huge subscription bases, and backed by the deep pockets of their respective corporations, the big American women's magazines, and their editors, created glossy, affluent periodicals geared to upper-middle class American housewives and mothers. Family Circle and Woman's Day (the super-market magazines) were smaller, more affordable periodicals which offered readers feasible family dinners, craft ideas and a few feature articles. These general magazines were in trouble in the fifties and sixties as television siphoned away advertisers.

Equally important the mass-market magazines had difficulty adjusting to the times and began to lose readers to more narrowly focused magazines. Two of the most popular magazines of the era--Playboy (launched in 1953) and Cosmopolitan (re-modeled in 1965)--did not attempt to be mass market magazines but successfully marketed a periodical for a specific, limited, demographic group. Niche marketing, not mass-marketing, became one of the chief criteria for the commercial success of most American magazines ever since.

Under Byrne Hope Sanders, Lotta Dempsey, John Clare, and particularly Doris Anderson, Chatelaine printed a wide variety of material, calculated to appeal to a large, mass audience of Canadian women. The magazine's mandate was to provide articles, fiction, departmental features and editorials of interest to Canadian women. Their competition were the established American women's magazines and in the early fifties the more family-oriented Canadian Home Journal. That mandate does not explain the magazine's popularity. Being Canadian, while certainly a drawing card, was not enough to keep subscribers paid up- the success of the magazine was tied to the creation of the Chatelaine community and the historical milieu which gave the magazine a particular niche. The advance of television, the creation of other Canadian women's magazines (Homemakers and Canadian Living in particular) and the move toward more specialized magazines has eroded the importance and prestige once accorded to Chatelaine in the fifties and sixties.

Chatelaine's female editors, and its staff of free-lance and staff writers (predominantly although not exclusively female) were responsible for the creation of an interesting, diverse periodical. The signed editorials, authored by Sanders, Dempsey, and Anderson were written in intimate language, like letters from a good (yet often feisty) friend on current women's issues in Canada. As the fifties turned into the sixties Anderson's
editorials became more closely associated with feminist thought and ideas and functioned as a “consciousness-raising” essay for the readers.

June Callwood has stated, as have other commentators and academics, that Doris Anderson must be given considerable credit for the service her editorials and article selection made upon the promulgation of feminist ideas in Canada during the late fifties, sixties and seventies. Of course, *Chatelaine* was not the only source for feminist ideas in the sixties-- television, radio and newspapers would offer sporadic coverage of these issues. But given *Chatelaine*'s large national audience, its commitment to publicizing feminist ideas, the dearth of Canadian or American feminist magazines (until the early seventies), the lack of attention to feminist issues in mass-market U.S. women’s magazines, and the small number of women’s organizations until the mid-late sixties, *Chatelaine* performed an important role. The Hilliard/Callwood articles of the mid-late fifties, along with Anderson’s editorials and the articles written by Christina McCall in the early sixties all predate the publication of Betty Friedan’s *Feminist Mystique*. Those articles and editorials anticipate and enumerate much of Friedan’s thesis thus clearly claiming a spot for *Chatelaine* in the history of second wave feminism in Canada. By the end of the sixties readers had matriculated through a course of feminism which included such issues as, legislative inequity; birth control and abortion information; equal pay for equal work; the systemic sexism of Canadian society; and finally the valorization of women’s sexuality (divorced from reproductive issues although usually not from the confines of marriage). The inclusion of feminist material was not always appreciated and often vociferously criticized, but it did lead to an atmosphere of anticipation about the magazine and to a spirit of discovery and growth. The progression in the articles and in Anderson’s editorials indicates that this was a journey undertaken by the writers and editors, as well as the readers, which strengthened the spirit of community.

The discovery and discussion of feminist issues was only one of the ways that the community of *Chatelaine* was fostered. The rapid changes which women were undergoing-- entry or re-entry into the workforce, the baby-boom, life in suburbia, and questions about their roles and futures-- were shared by a large group of Canadian (and American) women in the fifties and sixties. The novelty of the situation, the isolation of suburbia and rapid-paced changes in living furthered the attachment to the magazine. *Chatelaine* was a source-book, an entertainer and an educator. *Chatelaine* was a women’s service magazine and thus
provided a hefty amount of departmental features which sought to assist women in planning their families' food budget and meal plans, decorating their houses, buying clothes and make-up, planting a garden or dealing with childhood illnesses. These service features had a dual focus—they were educational and they offered “suggestions” for purchases. As well, they were usually clustered with ads for suitable products. However, they differed from the American women’s periodicals in a couple of important ways. First, with the exception of Homes features in the sixties, most of the ideas and products were affordable and not geared solely to the affluent upper and upper-middle class. Second, they were not (in the fifties) very glossy features but quite utilitarian in appearance. The sixties brought more attention to colour and presentation but they could never be described as lavish. Food features in particular stressed thrift, planned economizing and usually featured dinner and desserts made from scratch not from combinations of prepared foods. Thus, while there was a commercial message it was far from strident—only in the Homes features did affluence and conspicuous consumption reign. Letters from readers indicated that housewives found such features as “Meals of the Month” or the annual family budget a tremendous boon; they also indicated that where the magazine was overly prescriptive and perfectionist (the housecleaning features) that readers were equally quick to ignore the experts. The departmental features, as the most prescriptive material in the magazine, illustrated that no matter how authoritarian or respected the “experts” were it did not naturally follow that readers slavishly followed their recommendations. Reader response indicates that the power of the editors and writers was countered by the readers’ power to implement, evade, ignore or ridicule the material. This thesis illustrates that historians should be wary of inferring women’s actions from prescriptive literature without attention to how the “readers” responded to the material.

Letters printed in the magazine, and those in archival collections, enumerate how important the magazine was to its readers and its function as the community “coffee-klatch” for Canadian women. A magazine to be read, in the evocative phrase of Grace A. Bontaine, in “that precious hour of peace and afternoon tea, when all the troublesome tasks are done—the children are not yet home from school—and it’s too early to think about dinner.”

Readers wrote to the magazine to suggest article topics, to critique or praise articles, editorials, fiction, departmental fare and far less often the cover art or advertisements. Those letters, in turn, often encouraged others to re-read the controversial articles or re-examine a
controversial cover photo. Thus readers letters shaped the art of reading the magazine and were the major means of communication amongst members of the community. They also provided the inspiration for some article and service department material and played a role in “creating” or “inspiring” material in the magazine. Chatelaine readers were not passive consumers of the periodical but active participants in the creative process and members in the community. The Letters page functioned like a print pre-cursor of e-mail and indicated a high level of interaction and enjoyment in the comments, criticisms, and thoughts of other readers. Starch figures show that it was an eagerly read component of the magazine. Also included within the letters page were letters in response to other readers’ comments or in search of pen pals, baby’s names, or old friends. Letters such as this created a secondary correspondence beyond the Letters page with other members of the community.

However, the Letters page was not the only manifestation of the Chatelaine community in action. Chatelaine material was used by social services and educational departments across the country. Previews of the new issues and household tips were provided on women’s radio chat shows. Sometimes women’s groups visited the Chatelaine offices in Toronto. More often, the editors or writers made trips across the country, talking and meeting with readers in their own communities. All of these interactions strengthened the bond between readers and the magazine. In addition, the 2000-strong group of Chatelaine Councilors (a group set up by Sanders on her return from the war effort in Ottawa) regularly responded to surveys and questionnaires from the magazine which sought to evaluate the material, discern lifestyle trends and for future editorial suggestions. These women were selected based upon their age, region and class identification and were supposed to be representative of the mass audience.

Similarly, the highly successful Chatelaine contests got readers to contribute their recipes, their diet dramas, their re-decorating plans, and in the ultimate contest (Mrs. Chatelaine) their version of the ideal wife and mother. The magazine was very interactive and even those who did not enter the contests enjoyed using other readers’ recipes or for the more creative and critical readers, like “Mrs. Slob” Beatrice Maitland, created anti-contests much to the delight of the other “Slobs” across the country. The “Mrs. Chatelaine” contest is an excellent example of how the preferred meaning-- the valorization of the perfect housekeeping and community volunteerism-- was given an alternate interpretation by the
dedicated group of “slobs”. Thus a contest dedicated to rewarding a very traditional view of women’s roles backfired as it quickly became more popular to be a part of the “Slobs” group who mocked the contest, ridiculed the contestants’ perfectionist ways and created bonds with others who disliked housework, the limited role prescribed by the contest or the middle-class bias of the winners. These contests brought the “real” women into the magazine and whether accompanied by before and after pictures, or make-over essays, shrewdly allowed readers to participate in “making the periodical”. Women who were featured in the magazines invariably described the experience as one of the most enjoyable in their lives and reported that other readers--from all over the country and sometimes from the U.S. or Britain--wrote to congratulate them on their success. Finally, these women also reported that their respective towns, villages and cities (or their church or women’s groups) also lauded their Chatelaine win. Taken together, the contests and the contestants are proof of the prestige which was accorded to Chatelaine at the time and the enthusiasm for participation in the community created by the magazine.

Another, more informal indication of the Chatelaine community in action was the process by which new members were brought into the fold. Many letters from readers suggest that subscriptions to the magazine were common presents in female kinship networks (mothers, daughters, grand-daughters, sisters and cousins) or amongst friends. The letters from foreign readers or Canadians living abroad always detailed how their family or friends provided them with a gift subscription. For them the magazine was “a little of home.” Other letters, and the CARD data provide evidence of a sizable pass-along audience of readers. That is, the original subscriber often had networks of friends with whom she exchanged magazines and in the case of magazines going overseas these were often very elaborate. The final transmission of some of these well-traveled, well-read issues was as donations to hospital waiting rooms, doctor’s offices, or volunteer agencies where popular reading material was at a premium. The magazine’s range was impressive. Chatelaine clippings, popular articles, editorials and recipes found their way onto ministers’ desks, in schools, government offices and on generations of family dinner-tables.

