GROCERY BASKETS AND BOBBED HAIR: MODERNITY, WOMEN, AND THE GROCERY STORE IN TORONTO 1900-1939

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Abstract

This dissertation argues how the mobilization of tools of modernity, popularized by the *Canadian Grocer* and *Chatelaine*, and at times enforced by state officials, transformed food distribution, production, and consumption. The periodical literature reframed the home kitchen as an extension of the grocery store, selling both as modern spaces redesigned under the principles of scientific management. Using Toronto as a case study, this study starts in the late 1890s with the establishment of the *Grocer* and traces how women were pulled into modernity as workers and shoppers, over a period of thirty years, in ways unlike other retail industries. Between 1890 and 1939, new government programs, policies, and regulations increasingly intervened in the relationship between the market, the grocer, and the consumer. The appearance of the citizen consumer, including female shoppers who asserted their needs and preferences, gained new attention in the popular press. Such public debates about morality and consumerism during the First World War and the Great Depression forced many independent grocers and grocery chains to consider their reputation and responsibility as corporate citizens. Through the examination of periodical literature, this dissertation argues that modernity in the grocery trade in the early twentieth century could never fully cleave consumption from the 'logical' need for food that female consumers faced.

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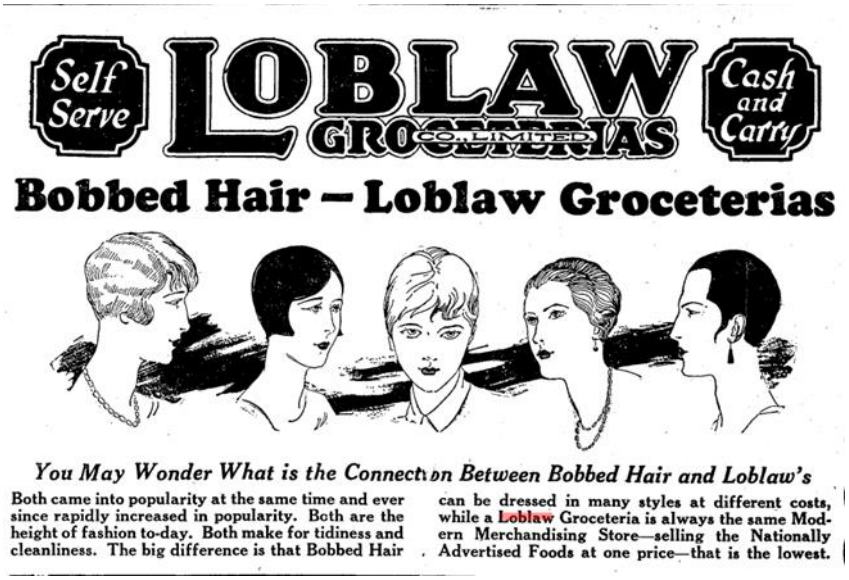
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Introduction: Check-out the Modern



[Figure 1. Loblaw Groceterias Advertisement, *The Toronto Daily Star*. (Nov. 18, 1926): 11]

In 1926 the *Toronto Daily Star* ran an advertisement for the grocery chain Loblaw Groceterias. The full-page advertisement featured daily, and weekly specials available to shoppers at a Loblaw Groceteria, and the advertisement itself was framed by a chain-link border with phrases such as "no waiting," "cash & carry," "lowest prices," "highest quality," and "self serve" in the centre of each link. At the very top of the advertisement [Fig. 1] the store name Loblaw Groceterias was flanked by the insignia "self serve" and "cash and carry," which were two methods of modern grocery shopping the chain exemplified. Below the brand name and modern methods was a sketch of five women accompanied by an explanation of how these women and their "Bobbed Hair" were connected to the Loblaw brand. The bobbed haircut came to be a visible marker for the figure of the "modern woman" in the early twentieth century.[1] As the text below the sketch indicates, the hairstyle (and grocery store) embodied the "height of

[1] Kathy Peiss, "Girls Lean Back Everywhere," in *The Modern Girl Around the World: Consumption, Modernity, and Globalization*, eds. The Modern Girl Research Group (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008): 348.

fashion to-day" and was made for "tidiness and cleanliness."[2] These modern women were depicted as well-groomed; their jewellery suggests affluence, with the centre figure wearing a collared shirt often donned by female office workers or students. Like the bobbed hair, Loblaw Groceterias, by 1926, had become a popular choice for female shoppers in Toronto while the grocery press continued to exemplify the brand for its modern methods, tidiness, and cleanliness. The association of bobbed hair and Loblaw Groceterias was one means whereby the grocery chain claimed it was an inherently modern space for modern shoppers.

Although the text suggested bobbed hair could "be dressed in many styles," advertisements for Loblaw Groceterias continued to feature the same variation of modern women who evoked their preferred shopper or employee. Through this image, and many others which appeared within the pages of the grocery press or women's magazines, the central argument of this dissertation takes shape. My central thesis is that as the grocery industry embraced modern retailing techniques, female customers were recast as by the periodical literature as simultaneously modern shoppers though purposely and repeatedly anchored to prescriptions of the domestic. The sketch of the women with bobbed hair celebrated their modern style, yet quite literally, wedged them between the name of a corporate chain and the various lines of food for sale, which would ideally make its way into their shopping basket and pantry.

Three questions animate my dissertation. First, how did grocery retailing embrace modern retailing techniques to write food consumption into the thrust of modernity? How did food as a commodity, a perishable good, and status as a necessity for subsistence modify how modern grocery retailing could occur? And, finally, given the gendered responsibility for food provision in most households, how did food as women's domain, shape the possibilities and limitations of

[2] "Loblaw Groceterias Advertisement," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (November 18, 1926): 11.

making food retailing modern? Over the thirty-year period examined in this dissertation, the mobilization of the tools of modernity by the grocery industry and grocery press transformed food distribution, production, and consumption. As part of this transformation, women as workers and consumers, were pulled into modernity in ways unlike other retail industries. The tools of modernity were brandished by the trade journal, the *Canadian Grocer*, and in popular women's magazines, such as *Everywoman's World* and *Chatelaine*, and at times, were enforced by state officials. However, modernity in the grocery trade could never fully cleave consumption from the logical need for food that consumers faced, and, as a result, female shoppers gained new political stake in public policy debates about consumption during times of national crisis and instability. The title of this dissertation, "Grocery Baskets and Bobbed Hair," is at the centre of these three questions as both came to symbolize modernity, standardization, homogeneity, freedom, and autonomy for women as vectors between the home kitchen and the grocery store.

Modern Meanings

My dissertation builds and expands upon the following fields of historical scholarship: histories of modernity and consumption, Canadian food history, and the history of women in Toronto in the early twentieth century. This dissertation follows Jane Nicholas's definition of modernity: that modernity was a period of time and a consciousness of what it meant to be modern.[3] These two interconnected elements, as Nicholas describes, paved the way for advances in the mass-production of factory-made good which, coupled with new ideas and faith in

[3] Jane Nicholas, *The Modern Girl: Feminine Modernities, the Body, and Commodities in the 1920s*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000) 11. See also Deborah Epstein Nord, *Walking the Victorian Streets: Women, Representation, and the City* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995, Erika Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000): 34, 79. T. Jackson. Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 61, 98.

progress and technology, facilitated mass consumerism across Canada.[4] For this reason, I approach modernity, in-part, as a period initiated in the 1890s and accelerating through the 1920s, as the city of Toronto was in flux by way of urbanization, industrialization, and commercialization. The decline of the Victorian era was a period of economic and industrial growth, immigration, and social reform. What followed was a cultural and technological shift where field experts and consumers grappled with the new "problems" of urbanization, engaged in social activism, and challenged Victorian predilections for self-sacrifice, thrift, and self-control.[5] In this way, my study builds on the scholarship of Carolyn Strange, Veronica Strong-Boag, and Bettina Bradbury, who examined the experience and perception of women in urban spaces during this period of change. Their studies explore the material and what was most visible – women's recruitment into industrial waged labour in downtown factories, solo travel on public transportation, leisure activities, and shopping – and the imaginary – where these modern activities were framed as a potentially, and a very real, danger to women and girls.[6] In addition, the simultaneous rise of anti-modernism, a movement that sought to escape the "urban stresses"

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[4] Nicholas, *The Modern Girl*, 11-12, 95, 212. While Nicholas differentiates between the modern girl and new woman: "if the new woman elbowed her way into a hostile public sphere with notions of improving it, the modern girl had a different goal of experiencing pleasure" and while the timeline of the two figures overlapped, the delineation was largely based on age and class. I conflate the two figures, not to suggest these differences were unimportant, but to demonstrate how white women from both middle-and-working classes were imagined as an ideal and modern shopper in the eyes of advertisers, the trade journal The *Grocer*, and by the grocery trade more broadly. The form, structure, and order that the grocery store could offer became an integral space for modern women to who wished to participate in Canada's social, economics, and cultural growth.

[5] Keith Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto: The Industrial Exhibition and the Shaping of a Late Victorian Culture*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997):125. See also Lears, *No Place of Grace,* p. 13 for a discussion of Victorian self-control and self-restraint as a triumph of what he calls the modern superego.

[6] Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995): 5, 7, 10. Veronica Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada*, (Boston: Addison Wesley Publishing, 1993): 7-8, 11-12, 51. Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families*: *Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993). See also, Lori Chambers, *Misconceptions*: *unmarried motherhood and the Children of Unmarried Parents Act in Ontario, 1921 to 1969*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 64. Tamara Myers, *Caught: Montreal's Modern Girls and the Law, 1869-1945, (*Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006*)* for further discussion on moral regulation enacted on women's bodies and actions in the city. See also, Rappaport's *Shopping for Pleasure*, notes the difference between the *flaneur*, a masculine subject; a man walking along in the modern streets and a *flaneuse*, a feminine subject who appeared as the city transformed into a commercial metropolis, pgs. 115-117.

and feared over-civilization caused by modernity, prompted an increase of art, literature, and an array of "authentic experiences" (such as D.I.Y. and crafts).[7] In this context, independent and chain grocery stores alike professed their modernness yet often retreated to folkloric imagery as a way to appear connected to the past, the familiar, and the community.[8]

The most common way to mediate this divide was to use images of women as modern shoppers, who boasted the autonomy to select the lines of foods they wanted. However, the same women were anchored to prescribed images of gender normative expectations and behaviours, particularly in the context of household management and child-rearing. The Loblaw Groceterias billboard, for example, was a mixed message of modern and traditional sentiment [Fig. 2].



[7] Ian McKay, *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection,* (McGill-Queens's University Press, 2009*):* xvii, xx. Joy Parr's *The Gender of Breadwinners: Women, Men, and Change in Two Industrial Towns 1880-1950,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994) claims that the increase in mass production industries challenged the grounding of masculine identity in the physicality of manual work but this led to the subdivision of tasks and hierarchies were confounded, pg. 164. See also, Adrian Gamble, "Comfortable, Honest and Unpretentious: A Cultural History of Canadian Arts and Crafts Movement," PhD Dissertation, York University (2020).
[8] David Monod, *Store Wars: Shopkeepers and the Cultures of Mass Marketing, 1890-1939*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996): 62-63.

[Figure 2: Loblaw Groceterias billboard. “Grandma knows” [1921] Location unknown. City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1488, Series 1230, Item 1477.]

On this billboard, the brand name of Loblaw was oversized and the dominant feature of the billboard. It assured viewers that one of their locations was nearby and claimed that their store was the most economical. Not only did the name Loblaw become synonymous with modern food retailing, but its physical presence as a chain throughout Toronto (even with only 8 stores in 1921) was purposely built near busy intersections where transportation was available and accessible. The growth of public transportation in Toronto was just one of the visible markers of the modernized cityscape. The tagline of “where money goes farthest” reflected the growing consumer interest in low prices and a trend toward thrift, particularly as thrift was marketed as a sign of household intelligence and during times of financial hardship, an emblem of nationalism. The brand name is accompanied by an image of an elderly woman, and although she carries the grocery basket (a commonality of the Loblaw store, but a rarity at the time), the phrase “Grandma knows” appears to contradict the newly constructed shopping experience the billboard attempts to market. Unlike the commonly used imagery of the young female shopper (with which this dissertation opens), the elderly woman in this billboard, suggests that through her own household experience she has acquired the generational knowledge to shop and fill her grocery basket, without the mediation of the clerk, with the lines of foods she understood to be economical and of value. Through such images, generational and familial knowledge was used in scientific retailing and the science of food, which was consistently marketed by the press as knowledge procured by an expert in the field, a laboratory, or an institutional kitchen setting. In such representations, women of all ages, were enticed to reject folkloric image of the traditional housewife and embrace modern messages of progress, efficiency, and technology.

Grocery stores could never fully celebrate the rupture of consumption from production. Grocery stores sometimes engaged in such folkloric images as a tactic to (for instance, celebrating Grandma's cooking and knowledge of food) respond to the moral economy of food, especially during times of economic crisis (such as the persistent demand for credit or protests over prices). However, as grocery stores touted how their modern grocery shopper had the freedom to "shop around," the fear – both imagined and real – that modernity would rupture a woman's relationship with her home or family, was embedded in the periodicals. The solution to this fear was the dissemination of images of supposedly modern women who shopped in modern spaces or used modern tools (measuring cups and refrigerators) with modern haircuts, yet were tethered to the responsibility of children, familial obligation, and domestic labour in the kitchen. Because of this tethering I argue for the unevenness of modernity in the grocery press repeatedly prescribed women's relationship to food in the context of the domestic economy and a production of the past (as something traditional) while alluding to the promise of freedom, authority, and autonomy.

Modernity as a consciousness is explored in Keith Walden's *Becoming Modern in Toronto,* where he argues that the proliferation of consumer goods, the "mass accessibility" of these goods, the appearance that they were both indispensable and in such abundance that anyone could aspire to obtain them, universalized a middle-class standard, for women and men, and tied consumer purchase to personal identity and sense of self.[9] This consciousness was not limited to consumers. David Monod's foundational study *Store Wars* has challenged the myth of the small-time shopkeeper as inherently backward, anti-modern, and unable to modernize their

[9] Nicholas, 12. Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, 24, 125. Liberalism, as Ian McKay explains in "The Liberal Order Framework: A Prospectus for a Recognition of Canadian History," *The Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 81 No. 4 (December 2000): 616-645, was tied to tenets of liberty, property, and equality; the acquiring of goods increased "the quantity of one's material possessions and increases one's individual autonomy or sovereignty.

stores or approach to retailing.[10] In addition, this modern consciousness was institutionalized in the 1890s when Domestic Science was integrated into contemporary university curricula. Domestic science, first offered at the University of Toronto, was a form of professional and educational training for women to become modern homemakers. Donica Belisle contends the introduction of domestic science helped establish the modern citizen consumer as white, bourgeois, and feminine.[11] The function of household management in post-secondary education belonged to a much broader idea of what it meant to be appropriately modern and raise a modern family. This idea, unconsciously or not, was extended by the experts of the Retail Merchant Association's (RMA) lecture series and Chatelaine Institute scientists in the late 1920s. However, as Cynthia Comacchio has argued, the majority whose lives were far removed from the intellectual movements and elite, and aesthetics of "modernism," modernity was experienced "more fundamentally in the everyday discordances of traditional ways with the new realities wrought by science and technology."[12] The customers and retailers of the grocery stores I investigate had vested interest and shifting priorities in supporting Empire and Canadian-made goods, their pocketbooks, and the health and well-being of their families in the pursuit of behaving and being perceived as modern.[13]

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[10] Monod, 5, 151, 160.

[11] Donica Belisle, *Purchasing Power: Women and the Rise of Canadian Consumer Culture*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020): 97. In his examination of the campaign for domestic science in Ontario universities, A.B. McKillop found that a scientifically trained modern homemaker would understand the best nutritional advice, create a sound home economy, and serve the traditional function as the "angel in the house" – a moral front to counteract the "crassness of the world of business, industry, and finance. A.B. McKillop, *Matters of Mind: The University in Ontario, 1791-1951*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994): 139-140. Even toy advertisements for young girls, like the 'Fairy Palace Doll House' included a wash tub, board, and wringer, a five-piece baking set, and mixing bowl and basin.

[12] Cynthia Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the making of a Modern Canada, 1920-1950,* (Waterloo: Wilfred University Press, 2006): 12-13.

[13] Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*, (New York: Vintage Publishing, 2003): 13-14.

Modern Methods

There is a rich and growing body of scholarship on the intersection of modernity, women, shopping, and consumerism, especially in the context of the department store. Donica Belisle, Susan Benson, William Leach, T. Jackson Lears, Keith Walden, and Erica Rappaport have explored the interplay between the rise of consumer society and modern femininity in the Canadian department stores like Eaton's and Simpson's, the Toronto Industrial Exhibition, U.S. giants like Wanamaker's and Marshall Field, and the experience of shopping in London's West End. For example, Rappaport shows how urban women, from different social classes, enjoyed shopping as a public and visual pleasure. While she maintains that shopping emerged as a specifically female activity in the middle of the nineteenth century, the West End shopper had been imagined as an aristocratic woman, but this had slowly unraveled by increasing numbers of middle-class women who took advantage of growing mobility into the city, tea shops, and female lavatories.[14] Rappaport shows that like the grocers I study, department store owners imagined their ideal customers as middle-class women. They catered to patrons assumed needs by installing chairs and small tables in stores, hiring female employees and female demonstrators to make the store feel like home, providing service or space, cash or credit, and spending considerable time and money on their displays. In addition, Rappaport views shopping as leisure time spent outside the home; no act of purchase was necessary to shop, and "although shopping was imagined as connected to a woman's domestic responsibility, it was primarily conceived as public pleasure."[15] While shopping for food was, first, an act of labour, not leisure, grocers used many of the same strategies as did department stores. Grocers often framed their patrons as

[14] Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure*, 4, 10, 14.
[15] Rappaport, 5.

customers because there was an important expectation of loyalty in exchange for their efficient service, quality goods, and competitive prices. The shop window was an effective medium to capture the attention of the passersby and entice them inside, much like the stores in the West End or elaborate displays of Eaton's or Wanamaker's. Still, it was unlikely that the housewife who had carefully budgeted and created a grocery list would enter a store, survey the stock, and leave empty handed. The rise of the shopper, in the context of the grocery industry, was much more visible by the 1930s alongside the boom of the chain store, and as the retail competition had evolved, the experience from patronizing where you needed to, to the ability to shop around.

Retail Nation is an excellent inquiry into the relationship between Eaton's, Simpson's, and the Hudson Bay department stores and Canadian national identity. Here, Belisle contends that these stores were symbols of Canadian modernity, for they assured that their goods and services would "enhance democratic life, strengthen the Canadian nation, and create citizen fulfillment" and, this way, helped make retailing a national past time.[16] In *Fables of Abundance*, Lears investigates how national corporations in the U.S. used advertising to represent and sell factory-produced goods to a mass market and the "conflict between authenticity and artifice" with material goods that followed.[17] Beyond the ephemeral material, the actual retail space of department stores were endowed with social meaning. Interior displays were "keyed to class distinctions" and designed where luxury goods were illuminated by light and mirrors while cheaper items were displayed on tables or counters, where bargain basements were literally and figuratively located on low levels; these stores catered to upper-and-middle class tastes but tried

[16] Donica Belisle, *Retail Nation: Department Stores and the Making of Modern Canada*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011): 4.
[17] T. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America*, (New York: Basic Books, 1994): 12-13.

to meet some working-class needs.[18] The department store counters were overwhelmingly female and working-class. Benson has argued that if class could be a divisive factor in the clerk-customer relationship, then gender was a unifying one.[19] Saleswomen were encouraged (by male managers) to shop with their customers and treat female customers like they would guests in their own homes.[20] Saleswomen were to transfer skills from their domestic lives to their work, while department store paternalism extended from employees to their female customers, claiming authority over both realms.[21] In a similar manner, the grocery store was presented by the popular press as a respectable, trustworthy, and modern extension of the household.

The Toronto Industrial Exhibition, as described by Walden, was as formidable a force as department stores in shaping understandings of modernity and "nudging people toward new meanings" and "new ways of being.[22]" Arguably, there were more similarities between the Exhibition floor and the grocery store than between the grocery store and the department store. While the roots of the Toronto exhibition were often traced to a commitment to progress, both agriculturally and industrially, the mass display of dry goods communicated to attendees was "tangible proof of the advantages of class cooperation" while the size and wealth of the companies that had produced them suggested the "consistency of industrially produced goods."[23] This show would later be the predecessor to the expanded version of the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE), discussed in more depth in Chapter 2, where producers and chain store companies operated their booths to advertise their goods, gain crowd recognition, and market

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[18] William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture,* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), 71, 78-79, 83. He argues that there was the desire to stir up feelings of social inadequacy and envy, but also to meet some needs of "class" and "mass" together.
[19] Susan Porter Benson, *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940,* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1988): 130.
[20] Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 130.
[21] Benson, 130. Belisle, *Retail Nation*, 7-8, 84-85, 93, 99.
[22] Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, 339.
[23] Ibid., 22, 144.

themselves as a successful product of modernity. The Exhibition was a place that "gave middle-class women an opportunity to escape the restrictive family hearth and to practice social interactions in public space" and granted the luxury of anonymity that only a city could permit to non-city visitors.[24] Toronto's grocery stores used many of the same kinds of marketing techniques, but differed from the exhibition in key ways: the modern grocery store a finite space, a space of purchase and necessity, and the cash-and-carry and self-service method utilized by the Loblaw Groceterias chain ratified uneven understandings and experiences of modernity.

The following chapters also engage with Tracey Deutsch's *Building a Housewife's Paradise*, which has examined the growth of grocery chain stores and the eventual emergence of the supermarket in Chicago, which has served as a helpful guide for my own research. Deutsch argues that politics, such as New Deal policies and grassroot protests, must frame any understanding of the grocery store and shopping.[25] Deutsch centres the American grocery chain, the National Tea Company, to document how the grocery store was a deeply political and gendered space, whereas I foreground Loblaw Groceterias to explore the modernization of the grocery trade in a large Canadian city.[26] In addition, my research builds directly on David Monod's study of shopkeeping and mass merchandising in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Monod challenges the assumption that small and independent shopkeepers were homogeneous and were innately anti-modern and overly reliant on traditional methods of

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[24] Ibid., 155, 170, 181. Walden does not argue that the space ever advertised itself as anything other than the extension of the family realm.

[25] Tracey Deutsch, *Building a Housewife's Paradise: Gender, Politics, and American Grocery Stores in the Twentieth Century*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012): 3, 45.

[26] Joy Parr has cautioned how it is an oversight to conflate the political, economic, and consumer decisions and policies of the U.S. and Canada because of to the geographic closeness between the two North American nations. *Domestic Goods: The Material, the moral, and the Economic in the Postwar Years*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999): 12. By 1924 Loblaw Groceterias expanded into Buffalo and Chicago. By 1932 the Loblaw chain operated 127 self-service stores with 77 in Chicago and 50 in Buffalo. The chain later sold the Chicago stores to Jewel Tea Co. but retained the Buffalo stores. "Loblaw Groceterias," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Feb. 6, 1932): 15.

retailing.[27] *Store Wars* is an exhaustive study on the economic modernization of small retailing in Canada which examines a range of retailing occupations, from shoemakers, furniture salespersons, grocers, clothiers, and druggists. Because of this more expansive scale, Monod seldom discusses the feminization of consumption outside of the context of department stores, clothing, and other material goods.[28] My analysis of Toronto and the expansion of chains like the Loblaw Groceterias permits a more focused analysis of the gendering of grocery shopping.

The way in which I describe women as consumers and shoppers builds on recent historiography that has refuted the construct of the passive consumer as weak and feminine or as inherently irrational.[29] The following chapters describe numerous marketing techniques, sale strategies, and success-versus-failure rhetoric, but this is not to suggest that consumers (or grocers and their stores) had no agency; there was a great deal of participation and engagement on both sides and a series of individual, personal choices. For this reason, my analysis adopts Parr's method of having acts of consumption "talk back" in their own terms, where women asserted their "own preferences over the commodity form prevailing in the market."[30] However, food as a commodity was not vulnerable to the tools of modernity in equal measure to others. While clothes, kitchen appliances, and other goods could be placed in bargain bins or creatively re-purposed, food was perishable. And unlike other commodities, purchasing food was almost entirely deemed women's work.

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[27] Monod, 13.
[28] Ibid., 115, 119-120, 123.
[29] Donica Belisle, "Toward a Canadian consumer history," *Labour/Le Travail*, Vol. 52 (Fall 2003): 188, and *Retail Nation*, 126. Valerie Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000): 8, 11-2. Parr, *Domestic Goods*, 6-7. Richard Wrightman and T.J. Lears (eds.) *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 880-1980*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983). Leach, *Land of Desire*. Lynn Spigel, *Make Room for TV: Television and the Family Ideal in Postwar America*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992): 5.
[30] Parr, *Domestic Goods*, 10, 15, 212.

Scholarship by Katherine Arnup, Molly Ladd-Taylor, and Strong-Boag investigates the experience of motherhood in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century in North America. The interwar years, as Strong-Boag documents, witnessed an increase in women's access to waged labour so much so that young girls "had to expect some period of employment and employers had come to anticipate their availability."[31] However, most of these workers left waged labour when they married or had children.[32] The same media culture that popularized the rhetoric of domesticity in women's magazines also represented the visual embodiments of the domestic ideal: the reassociation of women with the home, motherhood, and men with waged labour.[33] Through the early decades of the twentieth century, advice literature warned mothers against working until their child was at least two years of age and the onset of the Great Depression heightened the hostility toward women employed in waged labour, especially married women.[34] The construction of motherhood, as presented in advice literature, women's magazines, and popular culture, insisted that the responsibility for domestic consumption and production was the domain of women, especially mothers.

Strong-Boag traces the emergence of a domestic economy based on credit and consumption rather than thrift and production, with children and their mothers in the 1920s and 1930s increasingly targeted by advertisers.[35] Young girls and their mothers became part of a mass consumer culture where commercially produced goods were intended to replace the homemade

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[31] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled,* 42-43. Both Arnup and Strong-Boag claim that employment numbers documented in census records from 1921 and 1931 (two periods of depression) underestimate the number of female workers and the history of waged labour economy in Canada cannot be understood without women.
[32] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 41. She notes how the majority of working-class girls had always helped with domestic work in own households, and some had long accustomed to finding jobs outside the home as servants, seamstresses, and factory hands.
[33] Lears, *Fables of Abundance*, 103. Epstein Nord, *Walking the Victorian Streets,* 75.
[34] Katherine Arnup, *Education for Motherhood: Advice for Mothers in Twentieth-Century Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1995): 149.
[35] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 2, 13.

and rarely bought items that had been the norm in years past.[36] From periodical literature to domestic science classes, women and girls were encouraged to become up-to-date administrators through "conscientious budgeting, more psychological know-how, and informed consumerism."[37] This echoes Ladd-Taylor's examination of "mother-work" where the availability of labour-saving devices, removal of industrial production from the home, and decline in family sizes meant middle-class urban women spent "less time on household 'maintenance' and had more time for household 'management.'"[38] Arnup's examination of motherhood as an analytic category details the dominant view of what constituted a good mother that was constructed, developed, and propagated through advice literature. With the advent of mass-magazines, a significant body of 'scientific' advice literature, was designed to teach women the best way to rear children, was now widely available. It also marked a shift from relying on maternal instincts (and family systems) to advice literature designed for "modern mothers" to heed the advice of experts, not their hopelessly old-fashioned mothers."[39] My argument builds on the scholarship of domesticity and motherhood by exploring how the grocery press and women's magazines constructed the ideal shopper in the figure of the mother and tried to legitimize and capitalize on women's domestic work by characterizing it as traditional.

Women's responsibility for producing food often centered around consolidating ethnic or racial identity. Franca Iacovetta and Valerie J. Korinek have explored the intersection of food and ethnicity through the experiences of newcomers, particularly mothers. These newcomers were evaluated (by experts and prying neighbours) for their conformity to expectations of

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[36] Ibid., 14, 132. In practice, the production and purchase of commercial goods shifted aspirations and stimulated desire, rather than actual practice and for the most part, most households had to make do with what they had and could afford.
[37] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 126.
[38] Molly Ladd-Taylor, *Mother-Work: Women, Child Welfare, and the State, 1890-1930*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994): 4.
[39] Arnup, *Education for Motherhood,*4, 7. Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 126.

modernity through well-fitted modern kitchen appliances, heeding the advice of nutritionists and *Chatelaine* recipes, all while relishing in the abundance of resources available in Canada.[40] Strong-Boag similarly has examined how household science classes exposed students of non-British origins to "the forces of Canadianization" where they "learned that the domestic standards, recipes, and procedures that engaged their mothers were no longer preferred. […] Newcomers were left to cope with what such instruction meant to mothers proud of their traditional skills and daughters encouraged to remake themselves and their 'foreign' families into a more acceptable image."[41] The perception of obtaining acceptance through food and active participation in consumer culture was the experience of Black Canadians, argues Cheryl Thompson. However, the desire to achieve this acceptance was limited by commercial realities. Her study found that racial stereotypes of Black women in advertising campaigns continued to exclude them from the same independence and freedom that had been granted to modern white housewives.[42] One such instance, Thompson asserts, was with the "Mammy" racial stereotype appearing on Aunt Jemima pancake mix, an American product that quickly found its way to the Canadian market, advertisements, and on the shelves of Loblaw Groceterias.[43] For many

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[40] Franca Iacovetta and Valerie Korinek, "Jell-O Salads, One-Stop Shopping, and Maria the Homemaker: The Gender Politics of Food, 1947-1950," in *Sisters or Strangers?: Immigrant, Ethnic, and Racialized Women in Canadian History*, Eds. Epp, Iacovetta, Swyripa, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), evaluates a later period of immigration (post-WWII) but these sentiments/expectations were present in late 19th c. See also, Mariana Valverde's *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008) examines the rise of the social sciences and subsequent investigations of the homes, kitchens, and cupboards of the poor, pgs. 21-23.

[41] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 20, 129. See also, Steve Penfold's *The Donut: A Canadian History*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008) which explores how the donut was not only a mass commodity but an "edible symbol of Canadianness" and can be used to trace changing economic values and cultural meanings that were associated with food, consumer culture, and mass production in the twentieth century. Alexander Hughes's dissertation, "Lake Effect Pizza: The Commodification and Culture of Pizza in Toronto, Ontario and Buffalo, New York 1950-1990," adopts a similar investigation to Penfold.

[42] Cheryl Thompson, *Beauty in a Box: Detangling the Roots of Canada's Black Beauty Culture*, (Waterloo: WLU Press, 2019): 37, 43.

[43] Thompson, *Beauty in a Box*, 43 and Cheryl Thompson, "I'se in Town, Honey": Reading Aunt Jemima Advertising in Canadian Print Media, 1919 to 1962," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. 49. No. 1 (2015): 208, 214. See also, "Every Aunt Jemima Sale Sells Other Things for You," advertisement, *Canadian Grocer*, (February 15, 1929): 11. In a similar manner, Anne McClintock has investigated the intersection of imperialism and gender

Canadian women, strategies to obtain and afford groceries became an entrance for consumer activism as a class activity.[44] Female grocery shoppers could contribute to the local economy as evidence of their political and economic participation, which at times, helped facilitate their entrance into leadership positions within women-led organizations during times of crisis..[45] For example, *Radical Housewives* by Guard presents the collective action undertaken by Torontonian housewives in the 1930s who insisted upon the government to regulate business, particularly the cost of milk for its nutritional value for their children, in the interest of consumers. Ian Mosby observed how the conditions of the First World War and Depression prompted a growing number of women to use their support for wartime command economy, food rationing, and price controls as a means to "articulate and enact" a "vision of social and economic citizenship that stressed their rights as consumers to fair prices and equitable food distribution."[46] Fahrni's *Household Politics* focuses on Montreal in the postwar period and also centres women as economic citizens

whereby colonies (especially Africa) became a theatre for exhibiting the cult of domesticity and the reinvention of patriarchy vis-à-vis domestic colonialism, commodity fetishism, the invention of racial idleness, and other aspects in *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (1995). Victorian advertising took explicit shape around the reinvention of racial difference (McClintock's central case study is that of Pears' Soap as a product to consolidate British national identity) which was made possible, and was sustained by, the mass marketing of empire as an organized system of images and attitudes.

[44] Parr, *Domestic Goods.* Bettina Liverant, "The Promise of a More Abundant Life: Consumer Society and the rise of the managerial state," *The Canadian Historical Association*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (2008): 229-251, Katrina Srigley, *Breadwinning Daughters.: Young Working Women in a Depression-Era City*, 1929-1939, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), Julie Guard, *Radical Housewives: Price Wars and Food Politics in the Mid-Twentieth-Century Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2019), Magda Fahrni, *Household Politics: Montreal Families and Postwar Reconstruction*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), Joseph Tohill and Louis Hyman, ed., *Shopping for Change: Consumer Activism and the Possibilities of Purchasing Power,* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2017) Chapters by Liverant, Guard, and Tohill in particular. Beatrice Craig, *Backwoods Consumers and Homespun Capitalists: The Rise of Market Culture in Eastern Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

[45] Belisle, *Purchasing Power*, explores the rise and influence of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) to combat perceived social crisis (particularly with alcohol): 18-42. Liverant, "Making a Market for Consumers: The Calgary Consumers League and the High Cost of Living," in *Shopping for Change,* 42, 52.

[46] Ian Mosby, *Food Will Win the War: The Politics, Culture, and Science of Food on Canada's Home Front*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2015): 62.

who asserted that the individual was entitled to participate in a capitalist economy and that the state had a role to play in facilitating this participation.[47]

This activity brought female consumers into conversation with federal and provincial states, which were intervening in more elements of everyday life. By profiling government officials and hosts of 'experts' in conversations regarding family life, labour, and responsible consumption in women's magazines and the grocery press, this dissertation analyzes how these figures crafted policy measures to enforce stability as the grocery industry.[48] Furthermore, access to political and economic rights of citizenship have been shaped through state policies and forms of governance. As Jennifer Stephen has argued, constructions of citizenship have been historically organized through relations of gender, sexuality, class, race, ethnicity, and other identity factors; articulated within the possibilities and limits of national belonging.[49] In this context, public policy measures and state officials took on greater importance as the grocery industry ballooned amongst the new consumer economy. This was apparent through the first wave of food and drug regulations at the turn of the century, government initiatives to secure food distribution systems (rationing, anti-hoarding, profiteering) during the Great War, the provision of Mother's Allowance and relief, and eventually, the welfare state. The advent of the First World War was one of the first visible fractures between the state and the market, where growing tensions between state regulations of food and the morality of profit, as Ryan Targa has noted, unfolded in the advice columns in women's magazines, the grocery press, and the grocery store itself.[50]

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[47] Fahrni, *Household Politics*, 7, 109, 120.
[48] Jennifer Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl: Employability, Domesticity, and the Gendering of Canada's Welfare State, 1939-1947,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007): 15-16, 33.
[49] Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl,* 8, 11-15.
[50] Ryan Targa, "Great War Profiteering, Patriotism, and the Democratic Revolt in English Canada, 1914 to 1922," PhD Dissertation, York University, July 2022, 21-22. Targa also rightly comments on the intervention by governing officials as not a homogenous group, nor was the 'state' a monolithic entity. Governing officials had varying and opposing views on regulation against food profiteering, 149, 179, 244.

The increasing "legibility" of Toronto through public and food policy was facilitated by the belief in the ability of science and technology to improve societies through large-scale social engineering and standardization.[51] As anthropologist James C. Scott has claimed, mastery over the natural environment was a modern desire to "rationally engineer all aspects of social life in order to improve the human condition."[52] Because irrationality, disorder, and anarchy were the foes of modernity, once food became visible, and then calculable and capable of being administered within rational, predictable, and controllable it could become governable. In modern societies, there was "no invisible social hand," and "some degree of engineering by visible hands in or out of the state" was necessary.[53] This included the lines that filled the grocery store window and the contents of one's icebox at home.

My contribution to the history of women in Toronto builds upon Strange's study of Toronto's working girl "problem," Katrina Srigley's retelling of the experience of young women and girls in Depression-era Toronto, and Cynthia Wright's analysis of Eaton's College Street shoppers wherein I explore women's prescribed relationship to the grocery store and grocery shopping in the early twentieth century.[54] Second, my dissertation explores the dynamics between the space of the grocery store, the act of grocery shopping, and the space of the kitchen. In this way, my dissertation extends beyond an economic business history and incorporates elements of social and cultural history, gender history, and labour history; it builds on previous

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[51] James C. Scott, *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998): 5.
[52] Scott, *Seeing like a State,* 88.
[53] Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water,* 20.
[54] Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem* (1995), Srigley, *Breadwinning Daughters* (2010), Cythnia Wright, "'The Most Prominent Rendezvous of the Feminine Toronto' Eaton's College Street and the Organization of Shopping in Toronto, 1920-1950," PhD. Dissertation University of Toronto, 1992: 82. Ruth Frager has written about the history of Jewish women in Toronto, "Politicized Housewives in the Jewish Communist Movement of Toronto, 1923-1933," (1989) and *Sweatshop Strife: Class, Ethnicity, and Gender in the Jewish Labour Movement of Toronto, 1900-1939* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

scholarship and adds to the analysis of the advice literature regarding the mastery of the new, the modern, scientific management, and technology in the grocery store, and by extension, in the home kitchen. Third, I argue that the grocery trade and the women who shopped there were frequently at odds with what it meant to be modern, an image prescribed by the periodical literature. As Victoria de Grazia has said, "gender is especially visible at the moments of transition […] from bourgeois to mass consumption - and in times of scarcity and social distress."[55] My dissertation offers this visibility, and one more caveat that gender is especially visible at moments of transaction. My dissertation contributes to this rich literature by focusing on Canadian grocery stores, building on the grocery and shopkeeping studies by Deutch and Monod while concentrating on how the production of the modern grocery store depended on women as workers, consumers, wives, and mothers in Canada's second-largest city during the first three decades of the twentieth century.

Methodology

My research is guided by the articles, editorials, advice, political commentary, and advertisements in trade journals and magazines. In this way, my dissertation offers an analysis of how people talked about grocery stores, how the grocery trade grappled with modernized sales practices, and how women were pulled into the grocery sector as workers, consumers, and prospective consumers. The publishing press is inherently modern as it is mass-produced and mediated knowledge – whether about the grocery trade or the home – to the public. The two main publications I examine are *The Canadian Grocer* and *Chatelaine,* for several reasons: first, both were published under the Maclean's Publishing Company but had two very different

[55] Victoria de Grazia and Ellen Furlough, (eds.) *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective,* (Berkely: University of California Press, 1996): 4.

intended readerships; second, they each achieved the highest subscription base for a Canadian trade journal and women's magazine; third, my sources address not only the space of the grocery store but also the intentions, preparations, domestic and gendered expectations associated with food in the home that were prescribed by the popular press; and fourth, despite varied readerships and content, both sources reveal a similar language for what it meant to be modern and meet modern expectations as merchants, shoppers, men, and women in public or private spaces. As the *Grocer* and *Chatelaine* attempted to 'sell' the modern to their readers, editors (and associated correspondents and advertisers) were careful to keep class lines ambivalent not to alienate the consuming public. In theory, these journals hoped to represent and guide a wide swath of grocers and shoppers, regardless of store size or weekly budget, to participate in modernity if they behaved in a modern way.

Like the Loblaw chain, the *Grocer* and *Chatelaine* are still in circulation today. Following Valerie Korinek's examination of *Chatelaine* in the 1950s and 1960s, I recognize the prescriptive nature of the journals and magazines I rely on, and I do not presume that the guidance and advice reflected the reality of their readers.[56] In this way, I also include letters to the editor, photographs, and other commentary to offer some balance between the editorial staff and the everyday life of the reader. In addition, I have used the *Toronto Daily Star* to supplement these two national publications and amplify the Torontonian perspective where possible. However, the prescriptive nature of these sources is exactly how and why Canada's entrance into modernity was uneven.

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[56] Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 12-15. Korinek has argued that previous studies on American magazines have been overly deterministic analysis of the impact of magazine publishers and writers on readers. Strong-Boag, Arnup, and Ladd-Taylor have each commented on the departure of advice literature and the lived realities for many working-class (and middle-class mothers), and although advertisers "clamoured for attention" many "continued to hope for the best and cope with the worst." *The New Day Recalled*, 219. *Mother-Work*, 156. *Educating for Motherhood*, 7, 36, 39.

The inaugural volume of *The Canadian Grocer* was just twenty-four pages and was released in the fall of 1886. It was first launched as a monthly periodical, and despite securing only one subscriber after 10,000 sample copies were sent to nearly every retail merchant across Canada, the founding brothers J.B. Maclean and Hugh C. Maclean were hopeful.[57] The trade journal was launched with the hope of establishing itself as the leading North American grocery journal,

> to conduct our business on thorough and honest business principles; to give our patrons the utmost value; to gain the confidence of the trade […] to be independent of any clique, house, association, or other guild; to allow no one to dictate the policy of this paper; to give subscribers adequate value and impartial attention, and to resort to no unbusiness-like schemes or use undue influence to secure advertising patronage.[58]

The contents of each issue were filled with advertisements for various lines of food, equipment, advice columns, explanations of new or changing regulations, and market reports (prices and the availability of Canadian-produced and imported goods). Customer service – and how a new refrigeration system or cheese-cutting equipment could satisfy the most exacting patron – was the central focus of the *Grocer*.[59]

The second issue of the *Grocer*, with the same number of copies distributed, brought five subscribers. In a reflection of their six years of success, the *Grocer* was heralded as an independent reporter where "columns are not controlled by any 'bear' or 'bull'," the absence of "everything sensationalism or fakeism so deplorably common these days," and above all, an authority where "no merchant who is properly alive to the interests of his business" is without the *Grocer*.[60] In response to the quickening pace of the grocery market, the brothers revised the trade magazine in January 1888 to a weekly issue to bring their audience the most up-to-date information regarding prices, deals, and goods for sale. The sheer volume of the journal

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[57] "Canadian pioneers in trade journalism," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 6, 1893): 34.
[58] "Just Look at us Now," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 6, 1893): 11.
[59] "Catch On!" *Canadian Grocer,* (Mar. 13, 1891): 15. "Why Not Make Your Full Profit?" *Canadian Grocer,* (Nov. 3, 1911): 31.
[60] Ibid.

continued to balloon from twenty-four pages in 1887, forty-four pages by 1893, to over eighty pages by 1939.

Throughout the period my research examines, there was no clear editor of the *Grocer*. Only once was a chief editor named. William L. Edmonds was editor-in-chief at the *Grocer* approximately from 1893 until 1904, when he transferred to the Maclean's publishing company and later *Maclean's Magazine* launched in 1905, where he assumed a general manager and vice-president position.[61] Beyond Edmonds, there is no clear editor-in-chief but a growing, unnamed team of editorial staff and correspondents for the *Grocer*.[62] The team of correspondents were required to report the market changes and features and in 1920 the journal boasted that "our editorial staff interviews all over Canada perhaps 200 men in the trade every week. No one subscriber is in a position to do this, but they pay us our subscription price for this work."[63] While the *Grocer* claimed to not be beholden to external influence, like any periodical press they mediated knowledge for their subscribers with intention and agency. There is no concrete way to observe if the self-described expertise (and often conflicting advice) the *Grocer* offered was taken up by readers in the way the journal hoped, but their promotion of merchants who followed their direction and those that forwent modern merchandising guidance were presented as primitive.[64]

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[61] "Fifteen years' service," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 6, 1905): 47. "Staff dinner" *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan.6, 1905): 29.
[62] There was the rare mention of a member of the editorial staff or a general manager but beyond this the editorial staff and chief-editor was unknown.
[63] "Recording the Facts," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 10, 1920): 30. The subscription price was originally $2 per year until 1916 where it increased to $3 per year. See also, *Canadian Grocer* Vol. XXXII No. 16 (Apr. 19, 1918): 14.
[64] Charles Christian, "Primitive Methods," *Canadian Grocer,* (Apr. 13, 1900): 5. "A Return to Primitive Systems" *Canadian Grocer,* (Oct. 19, 1917): 27. "Chances Good for Maintenance of Standard of Living," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jul. 1, 1932): 13. *Canadian Grocer,* (Feb. 27, 1931): 45.

This was a stark difference to the editorials in *Chatelaine,* discussed further in depth in Chapter 3, which were signed and claimed by Byrne Hope Sanders.[65] This lack of editorial clarity is reflected in the articles and series that appeared in the *Grocer* in first few decades of the twentieth century, where there is an unclear idea of what it means to operate and decorate a so-called modern store. Within and between each issue, there was a considerable amount of backsliding, pivoting, and attempts to assuage the egos and desires of the chain stores, the independents, and female customers. For example, titles such as "Credit Necessary to the Country Store," "Origin of Credit Troubles," "Claims Chains Do Not Take Interest in Community Life," and "If 'Not a Chain Store Town' It's Not Much of a Town," each appeared in the same 1930 issue.[66] The contradictions appeared beyond the featured articles too. Again, in the same yearly volume, while one grocer prided himself in the freshness of his product as he only cut meat based on customer request to avoid the deterioration of the quality, an advertisement for a Berkel meat slicer promised the ability to prepare food for the customer before they entered the store, allowing for quick sales and more time for service.[67] In the absence of a clear editorial tone, the *Grocer* itself reveals the unevenness to mobilize and invoke modernity within the grocery trade.

I live 200 metres from a Loblaw store, which not only served as a constant reminder to complete this research, but visiting the 17,702 sq. ft store with directions to walk one-way down each aisle, remain 6ft from the person in front or behind, and lining up outside in the frigid cold

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[65] Byrne Hope Sanders was editor for Chatelaine from 1929 until 1952. For further reading see, Korinek's *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 260-264.

[66] "Origin of Credit Troubles," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 3, 1930): 27, "Claims Chains Do Not Take Interest in Community Life," *Canadian Grocer*, (Feb. 14, 1930): 28, "Credit Necessary to the Country Store," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 25, 1930): 96, "If 'Not a Chain Store Town' It's Not Much of a Town,'' *Canadian Grocer,* (Dec. 19, 1930): 19,

[67] "Believes in Cutting All Meats in Front of the Customer," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jul. 18, 1930): 33. "The Berkel method of Slicing," *Canadian Grocer,* (Mar. 14, 1930): 16.

as limited numbers of shoppers were allowed in at one time, made me think about the ways we shop for groceries, layout, and how we act inside this space (especially during times of crisis). By September 2021, after more than a year of Covid-generated archival lock-downs, I could access archives in Toronto and Ottawa, but both were still heavily restricted with limited visiting hours (3 hours per day, maximum 4 visits per week).[68] As I was unable to enter Long Term Care facilities or retirement homes due to the ongoing pandemic, an oral history of grocery shoppers in the early twentieth century was not possible for this phase of my research. Future studies could expand, like Srigley's study has done, linkages between material lives, identity, desire, and necessity.[69]

I was, however, granted access to the George Weston Ltd. archives located in downtown Toronto. The Weston company – for which today's Loblaw Companies Limited is a subsidiary– houses archived corporate material on the Loblaw Stores and Loblaw Groceterias. The archivist, Derrick Clements, kindly gave me a tour of a storage room filled with relics related to Loblaws. This included a woven Loblaw Groceterias shopping basket from the 1930s (a personal favourite archival find, see Chapter 1, Fig. 14), canisters of Loblaw branded Pride of Arabia Coffee and Egyptian Tea Blend, undated "XXX Spirit Vinegar," and warehouse boxes used to transport bananas, and even a Loblaws supermarket boardgame "for all ages" (which unfortunately fell outside of the timeline of this research). I was also directed toward annual reports addressed to the shareholders of Loblaw Stores Limited. This collection included audits of the books and

[68] Like many of my peers, how I approached my topic and research was a result of the realities of the COVID-19 Pandemic, which, by the end of my first year in the program, shuttered libraries and archives across the country throughout 2020.
[69] Katrina Srigley, "Clothing Stories: Consumption, Identity, and Desire in Depression-Era Toronto," *Journal of Women's History,* Vol. 19 No. 1 (2007): 82-83.

accounts of the Company from 1916 to 1919, 1925, 1926, 1929, 1930, 1933, and 1939.[70] The annual reports of the Loblaw Stores, from before the launch of Loblaw Groceterias in 1919, included accounts receivable, a summary of merchandise on hand per store, a summary of furniture and fixtures, and accounts payable. These earlier reports included the location of the Toronto stores, which I was able to verify and continue to extend until 1939 using the Toronto city directory. From 1925 onwards, the annual reports provided monthly statements, the asset value of real estate, autos and trucks, and store improvements, expenses paid for salaries for management, office workers, supervisors, warehouse workers, and truck drivers, and costs associated with rent and advertising.[71] Perhaps it was no longer worth the trouble to disaggregate costs associated and accrued per store by 1925 as the monthly statement shows a rapid growth in the number of stores each month; between July 25th, 1925, and January 9th, 1926, the number of Loblaw Groceterias had grown by 29 to 36, there were 85 stores by July 27th 1929 with 94 stores by December that same year.[72] However, the annual reports remained relatively modest until the late 1940s and early 1950s when these reports began to spotlight company culture, such as employee pensions and benefits, recreation rooms, luncheon facilities, and the employee bowling league.[73] While I had originally hoped to do a more focused cultural analysis of the Loblaw brand, it was the published primary sources of the *Canadian Grocer*, *Chatelaine,* and the

[70] The archive housed each annual statement prepared in April and October of 1916 to 1919. Following this date the archive did not have complete records and owns one annual statement per year for the dates listed.
[71] Loblaw Groceterias. Inc. Annual Report, (Jun. 30, 1925). Courtesy of the George Weston Archive.
[72] Loblaw Groceterias. Inc. Annual Report (Jun. 30, 1930). Courtesy of the George Weston Archive. See also, "Loblaw Self-Serve Store Soon to Top the Century Mark," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 25, 1930): 42. 39 Stores in Toronto, Hamilton and Windsor 6 each, London and Ottawa 3 each, Oshawa, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines and St. Thomas (2). At this time the business was confined in Canada to Ontario, at one time there was a Loblaw Groceteria in Edmonton, but this was closed in the late 1920s.
[73] Loblaw Groceterias. Inc. Annual Report, (May 31, 1948) and (Jun. 2, 1951). Courtesy of the George Weston Archive.