Another distinctive aspect of the Chatelaine community was its inclusiveness. Despite the fact that the magazine was produced in Toronto, its appeal was nation-wide. Most of the readers were Anglophones but there were was evidence that a smaller proportion
of Francophones, First-Nations and immigrants were reading the magazine. Critics of women’s magazines, from Friedan to Faludi, have depicted the readership as largely middle-class suburban readers which, in the case of Chatelaine, proved incorrect. In the fifties the readership studies indicated that the magazine had a large proportion of working class, unemployed and retired readers and that rural readers were dedicated subscribers. In the sixties, the numbers of more affluent readers increased (paralleling the general rise in incomes in the decade) but 79.3% of all Chatelaine readers still came from the lower-middle class group and rural readers still represented 30% of all subscribers. Comparisons to statistical averages for the era prove that readers were average, not affluent, Canadians.

The emphasis on the commercial imperative, the editorial authority and agenda, the readership profile and the interactive nature and importance of the Chatelaine community (along with an overview of Canada during the fifties and sixties) all serve to expand upon and situate the magazine’s content in its historical, business, readership, and editorial context. The text-- the magazine’s editorial and advertising content--form the other most important strand in this cultural and historical analysis of Chatelaine in the fifties and sixties.

The following brief comparison of the March 1950 and the March 1969 issues of Chatelaine provides a graphic illustration of the changes in style, content and tone as well as the continuities evident throughout the time period. An illustration of an ingenue wearing her new Easter bonnet graces the earlier cover. The pastel shades of her dress and hat, the pale-gray background and the polite listing of feature articles which runs along the bottom of the cover denote respectability and propriety. In short, the cover aims to provide subscribers with a pleasant picture, in keeping with secular and religious celebrations. This was representative of the fifties covers which usually featured dewy-eyed ingenues, babies, creations of the Chatelaine Institute kitchens or the royal family. In contrast, March 1969 features a photograph of scarf-clad, modish looking brunette smiling out at the reader. She is dressed in a predominantly navy and red ensemble and set on a bright red and pale gray background. In the sixties the number of celebrity and royal family covers increased as did the emphasis on young, sexually appealing Canadian models in a variety of closely cropped photographs of smiling white faces. Titles of the magazine’s features were given priority placement on the left-hand side of the cover. The refurbished cover-style was intended to
lure newsstand browsers by offering a mixture of youthfulness, colour and bold styles of graphic design.

The list of articles previewed on each of these covers provides evidence of editorial priorities and indicates which features the editors believed held the greatest appeal for readers. On the cover of the March 1950 issue were these headings: “Housewives are a Sorry Lot,” “The Top Look in Clothes for Spring,” “News in House Furnishings,” and “Is there a conspiracy of silence among doctors?” Also in the issue were three fiction stories: “The Unfettered Heart” by Belva Plain, “The Simple Life” by Cecilia Bartholomew and “When the Frost Comes,” by Jane Crosby as well as one other general feature article “Protection for Wives” by Mary Jukes. Because it was a spring issue it had an expanded fashion section, with four articles-- “It’s New, You Know,” “Newer Than Springtime,” “The Top Look,” and “It’s the Fashion,” all written by Mildred Spicer. There was one Chatelaine handicraft in this issue-- “Sweater Blouse Crochet” and two Simplicity pages—all of these patterns were available, for a price, from Chatelaine. The home planning section was larger than average, with five articles, including “Rooms that Set the Trend,” “Ranch House--Budget Style,” and the cover feature, by John Caulfield Smith. In addition Charlene Champness contributed “The Washable Nursery,” and “Colour Your Kitchen.” Beauty editor Eileen Morris only supplied one article, “Teeth are Living Longer Too,” about improvements in dental hygiene. The housekeeping and food departments had “The Institute Approves,” “Separate the Eggs” by Marie Holmes and “Four Menus for March,” by Jane Monteith. Finally, Chatelaine’s regular Child Health Clinic columnist Dr. Elizabeth Chant Robertson wrote “Your Child’s Eyes.” Byrne Hope Sanders’ editorial, “Compassion,” was located at the back of the magazine (along with the table of contents). This small, 78-page magazine also contained an equal weighting of advertisements for a variety of food, clothing, housewares, furniture, medical products, children’s products and automobiles. Companies as diverse as Listerine, Metropolitan Life Insurance, Coca Cola, Chevrolet, Harding Carpets, Westinghouse, General Electric, McClary Ranges, Campbell’s Soup, C.I.L. Nylon, Avon and Jergens advertised their wares in the March 1950 issue of Chatelaine.

In contrast, in March 1969 all of the prominent cover titles referred to articles: “Canadian men are afraid of love?” “Incest—the big problem we won’t face,” “Tommy Hunter: TV’s unlikeliest star?” “We’re keeping our poor in ghettos,” and “Canada’s top five
heroes.” At the bottom of the page--printed on the model’s sleeve--was the phrase “New Spring and Fashion Beauty” to alert readers to the special fashion and beauty features. This was a larger magazine--at 94 pages--but smaller than the average issue size in the sixties. There were considerable changes in design and content. The editorial and table of contents were moved to the front. Doris Anderson’s editorial, “As Judy Saw It,” was the first thing readers read--except for the ads for Miss Clairol and Chanel N” 5. From there, readers entered the “What’s New” section, usually about ten to fifteen pages in length of short, paragraph long write-ups about Chatelaine, Canadian Women, Movies, Books, Records, Theatre, TV and Radio, Shopping, Family Living, Health and Canadiana. Here the editors’ profiled recently released books (both non-fiction and fiction), movies, medical and sociological research and answered questions about readers’ antiques. In addition to the articles mentioned on the cover of the magazine, this issue also included “How to Choose a Good Nursing Home.” The fiction component was smaller, featuring only two stories, entitled: “What Other Love!” by Katherine Marcuse and “Kiss Away Tomorrow,” by Libby Machol. Beauty Editor Eveleen Dollery had a three page article called “Face Facts,” while the fashion editor Vivian Wilcox had a five page, full-colour article on the new Jumpsuits, Coats and Dresses called “JUMP.” Food editor Elaine Collett contributed “Bottoms Up!” a collection of recipes for upside-down cakes, puddings and gelatin molds. Consumer Editor, Una Abrahamson’s “Of Consuming Interest” provided the regular column on new household products and tips or hints for cleaning. Chatelaine Craft ideas this month were “Violet Nosegays to Petit-Point and Needlepoint,” and “A Garden of Canadiana,” both created by craft editor Wanda Nelles. Finally, Pearl Karal’s “The Scapegoat Child,” provided the essay for the regular “Your Child” column. The last page of the editorial material was “The Last Word is Yours,” the readers’ letter column. Once again, a variety of manufacturers chose to advertise their products in Chatelaine, including: Kraft Foods, Harding Carpets, Elizabeth Arden, Kotex, Canada Packers, Fortrel Knits, Smirnoff Vodka, Tia Maria, CBC, Windsor Salt, Dr. Ballard’s Cat Food, Clover Leaf Tuna, the Hong Kong Tourist Authority, Air Alitalia and Second Début.

In the nineteen years between these issues, Chatelaine grew larger and re-vamped its graphic design of layouts, covers, photography and illustration styles a number of times. As well, the article component was strengthened and the editors decided to publish less fiction.
Advertisers began to place more colourful and larger advertisements in *Chatelaine* which enabled the company to put more money into their departmental features, giving them more variety and visual appeal. Two of their most important editorial decisions was moving the editorial to a prominent location at the front-of-the-book and the inclusion of a regular letters page which anchored the back of the magazine.

Regardless of its placement in the magazine, editorials were a staple in the magazine from the early days of Bryne Hope Sanders' editorship in the thirties when she made the signed, editorial essay a *Chatelaine* tradition. Sanders' noblesse-oblige tone gave way to the short-lived but lively editorials of Lotta Dempsey and then the drought of John Clare when the editorial page was changed to the general focus "Chatelaine Centre." In 1958 Doris Anderson re-kindled the power of the *Chatelaine* editorial. The philosophy-of-life, cultural and *Chatelaine* topics of the fifties metamorphosed into the political, educational and primarily feminist essays of the sixties. This section provided food-for-thought, as countless letters noted, and differentiated the magazine from its American competitors which either eschewed editorials or wrote editorials that were little more than introductions to the magazine's material.

General feature articles included a mix of traditional and untraditional fare written by freelance and staff writers. Authored almost entirely by Canadians this section provided a balance to the household emphasis of the departmental features and was responsible for attracting readers from outside the primary *Chatelaine* audience--as men, teenagers and single women found something of interest in these articles. In the sixties Anderson and her associate editors broadened the mix (as the Dichter Report had recommended) to include foreign affairs articles, book reviews, and cultural reviews. The number of expose-style articles--on feminism, native issues, special educational and employment features, Canadian nationalism, poverty and child abuse (baby battering as it was then called)--increased. It is these articles that people who worked on the magazine are most proud of, and cite, as one of the legacies of the periodical. However, the sixties also included celebrity features (and more attention to U.S. movie stars like Elizabeth Taylor or Richard Burton), profiles of Canadian families (and other Centennial-inspired histories and examinations of the country), many other more traditional fare like articles on women's psychological development, marriage, kids, and how to cope with life in the suburbs.
Besides a decrease in the amount of space devoted to fiction there were also
considerable changes in the nature of Chatelaine stories. Throughout the fifties, Chatelaine
fiction was primarily romance stories-- either true-romance (or "fluffs") or marital-romance.
Despite the romantic nature of the stories they explored some dark subjects in the fifties:
male violence and discomfort with the "husband" role; women's suburban and urban angst;
sexism; and the harsh "reality" of married life. The endings were happy, or at least
superficial restorations of the status-quo but the tensions and strains exposed allowed readers
to examine the contradictions in their own lives. In the sixties the fiction component was
smaller and the mix of stories shifted away from the over-whelming focus on romance stories
(particularly the "fluffs") to the marital-romance, and a far larger number of protagonist's
quest tales and mysteries. Many stories, particularly the Sheila MacKay Russell sagas,
sought to teach a moral in each story. So the Chatelaine fiction component always had a
dual-pronged emphasis-- entertainment (fantasy, escapism and far less often, humour) and
education (a moral or lesson)-- in most stories. This component was the only one in the
magazine which was primarily American (although the illustrations were done by
Canadians), and favoured the "commercial package." The magazine could have been a
showcase for Canadian writers but they were often judged as not "commercial" enough
(except for Sheila MacKay Russell) or as accessible as the American formula fiction. Still,
despite the conventions of the genres, these stories exposed readers to contradictions,
ambiguity, and provided examples of how fictional heroines negotiated their lives.

Departmental material (food, beauty, fashion, child-care, gardening, housework,
interior design and renovating) provided readers with ideas, suggestions and plans of attack--
whether it was the boring family dinner-time or the old-fashioned rumpus room. There was a
Chatelaine expert for any household dilemma, and the fashion, beauty and homes features
even allowed readers to write into the magazine for personalized advice (for a small fee).
The departmental material in the fifties was more thrifty, and dowdy in appearance, than in
the sixties. The emphasis in the fifties was on economical family meals, affordable beauty
and clothing tips, the authoritative advice of Dr. Elizabeth Chant Robinson's "Child Health
Clinic," modest suburban bungalows geared to young families and the straight-forward
homespun advice of the gardening editor Helen O'Reilly. In contrast, the sixties features
were more colourful, larger and often featured fashions, furnishings and sometimes food
which were beyond the means of the majority of their readers. They offered, then, features for their most affluent readers and compelling fantasies for all the rest. Food features moved away from mainstream North American fare--casseroles, hamburger, chops and poultry--to feature more diversified dishes--pasta, curries, stews and rice combinations. Elaine Collett made an attempt to feature more sophisticated meal plans along with the core food features of hearty, yet economical, meals. The number of dieting features increased dramatically, and as did the beauty and fashion pages aimed at younger women with their colourful sixties, swinger look.

The advertisements in the magazine represented slightly over fifty percent of the magazine content in both decades. The products advertised were similar, although food advertisers were most prominent in the fifties whereas home building supplies and furnishing were more popular in the sixties. Stylistically, the ads got progressively larger and more colourful by the end of the era and advertisers were increasingly fond of ads which featured only the product or some appropriate images and not people. If people were not in the picture the readers could better imagine themselves using the product. The primary advertising fantasy offered readers in the fifties was the competent housewife while the sixties counterpart was a devotee of "the soft life" of leisure, affluence, sensuality and often sexuality. While the ads in the fifties did not portray women leaving their traditional realm of the private family home and returning or re-entering the workforce, the ads in the sixties when women's employment (particularly young women) was very common began to strip any productive role away from the female models, reducing them to decorative, sexual icons of commercialism.

The messages sent to readers by the various components of Chatelaine provided them with a complex portrait of Canadian women. However, the readers were able to ignore the material (the low Starch scores for ad readership); resist the information (responses to the house-cleaning service features); re-interpret the components (the letters about Russell's fiction); enjoy the material (articles); criticize the ideology (editorials) or remove or destroy irritating images (cover art, articles). They did not passively accept the ideas, themes, suggestions for living, ideology or entertainment aspects of the magazine. The "micropractice" of reading Chatelaine illustrates that readers had some control or power over this cultural product. Power did not solely reside in the hands of the Maclean Hunter
executives and advertisers. Their image of the magazine, as a profit-generator and as a vehicle for advertisers was not strong enough to overpower the agenda of the female editors and writers (who did not share this commercial imperative) nor did it negate the readers’ power. For instance, despite the commercial messages of the advertisements and the tacit support given to advertisers by the departmental material, those advertisers (and the publisher and business staff) were never able to prevent the editors, like Chatelaine Institute Director Elaine Collett, from removing all processed food products from the annual family budget specials to save money for the budget families. If the advertisers and business staff had exercised complete control over the message of Chatelaine, they would have vetted all the material for messages which ran counter to their commercial ethos. Chatelaine was a “producerly text”: it contained within its pages diverse ideas, opinions and messages.11 It encouraged readers to think about, and not just absorb, the material. It often offered “clues” on how to read the magazine, such as “Ten Fiction Plots We Can Do Without” or “Here’s Dirt in Your Eye House” which parodied the women’s magazine genre (today, commentators would call this self-reflexiveness or a postmodern sensibility). Articles and editorials such as those (readers’ letters could, and did, also function this way) exposed contradictions in the material and actively encouraged readers to think critically, and carefully, about what they read. Furthermore, the “community” created by the magazine was based upon gender, nationality and readership of the periodical-- it transcended but did not obliterate differences of class, age, region or race. Those demarcators, particularly class and age, would repeatedly expose fissures in the community and would result in differing interpretations of the material, its purpose and its effectiveness. With such a broad, mass audience the magazine was unable, and rarely did, invoke closure over the multiple meanings and interpretations of their editorial pages. This study of Chatelaine has illustrated the importance of including reader responses to popular culture, particularly as a means of analyzing the popularity of the product and how people interact with cultural products.

When Maclean Hunter created a commercial package to provide Canadian and North American advertisers with another vehicle to reach consumers (supplementing the readership available to advertisers in Maclean’s), they launched an unique and extremely popular magazine for Canadian women. Through the nature of the commercial editorial segregation in the offices of Chatelaine and within the company, it allowed the female editors and writers
a large degree of autonomy in the creation of the editorial material. The commitment to hiring strong female editors (Sanders, Dempsey and most particularly Anderson) created a magazine which was attuned to Canadian women and felt itself responsible to them. The John Clare era at the magazine was the least successful period (judged by advertising and financial information) which indicates that a committed female editor played a key role in the magazine’s success. The conservative, more traditional, ideology apparent in the magazine in the pre-Anderson (Clare) and the post-Anderson (Mildred Istona) eras indicate that the editors’ vision (respective of the limitations of the genre) was very important to Chatelaine’s tone and content. Buttressed by the findings of the Dichter Report (a successful male intervention into the primarily female editorial world) which encouraged Maclean Hunter to make the magazine more pro-active and not re-active, Doris Anderson re-formulated the periodical into one which combined a wide variety of material. The importance of the feminist articles and editorials, as well as the other general feature articles on topics such as birth control, abortion, lesbianism, menopause, women’s sexuality, should not be underestimated. Chatelaine reached a mass-audience of women and disseminated its mixed-messages far more effectively, respectably and affordably, than any other format could or did. As well, for women outside urban areas, where access to libraries, social-services and other resources were limited the magazine provided them with the “new” information of interest to women. Chatelaine played a unique role in cultivating a mass-market audience for second-wave feminist ideas, worked as a champion for women (lobbying for the Status of Women Commission) and was an educator about the discriminatory nature of Canadian society. No American women’s magazines were in the forefront of feminist movement there, nor did they consistently illuminate and popularize feminist ideas.

The other legacy of those years was the importance of the Chatelaine community in providing a sense of connection for many Canadian women. The letters to the magazine, the contests, the kinship subscription base, the appreciation of Canadians abroad, the community recognition, the Chatelaine Councilors, the cross-country visits of writers and editors all indicate the prestige attached to reading the magazine and participating in the community. This aspect of a women’s pop cultural product and the community of users and creators who sustained it is one that has been over-looked in the past. Despite the fact that the magazine’s content was routinely mentioned on radio shows, in newspapers, in schools and social service
departments, and sometimes made its way, via industrious clippers, to ministers and politicians, it is *Maclean's* which has been accorded the position of the prestigious, important magazine of the era. Historians have neglected *Chatelaine*, much like the *Maclean* Hunter executives did, because they have not realized that beneath its rather conventional cover and format lurked an unconventional women’s magazine. And that interspersed amongst articles on dieting, fashion, child-care and casserole recipes were articles, editorials (and even some fiction) which succinctly, and consistently, questioned the status-quo of Canadian women.

Arguably *Chatelaine* had more of an impact on Canadian women than the more general *Maclean's* had on its readership. “In the lodge,” as Eileen Morris described it, Canadian women were writing, reading and grappling with many important (and many not-so-important) issues. Those issues would change the way many women would regard their roles, their aspirations and their dreams for their daughters. Eighteen years after her resignation, Doris Anderson still has former readers approach her and tell her what an impact the magazine had on their lives.

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1 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Mrs Stella Kerkhoven, North Rhodesia to Doris Anderson, 1962.
2 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Doris Anderson to Mrs. Stella Kerkhoven, 3 January 1963.
3 PAO MHRS F-4-3-a Box 435, Miss O. Gaprist, Toronto, to Doris Anderson, 23 September 1962. The name of the writer was difficult to decipher and no address was included, hence there was no reply, although she did list her city of residence.
4 See the Introduction, for explanation of this term and my indebtedness to the work of Raymond Williams.
5 “*Chatelaine* Ad: Ideas, Wants, Sales!” *Canadian Advertising Rates and Data* (May-June 1953, Volume 26 #2), 100.
6 June Callwood interview with the author, June May 23, 1995; see commentary on *Chatelaine’s* role in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8.
7 PAO MHRS F-4-4-b Box 442, Grace A. Bontaine, Toronto to Doris Anderson, 4 December 1962.
8 Cover, *Chatelaine* (March 1950).
10 The term “micropractice” is Foucaultian terminology explaining the capillary (or diffused) nature of power—according to Foucault, only through examinations of “micropractices” will we discern how power operates and is diffused along a chain of relationships. The similar concept also resonates throughout the work of De Certeau (he refers to “poaching” or the “art of making do”). Social historians in their use of the term agency also refer to this practice indicative of the fact that the “bottom” always has some ability to resist, evade, or manipulate and not just acquiesce to the “top.”
12 Under Mildred Istona the magazine dropped the focus on feminism and became a much more traditional woman's magazine—superficial, and often silly, general feature articles, considerable attention to celebrities, a re-vamped and enlarged departmental section, an attention to more affluent furnishings, clothing and accessories and a considerable decrease in the number of "educational" articles or editorials. The emphasis was on affluence, entertainment and consumption. Mildred Istona was editor from 1977 through to 1994, the new editor is Rona Maynard. The decline of Chatelaine has been noted by media commentators, please see: Janice Turner, "Glossing Over the Issues" The Toronto Star (October 24, 1992), p. 111 and H3; Morris Wolfe, "MAGAZINES: Same Old Fluff in Modern Woman," Globe and Mail (Tuesday, March 2, 1993) and Morris Wolfe, "MAGAZINES: Decline and Fall of Chatelaine," Globe and Mail, (Tuesday, May 11, 1993).