Toronto Daily Star that proved most useful to examine the narrative of grocers, grocery shoppers, and groceries produced by the popular press.

Toronto as a Microcosm

In many respects, Toronto served as a socio-economic model for other cities in English Canada in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.[74] Toronto was one of the first cities in Canada to be occupied by chain grocery stores. At first these stores were slow growing, with only 18 or 20 by 1920. By March of 1930, there were at least 265 units of chain stores in Toronto.[75] Because of the context of how the Loblaw brand emerged as a powerful grocery chain store in the early twentieth century and Toronto's presence as one of the largest metropolis, the political, socioeconomic, and cultural trends that occurred in the three decades of my study, are reflected onto the city of Toronto and its residents, retailers, and shoppers.

Between the 1850s and 1870s there was a gradual trend to urbanization in cities like Toronto and Montreal. The pace of economic life quickened, cities grew in height and density, railways increased mobility, and larger manufacturing establishments settled into the growing cityscape.[76] The influence of assembly line efficiency and scientific management from the late 1880s permeated modernist architecture in the early twentieth century, as Mauro Guillen and

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[74] Arnup, 8-10, 14, 35. Arnup argues that Toronto led the nation in most forms of social experimentation, particularly health and child-care measures. The measures that were implemented in Toronto during this period were "often held up as the ideal, if not the reality."

[75] "New Groceteria Chain of Food Stores on Wheels is Planned for Near Future," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 28, 1930): 14. This does not include the number of independently owned chain stores, or voluntary chain stores, in Toronto. This was estimated to be an additional three or four hundred associated with either Superior, Red & White, Adanac, and Leader.

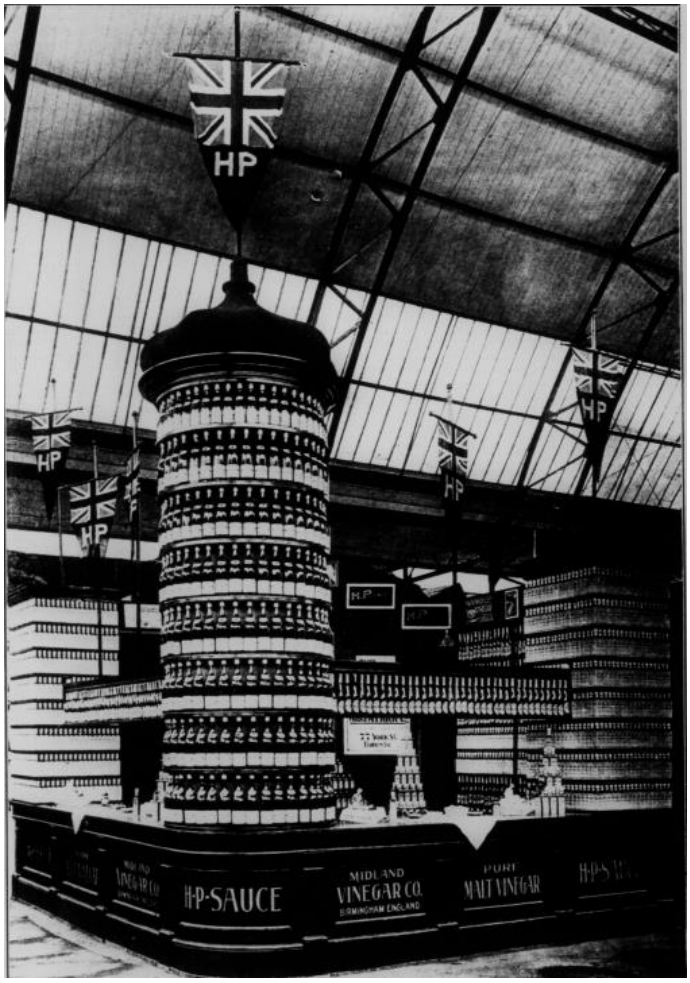
[76] Bradbury, *Working Families*, 11. Monod, 103. While the race to the sky had already begun in American cities by the 1910s, Canadians were somewhat uncertain about these steel behemoths.[76] For a discussion on New York skyscrapers see Ann Douglas's *Terrible Honesty: Mongrel Manhattan in the 1920s*, (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1996). Douglas argues that skyscrapers were inherently an American form of urban architecture and she sees the development of the New York skyline as a national and gendered process. Emily Thompson, *Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900-1933*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2004) explores zoning laws in New York in 1916, pg. 170.

Emily Thompson have argued.[77] For Guillen, industrial structures like factories and offices were constructed to emphasize efficiency, rationality, and functionality.[78] What was distinctively modern about this architecture, Guillen had argued, was the notion that the architect was concerned about the *user* of the building, not necessarily the client or firm who had commissioned it.[79] Tall buildings had already made their appearance in Toronto by 1913, and one 1913 *Maclean's* article profiled the advantages and disadvantages of the skyscraper. The Commission of Conservation of Canada vehemently referred to them as "rank and reedy growth," "modern towers of Babel erected by greedy corporations," and "monstrosities and nuisances."[80] The Commission continued to argue that skyscrapers led to overcrowding, darkened the streets, and were "a menace to […] those who unfortunately fall within their overpowering and sepulchral shadow."[81] Modernists applauded the simplicity, cleanliness, and unusualness of the skyscraper as a feat of architectural and modern grandeur.[82] The article continued to persuade that "it is safe to say that thousands of votes would be cast in its favour by people who like the new buildings as being definite proof that the city containing them is an up-to-date place with all the symptoms of progress."[83] The 'unusualness' of the skyscraper was part of the uncomfortable shift into the modern, where almost every style, product, movement, or thing that was attached to the word modern became a point of tension and discussion. However, the skyscrapers' vogue increased rather than diminished. The Toronto skyscraper became a

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[77] Anson Rabinbach, *The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity*, (Berkley: University of California Press, 1990): 238-239.
[78] Mauro Guillen, *The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical: Scientific Management and the Rise of the Modernist Architecture*, (Princeton University Press, 2006): 8
[79] Guillen, *The Taylorized Beauty of the Mechanical*, 137.
[80] Main Johnson, "Does Canada Want Skyscrapers?" *Maclean's Magazine*, Is. 25 No. 4 (Feb. 1, 1913): 30.
[81] Ibid., 31-32. Despite some vocal boards of trade hoping to limit the height of future buildings to 125 ft., The Canadian Pacific Building, completed in 1913, was the tallest in Toronto at 240 ft. and was quickly surpassed in height by the Royal Bank building and then by the Royal York Hotel.
[82] Ibid., 32, 35.
[83] Ibid., 35.

visual marker for women visiting the Chatelaine Institute in the Maclean's building, and its likeness was mimicked by some grocers who displayed their goods in the same towering fashion [Fig. 3].



[Figure 3: Grandeur of the H.P. Sauce display at the CNE, Midland Vinegar Company Exhibit, *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 20, 1910): 45.]

Beyond the physical changes to the cityscape, there was also a new noise that accompanied the modern era. Emily Thompson has argued that this new sound was modern for a number of reasons: it was efficient, it was a product, and it was perceived to demonstrate man's technical mastery over the physical environment; the modern sound was clear, direct, and easy to

understand.[84] What predated this sound was something more organic, more traditional, and familiar.[85] The noises of horse-drawn streetcars and bustling outdoor markets were gradually replaced with the sounds of modern technology like street railways. [Fig. 4]



[Figure 4: Viewing looking north on Yonge Street from King Street, with horsecars travelling both north and south. 1888. Toronto City Archives. Fonds 16, Series 71, Item 13350.]

[84] E. Thompson, 3.
[85] Thompson, 117-118, 156-7. See also Colonel George, "When Toronto Grew Up," *Maclean's Magazine*, Is. 31 No. 1, (Jan. 1, 1921): 16-17, 40-44.

The conditions of modern city life are argued to be more fatigue-producing than at any other time. The mere increase in the volume of noise of the traffic constituted a sensory bombardment like no other.[86] Much like how Walden abruptly opens his *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, with the death of Hannah Heron, who was struck in 1892 by a new electric trolley, traffic and automobile accidents was ever increasing on the streets of Toronto by the 1910s and became as much of a marker of the modern as the motor engine was.[87] [Fig. 5]



[Figure 5: Toronto Railway Company streetcar. With increased speed came concerns for safety. Early streetcars were equipped with a lifeguard constructed with a pipe frame and hung with heavy fishnet. After several fatalities, a new type of automatic fender was installed. Toronto City Archives. Finds 16, Series 71, Item 3363. Ca. 1893]

[86] David Fraser Harris, *Nerves*, (Kessinger Publishing, 1913): 215.
[87] Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, 3. See also, Reg. Calbeck, "Canadian Carelessness," *Maclean's Magazine*, Is. 23 No. 3, (Jan. 1, 1912): 266-269.



[Figure 6: Passengers transferring between a Toronto Railway Company car and a Toronto Civic Railway car at St. Clair Ave. W. and Avenue Road. [1916] Toronto City Archives. Fonds 16, Series 560, Item 3.]

However sparkling new these changes appeared, the modern was accompanied by an uncomfortable sense of haste, unpredictability, and unfamiliarity. This encounter was not necessarily negative, as Thompson describes that the modern was "built from the ground up" and "constructed by actions and through experiences of ordinary individuals as they struggled to make sense of their world."[88]

Technology was a visible symbol of modern culture in early twentieth-century Toronto, for future customers were now in closer proximity to shops by way of the railroad and streetcars, and the telephone facilitated grocery orders submitted and delivered without leaving home. The publishing press, too, occupied a substantial role in permeating a perception of an imagined modernity to a national audience of women and men, as magazines and trade journals brimming

[88] E. Thompson, 11.

with advice and instruction found their way into kitchens, on top of coffee tables, and store offices. My dissertation places debates and anxieties about modernity, gender and grocery shopping in the context of Toronto being made modern.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1, "The Grocery Trade," is divided into two main sections. The first section examines how the tools of modernity were mobilized to transform food distribution and production in the late nineteenth century and the first three decades of the twentieth century. The intervention of the federal state through food restrictions and regulations, coupled with the advocacy – and authority – of the grocery press for scientific management and "scientific selling," figuratively and quite literally, separated the modern grocery sector from traditional agricultural techniques and local food production. This separation is explored in the second section of this chapter through the popularization of the Loblaw brand in periodical literature. Largely endorsed by the grocery press as a beacon of modernity, the Loblaw chain and the groceteria self-serve method of shopping came to populate the busy intersections across Toronto in the hope of capturing the pocketbooks of middle class and affluent blue-collar households. This chapter presents the foundation for how the role of the federal state, brick-and-mortar grocers, the grocery press, and the shopper were, at times, at odds with who was permitted into modernity.

Chapter 2, "Tricks of the Trade," examines the way in which women were pulled into modernity through the grocery sector as workers, consumers, and prospective consumers. The role of women in the grocery sector was different than in other retail sectors. The chapter explores how the grocery trade capitalized on the gendering of administrative labour in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century to employ young, single women as bookkeepers,

stenographers, or clerks to mind sweet-toothed children and other women who entered the store. As technology and scientific management reorganized peoples' relationship to production, a series of home and food experts emerged to guide men and women into the modern economy and sought to subvert the domestic economy to usher the household consumer into its own modes of credit, consumption, and thrift. The hypocrisy of what modernity could offer becomes apparent as women were expected to be independent corporate actors while they were simultaneously portrayed as tethered to child raising and other domestic responsibilities.

Chapter 3, "Expanding Stores, Shrinking Kitchens," continues to examine the contradictions between modernity and prescribed domestic responsibilities for women in the grocery sector and the home kitchen. Two authorities on either space, the *Grocer* and *Chatelaine*, promoted modern tools, techniques, and images to ensure efficiency and productivity. The launch of the Chatelaine Institute invoked this contradiction between modernity and tradition as the kitchen was imagined as a site of active consumption, of pre-packaged and easy-to-prepare foods for modern shoppers to purchase. The caveat was that the Institute championed introducing technology and science into the kitchen to modernize it without disrupting the gendered norms, expectations, and actions that were expected of their female readers. At the same time, the grocery store was expected to expand. This expansion did not necessitate more square footage (though it was beneficial) but the illusion of openness and accessibility – especially for female customers. The figure of the modern shopper, depicted by periodical literature, was not representative of the 'business girl' on her way home from work but a woman tethered to the responsibility of children, familial obligation, and domestic labour in the kitchen. Public policy and periodical literature valorized the sustained position of women as shoppers and feeders of the family in new and unintended ways during times of crisis.

Chapter 4, “Citizen Consumers and Corporate Citizens,” explores food’s distinct status as a different type of consumable. Modern methods of marketing groceries were always tempered by the logical need for food that female shoppers faced. Unlike other material goods, the press, state officials, and shoppers themselves affixed morality to food, which was heightened during The First World War and the Great Depression. Food was irrevocably moral and was continually tied, by the women’s press and sometimes state officials characterized women’s responsibility for feeding their families as an inherently moral responsibility, which in turn generated a social and political space for consumers to make demands of the grocery trade. During periods of crisis, periodical literature and state officials reframed food from a commodity to food as moral and cultural production, too, and in the process, tried to reorient consumer spending. State intervention advocated and, in some cases, regulated national and communal interests to supersede individual needs and capitalist profits. Not only did consumers demand moral obligations of corporations, but independent grocers would accuse the chain stores of being detached, profit-hungry, and uncaring toward the community. The grocery industry had been brought into civic obligations under the conditions of the war, but it was the economic depression of the 1930s that intensified women’s ability to “talk back” to public policy and by proxy, the grocery industry.

Chapter One: The Grocery Trade

Introduction

The provision of groceries evolved with the expansion of Toronto. In the late nineteenth-century new foods like fruits and vegetables were introduced into Canadian diets as an increase in international imports, agricultural improvements, and a deflation of prices were reflected in the increase of grocery stores. This chapter will examine how the tools of modernity transformed food production and distribution in Toronto. Food was increasingly regulated, packaged, and standardized. The *Grocer* captured this transformation by valorizing brick-and-mortar grocery stores over open markets and pedlars. Industrial modernity, popularized by the *Grocer*, represented a transformation from an archaic relationship to the market to one defined by predictability, no liabilities, and stability. The gradual federal and provincial intervention in food production and consumption and the growing authority of the *Grocer* helped legitimize and professionalize the grocery retail industry.

Early foodways in Toronto

In Ontario alone, the number of specialized food shops doubled between 1871 and 1891, followed by a 60% growth over the next 40 years.[1] Even with the economic inflation of the early twentieth century, which Monod argues had more of an impact on wages than food prices, there was little decline in the consumption of food prior to the 1930s. In addition, there was an accompanying change in consumer preference. Those from the working class and the modestly affluent in the 1870s and 1880s wanted to see "the fruits of their labours manifested in new

[1] Monod, 104.

goods" and began "shaping their spending choices," which did not necessitate a dramatic increase in spending power but involved a "dramatic shift in priorities."[2] In response, marketing practices in Canada began to shift. Monod contends that the original novelty underpinning consumer society was not in the spending power, but the desire and ability to consume.[3] This was then enabled by the changes in commercial techniques and promotional skills, both of which were facilitated through trade journals such as the *Grocer*. Canadian merchants responded to an increasing number of wage earners, both male and female, and hoped to cultivate a mass audience. The conflation of shifting priorities and more wage-earners in the late nineteenth century was the precursor to the consumer society that would bloom in the first three decades of the twentieth century.

In the mid-1800s Toronto's wealth had rested on the produce from the land that surrounded it. Much of this farmland and market gardens was located in what is now known as Leslieville.[4] The grasses from the marshland that surrounded Ashbridges Bay were nutritious and cheap, and the butchers who controlled pastureland in this area would sell their produce at the nearby St. Lawrence Market.[5] In the nineteenth century, it would have been dangerous to transport meat long distances due to heat and other contaminants; this way, what had been slaughtered and processed in Ashbridges Bay had a direct route to local markets.[6] The

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[2] Ibid., 112.
[3] Ibid., 102.
[4] A number of these farm fields were owned by the Ashbridge family, Charles Cowell Small, the Sammons, and the Cosburns family. The area from the Don River to Heward Street was virtually all cattle sheds, ranches and abattoirs. The Clarkes, Blongs and Morses were prominent families of wholesale and retail butchers. In 1907 the Ashbridge's began to subdivide their farmland for residential housing.
[5] "19th Century East End Villages: Donmount, Riverside, Leslieville, Norway," Leslieville Historical Society. Web. https://leslievillehistory.com/timeline-ashbridges-bay/page/16/. Most of Leslieville was outside the City of Toronto until 1884 and was not subject to City taxation or by-law enforcement.
[6] Sean Kheraj has argued that from the incorporation of the City of Toronto (1834) the municipal government in Toronto held extensive regulatory authority to mediate the interactions between people and animals, which included public markets. "Living and Working with Domestic Animals in Nineteenth-Century Toronto," in *Urban Explorations: Environmental Histories of the Toronto Region*, edited by L. Anders Sandberg, Stephen Bocking, Colin Coates, and Ken Cruikshank, (Hamilton: L.R. Wilson Institute for Canadian History, 2013): 128-129.

production and sale of food was more tightly controlled from the mid-to-late nineteenth century.[7] Bettina Bradbury's study of Montreal between 1861 and 1891 demonstrates that those who grew vegetables, made their own cheese, or collected milk from a family goat or cow for sale to supplement and stretch wages – rather than for consumption in the home – found themselves increasingly restricted to do so by city regulations. A similar restriction already existed in Toronto. By 1840, the city council had begun to gradually constrain the geographic space for grazing cattle, and by 1876 all free-range animal husbandry was banned in Toronto.[8] Other home-grown or produced goods for consumption were increasingly regulated with *The Adulteration Act*, first enacted by the federal government in 1874 and later amended in 1890, which responded to the production and sale of adulterated milk and butter.[9] In addition, as more of the buying public was consuming canned products, in 1907, the federal government passed *The Meat and Canned Foods Act* which permitted the federal government the authority to inspect products prepared for and packed in cans and all fruit, vegetables, and fish prepared for export were subject to federal inspection.[10] *Adulteration Act, Pure Food legislation, The Lords Day Act*, the *Bulk Sales Act*, and the *Combines Act* were just a handful of regulations imposed on the trade in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Some of these government interventions were advocated for by retailers and consumers alike. John MacCormac for *Maclean's Magazine* documented the "Pure Food" problem. He wrote about a woman's experience in the corner grocery store: "There was nothing […] unusual about her and that is why her actions were significant for she typified the average Canadian housewife doing part of her daily buying. The

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[7] Bettina Bradbury, "Pigs, Cows, and Boarders: Non-Wage Forms of Survival among Montreal Families, 1861-91," *Labour/Le travail*, Vol. 14 (Fall 1984): 9-46.
[8] Kheraj, "Living and Working with Domestic Animals in Nineteenth-Century Toronto," 130-131.
[9] Aleck Samuel Ostry, *Nutrition Policy in Canada, 1870-1939*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006): 16-17. The adulteration of food was a central concern of the *Dairy Industry Act* (1914). The Act was later repealed with the passage of the *Food and Drug Act 1920*.
[10] Ostry*, Nutrition Policy in Canada*, 16.

woman made two purchases […] the genial grocer with the white apron and smiling face […] the woman knew the grocer […] she considered him an upright man."[11] However, as MacCormac describes, the two purchases were not as pure as she had expected; the jam had little fruit and instead contained dextrin, and the labelled chicken soup can contained slightly spoiled veal soup. The Pure Food movement, in part led by the Retail Merchants Association (RMA) and the Toronto Retail Grocers Association, resulted in federal protection under the *Pure Food Act* (c. 1906) for retail grocers who purchased goods from a wholesaler or manufacturer. Prior to this Canadians had to "contend with sand and dirt in the sugar; chicory or peas in the coffee; turnips and timothy seed in raspberry jam; flour in white pepper and numerous other adulterations […] Today the consumer is protected by the Government grading of Standard."[12] While Aleck Ostry has argued that the federal governments' involvement in nutritional policy helped establish a national food surveillance regime, consumer protection law also solidified trust within the trade and upheld the reputation of the grocer in the eyes of the consumer.[13]

The growing number of federal regulations coincided with the number of food retail stores which had increased steadily in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In Ontario, between 1881 and 1895, there was a 40.5% increase in recorded food stores.[14] However, sometimes regulations and licensing fees that were introduced were not enough to satisfy the growing number of grocers. This is especially evident in the case of the pedlar. The pedlar was mobile and would go from house to house to sell their wares. Although not "uniformly valued

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[11] John MacCormac, "Canada's Pure Food Problem," *Maclean's Magazine*, Is. 25 No. 1 (Aug. 1912): 45.
[12] "Great Changes in Grocery Methods," *Canadian Grocer,* (Apr. 15, 1939): 38.
[13] Ostry, 10-19. Toronto was one of the first cities to enforce pasteurization by-laws, and by 1929, some dairies have had pasteurized milk for over 25 years.
[14] In 1881 there were 5845 stores registered as "food stores" in *Might's Ontario Business Director*y (Toronto 1895) and by 1895 there were 8817 food stores. *The Census of Canada*, vol. 4 Table 2, 28-29 records 12926 food stores by 1921. This is a 75.44% increase from 1881. This data is captured in a table in Monod's appendix, 353.

throughout the country," the pedlar or peddling was a regulated trade.[15] Pedlars required a license and must brandish a badge, and failure to do so resulted in a heavy fine. Tensions between brick-and-mortar grocers and the pedlar were amplified in the pages of the *Grocer,* with the latter being ethnicized in places.

In 1891 the *Grocer* published a list of eleven reasons why the pedlar was a danger to the trade. These reasons ranged from,

> Pedlars are dangerous competitors of those who own stores; fruit pedlars endanger the public health by depositing their refuse in the streets; their business methods damage the store keeper who cannot carry his wares from street to street; there are many dishonest pedlars who defraud the public by light weights and short measures; and the pedling business is monopolized by an undesirable class.[16]

These reasons were provided with no editorial comment from the *Grocer*. The retailer in Canada was left to draw their own parallels between Chicago and cities like Toronto and the seeming threat of the pedlar to their own store and customers.

This hostility and degradation of the pedlar by the *Grocer* is not surprising as the pedlar was not the journal's target readership and how the pedlar distributed their stock to Torontonians undermined much of their advice for how to succeed as shopkeepers. As a food distributor, the pedlar was not confined to shop hours or a single location, and their ability to weave around the city and into working-class neighbourhoods would have been appreciated by families working shiftwork. While the pocketbooks of working-class women were not necessarily the target for

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[15] The spelling of pedlar varies overtime between pedlar, peddlar, pedler, and peddler. Pedlar was the most common spelling from the 1890s to 1910s. Unless used in a direct quote I have opted for the spelling of pedlar for consistency. "Chicago Grocers Vs. Pedlars," *Canadian Grocer,* (Jan. 1898): 8. See also, "Vagrant traders," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 30, 1891): 3, an earlier column where the pedlar was reported to "time his departure so as to evade any claims upon him for taxation" and was referred to a "handicap" in the trade.There are cases in Ontario where merchants had demanded that the city enforce the license law for pedlar's as it was not consistently applied. In some of these cases the Retail Merchants' Association intervened to launch a complain with the Chief-of-Police or city council. See "To Enforce Peddlers' License," *Canadian Grocer,* (May 2, 1910): 39. See also, "Kingston Merchants Waging War Against Men Selling Without Licenses," *Canadian Grocer* (Dec. 4, 1910): 32.

[16] "Chicago Grocers Vs. Pedlars," 5.

many of the chain stores like the eventual Loblaw brand, the perceived infringement of the brick-and-mortar's potential customers, and the grocery "pecking order" only antagonized grocers and advertisers more. Pedlars had been accused by members of the RMA, which included a number of grocery retailers, of "preying on women while their husbands were off at work" and that "many timid housewives complain of these house-to-house peddlers."[17] However, I could find no evidence of the pedlar as a nuisance or danger reported in *Everywoman's World, The Canadian Home Journal*, or *Chatelaine* to their predominately female readers.

Some brands refused to sell their stock to pedlars and were vocal about their disdain for them. Red Rose Tea ran a series of advertisements against the pedlar. In one such advertisement, bold letters appeared at the top and stated, "You Can Beat Out the Peddler," and urged customers to display the tea on the counters, in the windows, and recommend it to customers. The quality of the tea was of a high grade and the grocer could "be sure the peddler will not offer them anything so good at the price" and that "no pedlar can steal Red Rose Tea business away from you."[18] Some advertisers and grocers feared that housewives did not pay attention to quality when shopping and would only compare prices, which meant the grocer could lose out to the pedlar nearly every time.[19]

Much like the provision of food, the figure of the pedlar was made visible in order to become governable. In 1895 the "Pedlar question" was addressed in Toronto. A previous Toronto by-law passed in 1891, had prohibited pedlars from selling on King, Queen, Yonge, Dundas Street, and Spadina Avenue. After a failed attempt to repeal the by-law in the Court of

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[17] Monod, 90.
[18] "You Can Beat Out the Peddler," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 2, 1910): 47. See also, "Not how cheap but how good!" *Canadian Grocer,* (May 21, 1920): 25.
[19] "The Fresh Fruit Trade," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 27, 1892): 2. See also, "The Pedlar and the Tea Trade," *Canadian Grocer,* (Oct. 15, 1915): 22.