13 See Chapter 8.
The Research Databases: Methodology and Results

The sampling and content analysis of Chatelaine from 1950 through 1969 was conducted in two stages. The first stage, the General Survey Database, included all 240 of the magazines. The second stage, the component databases (editorials, articles, letters, fiction, departments, and advertisements) were restricted to sixty issues. Each January, May and September issue of the magazine was read very closely, and had all of its components entered into their respective databases. Those months were selected to allow for seasonal differences (without including major religious or public holidays) in advertising and department content.

General Survey Database

Structure & categories:

All 240 Chatelaine magazines from January 1950 through December 1969 were included in this database. Illustration A.1 is a copy of an empty General Survey Database entry-form. Filed by date, the basic information from each magazine was entered: price per single copy and subscription price; the editor's name and the total number of pages. The pages of advertisements, articles, fiction and departmental features were all counted. Similarly, the number of letters to the editor (if any) were counted. The editorials box was a yes/no format to count the number of magazines with an editorial essay. Information was also tabulated in this database about the magazine's cover art. Cover referred to the type of image used, cover art kept track of whether photographs or illustrations were used, cover colour tabulated the background colours used and finally, cover material referred to the use of glossy or plain paper for the cover. Magazine material allowed the type of paper used within the periodical--glossy, plain or newsprint--to be tabulated. Description of contents was an empty text-field where notes were taken about the magazine's features. The calculation fields underneath the description field calculated the percentage of ad, fiction, departmental and article content in each individual issue. Finally, the total percentage fields were summary fields which calculated the percentage of these components in the entire sample of magazines.

Fifties Results:

This database includes information from all 120 issues of Chatelaine published in the decade. The number of pages ranged from 54-159, although the average was 90 pages. A total of 1329 readers' letters were published. The single copy price of the magazine was 15-20 cents/issue or a subscription could be purchased for $1.50 or $2.00 per year.

Table A.1 General Survey Results and Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Total Pages</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>5653.5</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>1657</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departments</td>
<td>2221</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>1182.5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table A.2 Cover Art Images

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female Model (20s)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Female Celebrity</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Other (no people)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Group of Women (20s)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Celebrity Couple</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage Girl</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Babies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Flowers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother and kids</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Male/Female Couple</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bride/Bridal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/Mixed age group</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Royal Family</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Royal Couple</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Child</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Father and kids</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Grandmother + kids</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field</td>
<td>Content</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of issue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subscription price</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Number of Ad pages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of fiction pages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of article pages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of letters to ed</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of C dept. pgs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover art</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover colour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine material</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of contents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table A.3  Cover Colours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Black &amp; white</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-colour bold</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Grey</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-coloured pastel</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Other non-pastel</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Other pastel</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sixties Results:

This database includes information from all 120 issues of Chatelaine published in the decade. The magazine was much larger than its fifties counterpart, ranging from 65 to 187 pages long with an average page size of 112 pages per issue. A total of 1778 readers' letters were published. Single issue price ranged from 15-35 cents per copy or a subscription price of $1.50-2.00/year.

Table A.4  General Survey Results and Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Total Pages</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>7083.75</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>2332.5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departments</td>
<td>2777.5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>1264.25</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table A.5  Cover Art Images

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Image</th>
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<th>Image</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female Model (20s)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Male politician</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Group of children</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Celebrity</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Male Celebrity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Female model (30s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teenage Girl</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Celebrity Couple</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Bride</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royalty Female</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Family Groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Female child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother and kids</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Royal Family</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male child</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal Couple</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Male/Female Couple</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royalty Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Group of women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A.6  Cover Colours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>#</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multi-colour bold</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Other pastel</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black &amp; white</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Grey</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-colour pastel</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Other non-pastel</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Letters Database

Structure & categories:

All letters from the sixty sample issues were entered in this database. Each letter was identified by date and by an identification number. The gender of the writer, the writer's age (only if specified in the letter, a rare occurrence), the tone (negative, positive or neutral), the purpose of letter (i.e. about articles, fiction, cover art, magazine in general, for advice, etc.), an estimate of ethnicity (few writers were specific about this information) and the writer's
locale were all tabulated. The entire letter was transcribed into the description text field, the
total number of letters in each issue were entered and then the database provided a
calculation field which provided the average number of letters per issue in this sample. See
Illustration A.2 for a copy of a blank, letter record.

**Fifties Findings:**

There were a total of 342 letters in the fifties sample. Of those, 277 were written by
women (81%); 26 were written by men (8%); with the sex unclear in the remaining 39 letters
(11%). Very few writers (only 23 letters) identified their ages, those that did were either
children, teenagers, or elderly readers. There were 208 positive letters about the magazines’
features (61%); 127 negative letters (37%); and 7 neutral letters (2%). The reasons for
 correspondence were varied, but commentary about the articles was the most common reason
for writing. On average, in issues with a letters column or page (many issues in the fifties did
not include letters) printed excerpts from approximately 15 letters. Although it was often
difficult to classify whether writers were from urban, suburban or rural locales, the results
were: 171 letters from urban areas (50%); 128 from rural areas (37%); 19 from suburbia (6%)
with 11 unclear (3%). In all probability the urban and rural figures are too high and the
suburban figure too low. Similarly, an attempt was made to tabulate ethnicity—although this
was difficult to gauge using only readers’ last names and the few self-identifying comments--
hence the figures should be interpreted with caution. Anglo-Canadians comprised the largest
group, responsible for 219 letters (64%); European-Canadians (6%); British (either
Canadians self-identifying as British or letters from residents of Britain) 5%; American (3%);
French-Canadian (3%); Jewish (2%) with 17% of letters either unclear or unclassifiable.

**Table A.7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th># of L</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other letters</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorials</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contests</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th># of L</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home plans</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover art</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatty Chipmunk</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crafts, Teen Tempo, Fashion &amp; Parents</td>
<td>1 each</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table A.8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th># of L</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th># of L</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yukon</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sixties Findings:**

There were a total of 446 letters in the sample. Of those, women wrote 364 letters
(82%); men wrote 56 (13%) and 26 letters were unidentifiable. Positive letters were still the
bulk of published letters (207 or 46%) but neutral letters increased (14%) as did negative
letters (40%). Feature articles still accounted for the bulk of correspondence. Once again,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writer's gender</th>
<th>Writer's Age</th>
<th>$s$ of letters per issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>Why written</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writer's race ethnicity</th>
<th>Anglo Canadian</th>
<th>American</th>
<th>European</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Franco Canadian</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Native</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>East European</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writer's locale</th>
<th>Nova Scotia</th>
<th>Manitoba</th>
<th>rural</th>
<th>Wales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
<td>Saskatchewen</td>
<td>urban</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>suburban</td>
<td>United State</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>not clear</td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>NWT</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>Yukon</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
they came from all parts of the country, with the exception of P.E.I. and the Yukon. Urban residents comprised 50% of writers, followed by rural residents (33%) and suburbanites (12%). The remaining 5% were unclear. Ethnicity was more easily characterized and illustrates a more varied audience: Anglo-Canadians (75%); European-Canadians (10%); French-Canadians (4%); British (2%); Jewish (2%); U.S. (1%). Letters from Native-Canadians and Asian-Canadians represented less than 1%. 4% of letters were unclassifiable.

Table A.9  Sixties Letters Classified by Reason for Writing, n=446

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th># of L</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articles</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>Advice</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editorials</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Home plans</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiction</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Contests</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion/Beauty</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A.10  Sixties Letters Classified by Region, n=446

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th># of L</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>U.S.A.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>North West Territories</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Northern Rhodesia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Editorials Database

Structure & categories:

All editorials from the January, May and September issues of the magazine (1950-1969) were read, analyzed and data entered in the Editorials Database. Figure A1.3 is a copy of an empty Editorials Database entry-form. Date, editor's name and title are all self-explanatory fields. The categories in the topic field were: current affairs, general political, women's political issues, women's issues, feminism, medical, family/home, mothering, philosophy of life, childbirth/childcare, birth control, abortion, travel, biography, marriage, career, Canadian entertainment, American entertainment, Chatelaine magazine, other, no editorial in this issue. The topic field was restricted to one topic/editorial or editorial section while in the thematic category I allowed for the selection of a maximum of three categories. I used the primary topic or focus of the editorial to classify the essay—the thematic classifications illustrate, for example, that many topics had feminist themes, while the issue was not primarily about feminism as a subject. For a list of the thematic topics please see Illustration A.3 Description was a open text-field which permitted notes and comments about each essay.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familial</td>
<td>Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Royalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminism</td>
<td>Medical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatelaine's importance</td>
<td>Sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women and media</td>
<td>Political</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict in gender roles</td>
<td>Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexism</td>
<td>Academic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>Homosexuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiculturalism/ethnicity</td>
<td>Dating/Marital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Stratification</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Title

Description
Definitions:

Current affairs editorials provided commentary on current news events, likewise, general political editorials were editorials pertaining to Canadian political issues of the day. Women's political issues involved discussions about women (or the absence of women) in politics, about women voters, or women's political organizations etc. Women's issues refers to more general editorials about the lot of Canadian women, in which feminism was not the overwhelming theme of the article, for instance articles on working women etc. Feminist articles were those in which the term feminism or feminist issues were discussed. Philosophy of life editorials referred to editorials where the editors expounded on their own personal, general, philosophies about living (which were not about more specific topics—say birth control, feminism, etc.). Chatelaine magazine meant anything to do with the production, authors or editors of the periodical. The other categories are self-explanatory.