Appeal, the pedlars brought the matter before the Supreme Court and were successful.[20] The *Grocer* explained how the by-law of 1891 had been "maimed in one of its important features" but reassured their audience that the merchants of Toronto should not be discouraged as the city could still regulate which side of the street pedlars may be permitted to "ply their avocation" and had the power to define certain hours of operation.[21] In an attempt to mobilize merchants, the *Grocer* concluded that "ideal provinces or municipalities are built up only by action from within" and when it comes to the "pedlar nuisance," there were "many other ways of killing a dog besides hanging it."[22] The pedlar continued to appear in the volumes of the *Grocer* between the 1910s and 1930s, rarely separated from words and phrases such as nuisance, evil, "invader of the law," or allusions to criminality.[23] It is unsurprising then that the modern grocery trade established a hierarchy of shopkeepers through the press and municipal intervention to protect the interests and profits of grocers with a fixed, stable address and disparaged the unpredictable pedlar.

Pedling, as a method of selling, was the antithesis of what the *Grocer* had hoped to cultivate for its imagined community of readers.[24] Without a storefront, there was little for the journal to advise on, as, in their mind, there would be no scientific or modern methods of retailing, no standardization, minimal cleanliness (for pedlar's, by nature of their trade, would

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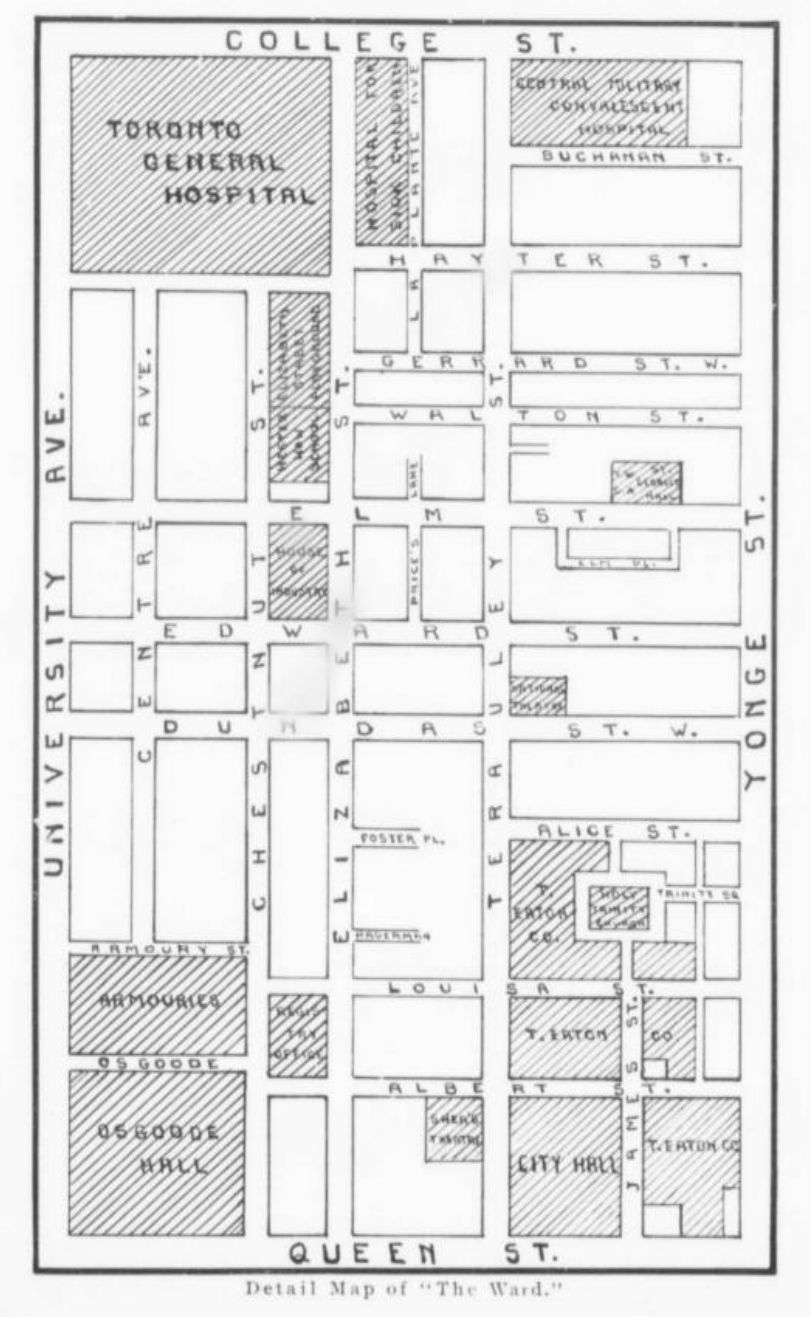
[20] "Pedlar Question in Toronto," *Canadian Grocer*, (Nov. 22, 1895): 15.
[21] Ibid. Even licensed pedlar's were not immune to further interventions in their trade. A Toronto fish pedlar was charged with creating a nuisance by shouting his wares on the street "Current News of the Week," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 1913): 36.
[22] "The Pedlar Question in Toronto," 15.
[23] The R.M.A. asked for a number of changes to Ontario Statutes including a change in the Hawkers' and Peddlers' and the Transient Trades' Acts (TTA) and accused peddlers of evading the law under the TTA. The amendment asked was aimed to clear up obscurity so there would be 'no shadow of a doubt as to the liability of the party accused' "Ontario R.M.A. Proposes Amendments," Canadian Grocer, (Apr. 11, 1919). The percentage of pedlar's % decreased in 1920s but grew once more in the 1930s with the depression and mass unemployment.
[24] Benedict Anderson*, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), 141-149.

expose their food lines to the open air and streets) was presented as a pre-modern form of selling. Toronto had experienced a surge of immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe before 1914, and many immigrants found themselves denied access to higher education and better-paid jobs because of their "accent, colour, or culture."[25] As a result, the pressure to expand self-employment opportunities grew and peddling – which was sometimes a traditional occupation for men and women in their home country – became the only option in the downtown core of Toronto, where immigrant communities were largely settled due to its affordable housing and proximity to downtown workplaces.

One of the areas located in the downtown core was distastefully referred to as "The Ward" and was an area of the city that was considerably overpopulated and in poor condition. Located between the parameters of University Avenue, College Street, Yonge Street, and Queen Street, it was described by the Bureau of Municipal Research as untidy, unsanitary, and populated by those "mostly of foreign nationality" and "large numbers of poorly educated people

[25] Monod, 40.

with low standards of living [who] have, through force of circumstances, congregated in one district and have been allowed to claim it for their own."[Fig. 1.][26]



Detail Map of "The Ward."

[26] "What is 'The Ward' Going to Do with Toronto? A Report on undesirable living conditions in one section of the city," *Bureau of Municipal Research*, (Dec. 1918): 5-6.

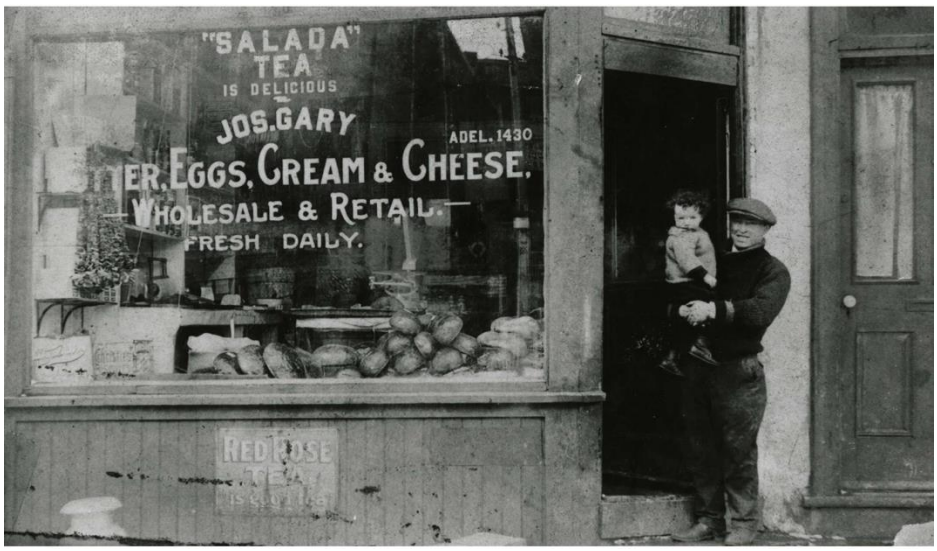
[Figure 1: Map of "The Ward" Bureau of Municipal Research. December 1918]

Although the Ward was gradually changing from a residential area into a business and industrial centre between 1909 and 1916, as many of the smaller buildings were torn down for the erection of modern buildings (e.g., Toronto General Hospital) approximately 10,527 people lived in this area. The majority of homes in the Ward were rented and were often without a water supply.[27] The largest percentage of residents were Jewish (68%), then Italian (12%), and a very small number of "Polish, Chinese, Negro, and other foreign peoples, with a few English born" (total 20%).[28] The Bureau provided a few family histories of some of the residents to demonstrate the "burden" these residents caused on Toronto.[29] Of the 21 family histories provided, five residents were listed as "Peddlers," four of these men were originally from Russia, and three had worked as a pedlar in their home country. Only one of the pedlars listed "yes" for naturalized and he earned the highest weekly income of $12. In his study, Monod has claimed that ethnic retailers tended to buy and hire from within their own communities to try to raise capital from among fellow immigrants.[30]

Immigrant grocers, particularly Jews, had varying levels of success securing the patronage of those outside their community.[31] For example, in 1917 Joseph Gary had fled to Canada from Poland and settled in the Ward and by 1925 had an established grocery store there where he sold staple foods like butter, eggs, and cheese [Fig. 2 and Fig. 3].[32]

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[27] Ibid, 29, 31, 32.
[28] Ibid 37
[29] Ibid. 37
[30] Monod, 38.
[31] Monod writes that most immigrants were stereotyped into selected occupations, i.e. the Italian fruiterer, Chinese laundryman etc. Jews were an "accepted retailing minority from the old world" and had an easier time opening up stores in frontier towns (furniture, shoes, clothing) and grocery stores in larger towns like Montreal and Toronto pg. 40.
[32] "Gary's Groceries," Storefront Stories, https://www.ojastorefrontstories.org/



[Figure 2: Joseph Gary in front of his grocery at 136 Elizabeth Street in St. John's Ward, ca. 1925. OJA, item 1542.]



[Figure 3: Joseph Gary, Rosie Lachovicz and Goldie Gary (left to right) in front of Gary's Groceries, ca.1935. OJA, item 1543.]

"Gary's Groceries" was later reopened on 420 College Street which sat in close proximity to chain competitor Dominion Stores at 431 College Street. Some took to the *Grocer* to complain about the encroachment of foreign competitors. A wholesaler wrote to the editor of the journal, "Italians who went into the wholesale and retail fruit and vegetable business about ten years ago, with practically no capital. They are now worth eight or ten thousand dollars. […] I am thinking

that we can drive them out of town, as they are getting about all the retail business."[33] Henry Johnson Jr., a prolific correspondent for the *Grocer* since 1910, responded with "Men win who deserve to win – whether they be Italians or other […] take those men into your association. Make use of them. Fraternize with them."[34] [Fig. 4] The trade journal was generally supportive of foreign grocers if they had a good work ethic and if they followed modern methods of retailing.[35] However, in 1920, the *Grocer* profiled the "alarm at the growth of the Chinese population in Western Canada" and how this matter had been discussed by the Western Retail Merchants' Association and brought to "the attention of the Government to the menace. The question was to have been investigated but nothing further has been heard."[36] The article continued to denounce the Chinese population as "blood-suckers on the community. They have no interest in the life of the town […] They take everything and give nothing in return," and "unlike the European foreigners who produce on the land, these Chinese produce nothing […] What is the West going to do about it?"[37] The author accused that, "unlike the Greeks and Italians who have established high-class eating houses and confectionary stores […] the Chinaman seems incapable of operating anything of the kind."[38] Beyond some allusions to race when the *Grocer* discussed the problem of the pedlar, the imagined community of grocers it hoped to establish, and believed that it had, was white, Canadian, or deemed a hardworking

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[33] Henry Johnson Jr., "Advises Against Starting Wholesale House," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jul. 4, 1913): 30.
[34] Ibid. Johnson Jr. was born and lived in America (San Franscico) but wrote for the *Grocer*. There is no clear evidence of how or why he came to work for the *Grocer*. In one of his travel logs he recorded how Mr. B.T. Huston from the *Grocer* drove him and his wife all over Toronto, and how Hutson's wife served the four of them tea in a park in the city. Paul Findlay, *An Old Grocer and His Wife See Europe*, (San Francisco: Honig-Cooper Company, 1925): 10-11.
[35] City of Toronto Archives. Danforth Avenue 1930.
[36] E.H. Scott, Chinese Menace in Western Canada," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 7, 1920): 136. See also, Charles E. Hope, "British Columbia's Racial Problem, *Maclean's Magazine*, (Feb. 1, 1930): 3-4, 62.
[37] Scott, "Chinese Menace in Western Canada," 136-137.
[38] Ibid., 137.

European national.[39]



[Figure 4: City of Toronto Archives. Danforth Avenue [1930] The Greco family ran an Italian fruit and vegetable store. Modern methods are visible with the white apron, systematic order of the products, price cards. Yet the food is exposed to the dust and to the street.]

Another food distributor that rivaled the grocery store in Toronto was the public market. Busy weekly farmers markets often required women to arrive early for an adequate selection and farmers needed to keep their prices lower than retailers (in theory) for women to see a saving in price equal to the value of their time to travel there and carry their purchase home.[40] The St. Lawrence Market, which remains a popular shopping spot in Toronto, was designated in 1803 by the colonial government of Upper Canada and a small wooden building was constructed to

[39] There was no mention of Black grocers in the *Grocer* beyond the "Chinese Menace" article. When the *Grocer* did reference Black persons, it was often in the context of overseas trade, racially stereotypical advertisements (such as Aunt Jemima and Gold Dust Washing Powder), and any dialogue was in broken English. Monod argues that Jewish stores were targeted by a Sunday-closing alliance in Toronto who opposed Jewish retailers' ability to work on Sunday (because of the *Lord's Day Act*) and RMA members and other 'nativist retailers' attacked Jews, Italians and other southern Europeans, and Chinese merchants and perpetuated the 'disloyalty, illegitimacy, absence of professional ethics, and an interest in profit over services' to convey images of immigrants' otherness in the retail industry, see pgs. 92-93.

[40] "North Toronto's Farmer Market," *The Toronto World*, Vol. XXVII No. 13,424 (Aug. 20, 1917): 11.

accommodate the town's first public market.[41] Public markets in the early twentieth century received mixed reception from the *Grocer* [Fig. 5].



[Figure 5: Interior of St. Lawrence Market, 1919. Image by James Salmon. City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1231, Item 61]

While Toronto farmers markets, such as St. Lawrence market, had a fixed address and paid a fee to sell, in the grocery trade hierarchy, farmers were not the intended audience of the *Grocer*. As Figure 5 shows, farmers would bring a variety of their goods to market, from fruits, vegetables, poultry, eggs, butter, and flowers would be available for purchase from their wagon.

[41] Kheraj, 130. By the 1860s there were three public markets in Toronto: St. Lawrence, St. Andrew, and St. Patrick Market. Both St. Andrew and St. Patrick Market closed due to inactivity by the 1890s and 1910s respectively. The St. Lawrence Market currently serves over 120 vendors and is referred to on the market website as "the community's beating heart and culinary focal point of the city of Toronto. It's the living symbol and anchor of the neighbourhood and for the families who live here."

The photograph shows a crowded market floor, filled with an array of cars and wagons. The light that filters in almost spotlights a farmer and their produce of fruit or vegetables. Although the market made food tangible to patrons (a customer could likely pick-up and survey a piece of fruit) which mimicked the autonomy the modern groceteria style of buying promoted by the *Grocer*, the market lacked the same commitment to packaged, branded, and standardized methods of selling and buying.

Conditions for selling were less than optimal for new farmers on the market circuit. One farmer who had travelled to Toronto recalled: "As soon as the wagon is in position, a buyer for some one of the large establishments in the city, seeing a stranger on the market […] starts dickering for them. You see it would be bad for the 'trade' to allow a new man to break in and sell direct, and consequently he is subjected to much 'blather,' running down of his goods, and criticism of the way in which they have been prepared for sale."[42] In addition, Toronto's Public Market By-Law No. 4327 prevented farmers from selling in retail quantities from their wagons at the St. Lawrence Market.[43] Farmers were restricted to selling by the barrel, bag, or in quantities not less than one bushel. Still, the majority of householders in Toronto purchased their produce in small quantities and to purchase a bushel of any line of vegetable would create food waste as it was likely to perish before consumption. The householder would be more "likely to purchase from a shopkeeper or peddler" as a result.[44]

Retailers frequented the Toronto City Council to voice their complaints about other public markets around the city that were less regulated. The *Grocer* reported one of these council meetings. One grocer protested: "The farmers come in there, sell no lower than our retail stores

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[42] "Why is Toronto Housekeeping So Dear?" *The Toronto Daily Star*, (May 12, 1911): 12.
[43] Passed in 1904. Repealed by 1929. https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/public-notices-bylaws/bylaws-municipal-code/bylaw-status-registry/search-bylaw-status-registry/#blsrDetails/54668
[44] "Why is Toronto Housekeeping So Dear?" 12.

and get off without paying taxes."[45] The *Grocer* came to the defence of both sellers and stated that the farmers' market "means nothing of saving to the consumer" but "we are not suggesting that there is anything wrong in the farmer getting all he can for his crops […] the contention merely is that the elimination of the retailer does not reduce prices."[46] Among the public markets in Toronto, including Kensington and Wychwood Market, St. Lawrence was the only one to be mentioned by name and have its prices reported on regularly within the *Grocer* within the "Markets and Market" segment.[47] Unlike the pedlar, a public market received less criticism from the journal despite competition for potential customers on market days and a seeming lack of cleanliness and order (as evident in Figure 5) that a modern grocery store should have. Ultimately, the St. Lawrence Market was located in the downtown core with immediate access to working-class and immigrant shoppers, compared to the growth of chain grocers who populated busy intersections in largely middle-class parts of the city.

Credit Worthiness

The 'logical' need for food meant trust, respectability, and morality became inseparable from the modernization of the grocery industry and the role of women in that growth. Not unlike the central character in liberalism, where the citizen may be trusted to join the electorate, the consumer was trusted to consume. Conversely, the social contract and trust established between government and society dissolves when those in power act contrary to the interests of the public good.[48] Offering and obtaining credit was unwaveringly linked to trustworthiness and the ability

[45] "The Farmers' Market," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 8, 1918): 26. See also, Michael Basil, "A History of farmers' markets in Canada," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing*, Vol. 4 No. 3, (2012): 387-407.
[46] "The Farmers' Market," 26. In some cases retail grocers would purchase wholesale from the farmers market.
[47] In the *Toronto Daily Star* prices and produce for the St. Lawrence Market were often placed on the "Woman's Daily Interest" page as women were the prospective consumer in any food-related context. See, "Summer Vegetables Scarcer at Market," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Oct. 13, 1928): 25.
[48] Michel Ducharme and Jean-Francois Constant, "Introduction: A Project of Rule Called Canada – The Liberal Order Framework and Historical Practice," 6-7and Jerry Bannister, "Canada as Counter-Revolution: The Loyalist

to purchase material goods, under the tenets of liberalism, to increase one's individual autonomy or sovereignty.[49] Furthermore, the system of the double-entry bookkeeping was a prominent feature of capitalist modernity in the grocery trade as the interpretative numbers of credit and debt were transformed into a material reality with moral connotations. This method was framed by the *Grocer* as a modern and "clean" manner of reporting all transaction histories, one which could safeguarded profit and the reputation of the clerk for "nothing excites the suspicion of customers or is more than inaccurate accounts and mistakes, especially if they are against the customer..."[50] Double-entry booking was system of writing and a mode of government, Mary Poovey has argued, that if merchants were to benefit from, they needed to obey the system rules over previous informal systems of agreement.[51] On one hand, this created a mercantile system where entries were treated as a modern fact – as numerical accuracies. However, the system measured the virtue of the merchant and the credit worthiness of a customer as much as it tracked commercial transactions.[52]

To obtain credit a customer would enter their local grocery store and share the items they needed, the clerk would record their name and food purchased, and the customer could have their purchase delivered to their front door, or as in the case of the late 1910s and early 1920s, would carry their purchase home in a paper bag. This was the main premise of the credit system and the clerk was responsible for collecting debt owed. In order to subvert the domestic economy for the grocery industry to usher in its own modes of credit, consumption, honour, and thrift, the grocery

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Order Framework in Canadian History, 1750-1840," 120 in *Liberalism and Hegemony: debating the Canadian liberal revolution*, eds. Jean-Francois and Michel Ducharme, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).
[49] Belisle, "Toward a Canadian Consumer History," 191.
[50] "Account Keeping in a Small Business," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 7, 1899): 7. Howard Wellington, "The Evolution of Bookkeeping Methods," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jul. 12, 1907): 61.
[51] Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact: Problems of Knowledge in the Sciences of Wealth and Society*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998):, xvii, xviii, 27, 28.
[52] Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact*, *xii*, 29-31.

store was framed by the periodical press and advertisers as an extension of the household and under the protection of the industry, rather than demolishing women's domestic sphere.[53] This was not a passive and instead, it is more helpful to consider this subversion as mutually-reinforcing.

If the customer had a credit limit or a fixed date for re-payment, it was important to approach the subject with tact and authority. One of the drawbacks of credit was the awkwardness of collection. One grocer expressed that others have likely lost customers because of unlimited credit, rather than sharp collections, "we often allow customers to run our credit business instead of running it ourselves."[54] He continued, "If a customer gets paid by the week for his work see that we get our pay in full for our account at that time or quit doing business with him."[55] Extension and collection of credit were further complicated if the women of the home were making the purchases, which was often the case. It was the popular opinion that men were bound by law to support their wives and give them the authority to pledge his credit.[56] This opinion was supported by an old English law where a wife had a presumptive authority over her husband's account. As Constance Backhouse has explained, prior to the *Married Women's Property Act* in 1884 married women were not only unable to own property but were restricted in their ability to obtain personal credit or assume contractual liability.[57] As a result, married women in the nineteenth century experienced difficulties finding shopkeepers who would agree to accept their credit.[58] Creditworthiness was contingent on property ownership.

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[53] Dolores Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution: A History of Feminist Designs For American Homes, Neighborhoods, and Cities*, (Boston: MIT Press, 1982): 5.
[54] "Retailers Behind the Times in Matters of Credits," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 1, 1910): 30.
[55] Ibid.
[56] "How far can a women pledge her husbands' credit?" *Chatelaine*, (Oct. 1929): 53.
[57] Constance Backhouse, "Married Women's Property Law in Nineteenth Century Canada," *Law and History Review*, Vol. 6 No. 2, (Fall 1988): 226.
[58] Backhouse, 214.

After 1884 and several reiterations of this doctrine, the law obliged a husband to supply his wife with necessities while they lived together. If the married woman was without means she had "an authority of necessity" to pledge his credit.[59] There was some ambiguity about what necessities were and what the credit limit was for married women. For example, throughout the 1910s, purchases made by Mrs. Smith were to be filed under Mr. Smith's account name.[60] Much like the shoppers explored in Rappaport's *Shopping for Pleasure*, women would continue to purchase under their husbands' name and he would be liable to his now overdue credit, where "often it is the case that the man who owes the bill has never even seen it."[61] Even if a husband protected his credit and communicated to retailers that he would not be responsible for debts contracted in his name by his wife, on occasion, they would authorize credit without the husband's knowledge. In one British Columbia case, Finch vs. Minnie, the wife had ordered goods amounting to $1,000 and while she had paid $700 of this out of her housekeeping allowance the dealer, anxious to be repaid in full, sued her husband for the remaining balance.[62] The husband was able to prove he knew nothing of this charge account and the judge ruled in his favor and remarked that a $26 hat could "hardly be called a necessity" for the wife.[63] Despite some economic independence for married women in the early decades of the twentieth century, where they could earn their income, purchases for the household could be a contentious subject for husband, wife, and grocer.

Although credit was the main form of payment in the early decades of the twentieth century, it was often lamented by retailers and economists as a precarious method, one which could

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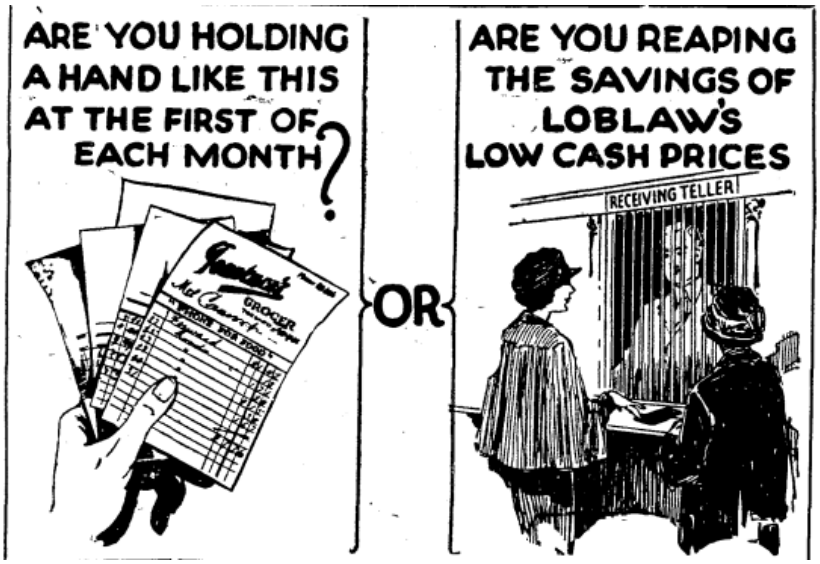
[59] "How far can a woman pledge her husbands' credit?" 53.
[60] H.R. Daniels, "Preventing Losses in a Retail Credit Business," *Canadian Grocer,* (May 27, 1910)*:* 97-98.
[61] H.D. McMullen, "Claims That Selling for Cash Means 30 Days Net," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 27, 1910):101-102. Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure,* 49.
[62] McMullen, "Claims That Selling for Cash Means 30 Days Net," 102.
[63] Ibid.

quickly spiral out of the grocers' control. However, plenty of grocers and customers preferred the credit system. One retailer claimed that "credit is a convenience. The majority of housekeepers demand it and appreciate it." He continued, "Take the convenience away from retailing and it wouldn't be long until the small retailer would be a thing of the past."[64] For others, their argument was that those in the cash business were in a wandering and uncertain trade as the average customer favoured the credit system.[65] The trade journal reported to its readership that for every 100 grocers starting that entered into the cash business, 99 would quickly slide to a credit system for it was considered the easiest and most pleasant way to increase trade.[66] Even T.P. Loblaw had recognized the high demand for credit from customers and retailers alike and sought to capitalize on the slide to credit. Loblaw had taken a brief hiatus from the retail industry and established The Loblaw Credit System, which expanded on his experience as a grocery store proprietor. This was one of the few times his name was not listed under the directory of grocers in Toronto but under office supplies. His advertisements ran from 1908-1909 and suggested that the grocer could cut their bookkeeping in half and that the "less writing you do in booking, the less chance to make mistakes."[67]

The Loblaw Credit System promised to help grocers in the early 1900s organize their outgoing credits, leave a good impression with their customers, and create more business as a result. However, the Loblaw Groceterias chain would never operate as a credit business, even as other chain and independent grocers turned back to credit during periods of national instability and crisis. The Loblaw brand went as far to highlight the trouble of such a system [Fig. 6.] The advertisement below offers the shopper two options: the first, to have loose bill slips that could

[64] "Some Problems Discussed by Retailers," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 4, 1910): 31.
[65] B.H. Thomas, "The Proper Handling of Credits Protects Business," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 10, 1910) 97.
[66] "To Our Competitors" *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 1, 1912): 39.
[67] "The Loblaw Credit System," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 11, 1908): 12.

easily mount and be accidentally misplaced, much to the chagrin of the grocer when repayment was due. The sketch on the left did not utilize the tools of modernity well; the payment slips represented a disorganized system and a liability for the shopper and grocer. Conversely, the Loblaw cash system, depicted with two well-dressed women, not unlike the women who featured in near-all Loblaw advertisements, "reaping the savings" that the chain could award to them. Not only could the groceteria, cash-and-carry method of grocery shopping offer female shoppers' freedom to browse and select, but as this advertisement suggests, it offered further autonomy over the household purse.



[Figure 6: Loblaw Groceterias Ad. *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Nov. 11, 1926): 11.]

Store credit often meant that a customer could pay for their goods at a later, more convenient date. For some, if their grocer was particularly lenient or they had established a good rapport, payment could be left outstanding for months at a time. Credit offered the grocer the potential to establish a loyal customer base as it would be more common to frequent the store a person had an account with.[68] In Craig Heron's *Lunch-Bucket Lives* he examines the working-class history

[68] James G. Cannon, "Individual Credits," Canadian Grocer, (Apr. 15, 1898): 5.

of Hamilton, ON from the 1890s to the 1930s and reveals how members of this community relied on wages to survive. In his investigation he reveals that the credit system, which this chapter explores, was crucial in times of mass unemployment.[69] Obtaining credit was often imperative for many working-class and poorer women across Canada. As Belisle and others have shown, budgeting was a central responsibility in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century for women.[70] Women who had access to more income, or at least a cash allowance often provided by their husband, began patronizing stores that offered competitive prices often city chain stores, while lower-income women had little choice but to continue to seek out local stores that offered credit.[71]

While some championed the credit system over cash in the early 1900s and late 1910s, other grocers continued to share their distaste for giving credit. As mentioned earlier, one of the main drawbacks of the credit system was that it could be as unpredictable as the paychecks of those who patronized the store. A poorly managed bookkeeping system and a lack of communication between the grocer and their customer could cost the retailer not only their earnings but their reputation too. For example, one grocer who was experimenting with a cash-only business had one woman customer accost him with, "You gave my neighbor credit and refused me!"[72] In the grocer's defence, the woman had sought groceries after the strict cash-only policy was in place. However, in this one instance, it is clear that the purchase, payment, and treatment in the local grocers was not an isolated transaction but was likely a popular topic of conversation among

[69] Craig Heron, *Lunch-Bucket Lives: Remaking the Workers' City*, (Toronto: Between the Lines Books, 2016): 165.
[70] Heron, *Lunch-Bucket Lives*, PG. Belisle, *Retail Nation* 134. Fahrni, *Household Politics*, 112. Bradbury, *Working Families*, 217. Deutsch, *Building a Housewife's Paradise*, 6. Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 113-116, 146-147.
[71] Belisle, *Retail Nation*, 134.
[72] Stanly Williams, "Grocer Tells of Change from Credit to Cash," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jul. 4, 1913): 35.

neighbourhood women responsible for grocery shopping. This, of course, was not a one-sided conversation.

As much as men and women could express their discontent with a grocer, the grocer could, and did, express the same sentiment among fellow retailers in the neighbourhood. In one case, retold in the *Grocer* – as both a warning and reassurance – a grocer spoke about how he had "haunted" a customer for weeks for repayment on her credit. She, according to the grocer, had "the reputation of being a confirmed dead beat, and she had through all that time lived loyally up to her reputation," he confronted the woman and stated, "I haven't the remotest conception that you're going to give me any money […] they all say that you couldn't pay them if you would and you wouldn't if you could." When she demanded who had said this about her, he responded "Why, all the merchants in town say it […] they've all got accounts that aren't worth the paper they're written on."[73] By nature of my sources, it is not possible to discern if merchants ceased trade with the woman in the story and if she would have turned to a cash business as a result, however, the prescriptive nature and authority of the *Grocer* constantly reminded readers to assess trustworthiness of female customers, by any means necessary, as a prerequisite to extend credit.

The credit system had been furiously debated among grocers in the early decades of the twentieth century, and some that felt they had no choice but to transition to a cash system. In what was referred to as a "credit town" a merchant described how his business fell in line with other retailers by extending credit to customers. [74] In 1912 the grocer observed how new competitors moved into the area and operated a cash system. The grocer watched his competition closely. As a credit store, in a supposed credit town, he found that nearly all his customers who

[73] "Conscience at Work," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 20, 1910): 100.
[74] C. Denike, "Forced to Change from Credit to Cash," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 1912): 118.

owed money would go to the cash stores as it was "common for the debtor to try to evade the merchant he owed."[75] The business was affected and he was forced to change from credit to cash, using the amount typically lost each year on bad accounts in advertising; both decisions created new demand in the store.

The burden of credit was to be equally shared by grocers and their customers, argued *Grocer* reader James Stuart. He claimed that the credit system was bad because it made Canadians "unthrifty citizens."[76] In general, it was easier to sell a family more groceries on credit than for cash. Because of this, it was often the shopkeeper who would be the one who suffered when others could not afford to pay their grocery bill for the week or month. Stuart viewed the credit system as a money lending scheme and if cash were the main feature of a store it would show "what the citizens of Canada could do by the exercise of judicious thrift habits."[77] Thrift existed within the tensions of modernity. To save or carefully budget was touted by the periodical literature as a sign of intelligent shopping or intelligent retailing, while to spend lavishly was simultaneously presented as a marker of social standing and success. While thrift would take on renewed importance during times of crisis, financial or wartime, the concept never drifted far in discussions of citizenship. In further defence of cash over credit, Stuart hoped that the "credit system will be cut down by the knife of common sense and independence of the merchant and that the standard of cash trade will be raised and will be the means of cheaper goods – both to the consumer and retailer, and will be the means of making thriftier and more well-to-do citizens."[78] Cash, or cash-and-carry, offered women shoppers a level of autonomy to physically access foodstuffs for sale in a store. Still, this system provided the grocer some financial freedom from

[75] Ibid.
[76] James Stuart, "Letters to the Editor," *Canadian Grocer,* (Jul. 3, 1914) p. 36.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid., 36-37.

overextended customers. Even with the eventual rise of the cash business alongside the growth of chain stores in the late 1920s, credit would serve to "enable the single merchant to overcome the handicap of chain prices and hold his trade more firmly than ever."[79] Hostility toward chain stores coupled with the Depression would breathe new life into the credit system causing tension for what it meant to retail and shop modern.

Early competition for the independent store and the predecessor of the chain grocery was the large department store with a grocery section and the mail order houses.[80] Both operated a cost-efficient production as they had a large buying power and were in a position to purchase their goods direct from the manufacturer and sell at a lower price. However, it was reported that department stores and mail order houses "frequently overbought in order to make up the proper-sized order […] many of them lost sight of the fact that buying was only one small part of the successful operation of a grocery store" and did not consider that display, exterior appearance, and merchandising were equally important.[81] Despite their temporary footprint on the retail scene, mail order houses and the appeal of lower costs, laid the foundation for the birth of the retail grocery store. The chain went over the heads of the wholesaler, commission merchant, jobber and broker, and appealed directly to the consumer.

The Department of Trade and Commerce revealed in 1932 that in large centres, chain stores continued to secure a good percentage of the grocery business. While the company-owned chain stores excelled in the city centres, the bulk of the grocery business remained in the hands of

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[79] Henry Johnson Jr., "Retailer in Credit Town Advised Not to Change to Cash," *Canadian Grocer,* (Mar. 1, 1929): 28.
[80] "Better Understanding Between Merchant and Farmer," *Canadian Grocer,* (Jan. 1, 1910): 23. Cynthia Wright notes how Eaton's mail order organization, first launched in 1884 but expanded to a nationwide scale by the late 1920s, was strongly resented by rural merchants who relied on the purchases made by local residents. "'Feminine Trifles of Vast Importance': Writing Gender into the History of Consumption," in *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women's History*, eds. Mariana Valverde and Franca Iacovetta, (University of Toronto Press, 1992): 240-241.
[81] B.T. Hutson, "Has the chain grocery store come to stay?" *Macleans Magazine*, (May 15, 1930): 13.

independents who operated individually or through cooperative groups.[82] The *Grocer* analyzed the figures of nine towns ranging from populations of 11,000 to 30,000 and the of three large cities, Winnipeg, Toronto, and Greater Montreal. [Fig. 7] Their analysis revealed that

Analysis of 1930 Census Figures Showing Status of Individually Owned Stores

	Population	Total Grocery Stores	Aver. No. of People Served	Per Capita Purchases	No. of Independents	Aver. Sales of Independents	% Grocery Business by Independents
Woodstock	11,300	23	495	$ 85	18	$32,000	60.2%
Belleville	13,700	50	274	82	44	15,800	44.8%
Timmins	14,200	26	546	102	20	32,900	45.6%
Stratford	17,000	50	340	72	42	17,800	60.8%
Sarnia	18,000	47	383	82	42	20,000	57.0%
Niagara Falls	19,000	63	301	115	54	18,000	44.1%
Peterborough	22,000	72	305	89	48	26,200	*64.0%
Sherbrooke	29,000	88	330	65	39	18,800	77.9%
Brantford	30,107	82	366	92	72	26,600	69.6%

*Local chains included with independents.

[Figure 7: Individually owned stores in Ontario, *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 21, 1932): 24]

some retailers were losing out to the chains in the area, and more simply, there were too many stores based on the population in some cases. The above image shows that while towns like Brantford and Peterborough had independents commanded the majority of the grocery business, Niagara Falls and Belleville – which both had a higher per capita purchase than any of the three major cities – lagged behind their chain competitors.

A comparison of Toronto with a smaller Ontarian town, Sarnia, depicts this division of preference between independent and chains. [Fig. 8] The grocery stores in Sarnia, chains

How Independent Grocers Fare in Canada's Three Largest Cities

	Population	Total Grocery Stores	Aver. No. of People Served	Per Capita Purchases	No. of Independents	Aver. Sales of Independents	% Grocery Business by Independents
Winnipeg	218,800	657	333	$45	593	11,400	67%
Toronto	631,000	1,490	423	$64	1,233	13,100	40%
Montreal	975,000	2,755	354	$63	2,382	17,500	68%

[Figure 8: Independent grocers in Winnipeg, Toronto, and Montreal, *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 21, 1932): 24]

[82] "Independents v. Chains," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 23, 1932): 19.

included, sold an average of 383 people, the per capita purchases were $82 and the average sales of the independent stores were $20,000.[83] Sarnia was considered an average town for the number of grocery stores, population, and annual sales. Sales in the big cities presented an entirely different picture. As the image above shows, in Toronto, the average sales per independent store was $13,100 with per capita purchases at $64. Overall, the smaller the town, the greater the per capita purchase from grocery stores. The column quipped that "a lot of people of low purchasing power flock to the bright lights."[84] With chains able to sell for less, independents in Toronto struggled to price match and needed to rely on strong selling strategies, service, and delivery where possible. As Toronto became a fortress of chain stores, only 40% of independent stores occupied the grocery business by the early 1930s.[85]

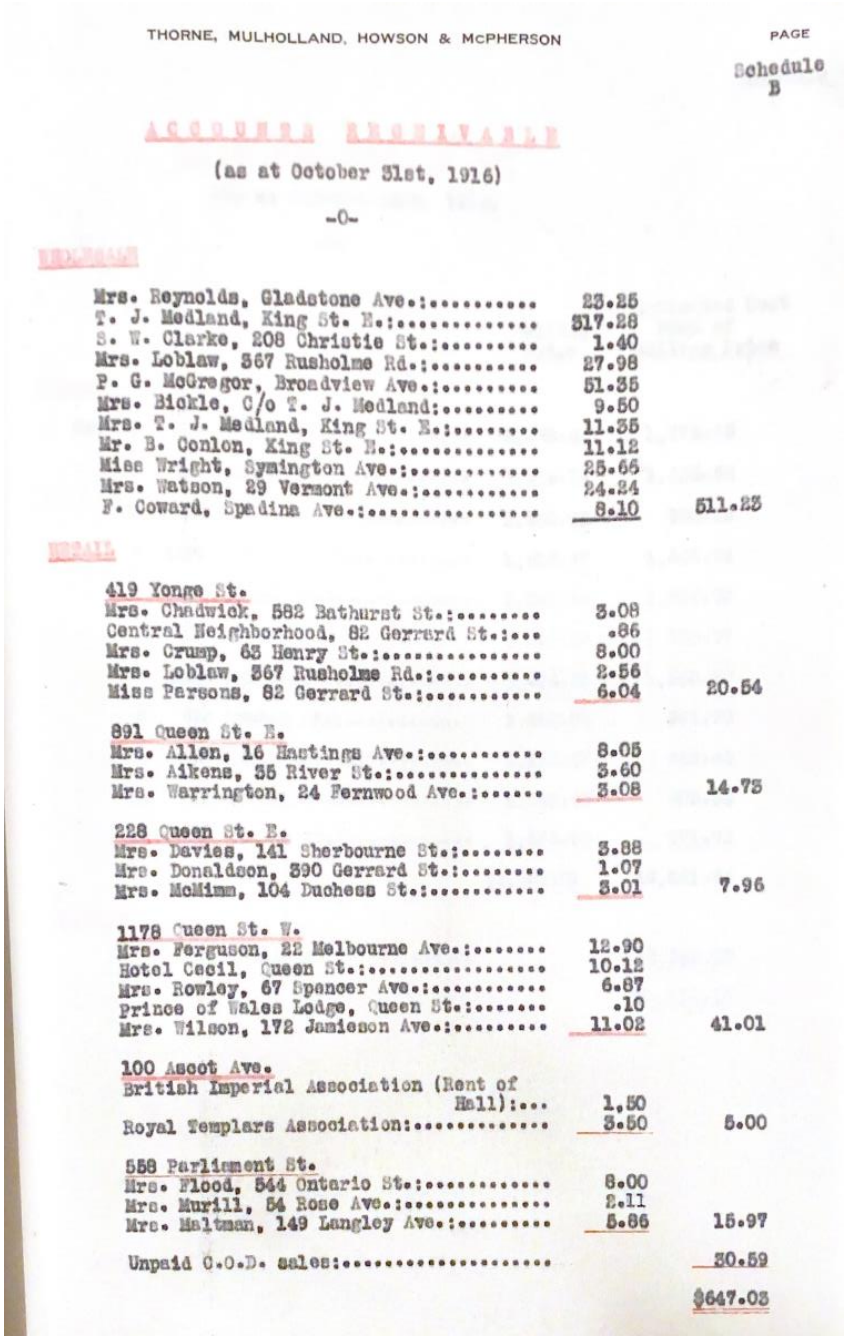
The Loblaw Groceterias

Before launching the Loblaw Groceterias chain in 1919, T.P. Loblaw reflected on the one store he and his then-employer, Milton Cork, operated on College St. in Toronto. In 1902 T.P. Loblaw had the mortgage transferred to himself for Cork's 459 and 461 College Street location, a 30ft x 120ft, two 3-storey extension brick dwelling (15x35 and 12x25) for $6250. After working side-by-side for a number of years, Cork and Loblaw each opened their own grocery store in Toronto. Loblaw continued to operate out of the 459-461 College location and Cork out of 1468 Queen West, selling groceries, fruit, and provisions.[86] Loblaw believed that with greater volume he and Cork could buy more cheaply and lower operating costs, providing better value to

[83] "Statistics show some Grocers to be falling down on the job," Canadian Grocer, (Oct. 21, 1932): 24.
[84] Ibid.
[85] 894 chain stores, 596 independent stores. In comparison to the other 2 major cities, Winnipeg (67% independent) and Montreal (68% independent).
[86] Ibid.

their customers. The chain store idea, he felt, was "sound and bound to come."[87] He told Cork, "The individual grocer is not facing ruin, but he is facing changing conditions, and I am going to keep abreast of the times."[88] One night, after the duo had closed the store, sitting across from one another at a counter, Loblaw said to Milton "I think it would be a good idea to open up a number of small stores. A girl could run one if she had a boy to assist her in the store and make deliveries after school." Mr. Cork agreed and entered a partnership with the young enthusiast. By 1910, the partners were operating nineteen of these small stores.[89] In 1910 Loblaw bought several shops in Toronto and ran them under a single management. For this first bundle of stores, it was suggested by *Maclean's* that these were solely cash-and-carry, where customers paid cash at the counter and carried their purchase home with them, but the interior had the traditional clerks and long counters, wherein customers needed to request goods from behind these counters.[90] However, annual reports from 1916 show several unpaid debts at six of the Loblaw Store locations [Fig. 9].

[87] Frank J. Ayearst, "He Created a $10,000,000 Business in Seven Years," *Maclean's Magazine*, (Feb. 15, 1927): 17.
[88] Ayearst, 55.
[89] These stores were eventually sold to Dominion, their main chain competitor throughout the 1920s and 1930s.
[90] Fred Bodsworth, "He Knows his Groceries," *Maclean's Magazine*, (Nov. 15, 1948): 16.



THORNE, MULHOLLAND, HOWSON & McPHERSON

PAGE

Schedule B

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE

(as at October 31st, 1916)

-0-

WHOLESALE

Mrs. Reynolds, Gladstone Ave.:	23.25	
T. J. Medland, King St. E.:	317.28	
S. W. Clarke, 208 Christie St.:	1.40	
Mrs. Loblaw, 367 Rusholme Rd.:	27.98	
P. G. McGregor, Broadview Ave.:	51.35	
Mrs. Bickle, C/o T. J. Medland:	9.50	
Mrs. T. J. Medland, King St. E.:	11.35	
Mr. B. Conlon, King St. E.:	11.12	
Miss Wright, Symington Ave.:	25.66	
Mrs. Watson, 29 Vermont Ave.:	24.24	
F. Coward, Spadina Ave.:	8.10	511.23

RETAIL

419 Yonge St.		
Mrs. Chadwick, 582 Bathurst St.:	3.08	
Central Neighborhood, 82 Gerrard St.:	.86	
Mrs. Crump, 63 Henry St.:	8.00	
Mrs. Loblaw, 367 Rusholme Rd.:	2.56	
Miss Parsons, 82 Gerrard St.:	6.04	20.54
891 Queen St. E.		
Mrs. Allen, 16 Hastings Ave.:	8.05	
Mrs. Aikens, 55 River St.:	3.60	
Mrs. Warrington, 24 Fernwood Ave.:	3.08	14.73
228 Queen St. E.		
Mrs. Davies, 141 Sherbourne St.:	3.88	
Mrs. Donaldson, 390 Gerrard St.:	1.07	
Mrs. McMinn, 104 Duchess St.:	3.01	7.96
1178 Queen St. W.		
Mrs. Ferguson, 22 Melbourne Ave.:	12.90	
Hotel Cecil, Queen St.:	10.12	
Mrs. Rowley, 67 Spencer Ave.:	6.87	
Prince of Wales Lodge, Queen St.:	.10	
Mrs. Wilson, 172 Jamieson Ave.:	11.02	41.01
100 Ascot Ave.		
British Imperial Association (Rent of Hall):	1.50	
Royal Templars Association:	3.50	5.00
558 Parliament St.		
Mrs. Flood, 544 Ontario St.:	8.00	
Mrs. Murill, 54 Rose Ave.:	2.11	
Mrs. Maltman, 149 Langley Ave.:	5.86	15.97
Unpaid C.O.D. sales:		30.59
		$647.03

[Figure 9: Loblaw Inc. Annual report Accounts Receivable for Wholesale and Retail. Courtesy of George Weston Archives (Oct. 1916).]

This report recognizes the purchasing status of married women who were granted credit in a cash-and-carry store (including T.P. Loblaw's wife) and women who were a purchasing agent for wholesale sales, including for T.J. Medland, a competing grocery company in Toronto.

After several years of partnership, Loblaw and his business partner, Cork were readying to launch a new chain store scheme. The "multiple store idea" at this point was relatively well established in Great Britain and the United States. In 1859 the Hartford Brothers founded in New York what would become the Atlantic & Pacific Tea stores with 15,000 units by 1930 and an annual profit of one billion dollars.[91] In Canada, William Carroll from Hamilton, Ontario was the first to operate a grocery chain store, his first opened in 1893 and by 1910 he had five or six. Although Carroll was the first, T.P. Loblaw was the first in Canada to launch the cash and carry chain and has survived to this day – albeit with modifications and a massive square-foot increase. The Loblaw Groceteria, as a self-service and cash and carry groceteria, it would be the first of its kind in Canada and among the first dozen or so globally, was officially opened in May 1919 at 2923 Dundas Street West.[92] At this time it was unclear "just how extensive this chain may be" and just a single store, on Dundas Street West, Toronto, had been purchased.[93] This store, and all future purchases of theirs would be renovated to match the groceteria system. The typical blueprint of the early groceteria style divided the floor plan into three sections: an entryway, salesroom, and a storeroom. The name "groceteria" was based on the new concept of the cafeteria, which reduced labour costs of restaurants by having customers serve themselves.[94] This style fit modernist ideals where the bleaker parts of the store were hidden and the customer was greeted with only merchandising space.[95] However, because of such high sales in a short period of time, it was necessary to expand the sales room to the full length of the store.[96]

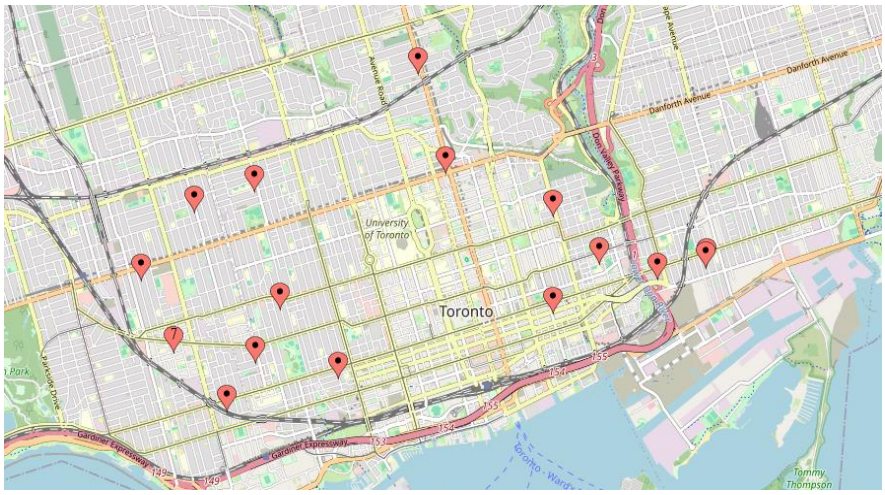
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[91] Ibid., 69. Deutsch, *Building a Housewife's Paradise*, Chapter 3 especially.
[92] Bodsworth, 51.
[93] "Groceteria chain store system also inaugurated," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 30, 1919): 29.
[94] Wright, "'The Most Prominent Rendezvous of the Feminine Toronto' Eaton's College Street and the Organization of Shopping in Toronto, 1920-1950," 82.
[95] Leach, 75-76.
[96] "Groceteria has come to stay regular grocery a feature," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 26, 1919) 28.