A few thematic categories also require definition. Professional refers to career or employment issues. Feminism is an inclusive category, but in application is restricted to maternal and liberal-feminist agendas, rarely to socialist-feminist concerns. Women and media refer to depictions of women in the media, women journalists, the role women play in media and such cultural corporations etc. Conflict in gender roles refers to editorials which debated male/female difference and/or the difficulties faced in re-adjusting sex roles. The other thematic categories are self-explanatory.

Findings, 1950s:

The fact that four different editors and two guest editorialists authored the thirty different editorials in the intensive reading sample of the 1950s affected the statistical portrait of the decade's editorial offerings. Furthermore, John Clare eschewed editorial essays for the “Chatelaine Centre” format. “Centre” was a combination of anecdotal material about the contributors, production, or readers’ responses to Chatelaine. These have been included in the editorial statistics because they utilized the same space and were introductions to the magazine and thus are properly classified in the editorial genre rather than with the non-fiction articles. Clare wrote twelve of the thirty ‘editorials’ in the sample, Byrne Hope Sanders and Doris Anderson each wrote seven editorials, while Lotta Dempsey authored two editorials. The remaining two editorials (in the sample) were written by guest editors Clare Wallace and Gerry Anglin. A cross tabulation between the editors and their editorial themes provides insight into the issues they considered worthy of editorializing. Clare had the largest number of editorials with family themes in his twelve editorials, and the other male guest editor's editorial also contained this theme. Family was non-existent in Anderson's pieces and was only used once by Dempsey and Sanders. Cultural themes were well distributed amongst Clare, Sanders and Anderson. Anderson and Sanders' editorials account for the only feminist themes.

Table A.11  Fifties Editorials Classified by Topic, n=30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chatelaine Magazine</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>Women's Issues</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy of Life</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Feminism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Affairs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Mothering</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Marriage</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A.12  Fifties Editorials Classified by Themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># of eds.</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># of eds.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chatelaine's Importance</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Dating/Marital</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Women & Media  6  Racism  1
Entertainment  5  Multiculturalism  1
Sexism  4  Royalty  1
Conflict in Gender Roles  4  Money  1
Feminism  3  Violence  1
International  3

* up to three themes were selected for each editorial

**Findings, 1960s:**

In contrast to the fifties, in the sixties all the editorial essays were written by Doris Anderson. There are notable changes in both popular topics and themes.

**Table A.13**  Sixties Editorials Classified by Topic, n=30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women's Political Issues</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>Family/home</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Affairs</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Philosophy of Life</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's Issues</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminism</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>Chatelaine Magazine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothering</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table A.14**  Sixties Editorials Classified by Themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># of eds.</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># of eds.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feminism</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict in gender roles</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Chatelaine's Importance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women &amp; media</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexism</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Money</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dating/Marital</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* up to three themes were selected for each editorial

**Articles Database**

**Structure & categories:**

All articles from the January, May and September issues of the magazine (1950-1969) were read, analyzed and data entered in the Articles Database. Illustration A1.4 is a copy of an empty Articles Database entry-form. Each article was filed by date of issue and by a specific, original identification number. Title, author's name and the author statistics are all self-explanatory. Each article was coded by topic from this list (one choice only):

- current affairs
- politics
- feminism
- medical general
- women's psychological
- women's medical depression
- women's medical alcoholism
- women's medical drug dependency
- women's medical difficult pregnancy
- women's medical infertility
- women's medical menopause
- men
- children
- aging
- housewife syndrome/fatigue/nerves
- frigidity
- sex
- family/home
- cooking
- mothering/childbirth/childcare
- birth control
- abortion
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of issue</th>
<th>Article ID #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author State</td>
<td>female male Chatelaine regular freelance writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locale</td>
<td>Canadian Que. B.C. European rural Not applicable Maritimes Ontario USA Other suburban Newf. Western British urban Northern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's issue</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical Tidbits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Audience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commentary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator</td>
<td>expert voyeur iconoclast defender status quo other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>gender race/ethnicity ability wilderness class age country other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Binaries</td>
<td>fem/masc nature/modernity centre/regions US/Canada Canada Europe adult/child urban/rural east/west Can./British</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Familial Professional Feminism Conflict in Gender roles Sexuality Sexism Racism Multiculturalism/Ethnicity Class Stratification Business Violence Culture Medical Sports Political International Academic Other Money Home plan/decor Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
women’s medical menstruation
male medical
children medical
celebrity profile
Canadian entertainment
Canadian and American entertainment
other entertainment
marriage
teenager’s concerns
education
farming
religion
shopping
Chatelaine magazine
dieting
volunteer organizations
women’s rights
family budgets
travel
glamour/fashion
American entertainment
British entertainment
Royalty
dating/relationships between the sexes
career
business/industry
resources
humour
violence against women
sports
history
Mrs. Chatelaine contest

In the locale category, a provincial and residential location was selected, or if not possible, a country was chosen to indicate where the article was set. Women’s issues was a yes/no category which attempted to tabulate how many of the articles in the magazines were really gender specific as opposed to general articles of interest to all readers. Length tabulated the number of pages for each article from less than one to more than five pages. Historical tidbits included all historically important notes, comments etc. in each article. Target audience was another open field which attempted to answer the question of “implied audience” (i.e housewives, teenagers, working women, etc.). Likewise, Commentary was an open text field--for my comments, critique and thoughts about each article. The largest open-field for this database was summary which allowed up to four pages in which to make notes on the articles’ content.

The next group of categories all attempted to tabulate qualitative markers in the articles instead of the more-easily tabulated categories of topic, locale, author’s statistics etc. These categories are, of course, all subjective. Having said that, since all the database entries were done by myself I avoided problems of multiple imputers and a need to code for probability. In the power category (Foucault’s influence) I attempted to answer what I thought was a simple question: “who had power in the article?” The pop-up list of available topics was broad, and illustrates the difficulty in determining where power lay:

female-defined, feminist
female-defined within the family
female-defined, sexuality/appearance
in conflict
society-defined
male-defined: political/legal
male-defined: patriarchal (general than above)
equal (male/female)
unclear
child-centred

Two related-categories, narrator and audience were attempts to answer questions about the tone employed by article writers and the “implied audience” for whom they wrote. For narrator there was a choice between: the expert, the voyeur, the iconoclast, the defender of the status quo, or other. Reader choices were similar: voyeur (peering into the world described by the writer), student (active learning/educational articles), part of the status quo (the “traditional” reader so often imagined of women’s magazines), an iconoclast (anti-status quo and actively critical); or other. Resources allowed me to codify the number of social-history categories of analysis employed in the articles: gender, class, race/ethnicity, age, along with what I considered three important Canadian cultural categories: country (rural); city (urban) or wilderness. Up to three resources could be selected for each article. Binaries, a category suggested by Paul Rutherford, presumed that many popular culture texts employ readily-understandable binaries as a sort of short-hand to making meaning: feminine/masculine; adult/child; nature/modernity urban/rural; centre/regions; west/east;
U.S.A./Canada; Canada/British; Canada/Europe. For each article I could select two binaries. Discourses (with thanks to Foucault) also sought to codify the type (only one was selected) of discourse employed in the articles: citizenship/domesticity; romance/feminist; feminist/maternal; female/male; femininity; masculinity; religiously; misogyny/paternalism; consumption; culture or other. Finally, themes (up to three per article) allowed the sub-themes and topics of articles to be classified and tabulated: family, professional (career); feminism, conflict in gender roles, sexuality, sexism, racism, multiculturalism/ethnicity, class stratification, business, violence, culture, medical, sports, political, international, academic, money, homeplan/decor, marriage, or other. They are the same as the editorial themes, and readers interested in clarification should return to that section.

Findings Fifties:

A total of 192 articles were entered in the fifties article database. Female authors were the most common (70% of articles) although men (27%) and women & men (3%) also wrote feature articles. There were slightly more freelance contributions than staff-written articles. Article length seldom exceeded three pages as the results indicate—less than one page (12%); one page (23%); 2 pages (20%); three pages (25%); four pages (16%); five pages (2%); longer than five pages (1%). Most articles were set in a general Canadian setting, followed by a provincial setting, or far less frequently foreign (British, English, American) settings.

Article Topics: woman in the home (this included marriage, home, family, family budgets, aging, sex, men and children) proved the most popular topic for articles (26%); followed by medical issues for women, children and men (13%); Woman outside the home (career, education, business, feminism, volunteering, farming and religion) was third (11%); tied at 10% each were: Personalities (royalty, celebrity profile and biography); News (current affairs and political); and Entertainment (Canadian, American and Can/American). Less popular, but significant of the breadth of articles available in each issue were: Travel (6%); Teenagers (5.2%); Humour (3%) and information about Chatelaine magazine (3%). Finally, sports, history, fashion (this means non-Chatelaine Institute material) and violence were infrequent topics for articles.

Article Themes: Family (67 articles); Culture (49); Class Stratification (38); Marriage (34); Money (31); Conflict in gender roles (30); International (29); Sexism (27); Professional (26); Feminism (18); Political (13); Sexuality (11); Home-planning (10); Business (8); Academic (6); Racism (4); Sports (3); Violence (3).

The 'expert' writer, upon whom readers could count to provide a thorough and reliable piece, was employed in 127 articles in the sample. Other modes of narrative styling, voyeuristic (36 articles), iconoclastic (19) and defender of the status quo (9) either did not curry favour with the editors or did not epitomize the Chatelaine style. The 'ideal reader' presumed by the tone and narrative styling employed in the articles was a voyeur (95 articles), a student (66) or as part of the status quo (31).

The resources used by the writers were very consistent: gender (153 articles) and class (106), age (69) and race/ethnicity (48). The selection of binary categories, like the similar category in the fiction sample, also supported the primacy of the gender as focal point of the magazine. The most popular binary categories were male/female (125 articles), followed by adult/child (83) and much more distantly by American/Canadian (31 articles). The results in the power category were: male patriarchal power (27%); female power within the family (24%), society defined (13%), female power defined as feminist (12.5%), equal power (10%) and finally, male political or legal power (9%). Articles which featured female power resulting from appearance or sexuality were rare (3%), as were those which featured conflict over who exercised power (0.5%) or those in which children were powerful (1%).
The discourses category proved unworkable—it was far too limiting to select only one for each article.

**Findings Sixties:**

There were a total of 307 articles included in this sample. Female authors proved even more popular in the sixties—women authors (83% of all articles); male authors (13%). More feature articles were written by Chatelaine regulars during the sixties (56% of articles). There were a range of article lengths: less than one page (18%), one page (25%), two pages (11%), three pages (19%), four pages (17%), five pages (4%) and over five pages (6%). Canadian locales were the most prevalent, followed once again by provincial and then foreign settings.

Article Topics were different from the fifties—women in the home (25%); news (17%); women outside the home (13%); entertainment (11%); medical (10%); personalities (7%); teenagers (4%); history (3%); humour (2%); travel (2%); sports (3%). While the two most important themes remained the same the article themes exhibit an increasing fascination with money, professional, feminist and political issues: family (114 articles); culture (99); money (78); professional (63); medical (57); class stratification (47); international (45); multicultural (37); marriage (35); politics (35); conflict in gender roles (34); feminism (33); academic (28); sexuality (25); business (17); sexism (15); home planning (13); racism (5); sports (5).

The expert was the tone employed by writers in 258 of the feature articles. Readers were constructed as “students” in 156 articles or “voyeurs” in 141 articles. Males were still, by virtue of patriarchal and legal/political expertise, presented as the most powerful in 32% of articles. Female power (family defined) was the next most common category (21%), followed by—equal power relations (20%); feminist (10%); society-defined (10%); and female sexuality (5%). The category resources provided eerily similar results to the fifties: gender (important in 254 articles); class (199); age (141); race/ethnicity (106). Binary categories results were the same: feminine/masculine (225 articles); adult/child (127); United States/Canada (61); with the additions of Canada/Britain (30) and Canada/Europe (28).

**Fiction Database**

**Structure & categories:**

This database contains the stories featured in the January, May and September issues of Chatelaine from 1950-1969. All of the stories were read, and then analyzed using these categories: Author’s Gender; Author’s Nationality; the protagonist, first and second characters of each story were classified according to their gender and sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, occupation, and marital status; locale of the story; roles of women; roles of men; female character’s characteristics; male character’s characteristics; the model employed by the author; genre; model reader; gendered relations of power; resources utilized by the author (choice of gender, class, race/ethnicity, age, city, country, wilderness, other); discourses employed; gendered relations of the story’s resolution; themes; and finally binaries utilized. See the blank Fiction Database form for further details (Illustration A.5)

**Findings Fifties:**

Overview: There were 68 stories in this sample. Female authors produced 75% of Chatelaine’s fiction while male writers (21%) and unclear (4%) account for the remaining stories. Only 15% of stories were written by Canadians—the others were not defined, leading one to assume that they were American. The most popular genre was the romance (57% of stories), followed by--family/marital dramas (31%), protagonist’s quest or melodrama (7%);
### A5 Fiction Database

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of issue</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Author:**

- ID
- Author

**Author's Origins:**
- Chtl. reg.
- Freelancer
- Canadian
- Amer.
- Brit.
- Other

**Author's Gender:**
- Protag's Gender
  - female
  - hetero
  - ambiguous

**Protag's Age:**
- gender
  - male
  - homo
  - bisexual

**Protag Occupation:**
- Mother
- Grandfather
- Education
- Clerical
- Rural/Resource
- Athlete
- Student
- Corporate
- Academe
- Other Prof.
- Retail/Sales
- Actor
- Grandmother
- Medicine
- Blue Collar
- Writer
- Other
- Father
- Law
- Unskilled
- Farmer
- Unspecified
- Social

**Char. I Gender:**
- male
- female
- homo
- hetero
- ambiguous
- bisexual

**Char. I Age:**

**Char. I Occupation:**

**Char. I Ethnicity:**

**Char. II Age:**

**Char. II Gender:**

**Char. II Occupation:**

**Char. II Ethnicity:**

**Protag's Marital Status:**

**Char. I Marital Status:**

**Char. II Marital Status:**

**Roles of women:**
- Home/family
- Teaching
- Academic
- Volunteer work
- Clerical
- Business
- Nursing
- Retail sales
- Farming
- Entertainment
- Corporate
- Professional
- Industry
- Socialite
- Student

**Roles of men:**
- Not applicable
- Medical
- Industry
- Volunteer
- Student
- Home/family
- Teaching
- Academic
- Family provider
- Worker/bc
- Business
- Nursing
- Professional
- Other
- Corporate
- Retail sales
- Education
- Farming

**Women's characteristics:**
- Dominant
- Victim
- Agency
- Emotional
- Aggressive
- Submissive
- Manipulative
- Confused

**Men's characteristics:**
- Dominant
- Submissive
- Agency
- Manipulative
- Aggressive
- Victim
- Macho
- Emotional

**Author's model:**

**Genre:**

**Resources:**
- gender
- race/ethnicity
- city
- wilderness
- class
- age
- country
- other
mystery (1%) and other (1%). First-person narration was the most popular narrative style, followed by omniscient narrators. Most of the stories were set in Canada (83%) followed by the United States (13%), Britain (3%) and Europe (1%)

Protagonist’s Vital Statistics: 75% of protagonists were women. The protagonists were most likely to be in their twenties (51% of stories), teenage years (19%) or forties (10%). Most of them were Anglo-Canadians (84%) or Americans (9%). 50% of them were single, 47% were married and the remaining 3% were widowed. Female protagonists, if married, described their occupations as wives and mothers. Single female protagonists were either students, clerical workers, teachers or other professionals. Male protagonists tended towards corporate employment, other professions, writers or students.

Character One’s Vital Statistics: 57% of these “second most important characters” were men. 53% of these characters were in their twenties, 12% were teenagers and 12% were in their thirties—the remainder tended to be in their fifties, forties or over sixty. 82% were Anglo-Canadians, Americans (7%), European (4%) or British/ Irish (3%). 48% were single and 43% were married. Males in this category tended to be students, employed in the corporate or professional sector, or ironically, were blue-collar workers, farmers or unskilled workers. The vast majority of females in this category were wives and mothers while a few were students, clerical workers or in an odd case professionals (academic).

Character Two’s Vital Statistics: 62% were males. Once again, most were in their twenties (40%), teenage years (18%) or fifties (17%). 54% were single while 21% were married (the rest were engaged, widowed or divorced). 78% were Anglo-Canadians followed by Americans (10%) or British (5%)—with one instance each of Jewish and European characters. Male characters were employed in the corporate sector, as farmers, other professionals, students, writers or academics. Female characters were wives or mothers, students, or clerical workers.

Roles of female and male characters: Analysis of all female characters in the stories found that in 58 of 68 stories the female characters were limited to the domestic sphere—mothers, daughters, and wives. If they worked outside of the family home, it was likely in a clerical job which was depicted as temporary employment before marriage. In contrast, male characters were the breadwinners. They were firmly entrenched in the business and corporate world, featured in 35 out of 68 stories, followed by home and family, professional, academic or scholastic pursuits.

Characteristics of female and male actors: The most prevalent behavioural characteristic of the female characters was they had agency (40 stories) in these tales. They were also inclined to be emotional (38 stories), manipulative (22), dominant (18), confused (16), victims (15), submissive (15) or aggressive (2). In contrast, male characters only had agency in 18 stories—they were more likely to be macho (37 stories), dominant (28), submissive (25), emotional (18), aggressive (14), victims (10) or manipulative (10). While the statistics do illustrate that female and male characters were often drawn to conform to the most stereotypical conventions: macho men and emotional women, the most prevalent characterizations contradict assumptions about fifties characters behaviour. There were a number of strong women characters, or at least female characters that determined the fate of their own lives which male characters were not as likely to accomplish. Women were not cowering victims in this fiction, indeed the statistics for victimization illustrate that while this happened infrequently, it had an almost equal chance of occurring to either female or male characters.

Power: Equally important to the gendered behavioural characteristics exhibited by the characters was the issue of power. That is, which characters, male or female, determined the outcome of these stories. These gendered relations of power illustrate an almost contradictory combination—female autonomy in a traditional genre— in Chatelaine romance stories, the woman almost always got her man. The terms of power (who had it and exercised it in the story) resided with women in 60% of cases. While female power was paramount in these stories, the reasons why women had power was very telling. The predominant way in which female characters achieved power was through feminine wiles which appeared in 25% of the stories analyzed. Next came female power within the family
(19%) which was followed by female power through sexuality (7.5%). Power from feminism, whether liberal feminism (6%) or material feminism (3%) were utilized least frequently. Male power was divided into three categories: patriarchal, institutional (business and legal power) and sexual. In the stories 25% of male power was the result of patriarchal conventions, while male sexuality and institutional power each accounted for 6% of the stories. Power relations were deemed equal in one story, while another story depicted power as society-centric, or diffused and not residing with one gender or individual character.

**Resolutions**: The outcome of the stories were determined by female characters in 60% of cases while male characters determined the ending in 35% of stories. The remaining stories were equally determined by male and female characters. Female characters were more likely to control the outcome of romances (64%) than they were the family/marital dramas (48%)

**Resources**: The most popular analytical categories used by author’s were gender (55 stories), class (40), age (32), urban (9), race/ethnicity (8), rural (5), and wilderness (2). Up to three resources could be selected for each story.

**Binaries**: The most frequent oppositional pairings utilized were: feminine/masculine (63 stories), adult/child (33 stories), hero/villain (25 stories), hero/heroine (6 stories), nature/modernity (6 stories) or urban/rural (3 stories). Two binaries could be selected for each story.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># of stories</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># of stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marriage/dating</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Multiculturalism</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class stratification</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict in gender roles</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexism</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminism</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Homosexuality</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* up to three themes were selected for each story

**Findings Sixties**:

**Overview**: There were 59 stories in this sample. 81% of the stories were written by women and there was a considerable increase in the number written by Canadians (25%). The popular genres were—romance (31%), family/marital dramas (31%), protagonists’ quest (25%) and mystery (12%). Most of the stories were still set in Canada (66%) followed by the United States (23%), Europe (7%) or Exotic locales (4%).