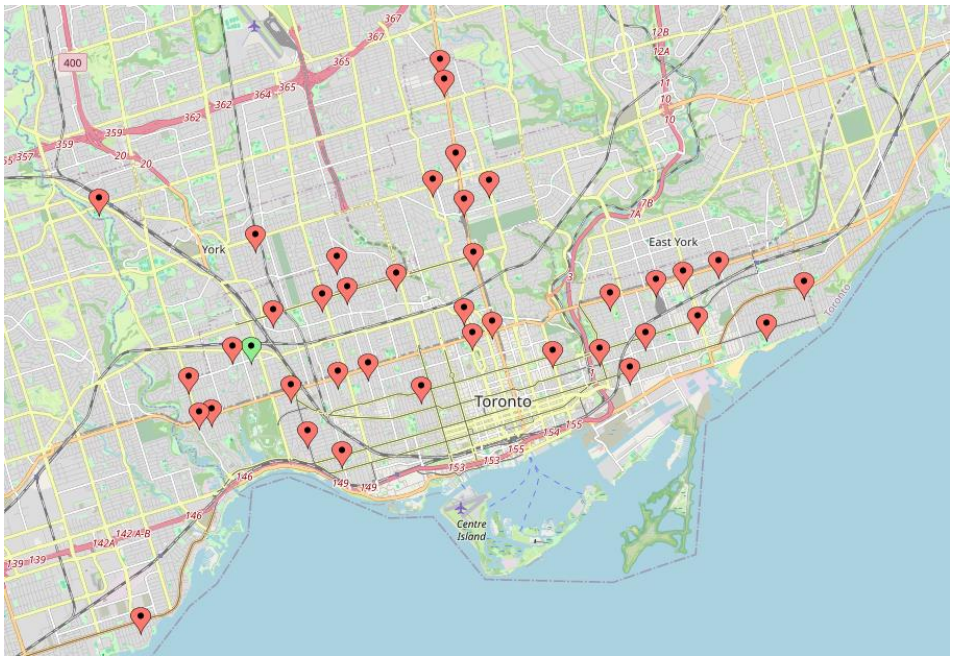
While Toronto's major department stores, Simpson's and Eaton's, were located on the corner of Yonge and Queen streets, thereby creating a shopping district of sorts, the grocery trade needed to establish itself differently.[97] Loblaw and Cork had hoped to capture the pocketbooks of those with a moderate income and found great success near accessible, busy intersections and along Bloor Street West and the Danforth in the East. Notably, Loblaw locations populated near every major street in the Toronto area except toward the downtown area where the Ward once was and where Jewish vendors tended to operate in the Kensington market. Loblaw Groceterias, other chain stores, and independent retailers needed to, where possible, settle near customers rather than wait for customers to come to them for a leisurely afternoon in the shopping centres. In his study Monod has charted the general spread of Torontonian grocery stores between 1902 and 1930 and found that larger stores tended to follow wealthier residents into Rosedale and High Park, the middle class in the Annex and neighbourhoods bordering Yonge Street, and the more affluent blue-collar workers to north of College Street in the West and along the Danforth in the East.[98] The below maps depict the growth of the Loblaw

[97] Belisle, "Toward a Canadian consumer history," 114.
[98] Monod, 31-32, 354.

Groceterias chain (marked with a green pin) [Fig. 10, 11, 12] from its original iteration as Loblaw Store Ltd. to Loblaw Groceterias between 1919 and 1940.



[Figure 10: Loblaw Store Locations prior to the launch of the Groceterias store system, 1919]



[Figure 11: Loblaw Groceterias locations in Toronto, ON. 1931]



[Figure 12: Loblaw Groceterias locations in Toronto, ON. 1941]

Cork reiterated how the Loblaw Groceterias was a social space after a *Grocer* reporter witnessed a large crowd pack the store on a Saturday night and asked if each person in the steady stream of people was a customer. To this Cork answered:

> By no means. On Saturday night especially our lady customers often bring friends, husband or one of the children to help her get her purchases home, for Saturday sales are always large…She may bring someone who wants to look us over, which is advertising for us. Many of these customers come from a distance and are seen here only once a week. Others drop in frequently.[99]

The open and expanded layout of the groceteria helped facilitate self-service and socializing. This was always welcome as they hoped positive interactions within the space would lead to positive word-of-mouth as these conversations continued elsewhere.

[99] "Groceteria has come to stay regular grocery a feature," 28.

Upon entry into the Loblaw Groceteria, customers passed through a turnstile, helped themselves to one of the neatly stacked shopping baskets, and then proceeded to self-select their groceries like the shoppers in the image below [Fig. 13].



[Figure 13: Loblaw Groceteria Co. Limited, 18 St. Clair, Toronto, CA. Courtesy of George Weston Archives. 1933-1936.]

At the front of the store, shelves were stocked with attractive bottles and canned goods, whose names were recognizable household brands, each marked clearly with their price. Further back were the teas, coffees, fancy biscuits, and cheese; each wrapped and ready to carry home. Perishable and refrigerated goods were in the centre of the store, with heavy flours and sugar on the back wall. It was never necessary to consult with the salespeople for each package was labeled with quantity and price per pound.[100] Once the customer had selected foods from their carefully curated list, they would carry their basket to the counter to pay in cash [Fig. 14].

[100] Ibid.



[Figure 14: A grocery basket used in Loblaw Groceterias. Courtesy of George Weston Archives. 1930]

After the transaction the emptied basket was promptly returned to the entrance for the next customer to pass through the turnstile. In only five short months after Loblaw Groceterias offered a new space and a new experience to shop, the *Grocer* announced that the self-serve groceteria system had come to stay.

The Chain Store

The grocery chain store had made minimal headway in Canada until after 1920. It required several years for the experimental work and for a substantial percentage of the public to become accustomed to the new idea of accepting less service and doing some of the work themselves. The year 1920 proved to be the psychological starting point.[101] At this time the business cycle had been fluctuating after WWI; the public needed to practice thrift,

[101] Hutson, 13, 69.

unemployment was higher, and wages were lower. As Monod notes, chains capitalized on the consumer interest in low prices that had accompanied the 1919-21 inflationary years and subsequent Depression.[102] Chains maintained low prices while other's inflated, they put goods on sale or special first, and devalued their stocks in advance of the general wholesale price index.[103] These were the conditions, Hutson argued, for customers to choose their own goods from the merchant's shelves and carry them home, which eliminated services that cost six or seven cents on every dollar spent.[104] Loblaw Stores and Loblaw Groceterias adopted their slogan of "We Sell for Less" and succeeded in putting goods on the customer's table at a much lower price than what the wholesaler or independent could buy them for. Confident in their ability to appeal to their target audience, the brand asked customers to "choose by comparison," in the hope that "thrifty housewives" would continue to shop there.[105]

In 1930 columnist B.T Huston for *Maclean's* asked, "Has the chain grocery store come to stay?" Chain store growth was steady across Canada, but growth had been the greatest in the larger population centres where the natural field was the big city and they often picked locations of prominence. For example, Toronto's city directory reveals that four out of ten chain store outlets were located on Yonge Street north of Bloor, in wealthier neighbourhoods.[106] Monod maintains that grocery chain stores, and their price-cutting techniques, were not to appeal to the poor but to workers and bourgeois of moderate income.[107] Where these stores congregated gave "that intersection the reputation of being a good place to shop. […] chain stores in Toronto

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[102] Monod, 124.
[103] Monod, 124-125.
[104] Ibid., 69.
[105] "Learn as Thousands Have – The Value of Selecting Your Foods the Loblaw Way," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jun. 2, 1927): 11.
[106] Monod, 125. Monod notes that Bloor and Roncesvalles in the High Park area accounted for 25% of the Torontoian population, approximately 22% were located in the skilled Anglo-Saxon working-class district between the Danforth and Gerrard Street.
[107] Monod, 125.

cluster to a remarkable extent. Take, for instance, the corner of Bloor and Bathurst, we have an Arnold, Loblaw, Dominion, and a Tambyln all on that corner and I believe that an A. & P. Has opened up near there. Generally speaking wherever you find an Arnold store on the map you find a Loblaw and one or two Dominion Stores, as well as one or two other chains."[108] The proliferation of grocery chains in Toronto would set the pace of retailing, but it was the community and female customers who sustained moral expectations of the grocery store.

The early 1930s prompted many chains to reevaluate their expansion plans and what they offered as a retail experience as unemployment climbed and budgets were tightened. In the earlier decades of the century, retailing had "swung too far in the direction of service" as independent grocers offered credit to nearly anyone who asked for it and delivered "a bar of soap half a mile."[109] Cash-and-carry was an inevitable means to the cumbersome and costly overhead costs of shopkeeping. However, the "pendulum went too far in the other direction" as chains forwent service in favour of a cash-and-carry policy.[110] This was at the detriment to working-class and poorer housewives, argued Heron, as price-cutting chain stores progressively set the pace of city retailing, the trend in the 1920s and 1930s was increasingly cash-only and impersonal.[111] However, as the retail environment was shaken by the Depression, further compounded by a demand for the moral obligation of stores to their customers, many of these grocery chains had little choice but to swing back to service.

Hutson noted how across Ontario there were fewer independent grocers and in the prime shopping areas they had been succeeded by large corporate, chain organizations which were

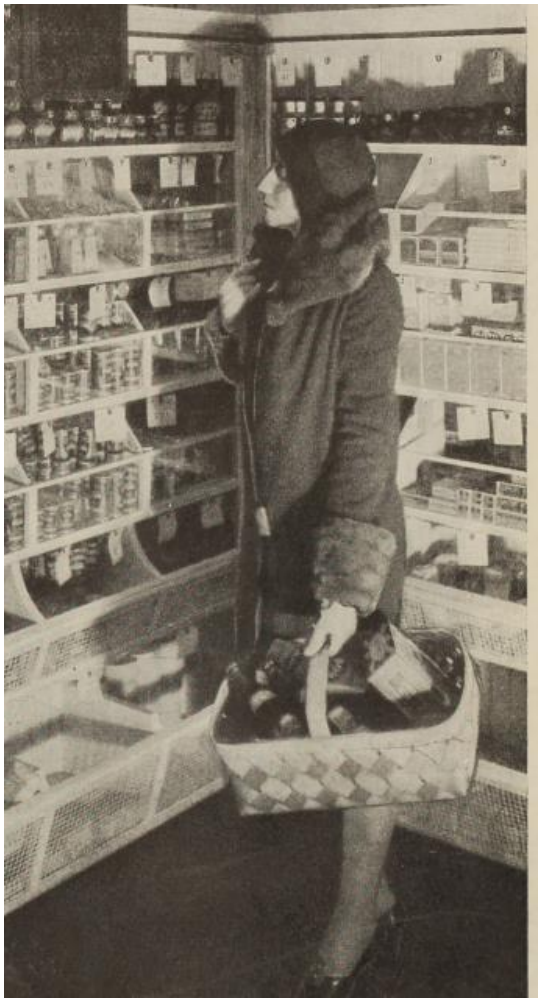
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[108] H.R. Kemp, "Different Types of Business," *Canadian Grocer* (Feb. 14, 1930): 43.
[109] "Swing Back to Service," *Canadian Grocer,* (Feb. 28, 1930): 30.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Heron, 165.

operated by central control in offices up to eighty miles away.[112] Discussed further in Chapter 4, the distant control offices of grocery chains only added to the growing hostility of independent grocers toward these growing grocery giants. The existence and continual growth of chain stores meant the consuming public was patronizing them for Canada faced a financial collapse and chains were a means for saving and stretching the family purse. With a tinge of skepticism, Hutson asked: "Is the public which does its shopping in this type of establishment getting what it thinks it is? Does it secure better quality goods, displayed in a more pleasing way and at lower

[112] B.T.Hutson, "Has the Chain Grocery Store come to Stay?" *Maclean's Magazine*, (May 15, 1930): 13.

prices? Why is it content to become the packhorse, as it were, in place of the merchant and his staff?"[113] [Fig. 15]



[Figure 15: The idea "Serve Yourself" has been implemented to the point where the shopper actually does the work of the retail store salesman by assembling her purchases from the shelving and tables, *Maclean's*, (May 15, 1930): 13.]

Hutson's overarching question for his column was if the small independent retailer would survive the pace of chain store expansion. As this section articulates, the independent retailer survived in spite of grocery giants.

It was no longer possible for "the merchant to high-hat his customer: the customer high-hatted him and insisted on her every wish being granted."[114] As scientific methods were

[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid.

introduced in store arrangement, store display, hygiene, stock control, and store management while waste in goods, time, and money was eliminated. In addition, mass selling resulted in manufacturers increasing their volume and an influx of goods tends to lower costs and reduce prices for retailers and consumers.[115] While progressive grocers and chain stores both adopted these methods of retailing – the *Grocer*, at times, instructed the independent retailer to look toward the technique of the chain store. The chain was able to differentiate itself by price. Loblaw Stores and Loblaw Groceterias adopted the slogan "We Sell for Less" for prices could be reduced because of the ability to purchase in bulk and the elimination of credit, service, and delivery.

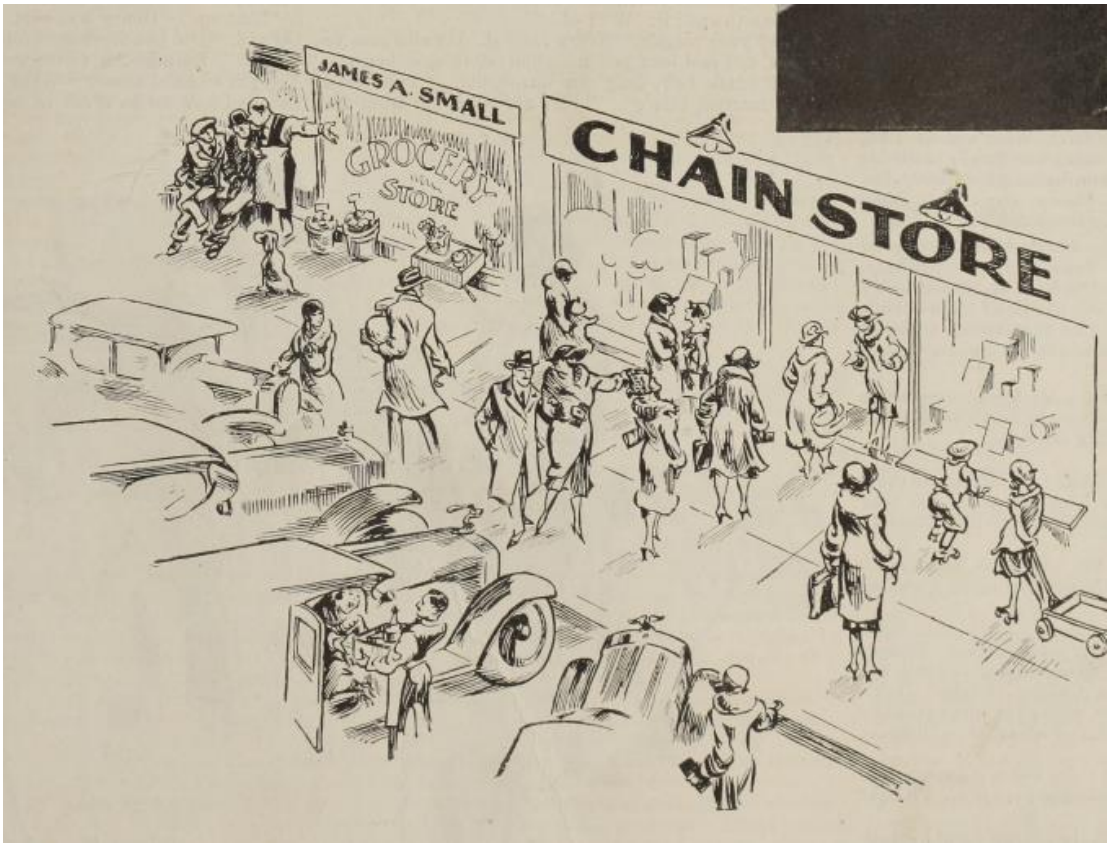
Individual merchants complained that chain stores cut the heart out of food prices. Chain stores fought back and argued prices were cut long before their existence.[116] J.L.A. Grenier, president of the Montreal Wholesale Grocers' Guild weighed in on this debate. While Grenier contended that the rapid growth of competition had eliminated the inefficient in the grocery business, the sheer volume of chain stores had depressed prices amongst themselves, which had a knock-on effect with independent merchants.[117] For example, one unnamed chain helped depress potato prices by initiating a "potato week" and featured potatoes at a very low price.[118]

Was there a place in merchandising for the independent retailer? It is undeniable that there were fewer independent merchants in towns and cities where chains have setup shop, especially in Toronto. But, as chapter 3 argues, the progressive independent merchant was left in a stronger position and the inefficient, as described by the grocery press, had largely been weeded out.[119]

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[115] Ibid., 70
[116] "Says Chains are Responsible for Price Cutting of Manufacturers' Brands," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 18, 1931): 42.
[117] "Jobber puts blame on chains for low prices in foods," 17.
[118] J.E. Boyle, "Competition More and more on Quality and Service Basis," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 1, 1929): 39.
[119] "Statistics show some Grocers to be falling down on the job," 70.

One advantage the independent retailer had was the ability to watch closely the changing buying habits of the public. This personal connection with each customer that made the store bell ring was an opportunity to not only sell at lower prices, offer delivery, extend credit, but understand what was a typical budget, a staple in the home, or the latest menu trend encouraged by the Chatelaine Institute. The most obvious aversion to the chain store was that no matter the inducement a non-service type of store may present, there was a large percentage of the public that would not buy goods from such a store because they were willing to pay for services in addition to the cost of goods. There were some independent merchants who saw the chain store which operated on their street not as a competitor but as free advertisement [Fig. 16]. The below image depicts a number of women and children either having shopped or on route into the chain store.



[Figure 16: The Chain Store Town, *Maclean's Magazine*, (May 15, 1930): 13]

The "James A. Small" store, according to *Maclean's* writer, B.T. Hutson, would reap the benefits of the bustling chain store next door, as they could offer service and if they desired, credit, for their customers unlike the chain. It was likely beneficial to belong to a heavily frequented shopping street, even if the space was shared between different retailers rather than to be isolated and inconvenient out of the way. If the groceteria system and Loblaw Market stores were an indication of what was popular, customers enjoyed the timesaving, one-stop shopping experience. Hutson argued that a chain store was a "live-wire" store with good advertisement, were bright and attractive, and lured buyers in from more rural districts.[120] The independent store could offer competitive prices for those that decided on delivery and a personalized shopping experience, should the shopper choose to forgo the turnstile of the next door chain store on this occasion.

The advantages of the independent store were a consistent topic in the opinion pieces in the *Grocer*. An independent store could offer the personal touch, service, intimate familiarity with the individual preferences of customers, the opportunity to cater to the more unusual requests, freedom of action for the merchant, and the "virtue of ready adaptability and warm responsiveness."[121] One independent merchant prided himself in his connection to those who patronized his shop: "I find it pays to make a careful study of each individual customer. […] For one thing, I try to remember his name and street address. When he comes the next time, he'll feel more at home if he's greeted with 'good morning, Mr. Jones,' than he would if it were just 'good morning.'"[122] In a similar manner, another set the scene for the heroism of the independent retailer. The scene: an unexpected avalanche of relatives for New Year's dinner and all stores are

[120] Hutson, 74.
[121] Juluis Klein, "No Place for the 'Gadget-Juggles' Type of Retailer Today," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 1, 1929): 20.
[122] "Value of Getting a Line on the Customer," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 1912): 118.

closed, "your frantic girl friend wants service and wants it badly […] This is when the patron of the independent is glad that she had her regular dealer, whom she can reach on the telephone and of whom she is not afraid to ask a favor."[123] For the independent who was willing to go above and beyond for a loyal patron, personal relationships between grocer and customer were viewed as worth while.

Although contributors to the *Grocer* were often critical of chain stores – never to the point of alienating their chain-owner readership – owners of independent shops were regaled with the desirable qualities of the chain they should adopt for themselves. The chain store was a great teacher, remarked Paul Findlay.[124] To his class of retailers attending his Extension Course at the University of Toronto, Findlay praised the scientific methods adopted by chain store organizations, many of which methods – from layout, advertisement, and hygiene – have been subsumed by independent stores. Although an adept student, the independent store, argued Findlay, could excel over most chains. He explained, "Any man running his own store can beat any hired man running a store for someone else. But it must be run right […] It's the man that counts every time."[125] It was the independent store that excelled in three fundamental categories: personality, delivery, and credit which survived the rapid expansion of chains in the early 1920s. It was these independent merchants who "were setting the competition."[126] Others echoed how the retail grocer was better at business than ever before, largely due to the aggressiveness of the chain stores which have helped weed out the inefficient independents.[127]

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[123] "Emergency Service Needs Patronage," *Canadian Grocer,* (Mar. 15, 1929): 25.
[124] "Keeping Up with Mary," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 17, 1930): 17.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.
[127] C.L. Marshall, "Retail merchant never more efficient than he is today," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 3, 1930): 17. C.L. Marshall of C.L Marshall & Company, grocer business for more than 40 years.

Self-service chains could reduce overhead costs; it was the independent who could operate cheaper even with full-service offered. For example, as Findlay explained in his lecture,

> A non-service man can't turn a hand until a customer comes into the store, whereas the service merchant can be busy on the telephone from 8 o'clock in the morning. The chain does little of its business the first days of the week but from 12 o'clock on Saturday until closing time, does sometimes as much as 40 per cent of the week's trade or more. […] Chain stores carried from 750 to 1,000 lines. The individual merchant up to 4,000 or more. There were always customers for the additional goods and they have to buy them from the individual merchant."[128]

The big city chain could capture customers by advertising, display, and cost-cutting. If the self-service or cash-only shops were as efficient in the personal talks and connections with customers, they would earn a larger portion of the industry. For this reason, the independent – in all its personality and charm, it was argued – meant it would always be a competitor in the grocery trade.

Not long after their explosive growth, chain stores were accused of adopting unethical methods in buying. The rapidity with which well-operated chains with central control could market a new product made their services highly sought after by manufacturers. Combined with their buying power, this gave chain stores an upper hand in bargaining. One leading Toronto wholesaler, Hugh Blain, accused chain stores of attempting to form a monopoly and paralyzing the independent retailer. In response, T.P. Loblaw publicly refuted this statement and argued that "we may have driven from the field some of the weaker stores that were doomed to fail anyway" and there was no "illegitimate profit" had been made by chain stores.[129] Despite Loblaw's claim that chain stores protected the public and manufacturers from inflationary wholesale prices, others in the grocery trade continued to disagree. "They are the dictators, and they demand concessions from manufacturers" *Maclean's* continued, "They ask for and secure substantial

[128] "Keeping Up with Mary," 54.
[129] "Denies Chain Stores Contemplate Monopoly," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Feb. 7, 1925): 3.

discounts because of their huge purchases; they get advertising allowances from manufacturers for advertising the latter's goods in their own newspaper space and in their stores."[130] While the columnist did not provide names, he implicated some chains for insisting upon an entrance fee which ranged from $1000 to $5000 from manufacturers to put their goods into stock, or request a case of product free per store before agreeing to place it on their shelves.[131] The demand for more concessions on merchandise purchased had put them in the bad with a number of groups, including social welfare insurance, banking, and the general public who believed there may have been more in the "chain store movement than merely a desire to
furnish the necessities of life at lower cost by eliminating waste in distribution."[132] Unlike the independently operated stores that were embedded in neighborhoods, chain stores were designed to work in coordination with each other, overseen not by local proprietors but regional and national management.[133] When access to individual autonomy through the purchase of material goods was viewed as threatened because of the chain store, the moral integrity of the grocery industry and how state officials failed to protect their collective interests was questioned. As Chapter 4 illustrates, the limits of the grocery trade are tested, and challenged by female shoppers, during periods of national crisis and instability.