**Protagonist’s Vital Statistics**: 80% of protagonists were female and 49% of them were in their twenties. The remainder were most likely to be in their thirties (19%), teenage years (10%) or forties (10%). 68% were Anglo-Canadians while 20% were Americans—along with one of each of these ethnic/racial groups: French-Canadians, European, British, Black, Jewish, and Australian. 51% were single, 34% were married (the rest were divorced, engaged or widowed). Of the female protagonists most were wives and mothers (if married) or if single they were usually nurses, clerical workers or students. Male protagonists were employed in a variety of fields—farming, corporations, professionals, writers, athletes, and students.

**Character One’s Vital Statistics**: 63% of these characters were male. In terms of age they tended to be in their thirties (33%), twenties (32%), fifties (12%), forties (9%) or in their teenage years (9%). 57% were Anglo-Canadians followed by Americans (24%) and Europeans (9%). 50% were married and 31% were single. Female characters were usually wives and mothers. A small number were students, professionals or clerical workers. Male
characters were in the corporate world, professions, farmers, or other unspecified employment.

Character Two's Vital Statistics: 57% were male. Twenty-year-olds predominate (36%), followed by people in their thirties (30%), or forties (13%). 68% were Anglo-Canadians. The rest were Americans (21%), British (4%) or European, Black, Jewish (each 2%). 55% of these characters were single while 38% were married. Female characters were usually wives and mothers. Those who were employed outside the home tended to be nurses, students, professionals (vaguely defined) or worked in unspecified fields. Male characters were employed in corporations, as farmers, doctors, blue-collar workers, or professionals.

Roles of Women and Men: In total, the primary roles assumed by the female characters were those of wife and mother, professionals or clerical/retail workers. Male characters were also primarily defined by their family role, professional employment or corporate employment, or farming.

Characteristics of male and female actors: Women were most likely to be emotional (36 stories), confused (29), have agency (26), behave in a dominant fashion (26), submissively (21), manipulate (12), be victimized (8) or act in an aggressive manner (2). Male characters were most inclined toward macho behaviour (30 stories), have agency (22), be dominant (22), be submissive (22), be emotional (8), manipulate others (5) or be victimized (5). Once again, more female characters rather than male characters had agency in the stories.

Power: Male characters were the most powerful in this decade—either from patriarchy (36% of stories) or from political/corporate or medical expertise (10%). Female characters were the most powerful in 36% of stories. This power was derived from their family role (16%), feminine wiles (12%), liberal feminism (7%) or maternal feminism (2%). Power-relations were equal in 5% of stories or society-defined (where the characters were all constrained by societal expectations) in 12% of stories.

Resolution: Female characters determined the outcome of the majority of stories (59%) as opposed to the 40% determined by male characters.

Resources: The most popular categories were gender (54 stories), class (31), age (31) race and ethnicity (11), rural (8), urban (4) or religion (1).

Binaries: In tandem with the resource statistics the most popular binary oppositions were: feminine/masculine (51 stories), adult/child (27), hero/villain (22), urban/rural (11) and hero/heroine (9).

Table A.16  Sixties Fiction Classified by Themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># of stories</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># of stories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marriage/dating</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Sexism</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Racism</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict in gender roles</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Stratification</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Multiculturalism</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feminism</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>International</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* up to three themes were selected for each story

Chatelaine Departments Database

Structure & organization:
The department databases—food, house & home, and childcare—were quite basic compared with the other databases. Because of the nature of the material—very prescriptive, little text and very short—these databases were largely a means by which the material was categorized. The food database fields were: authors—gender and name, type of recipe, time estimate for preparation, number of ingredients, whether or not the recipe called for prepared foods (canned soup, biscuit mix, etc.), whether or not it was a contest entry, themes, as well as a text field to enter notes and comments about the recipes. House and home was similar, it organized all of the articles about homeplanning, housekeeping, and gardening into these categories: author’s, gender, nature of the article, text fields for notes and commentary, and themes. Finally, the childcare database had a topic list, categories for author, text field for notes and a thematic list. Fashion and beauty did not have a database due to the difficulty in determining how the disparate articles, ad-vertisements and contests could be organized.

Findings Fifties:

Food: There were 155 articles in this sample. The majority of the articles about food (all written, compiled or adjudicated by the staff at the Chatelaine Institute) featured recipes for supper dishes or desserts. 57% of all recipes did not call for convenience foods. These articles were split fairly evenly between contest winners/reader supplied recipes (81 articles) and those produced at Chatelaine (72 articles). The category of time estimated for preparation was abandoned because it proved unworkable. Similarly, the number of ingredients was of little value.

Table A.17  Fifties Food Articles Classified by Topic, n=155

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supper dishes</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>Relish/Condiments</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dessert</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>Luncheons</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack/Treats</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Side Dish</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meal Plans</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertaining</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Soup</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Preserves</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11*</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: this category includes the articles which had a wide variety of types of recipes.

Table A.18  Fifties Food Articles Classified by Theme, n=155*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thrift</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Children pleasers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional values</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Husband pleasers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New and improved</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>Ethnic</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Calorie-reduced</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Special”</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Healthfulness</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed of Preparation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Affluence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of Preparation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* five articles were unclear—they were left empty

House and Home: There were 93 articles in this sample. 44% of these articles were devoted to home planning articles (interior design, exterior plans, furnishings) while 41% were devoted to housekeeping issues (cleaners, programs of cleaning, household hints). The remaining articles were devoted to gardening (16%) and one “special feature” (1%).

Table A.19  Fifties Household Articles Classified by Theme, n=205*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># articles</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interior Design</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Home repairs</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Tips/Hints</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Affluence</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parents: There were 50 articles in this sample. Dr. Elizabeth Chant Robertson wrote 58% of them followed by “Chatty” (18%), female freelancers (14%), male freelancers (8%) and the editors (2%). Despite the inclusive title “Child Health Clinic” or “Young Parents” the intended audience were mothers. Combining all the different “health” articles into one category that proved to be the most popular topic (medical, dental, psychological, growth, birth defects).

Table A.20  Fifties Parents Articles Classified by Topic, n=50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>#</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>medical</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatty Chipmunk</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Items for kids (crafts)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school development</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</table>

Table A.21  Fifties Parents Articles Classified by Theme, n=50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concern for normal development</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do-it-yourself</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General problems of children</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General joys of children</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings Sixties:

Food: There were 62 articles in this sample. In contrast to the fifties, these articles were all (with one exception) written by the Chatelaine staff and used Chatelaine produced recipes. 56% of recipes did not use convenience food products. Most articles contained recipes for supper dishes or meal plans. Note the thematic shift to ethnic cuisine and novelty.

Table A.22  Sixties Food Articles Classified by Topic, n=62

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supper dishes</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meal plans</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertaining</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luncheon</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dessert</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A.23  Sixties Food Articles Classified by Theme, n=62

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thrift</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New and improved</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A.24  Sixties Household Articles Classified by Theme, n=242*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># articles</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th># articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home tips/Hints</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Thrift</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior Design</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Re-modelling</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product profile</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Suburban living</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seal of Approval</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affluence</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Special Features</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized Cleaning</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Central Canada Living</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exterior House Design</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>General housekeeping</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do-it-yourself</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Home repairs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* up to three themes were selected for each article

Table A.25  Sixties Parents Articles Classified by Topic, n=32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>Items for children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-school development</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>New Baby</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A.26  Sixties Parents Articles Classified by Theme, n=32

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenges of parenting</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>Motherblame</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern for normal development</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>General problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parentblame</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advertising Database

Structure & organization:

Given the large number of advertisements in Chatelaine magazine only one issue per year was entered into the ad databases for each decade. I rotated the selected issue to reflect seasonal changes in content, product and number of advertisements. The blank advertising form provides an indication of the categories (Illustration A.6) Each ad was identified by its date and specific ad identification number and then all of the categories were filled in—except if the information was not available (for instance, price of the product was seldom completed since prices were usually not printed on the ads). Target audience was an estimate
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of issue</th>
<th>Ad ID #</th>
<th>Brand name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target Audience</td>
<td>Product</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ single women</td>
<td>☐ married men</td>
<td>☐ rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ married women</td>
<td>☐ fathers</td>
<td>☐ urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ mothers</td>
<td>☐ elderly men</td>
<td>☐ both rural and urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ elderly women</td>
<td>☐ teenagers</td>
<td>☐ Western Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ single men</td>
<td>☐ Children</td>
<td>☐ Central Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price of product</td>
<td># of people in ad</td>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Colour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>Setting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout</td>
<td>Body Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location in magazine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facial expression</td>
<td>☐ happy</td>
<td>☐ serene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing worn</td>
<td>☐ ecstatic</td>
<td>☐ sad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal imagery</td>
<td>Mood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual dynamics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women's body positions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men's body positions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spokesperson</td>
<td>☐ yes</td>
<td>☐ female children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ no</td>
<td>☐ male children</td>
<td>☐ women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ads without people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupations depicted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Mother</td>
<td>☐ Corporate</td>
<td>☐ Academe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Student</td>
<td>☐ Business</td>
<td>☐ Working Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Grandmother</td>
<td>☐ Medicine</td>
<td>☐ Unskilled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Father</td>
<td>☐ Law</td>
<td>☐ Clerical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Grandfather</td>
<td>☐ Education</td>
<td>☐ Other Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Size</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
of whom the ad was supposed to appeal. The people in each ad were classified by sex, age, race, ethnicity, body language, clothing worn, sexual and maternal imagery, sexual dynamics, body positions and the setting. As well, all ads had their colour, mood, description, comments, and size entered into appropriate database fields. This research was a combination of content analysis and critical analysis. The critical analysis, of course, much more subjective than the content analysis number crunching, but data for mood, imagery, body language, etc. produced a statistical sampling which could support or refute impressions based upon a general reading of ad content. Similarly, this rigorous, structured analysis resulted in a complete sampling. This study is not, therefore, based solely on my impressionistic reading of ads of my choice, but also incorporates each and every ad in the ten issues selected. The categories have been influenced by the work of Irving Goffman, Judith Williamson, John Berger and Paul Rutherford.