Conclusion

The modernization of food production and distribution in Toronto in the mid-to-late nineteenth and early twentieth century helped transform the experience of food shopping. The first wave of food regulations and government initiatives to protect the buyer focused on the

[130] Ibid., 3. Hutson, 70.
[131] Hutson, 70.
[132] "Price Concessions Said to be key to Chain Store Troubles," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 14, 1930): 16.
[133] Deutsch, 44.

hygiene and sanitation of food production. As a result, this forced households to purchase commercially produced goods as their ability to do so was increasingly restricted, particularly in the downtown core of Toronto where working-class families lived. While many women would have continued to feed their households with limited assistance from commercial products, especially those who lived closer to public markets or had a pedlar frequent their neighbourhood, new habits were slowly taking root in Toronto under the impact of the forces of mass production and a cash economy.[134] Although the Loblaw brand, supported by the *Grocer*, was a proponent of the cash-and-carry method, the ability to extend and obtain credit remained an important facet of the grocery industry. The extension of credit was not free of liabilities and was unstable; cash was clean transaction, standardized, and further removed the familiarity between the grocer and the shopper. This was the anonymity and autonomy that modernity in the grocery trade could offer, as perpetuated by the periodical press, to women.

The *Grocer* heavily documented and encouraged the professionalization and standardization of the trade from its inaugural issue in 1886. Selections of national brands were advertised and offered to shoppers at an unprecedented scale in the attempt to replace homemade alternatives. Food shopping for the family was not necessarily a new development, however patterns had slowly evolved from the production of goods in the home of staples such as meats and dairy, to a culture of haggling with farmers at the market, bargaining with local merchants, to pre-determined unchangeable costs for goods to be paid for at a modern cash register, paper-bagged, and carried home or loaded into the family car.[135] The sheer quantity of food that was heavily advertised, packaged, purposefully aligned in storefront windows, and in some stores, that was available to hold, assess, and evaluate by one's self could turn grocery shopping into a daunting

[134] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 128. Bradbury, "Pigs, Cows, and Boarders," 32, 46.
[135] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 128-129.

task. The expansion and modernization of the grocery trade coincided with the rise of advice literature and the advent of mass-magazines where “mothers-instinct” was challenged by home and nutrition experts, and grocers entered a period of intense competition with one another to earn the loyalty of those readers.

Chapter Two: The Tricks of the Trade

Introduction

To their readers, the *Grocer* boasted that there was limitless room at the top for those in the business.[1] However, the path to the top was heavily guarded by a rising number of experts (which included the *Grocer*) of technology, scientific management, and the possibilities of modern retailing. Each section in this chapter moves from the turn of the century to first three decades of the twentieth century to demonstrate how this period of expert advice literature intensified. I borrow Mary Poovey's definition of the expert throughout this chapter, wherein the expert was someone who had the privilege of interpreting a system (of trade, or of the home), which, not incidentally, only the expert could see.[2] The experts that appear within my chapter relied heavily on gender norms to do the work. Periodical literature tried to legitimize women's domestic work by characterizing it as traditional and tried to capitalize on it, while grappling with the persistence of productive labour that continued inside the household. This chapter examines how women, as workers and consumers, were central to the growth of the grocery sector in Toronto and how the prescribed affiliation of women with domestic production accelerated under industrial modernity, where responsibilities to oversee the household and children grew, complicating and gendering the figure of the modern grocery shopper.

The Makings of a Salesman

In the late nineteenth to early twentieth century, as young women were ushered into Domestic Science classes, young men were often expected to follow their fathers into the family grocery business to become the eventual successor. In 1891, the *Grocer* published the column

[1] Ibid., 22.
[2] Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact, xvii*.

"Make Men of Your Boys," which documented the anxiety concerning the next generation of the family shop. The column asked the reader if – as an owner, merchant, and father –they felt confident that their sons would be a credit and honor to their business, legacy, and reputation that they had worked hard to build.[3] Grocers were instructed to bring their sons into their store to show them the layout of the store, how to arrange products in an ornamental fashion, and how business was conducted. The *Grocer's* assumption that these fathers occupied a brick-and-mortar store, rather than operating out of their living room or a crude set-up of foodstuffs in the back alley, further established what the editors at the *Grocer* considered the proper class and appropriate reflection of the grocery trade.[4] The author wrote that for his sons he had a "fine shop fitted up for them, provided with tools and materials, where they make what ever they choose for playthings or home adornment. They saw wood, assist in keeping the place in order, do the marketing and other chores, for which service we pay them a regular salary."[5] Their son's development of manual and practical skills therefore achieved two things: the value of a dollar and the character of a future merchant. On the other hand, the column cautioned that unrestricted wealth would only result in trouble and an out-of-touch merchant with his customers. The "rich storekeepers' sons [who] do not amount to much," the columnist continued, "have no ambition beyond that of being a swell, which chiefly consists in scenting and bejeweling oneself and wearing gaudy appeal," smart businessmen knew the mistake in allowing their boys "unrestricted freedom and a liberal amount of money to squander."[6] The merchant father should try to make men of their boys to avoid "thankless and greedy heirs" who simply wait for "dead men's

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[3] "Make Men of your Boys," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 18, 1891): 18.Af
[4] In his examination of twentieth century shopkeeping, Monod has argued that for middle-class peoples the home was perceived as a retreat, and the ability to separate home and work was a 'hallmark of bourgeois respectability' where some working-class merchants needed to sacrifice their domestic ideals to financial realities and sell their wares from their home, *Store Wars*, pg. 34-35.
[5] "Make Men of your Boys," 18.
[6] Ibid.

shoes."[7] With their fathers' help in their store, young boys could learn the value of a dollar, and knowledge of store operation as they made their foray as future businessmen. A certain level of masculinity was awarded to boys who were shaped into men through a fixed-address grocery store, their knowledge of food, and mastery of how business was managed. However, food continued to be gendered and associated with the domestic economy for female workers and customers.

To meet the new twentieth century standard of retail business, some viewed apprenticeship – a system of training to acquire the skills of a particular trade – as an essential step to secure a high level of service and status.[8] To train others in their likeness, the merchant first needed to become an expert of the trade and acquaint themselves with every phase of the business. To do so, contributor for the *Grocer,* L.C. Mortimer, claimed:

> He must pass through the experiences of other men - his predecessors in the business, before he himself can contribute anything to the trade…It would seem then that it would not be for the best interests of the grocery business as a whole, that a grocer should have control of a grocery business before he is thoroughly competent to do so. If he has not passed through the training necessary to equip himself with that efficiency by which the trade is standardized, is he not weakening in some sense the standard of the business in which he participates?[9]

While the majority of grocers did not think a clerk needed to serve an apprenticeship, likely because the merchant did not complete a rigid apprenticeship himself, a few recognized the necessity of competent clerkship before they joined the shop floor.[10] When the journal was still in its infancy, the *Grocer* explicitly endorsed the opinion that the "most prevalent cause of failure

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[7] Ibid.
[8] Apprenticeship long predates the nineteenth century, and its origins can be traced back to the Middle Ages throughout Europe. The hierarchical and system of specialized and practical training were brought over to Canada in the seventeenth century. See, Joanne Burgess, "The Growth of a Craft Labour Force: Montreal Leather Artisans, 1815-1831," *Historical Papers*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (1988): 48-62.
[9] L.C. Mortimer, "Concerning the Retail Salesman and His work," *Canadian Grocer,* (Jan. 21, 1910): 31. See also *Canadian Grocer,* (Aug. 27, 1897): 15.
[10] Mortimer, "Concerning the Retail Salesman and His work," 31.

in business was a lack of apprenticeship."[11] Those that had entered the trade without having completed an apprenticeship, and struggled with their business and staff, they tended to blame the conditions of the trade or their successful rivals rather than their own knowledge of the industry.[12] Apprenticeship or not, it was a risk to have an unexperienced clerk weigh sugar or flour, under-weighing could cost the shop and over-weighing could cost a customer; they could respond impolitely to the shopper, have an untidy appearance, or poor attendance. More than a potential threat to profit, Mortimer continued, "it might be further argued that for the security of the public health and comfort, the inexperienced man or woman should not be allowed control of a grocery business."[13] As the *Grocer* continued to share scientific instruction for retailing and a vision of a standardized trade, there was, in theory, little room for disordered routines of the past.[14]

To further support the *Grocer's* vision of a modernized and scientific trade, the accolades of the Loblaw brand were repeatedly highlighted. In his version of his life's history, told to *Maclean's Magazine* (the publishing house for *Grocer*) T.P. Loblaw recounted how his experience under an apprenticeship provided him an intimate knowledge of grocery retailing. An orphan at age fifteen, Loblaw had moved to his uncle's farm near Elmgrove, Ontario where he would need to walk eight miles a day to the closest school in the Essa township.[15] Farm work often pushed Loblaw's schoolwork to the background and was able to attend school for six months of the year. Farm work was arduous and paid little, "there was little or nothing about [this work] to fire a boy with ambition…he made up his mind that he would rather work behind a

[11] "The Apprenticeship System," *Canadian Grocer*, (Aug. 27, 1897): 15.
[12] Harvey, "How a clerk's savings can start him in business," 58.
[13] Mortimer, 31.
[14] Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 34.
[15] Ayearst, "He Created a $10,000,000 Business in Seven Years," 17.

counter than behind the plow."[16] His uncle, however, was unsympathetic to such ambition and refused to advance his weekly salary to aid Loblaw's move to the city. Loblaw instead hired himself out to another farmer to pick apples for ten dollars a month. After two months, in 1890, at eighteen years old, with twenty dollars in his pocket, Loblaw exchanged farm life for a new life in Toronto.

In the 1927 interview with *Macleans,* Loblaw narrated his early years in Toronto and guidance under the Cork's. Soon after arriving in Toronto, Loblaw met Milton Cork, future co-founder of the Loblaw chain, who had begun his grocery career at age 16 in 1886. Working in his father's small grocery store W.G. Cork's at 400 King St. E, Toronto. Both bewildered and broke by city life, Loblaw was employed at the Cork store on King St. as a clerk, earning $3 a week.[17] His room and board in the city cost Loblaw $3.50 a week, but he was content to have begun his business career behind the counter of Cork's grocery store. Loblaw shared with the magazine, "It is unfortunate that so many of our young men to-day want to pick out a job that will pay them the most at the start. That is a short-sighted and mighty dangerous policy."[18] However, despite a positive outlook, it was not long before his capital fell below his payments to his landlady. Mrs. Cork persuaded a neighbour to allow Loblaw to board for $3 a week, with the understanding he would share the same room as their son. When Cork increased Loblaw's pay to $3.50 a week, he quickly learned the value of a dollar, and each week he was "fifty cents ahead of the game."[19] When employed in the Cork store the system of keeping track of a customer's purchases was complicated. As a result, Loblaw sought out night school to learn bookkeeping.[20]

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[16] Ibid., 55.
[17] C. Fred Bodsworth, "He Knows His Groceries," *Macleans*, (Nov. 15, 1948): 16. *The Toronto City Directory*, Might Directories Limited, (1892): 998.
[18] Ayearst, 17.
[19] Ibid., 17, 55.
[20] T.P. Loblaw was obligated to work four nights a week and could only commit to two nights at the business college.

Shortly after, with $800 accrued from a $11 a week salary and entered partnership with Cork under the style of J.M. Cork & Co., Loblaw bought into Cork's College Street location. At this store, alongside the new bookkeeping system, Loblaw studied merchandising methods, costs, characteristic foresight, and began to plan for the future. Loblaw's vision for his career was to extend far beyond a small corner grocery store.

Loblaw credited another influence in his early retailing training to Lucy Cork, Milton's mother. Although she had never been employed as a grocer like her husband and son, she taught Loblaw the value of hygiene and cleanliness in a retail space. On which, Loblaw later reflected, "I believe that cleanliness in the handling of food contributes in no small way to the health of a community."[21] While some grocers modernized their store at the end of the nineteenth century, it would not be until the early decades of the twentieth, discussed at length in the following chapter, for glass displays, hygiene, order, and cleanliness would become indivisible from retail grocery shops and staff. Mrs. Cork offered her instruction and expectation of the retailing experience, akin to the women who patronized future Loblaw Stores across the city. It is also this advice that highlights the unevenness of modernity in the grocery sector as Loblaw and his brand of groceterias stores became synonymous with what was considered modern, and yet, he credited Mrs. Cork and the familial knowledge he had learned through his apprenticeship (he had no specialist or institutional training) to his success.

The first time Loblaw had been

named by the *Grocer* was in 1899 when the journal praised him for his success in climbing the career ranks from clerk to proprietor.[22] This praise for Loblaw and the brand he cultivated was

[21] Bodsworth, "He Knows His Groceries," 16.
[22] "Among Toronto Retailers," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jul. 14, 1899) 17.

certainly not the last. Under the supervision of Milton Cork, Loblaw was awarded the title of expert in "counter culture" and the business of retail by the *Grocer*.[23]

Before the groceteria style of shopping and the cash-and-carry method became synonymous with the modern grocery trade by the late 1920s, clerks required in-depth knowledge of the goods kept behind the counter, out of reach of the customer. For the salesperson who had not been brought into the trade by familial ties, workers needed to speak intelligently about the lines and show initiative, to "dig deep and hard for it. Dig into the trade papers and other forms of literature […] The more valuable the knowledge, the more difficult it is of attainment. But the reward is worth the effort."[24] Just as women were instructed to know the values and costs of the goods they purchased, discussed later in this chapter, it was imperative grocers and staff knew their inventory. In traditional grocery stores, where long counters separated the clerk and customer, the customer relied on the clerk to select and present the items they chose. In doing so, grocers were often held liable for the quality of the goods. As Deutsch has observed, poor quality flour hastily hoisted onto the counter may not mean the store carried bad flour, but that the clerk had refused to get the good flour from the backroom, because they were lazy, wanted to dupe the customer into paying high price for poor quality.[25] Either way, a customer who demanded attention, equitable treatment, and value for their money, would feel slighted by the interaction and could, quite as easily, hastily spread news of such a poor experience to her social circle.

Determining who deserved quality service, an extension of credit, or keen attention was a skill grocers needed to learn through personal experience and from experts in the trade. To help guide this process, the *Grocer* repeatedly profiled the advice of retail experts like Johnson Jr.

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[23] Benson, *Counter Cultures*, 2.
[24] "The New Era in the Grocery Trade," 29.
[25] Deutsch, *Building a Housewife's Paradise,* 33.

Johnson Jr., which was a pseudonym for his real name, Paul Findlay, was heralded as one of the most successful dealers in North America with over forty years in the retail grocery business, and regular correspondent for the *Grocer*, questioned: "In theory, by precept and mostly in practice we treat all customers the same […] But is it right, or sensible, or good business to do that? […] Is it not actually more just and proper for us to consider the value of the customer to us as well as our obligation to her as a class?'[26] Service should be provided to all customers, he continued, but not every customer that entered the store received equal treatment. Although scientific management required standardization and obedience, where "no worker ought to be permitted, or tempted, to 'go his own way'" the *Grocer* sometimes gendered and made the female consumer a problem for young male clerks.[27]

Quality service was inadvertently predicated on class as much as it was on a customer's mannerisms. The prescriptive advice of the *Grocer* warned their majority male readership that female customers had a range of mannerisms and emotions that needed to be appropriately managed by male staff. The ideal customer would have a clean and organized relationship to the store, where there was no messiness of unpaid or outstanding debts from extended credit and would be devoutly loyal in exchange for careful and specialized service provided to them. The *Grocer* published Johnson Jr's fictious scenario to guide readers through such gendered (and emotional) encounters. In this scenario there was Mrs. Pratt, a widow living alone, who would neither shop exclusively at her local store nor purchase large amounts from there. There was no reward for special service rendered to her.[28] Another woman, Mrs. Perkins, who bought more

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[26] "Five Don'ts for Clerks," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 7, 1919): 61. *Canadian Grocer*, (Aug. 14, 1914): 29. There is no clear reason why Findlay/Johnson Jr. wrote under a pseudonym. He most often went by Johnson Jr. when he authored pieces for the *Grocer* as a correspondent and as Findlay (his legal name) when he gave public lectures to retailers.
[27] Stephen, 34.
[28] "Five Don'ts for Clerks," 61.

liberally (but only slightly so) was exacting in her demands, and asked for a selection of peppers of "even size and of the same shade of green," and wanted her sliced bacon uncontaminated from the odors of the refrigerator.[29] In this case, Johnson Jr. surmised Perkins carried four steady grocery accounts across town. To compensate for her particularities, he proposed his staff remain courteous but are prepared with a special figure for her to pay. If asparagus is 15 cents per pound, he said, "we know she is going to ask us to select specially straight, even-sized stalks; so the price we name to her is 20 cents."[30] In the case of Mrs. Exton, whom also had particular demands, had shopped exclusively at the store for twenty years and remained loyal and confident in her grocer to supply her with high-quality goods. Exton would receive the best prices, quality, and "painstaking attention and every preference we [could] offer." Despite this scenario, Johnson Jr. admitted "favouring those whose accounts make favours profitable" and to distinguish these accounts from those which, even in the most favourable circumstances, "tend to become liabilities instead of assets."[31] Although the overly "fussy" or "know-it-all" female shopper was framed as an unpredictable and problematic, the *Grocer* offered advice such as this to help standardize and predict the customer.[32]

Familiarity with a customer was considered essential to avoid such liabilities. In another warning, the *Grocer* gendered the undesirable customer. The journal included the encounter one male grocer had of the fashionably dressed "sugar-mouthed customer" who with "words of appreciation will often hoodwink you into giving her credit."[33] This grocer had trusted a new customer, a well-dressed woman, who had praised the store, his prompt service, and quality of

[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid., 62.
[31] Ibid 61
[32] Elmer Wheeler, "Watch Your Bark!" *Canadian Grocer*, (Nov. 15, 1939): 24.
[33] Tobey, "Just Too Sweet," 31.

goods. She appeared to not only be an asset to his account but would bring her other respectable friends during her outings. Instead, the grocer was left with unrequited payments once he had offered the woman credit and found that she was "practically worthless" with an out-of-work husband. He cautioned to others, "it's alright to sell the sugar, but beware of the kind that comes from the other side of the counter."[34] In the grocery store gender, language, dress, and manner were important mechanisms for grounding identities that were "debated, ranked, tested, propagated, and normalized."[35] The imagined modern female shopper the *Grocer* had marketed to its readers – fashionable, loyal, profitable – often remained simply an ideal with the reality of gendered encounters unsettling such expectations.

Even if a "sugar-mouthed" customer had seemingly hoodwinked a grocer into extending credit, the retailer, not the credit system itself, was at fault. The *Grocer* published several articles by fellow retailers and members of the R.M.A. who recommended that grocers collect a customers name in full, the occupation (or husband's occupation), if they had previously traded with the grocer, the amount of his income, if he is a property holder, and if he draws his money weekly, fortnightly, or once a month.[36] The prescriptive advice groomed readers of the *Grocer* to expect that the consumer was a married woman shopping on behalf of her husbands account, spending his money. As an additional assurance, the grocer may ask the patron if they could be considered a customer; entering into an unspoken contract shop loyalty.[37] This was not an arbitrary consideration for "it was said to be an unknown thing for a woman to get credit from a grocer without inquiry as to her standing as a "good customer." It makes no difference who she

[34] Ibid.
[35] Deutsch, 43.
[36] B.H. Thomas, "The Proper Handling of Credits Protects Business," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 27, 1910): 96 and "What a Retailer Should Know about Credit Customers," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 20, 1910): 32.
[37] Thomas, "The Proper Handling of Credits Protects Business," 96.

may be, every store does the same thing" if she asked for credit, she was then referred to the manager "who in turn politely asks for references. Going to another store does not help any for the woman finds herself up against the same proposition."[38] Supposedly, an applicant for credit with good intentions and is responsible would willingly provide the above information. It was the grocer's arbitrary decision to determine if their customer should have a credit limit and what that limit should be.

However, a systematic credit system, meant that the grocer and their customer shared a friendly, business relation, and mutual understanding with one another.[39] Mindful interactions between customer and clerk created lasting impressions and familiarity with patrons was essential to avoid potential credit liabilities. The question of credit (trust)worthiness was a highly personalized and gendered process.

Prescriptive advice from the *Grocer* varied from instruction for young men to manage female customers, to how they managed their own appearance where their authority was bolstered as a representative of modern science. For clerks who adorned a long white apron they impressed a message of order, consistency, and expertise. A uniform that mimicked the laboratory coat of scientists.[40] The apron was material evidence of the stores' commitment to modernity through its cleanliness and scientific appearance. Under the surveillance of customers, the crisp white uniform could alert patrons to any dirt and grime. The *Grocer* repeatedly told their readers how the appearance of the stores' staff needed to make a good first impression and be as orderly as the canned goods that loomed from the high shelves [Fig. 1]. The below photograph of the Loblaw Groceterias employees reflects this advice. A former Loblaw employee stated that

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[38] "Items Done Up in Brief for Busy Merchants," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 20, 1910): 30.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, 162.

"working on the floor you were required to wear dark pants, a white shirt, black bow tie, white coat, and white apron."[41] The female employees in the photo mirror a similar requirement with white coats, a dark skirt, and have short, styled hair. Another former employee stated that T.P. Loblaw would visit the stores on Saturdays with his secretary and she would "check hairnets, white shoes, and stockings for the girls, while Mr. Loblaw would demonstrate how the hardwood floor should be swept."[42] In this way, the labouring body needed a clean and attractive appearance to generate and bolster store sales.[43]

The dry goods in the windows behind the employees are equally as orderly and neatly arranged, with the "sale of



[Figure 1: Loblaw Groceterias Limited, Store No. 1, Exterior, Employee Group Photograph. 2923 Dundas St. West, Toronto, Ca. 1922. George Weston Archives.]

[41] David Peter Thomson, *George Weston Limited: 125 Years* (2009), 45.
[42] J.W. Page, *George Weston Limited: 125 Years* (2009), 32.
[43] Donica Belisle, "A Labour Force for the Consumer Century: Commodification in Canada's Largest Department Stores, 1890 to 1940," *Labour/Le Travail*, Vol. 58 (Fall 2006): 111-112.

today" price cards are intentionally hung, creating a sense of symmetry in the window.[44] One grocer offered his advice to others, and warned that a "woman instinctively shuns the unshaven, unwashed, unlaundered man. An extravagant laundry bill proves a most important asset…"[45] Another cautioned grocers to be wary of who they employed because foodstuffs were held, packaged, and money exchanged hand-to-hand with customers, "any deformity, such as mis-shaped hands, rough skin, imperfect speech" was a potential "handicap in the grocery business."[46] While there is no explicit evidence to suggest grocers were discriminatory in their hiring practices for reasons such as these, the overwhelming value the *Grocer* attributed to service and experience of the customer, it is likely certain appearances or qualities were favored over others. Much like the strategy employed by Eaton's, publication of photographs or sketches of Loblaw employees in the *Toronto Daily Star* often emphasized their competence, attractiveness, efficiency, and whiteness.[47] A well-groomed staff in their science-inspired uniform, were a symbol of the modern grocery trade, but their appearance would not be the only quality of salesmanship required to persuade, suggest, and instruct customers to make purchases. However, employability discourses and the gendering of the labouring female body, where physical attributes and personality were itemized, was reproduced in sketches for the general

[44] The Loblaw Groceterias did not have traditional counters and operated under the cash and carry style of retailing. The white apron was a staple across many grocery stores throughout the early-to-mid twentieth century. As Loblaws was rebranded and launched their supermarket chains across Ontario, annual reports from 1950 continued to show photographs of men and women staff in similar white uniforms.
[45] "Montreal Grocer Talks Service, Not Prices," *Canadian Grocer,* (Jul. 31, 1914): 23.
[46] A.H. Harvey, "How a clerk's savings can start him in business," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 4, 1910): 58.
[47] Belisle, "A Labour Force for the Consumer Century," 132, 143. In her article Belisle contends that department store illustrations of workers (and customers) represented ideals and not realities, and yet, hiring predominately white workers demonstrated that those whose appearances 'matched prevailing race, class, and gender ideals had better chances of employment success.'

public and in text distributed to the readership of the *Grocer*, all of which contributed to expert knowledge about female workers.[48]

Women Behind the Counter

Even in the most modern scenarios, employed or shopping in the newest cash-and-carry store, pictured in flashy advertisements, or demonstrating the latest-and-greatest products at the inexplicably modern CNE or on the groceteria floor, women were anchored to traditional gender roles or generational knowledge in the popular press. Female entrepreneurship had grown slowly but steadily in the nineteenth century. Married women in English Canada obtained the right to transact business independently from their husbands in the 1870s and 1880s. The image of the business girl would soon become recognizable – and hotly debated.[49] As more women moved into such positions, women's columnists were quick to remind their readers that "business will do much for you. It will make you quick, alert, self-reliant and progressive. Being a business girl gives you no excuse for lack of gentle manners."[50] The entrance of women into clerical or administrative roles can be traced to the late nineteenth century and Graham Lowes analysis of women's work in Canadian offices describes how such jobs were "sex labelled."[51] The evolution of modern administration during first three decades of the twentieth century, Lowe argues, created a new stratum of clerical jobs and the entrance of women coincided with many "new fragmented, routine jobs in the lower reaches of administrative hierarchies" wherein employers could tailor the labour supply by manipulating demand characteristics and attaching "female

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[48] Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 35-37. Stephen's examination of the aptitude tests used during the Second World War to mobilize Canadian womanpower, reveals that the cultivating specific occupational skills intensified the gendering of the female labouring body by physical (height, weight), mental capabilities, and emotional attributes (which were harder to standardize).
[49] Monod, 45.
[50] Laura A. Smith, "What I Found Out as a Business Girl," *Maclean's Magazine*, (Dec. 1, 1907) 4, 7.
[51] Graham Lowe, "Women, Work and the Office: The Feminization of Clerical Occupations in Canada 1901-1931," *The Canadian Journal of Sociology,* Vol. 5 No. 4 (1980): 362-363, 368.

only" to job advertisements.[52] Vocational aptitude for young women was often attributed to their "manipulative dexterity and speed," and were best suited for work that required skill but limited physical exertion or strength.[53] Most clerical workers were concentrated in urban centres, like Toronto, which made the pool of untapped potential for female grocery workers rich.[54] As women, married or otherwise, were gradually established as a labour reserve for administrative work, or waged labour more broadly, the grocery industry tapped into this reserve.