**Fifties Findings:**


**General Characteristics of the ads:** 91% of all ads placed in the magazine were for brand name products. Black and white ads predominate (658 ads or 65%) with 224 full colour ads (22%). 41% of ads were an equal combination of ads and text while 38% were mostly graphics (remaining ad layout styles were--18% were mostly text, 3% no graphics). Half page ads were the most popular format for advertisers (29%) followed by quarter page ads (21%), full page ads (18%), eighth page ads (13%), less than eighth of a page (12%), three quarters of a page (6%), and multiple page ads (1%). The percentage of advertisements increased as one moved from front to back through the magazine. The most popular location for ads was in the fourth quarter of the magazine (33% of the ads), followed by the third quarter (30%), the second quarter (25%), and the first quarter (10%)—the remaining 2% of ads were placed in the prime locations—the inside front cover and the back cover. 31% of the ads did not contain people. The products that favoured ads without people were: food ads (21%); general household products (17%); leisure and hobbies (10%) and appliances, home entertainment and building supplies (10%); household cleaners (8%); housewares (5.8%) and medical products (5.8%).

**Table A.27 Product Breakdown for the Fifties, n=1007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th># of ads (Percentage)</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th># of ads (Percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Women’s Medical</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processed Foods</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>Children’s Medical</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Food</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Men’s Medical</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baking Supplies</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Feminine Hygiene</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft Drinks</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>TOTAL MEDICAL</td>
<td>96 (9.53%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL FOOD</td>
<td>161 (15.98%)</td>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Appliances</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>Sporting Goods</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Entertainment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chatelaine Products</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Chatelaine contests</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Supplies</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>Cultural Products</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL BUILDING</td>
<td>147 (14.59%)</td>
<td>Pop cultural products</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmetics</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>How-to-do books etc.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shampoo/Soap</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Razors/Depilatories</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>TOTAL LEISURE</td>
<td>78 (7.74%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL BEAUTY</td>
<td>145 (14.39%)</td>
<td>Linens/Towels</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Household Items</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>China/Silverware</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Cleaners</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Pots and Pans</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL HOUSEWARE</td>
<td>52 (5.16%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
39% of ads did not have sexual imagery, 31% had only shots of body parts, or bizarre shots. Male poses were less varied, they stood (39%), sat (22%), had head-only shots (12%), partial frontal shots (10%), or stood sideways (8%)—they very seldom were posed lying down, kneeling, were dis-embodied in body-part shots, or featured in bizarre poses. I expected sexual imagery to be a key part of the adworlds—that proved incorrect. 39% of ads did not have sexual imagery, 31% had moderate sexual images, 22% with very little sexual imagery while rampant sexuality (nudity, lingerie, suggestive poses, etc.) were featured in only 8% of ads. Similarly, maternal imagery was also not very popular—62% of the ads did not have maternal imagery, 19% had moderate maternal imagery, 11% had...
rampant maternal imagery (these usually played upon maternal guilt, fear or insecurity--found in medical ads and insurance ads) and 7% had very little maternal imagery.

Table A. 28  Fifties Ads Classified by Moods, n=1007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mood</th>
<th># ads/Percent</th>
<th>Mood</th>
<th># ads/Percent</th>
<th>Mood</th>
<th># ads/Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wholesome</td>
<td>211 (21%)</td>
<td>Humorous</td>
<td>41 (4%)</td>
<td>Patronizing</td>
<td>10 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affluence</td>
<td>137 (14%)</td>
<td>Novelty</td>
<td>29 (3%)</td>
<td>Athletic</td>
<td>10 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playful</td>
<td>94 (9%)</td>
<td>Melodrama</td>
<td>29 (3%)</td>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>10 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecurity</td>
<td>76 (8%)</td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>26 (3%)</td>
<td>Frightening</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic</td>
<td>69 (7%)</td>
<td>Exotic</td>
<td>23 (2%)</td>
<td>Adventurous</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>57 (6%)</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>18 (2%)</td>
<td>Paternal</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrift</td>
<td>56 (6%)</td>
<td>Intimate</td>
<td>13 (1%)</td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal</td>
<td>53 (5%)</td>
<td>Toy/Fun</td>
<td>13 (1%)</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sixties Findings:


General characteristics of the ads: 97% of the sixties ads were for brand name products. 52% of the ads were black and white while 38% were full colour—the remaining ads were one or two colour ads. The layouts were different in the sixties—ads which were mostly graphics predominate (53%) followed by equal text/graphics (26%), mostly text (15%) and no graphics (6%). Once again, most of the ads were found in the fourth quarter of the magazine (38%), followed by the third quarter (28%), first quarter (18%), second quarter (13%) and the back and front covers. The ads were considerably larger in the sixties. Full page ads were the most numerous, followed by—quarter page ads (22%), half page ads (21%), eighth of a page ads (10%), less than an eighth of a page (7%), three quarters of a page (6%), and larger than one page (4%). Another major change in the sixties was that the number of people in the ads declined drastically—48% of ads did not have any people. The most common product categories without people were: Building supplies (26%), Food (21%), Leisure (14%), Medical (11%), General household (8%), and Housewares (7%).

Table A.29  Product Breakdown for the Sixties, n=998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th># of ads (Percentage)</th>
<th>Product</th>
<th># of ads (Percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building Supplies</td>
<td>140 (14%)</td>
<td>General Household Items</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Appliances</td>
<td>44 (4%)</td>
<td>Household Cleaners</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Entertainment</td>
<td>7 (0%)</td>
<td>TOTAL GEN HOUSE</td>
<td>69 (6.91%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>33 (3%)</td>
<td>Women’s Clothing</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL BUILDING</td>
<td>224 (22.41%)</td>
<td>Women’s Sew. Patterns</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>24 (2.41%)</td>
<td>Sewing/Knitting General</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processed Foods</td>
<td>108 (10.8%)</td>
<td>Children’s Clothing</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baby Food</td>
<td>8 (0.8%)</td>
<td>Men’s Clothing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baking Supplies</td>
<td>12 (1.2%)</td>
<td>Family Clothing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft Drinks</td>
<td>1 (0.1%)</td>
<td>TOTAL CLOTHING</td>
<td>66 (6.61%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL FOOD</td>
<td>153 (15.33%)</td>
<td>Linens/Towels</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>1 (0.1%)</td>
<td>China/Silverware</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatelaine Products</td>
<td>68 (6.8%)</td>
<td>Pots and Pans</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatelaine contests</td>
<td>7 (0.7%)</td>
<td>TOTAL HOUSEWARE</td>
<td>54 (5.41%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Products</td>
<td>29 (2.9%)</td>
<td>Public Service</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop cultural products</td>
<td>8 (0.8%)</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How-to-do books etc.</td>
<td>4 (0.4%)</td>
<td>Cars</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>19 (1.9%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Characteristics of Ad People: 52% of all Chatelaine ads in the sixties included people. Of the ads with people 52% of them featured individual women, followed by: women and men (14%), individual men (8%), mothers and children (8%), parents and children (3%), individual boys (3%), boys and girls (3%) and individual girls (2%). Most of the people were in their twenties, thirties, or were in multi-generational groupings (i.e. families). 98% of the people were white. Ad people were usually illustrated in a home setting (46%), at play (21%) or in the office (9%). The most common type of body language was judged to be "welcoming" (37%), followed by alluring (22%), playful (18%), cute (10%), and authority figures (6%). Facial expressions mirrored this trend towards friendly, welcoming ad-people--the "happy" look predominated followed by sexual glances, serene looks and ecstatic grins.

Ad people tended towards casual clothes, business clothes or varying stages of nudity--29% were wearing casual clothes followed by moderately dressy (17%), business wear (14%), nudity (7%), formal-wear (6%), lingerie (6%), partial nudity (6%) or ethnic costumes (3%). Sexual clothing--nudity, partial nudity and lingerie all increased in the sixties. 73% of the ad people were deemed to be middle class, 9% were upper class, and 2% were working class. Once again, most of the inhabitants were Anglo-Canadians (82%) with a smattering of Europeans (15 ads), Scots (11 ads), Americans (10 ads), multi-ethnic ads (9 ads), French-Canadians (5 ads), and Natives (1 ad)

The results of the sexual dynamics of the ads was similar to the fifties: women were either decorative (41%) or dominant (24%). Women's body positions were varied: standing was the most popular (35%) followed by partial front images (25%). Male poses were the same--they stood (48%) or were depicted in partial frontal shots (13%). Once again, the categories of maternal and sexual imagery proved that neither image predominated in the ads--43% of ads did not contain sexual imagery while 74% of the ads did not contain maternal imagery.

Table A. 30 Sixties Ads Classified by Moods, n=998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mood</th>
<th># ads/Percent</th>
<th>Mood</th>
<th># ads/Percent</th>
<th>Mood</th>
<th># ads/Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affluence</td>
<td>203 (20%)</td>
<td>Humourous</td>
<td>43 (4%)</td>
<td>Frightening</td>
<td>10 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesome</td>
<td>153 (15%)</td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>38 (4%)</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dramatic</td>
<td>92 (9%)</td>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>26 (3%)</td>
<td>Adventurous</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playful</td>
<td>82 (8%)</td>
<td>Intimate</td>
<td>25 (3%)</td>
<td>Athletic</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insecurity</td>
<td>68 (7%)</td>
<td>Maternal</td>
<td>23 (2%)</td>
<td>Paternal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novelty</td>
<td>57 (6%)</td>
<td>Exotic</td>
<td>19 (2%)</td>
<td>Toy/Play</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>45 (5%)</td>
<td>Patronizing</td>
<td>13 (1%)</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrift</td>
<td>52 (5%)</td>
<td>Melodrama</td>
<td>12 (1%)</td>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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"Anonymous" Questionnaires completed: June 8, 1993; July 2, 1993; August 28, 1993; December 28, 1993.


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