The grocery retail sector used its marketing expertise to portray and debate how to itemize and gender the workforce successfully. While some women were employed as store clerks, however, unlike male clerks, they were also instructed to mind the children who accompanied their mothers, sell lower-priced stock such as confectionary, and were hired as demonstrators or biscuit girls. Women workers entered a segregated labour market with lower pay, fewer opportunities, often part-time employment, and were, at times, characterized as dispensable in the workforce.[55]

As more married middle-class women entered the waged workforce in the grocery trade during the early decades of the twentieth century, as clerks, salesladies, bookkeepers, and packers, there had been plenty of discourse in *Chatelaine* and the *Grocer* on the subject. Economic and social questions of marriage continued to flood the desk of the *Chatelaine*

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[52] Lowe, "Women, Work and the Office," 366, 368-369.
[53] Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 35, 171.
[54] Belisle, *Retail Nation,* 160.
[55] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 3-4. Katrina Srigley, "'In case you hadn't noticed!': Race, Ethnicity, and Women's Wage-Earning in a Depression-Era City," *Labour/Le Travail*, 55 (Spring 2005): 95. Shirley Tillotson, "'We May All Soon be First-Class Men': Gender and Skill in Canada's Early Twentieth Century Urban Telegraph Industry," in *Gender and History in Canada*, eds. Joy Parr and Mark Rosenfeld, (Toronto: Copp Clark Ltd., 1996): 236, 238. Robert McIntosh, "Sweated Labour: Female Needleworkers in Industrializing Canada," in *Canadian Women: A Reader*, ed. Windy Mitchinson et. al, (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada Ltd., 1996): 145, 148, 165. Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners,* 24-26. Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl,* 4, 7-8, 14, 127. Joan Sangster, *Transforming Labour: Women and Work in Postwar Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010): 6-7, 19, 145. Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982): 45-46.

editorial team in the late 1920s as more women entered waged work in Toronto. To the editor, readers had questioned: "Should wives have to be dependent on their husbands for every cent they get? Should wives have wages? Should they have a personal allowance and send the house-keeping bills to the husband? Is it economically desirable that a wife should earn money outside the home?[56] In response to questions on the household economy, one agitated man wrote to the magazine:

> My girl says she won't marry me unless I let her keep on with her work…She says the work of a modern apartment isn't enough to keep an able-bodied intelligent woman busy for more than an hour or two a day, that she doesn't like embroidering, pink teas or bridge, and what is she to do with herself all day? What am I to do? I always looked forward to having my wife dependent on me and thought what fun it would be to save up for little 'doo-dads' for her. You can't have much fun giving to somebody who has much as you.[57]

Nancy Leigh's response was, for the most part, sympathetic to the young man for he held a "traditional masculine viewpoint" which was the most difficult adjustment to make in the present transitional stage, for the wife was able to do "what she wants and getting paid for it. He is getting blamed by the outside world for allowing her to do it."[58] At times, *Chatelaine's* construction of the modern woman had economic independence. Where she could "step out to make her own place in the sun, dependent on no man," and where "most ridiculous and most tragic thing a man can do to a woman - treat her as a doll all through her married life" in response to a woman who had been excluded from all business related to the household, from

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[56] Nancy Leigh, "Wages and Wives," *Chatelaine*, (Apr. 4, 1929): 23. Strong-Boag has argued that the 1920s was the first decade in which the majority of Canadians were urban-dwellers which continued a long-established trend of favouring a disproportionately large female population in cities and increased female participation in the labour force. There were larger numbers of gainfully employed women between 16 and 34 who were most likely to be seeing both paid work and marital prospects. The Canadian 1921 and 1931 Census shows a steadily increasing number of married women entering waged employment: 35, 202 or 7.19% and 66, 798 or 10.03% in 1931. "The Girl of the New Day: Canadian Working Women in the 1920s," *Labour/Le Travailleur,* (1979): 132-133.
[57] Leigh, "Wages and Wives," 23.
[58] Ibid.

finances to life-insurance policies.[59] One woman, who ran a successful business, wrote in to express her worry that perhaps she should return home full-time, fearing she had denied her husband *something* as a result of her lifestyle. Leigh's reply to this woman, and her readers,

> Once you have become accustomed to a certain scale of living it is very difficult to retreat from it. If by your energy and your driving power you have built up a business, I do not believe you could ever have been 'just an ordinary housewife'…You are probably quite right when you feel you have taken something from your husband. There are very few big men big enough to form a real partnership with a woman, to appreciate her in the responsibilities of the home."[60]

Married women's desire to work, as a necessity or a right, was often framed by the popular press in such a way to soothe public fears (and personal fears) that the family unit would not breakdown under the weight of unemployment or national instability.[61] This apprehension of performing labour in the same occupation as men, or in place of the male breadwinner, is apparent by Mary Ann's letter to the *Canadian Home Journal*. Mary Ann claimed she preferred to work as a domestic servant because there was nothing modern about the factory girls who lived in a single room in poor or "indifferent lodgings," who could not afford good food unless they had a substantial salary – which they most likely did not – compared the room and board she was offered.[62] She continued that this line of work equipped her with the knowledge to "take charge of a house of my own […] run things smoothly, something girls who spend years in factories and behind counters cannot always do."[63] For Leigh and Mary Ann, the home was the biggest business in the world.[64]

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[59] Leigh, "Wages and Wives," 23. Nancy Leigh, "Starting Over Again," *Chatelaine*, (Jan., 1929): 34.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Margaret Hobbs, "Equality and Difference: Feminism and the Defence of Women Workers During the Great Depression," *Labour/Le Travail*, 32 (Fall 1993): 202, 216.
[62] Mary Ann, "Why I like to be a Domestic Servant," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Apr. 1922): 43.
[63] Ibid., 42.
[64] Leigh., 60.

In her reflection on her position in the business world, *Ladies Home Journal* columnist Laura Smith offered her advice to all wage-earning women:

> Do not let misguided persons stir up discontent and persuade you that you are doing "a man's work and should receive a man's salary." You are doing your own work and are entitled to the highest salary you can earn. You could not be a man in business if you tried. Really, why should you or any girl wish to be? Men get the hardest tasks, the longest hours and the hardest part of the business strain. If you grow into a woman with fine executive ability, poise and thorough knowledge of business you will command a good salary and receive a great many privileges on your own account. Be content to be a girl in business, clinging to your womanly ideals, keeping your heart young and envying no one.[65]

Women employed behind the counter need to possess expertise within the industry, rarely earning the title – or salary – of an expert or specialist like the male clerks they worked beside.

How best to employ women in the grocery trade occupied ample space within the *Grocer*. In the early years of the trade journal a column entitled "Some reflexive questions" posed varying rhetorical questions related to shop management, including: "Do lady clerks aid in bringing certain customers that you would otherwise lose?"[66] It was not until several years later that Mrs. A.L.G. came to the defense of women's labour in the grocery industry. In her reflection submitted to the *Grocer,* Mrs. A.L.G. predicted that there would be fewer men in the retail grocery business in the coming years, and their labor would instead be accoladed to physical work like handling boxes and heavy barrels.[67] Women, not men, she argued were the better judge of what to sell, particularly when it came to pantry purchases.[68]

Mrs. A. L. G. Claimed to have "experience studying the matter of women's employment, and I see that more young women are being employed in grocery stores every day…Women are peculiarly adapted to sell food products. They are better judges of foods to begin with, they are

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[65] Smith, "What I Found Out as a Business Girl," 73-74.
[66] "Some reflexive questions," *Canadian Grocer*, (Nov. 6, 1891):18.
[67] Mrs. A.L.G., "Women in the Grocery Store," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan 15, 1897): 20.
[68] Ibid.

cleaner in the second place…better adapted for keeping a grocery store or any other store where food is kept than a man."[69] To further her point, she sought out the male grocers in her city for their opinion and attitude on female clerks. There were twenty-six retail grocery stores and ten years prior, not one had a single female clerk: "They would no more have thought of employing a woman in any capacity, whether as a clerk, bookkeeper or stenographer, that they would have thought of giving goods away free of cost.[70]" Fifteen of the twenty-six stores now employed women behind the counter, and remaining eleven have women fulfill roles as book-keepers, typewriters, or demonstrators. Antipathy was slowly shifting, for these male grocers, to recognition of women's expertise and entitlement in a space where food was sold. Not content with the movement of women into clerkship ending behind the counter, Mrs. A. offered the following conclusion:

> It is but a step from the clerkship to the proprietorship of the store, and the ambitious young woman will soon feel that she has a right to open a store of her own, and I believe that when she does so her store will be conducted quite as well as any store now conducted by a man. Wherever women have once secured a foothold, they have speedily shown that they are better than men in the same positions. It is this which justifies my belief that after the first grocery store is started by a woman, others will speedily follow, and the end will be that male grocers will have to take up some other line…I have been simply giving my personal opinions, based upon considerable investigation, as well as a strong belief that women are destined to take a prominent place in the retail stores of the country.[71]

By the early decades of the twentieth century, women continued to move into clerk positions in the grocery business. However, their presence was never the majority that Mrs. A. predicted. There was a small handful of single women employed at Loblaw Store at the 459-461 College St. location in the early 1900s. Miss Jennie Ellis was employed as a bookkeeper for at least two years. Miss Luela Cowling was employed as a clerk and Miss Ida Good as a bookkeeper in

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[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.

1905.[72] The grocery industry took advantage of the administrative revolution, as Lowe views it, and young women were largely employed as bookkeepers or stenographers. Sometimes women who were employed as cashiers would have to perform bookkeeping tasks.[73] The below advertisements for positions at Loblaw locations reflect the desired womanly worker: young ladies (unmarried) and part-time work [Fig 2, 3.] Women were employed as managers in a few grocery stores across Canada, but this number was a mere fraction of the number of male managers.[74]



YOUNG LADIES WANTED, PREFERably with experience in grocery store. Apply at once. Loblaw's, 249 Logan avenue (Queen and Logan).

YOUNG LADIES TO ACT AS GROcers clerks, Saturday afternoons. Apply Loblaws, 893 Queen east.

[Figure 2: "Help Wanted-Female (Cont.)" *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jan. 15, 1919):14]

[Figure 3: "Help Wanted-Female (Cont.)" *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Aug. 2, 1919): 14]

On the "Clerk's Page" in the *Grocer*, attention was directed to "clerks of the male persuasion" to listen to the success stories of grocers who employ women in their stores.[75] One male grocer believed in the superiority of the female clerk over the male: "they are much neater in appearance and are quicker and more trustworthy…Of course, it is necessary to have young

[72] *Census and Statistics Bulletin XI: Occupations of the People*, Ottawa (1910). Six Loblaw Store employees are listed on the city directory: 5 clerks, 1 bookkeeper, 4 men and 2 unmarried women (Cowling and Good).
[73] Henry Johnson Jr., "Now We Must Keep Books," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 5, 1918): 30. Johnson Jr. recalls how one of his female cashiers would complete her daily bookkeeping work in an hour each morning. By using the double-entry bookkeeping system, Johnson Jr. was able to see his transactions 'down to the penny at any time within a few hours' in 'sufficient detail for practical purposes, all the time.'
[74] Ibid., 14. *Fifth Census of Canada 1911*, Ottawa (1913): 89. 5,791 men employed as managers versus 621 women employed as managers. Women significantly dominated the personal and domestic service industry first, second, under the trade and transportation class, salesmen and saleswomen were broken down into several categories, ranging from bakery and confectionery to wines and liquors. Within this class, under 16 years old 220:15 (m/f), and 3,426:367 (m/f) over 16. The largest number of women (over 16) within this class is in the dry goods, fancy goods, and not specified, however for each women occupied at least half the total of men.
[75] Walter Gilbert, "The woman clerk's success," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 30, 1908): 62.

men, too, for the heavier work, but I find I get better results in having young ladies attend to the wants of my customers."[76] Several grocers reported that women often preferred to be served by other women. This inference is unsurprising as the *Grocer* frequently compared the interior of the store as an extension of the home: a clean space, organized, and where children could accompany their mothers.[77] For female employees and customers the grocery store was continually framed by popular press and state policy as an extension of their domestic labour rather than as rupture by modernity in the grocery trade.

Attributes of the labouring female body were continually discussed in the pages of the *Grocer*. One grocer noted how: "I find that some women like to buy from men while others would rather buy from a girl. So I split my force fifty-fifty."[78] Female customers found female clerks to be polite and attentive, and to naturally have a knowledge and expertise on cooking, economy for the family purse and menu, and could interest the consumer in ways in the male expert could not.[79] In this way, female employees helped sustain the moral economy of food. There was a level of trust that from one woman to another, understood the economic, moral, and social value of food purchased for the home kitchen, and by extension, the family. In the grocery department of the Hudson's Bay Company Store, one manager noted how customers had become accustomed to being waited upon by women clerks and were willing to wait to be served by their favourite. The manager was surprised to see a regular customer wait for twenty minutes for "a particular lady clerk to come back from lunch. Any of the other clerks could have served her, but the clerk she waited for knew her tastes in every line…Each saleslady knows that by courteous

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[76] Ibid.
[77] Monod suggests well-to-do women grocers between 1919 and 1939 were more likely to reside above their store, compared to bourgeois men who often separated home and their place of work, 47. The Toronto City Directory reveals that men who were listed as grocers or grocery clerks tended to live at their own residence, while single young women, in the same profession, were self-supporting and boarded and rented across the city.
[78] Edward Dreier, "The Traveller and the Female Clerk," *Canadian Grocer*, (Feb. 14, 1919): 25.
[79] Gilbert, "The woman clerk's success," 62.

attention her personal grocer clientele can be increased…on that basis salaries are adjusted."[80] Although acknowledged as a great asset to the store, for her cleaning, organizing, and polite temperament, it was urged to other grocers that: "if you have not tried her it is not too late to and be convinced that she has a place there."[81] As a uniquely modern asset, the female clerk was often referred in much of the same way new, shiny equipment was.

In some instances, the female clerk was argued to be more dependable and a better business decision for the store. Harry Braverman notes in *Labor and Monopoly Capital* that "labor power has become a commodity. Its uses are no longer organized according to the needs and desires of those who sell it, but rather according to the needs of its purchasers…"[82] This preference for women employees was not lost on managers. The *Grocer* published the favourable opinion that:

> Young ladies…if they are away for a holiday you can at least be sure they will come to work the following day prepared for work, and not looking as if they had been on a spree. Then, again, they have not as many temptations as a young man, not so many engagements or so many ways to spend their time and money. They are not always looking at the clock to see when closing time, is, either, and in lots of ways they are preferable…For my part, the young lady clerks have come to stay.[83]

President of the Grocers Association in St. Louis, MI commented that "a woman clerk has no bad habits. She is apt to be honest. She does not smoke cigarettes or drink when the boss is out…She does not help herself to the stock."[84] Another boasted how "A woman about a grocery store raises the tone…A woman about a store is in fact a bit of brightness, who is bound to keep her place."[85] However, despite such glowing recommendations to hire woman clerks, the appeal

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[80] "Sell the Clerk and Goods are half sold," *Canadian Grocer,* (Jun. 27, 1919): 36.
[81] "The Woman Clerk," *Canadian Grocer,* (Jan. 3, 1908): 36.
[82] Harry Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century*, (New York: NYU Press, 1998): 57.
[83] Gilbert, 62.
[84] Ibid.
[85] "Our Clerks' Page," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 30, 1908): 64.

of young ladies was couched in sexist language and assumptions. Much like how the *Grocer* had constructed the female shopper as a merchant's primary audience, and, on occasion a problem to be managed, the female clerk was simultaneously framed as an asset to the modern store and a liability.

In early editions of the *Grocer,* there was one section called "Drops from the Editors Pen," which featured thoughts from trade, exhibitions, cheese, sugar, and clerkship. One such rumination included the following remark: "There is one thing about the female clerk: just as the merchant thinks he has her it is quite probable that some young fellow may come along and take her to himself."[86] Beyond the editor's pen, one anonymous grocer, in his irritation for the traveling salesman, assumed that women clerks were easily led astray from their work duties by charming men. These women, many just out of school or business colleges, "unfamiliar with the ways of the world or the ways of business…are nice, innocent young girls" possessed an "exceedingly strong liking for the opposite sex and an idea that flirtation is part of business life."[87] The writer, speaking from experience, happened to be,

> unfortunate enough to have to employ one of these hypnotic-eyed young girls along with other girls. She is a girl of fairly good family, with absolutely nothing against her character, but her misconstrued idea that her duty lies in entertaining every flip commercial man that comes along, very much to her detriment. Whilst they are one or two other girls employed in this store, the flip young man cannot see any but the goo-goo-eyed one, who is about 17 years of age.[88]

It was not entirely uncommon to associate a woman employee with her sexual appeal. F.E. Baily was an English writer who frequently authored highly opinionated, articles for *Chatelaine* in the late 1920s and the 1930s to discuss his indignation toward wage-earning women. In one such piece, "Women Bring Too Much Sex Into Business" Bailey criticized women's "tendency to let

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[86] "Drops from the Editors Pen," *Canadian Grocer,* (Jul. 22, 1898): 15.
[87] "The Traveller and the Female Clerk," 54.
[88] Ibid.

oneself be kissed by the boss in order to attain an increase in salary" and how "some business girls find the cultivation of sex appeal much less trouble than acquiring a deep and wide professional knowledge."[89] Similar to the grocer's disappointment with his "goo-goo-eyed" employee whose time and attention is stolen away from his store, Bailey too warns of the depreciation of an organization when the "female staff make it part of their business routine to tantalize the men."[90] Popular press suggested that sex was a tool to advance one's career, rather than acknowledging the risk, and prevalence, of sexual harassment in the workplace as a tool to maintain hierarchies of pay and power.[91]

Johnson Jr., a revered retail magnate, tended to approach the debate of female workers in the grocery industry with neutrality. While others assessed the potential flight risk of the licentious woman clerk, who alone, was "plenty…two or three are gathered together there is too much talking and laughing among themselves, which is not good for any business"[92] Johnson Jr. instead reflected on their employment in much of the same way he did with his other columns on the qualities of salesmen. As he recalled his most recent experience with an employee, a female clerk, he noted how she came at a time "when we needed efficient help; stepped right into the place and filled it well" she was of "good appearance, which does not mean 'pretty' but businesslike, prompt, intelligent. She knew goods and could talk them well."[93] In praise of the

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[89] F.E. Baily, "Women Bring Too Much Sex into Business," *Chatelaine*, (Jul. 1930): 5.
[90] "The Traveller and the Female Clerk," 54. Baily, "Women Bring Too Much Sex into Business," 41.
[91] Daniel Bender, "'Too Much of Distasteful Masculinity': Historicizing Sexual Harassment in the Garment Sweatshop and Factory," *Journal of Women's History*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (2004): 91, 93. Bender argues that sexual harassment was an expression of power and was central to how men constructed, policed, and naturalized sexual difference at work.
[92] "The Woman Clerk," 36.
[93] Henry Johnson Jr., "A Woman Clerk and a Lost Opportunity," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 4, 1912): 34. In one example of a well-ordered routine Johnson Jr. authored for the Grocer, he notes how in this scenario, there is a Chief woman clerk and two additional female clerks who would report to her for their duties. These duties included calling customers at their home, which would have likely been other women, cleaning and restocking shelves and counters, "Organizing Routine Inside the Store," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 18, 1912): 30.

new hire, Johnson commented on her ability to talk down the most irate customer and her performance was so commendable that her salary was advanced steadily to $10 per week on a fifty-five-hour schedule – which, was "supposed to be good for any woman."[94] The downfall of the employee, resulting in her eventual dismissal was not presented in such a way to attack her sex. Soon after the employee received their latest pay increase, she became reportedly indifferent toward the work, undercharged customers, and was slow to complete daily tasks. For this, Johnson Jr. told readers of the *Grocer* that, "no man or woman on earth is indispensable to any business…work is a continual climb and there is no stopping place.[95] For Johnson Jr. the makings of a salesperson was attributed to the pseudo-scientific qualities the *Grocer* had ranked as most sought after: efficiency, punctuality, attitude, and accuracy of the clerk.

The Expert

The nineteenth century became a terrain of experts where various professions – doctors, social workers, psychologists, nutritionists, and home economists – gained new legitimacy.[96] The expert, in any field, commanded an aura of authority. Poovey has argued that the figure of the expert was a knowledge producer as much as it was a social position.[97] Expert knowledge was often born out of perceived problems of the modern city, a desire for social and moral reform.[98] The prescriptive expertise was a "dialectic encounter between experts backed by the state, medical, or religious powers," that was reproduced in the pages of popular press.[99] Series of experts impressed the need for their audience to replace generational learning with sound,

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[94] Johnson Jr., "A Woman Clerk and a Lost Opportunity," 34.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Arnup, 3. Epstein-Nord, 208.
[97] Poovey, 15-16.
[98] Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water,* 44-47, 52. Thompson, 119. See also, Jennifer Stephen, "'Factory Girls' and the Toronto Psychiatric Clinic, in *Law, Society, and the State: Essays in Modern Legal History*, eds. Louis A. Knafla and Susan W.S. Binnie, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995): 411, 414, 421.
[99] Chambers, *Misconceptions*, 6.

scientific, and modern knowledge, so they could become amateur experts. This included anyone involved with the purchase or sale of groceries. This section examines how the *Grocer* and popular women's magazines 'sold' and popularized modern ways of running a grocery store and being a mother and housewife. To survive the transition into the modern economy, grocers and housewives needed to follow this expertise closely, become self-made experts, shop intelligently, and retail down to a science.

Following the establishment of the *Grocer* in 1886, the trade journal became a formidable source of expertise and knowledge of the grocery trade. Grocers reported in confidence to the trade journal for their successful application of science and ingenuity in the industry, priding themselves on their reception of all facets of the modern. In response, the *Grocer* often rewarded these readers with the title of expert as the journal profiled their successful tricks of the trade. With the journal's guidance, there need not be room for the slovenly or the unskilled, the day had dawned on the scientific diet, of health-giving foods, and cleanliness – "exit the doctor, enter the food expert."[100]

The modern expert in the grocery trade was characterized as well-versed in business operation, nutrition, customer observation, marketing, and design. The *Grocer* claimed that the merchant of the early twentieth century was not like his or her predecessor, "the merchant of the day is compelled, by the very nature of the business world in which he lives, to make an acute specialized study of his business."[101] Although the figure of the expert long predated the twentieth century, this social position gained new legitimacy with the advent of mass-magazines and Lears and Richard Wrightman Fox have suggested that the turn of the century witnessed a rapid expansion of the "professional-managerial stratum" who intended to harmonize and

[100] "The New Era in Grocery Trade," 22.
[101] L.C. Harkness, "Intimate Knowledge of the Stock Needed in Buying," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 20, 1910): 36.

standardize relations between labour and capital.[102] There were, of course, formal and informal methods for the grocer to become the expert of their trade that was recommended by the *Grocer*. Daily exposure to the buying public could train an observant manager or clerk on what product sells, what customers are attracted to, and how to read body language and cues. The illustration below portrays the discontent of the seemingly well-to-do female customer at the counter who is waiting to be served while the clerk obliviously whistles a tune. Failure to apply what other experts had shared – in trade journals and lecture talks – across the counter was considered the fault of the grocer [Fig. 4].



[Figure 4: A Prevalent Practice that Should be Eliminated, *Canadian Grocer*, April 2, 1912 pg. 35]

Akin to the need to understand the value of calories in preparing the family's food itinerary, grocers needed to take care to know how and where the food on their shelves was made. A key

[102] Lears and Wrightman Fox, "Introduction," in *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History 1880-1980,* (New York: Random House Inc., 1983): xi. Rabinbach's *The Human Motor* argues that the discourse surrounding the 'science of work' allowed the Taylor system to end the 'skilled labourer's monopoly of expertise, dissolved the traditional foreman's authority over the shop floor, weakened the power of the unions to control wages, and gave management powerful method of exercising control over the production process' 121, 123, 238-239.

requirement for the successful grocer and their staff was a competent, intelligent, and scientific knowledge of the goods they carried. The so-called, pre-modern, disorganization of the store had been solved through pre-packaged items and greater care for arrangement.[103] Writing for the *Grocer*, Charles Adams urged for the retail grocer, the practical man, to "buy intelligently and therefore scientifically" when he stocks his store; does the man behind the counter know the contents of what passes from his hands to his customer?[104] When compared to one of the grocer's competitors, the druggist, Adams expressed how the druggist is directly responsible for seeing that the proper ingredients are in what he sells – he makes a thorough study of his stock and attends school to do so. The average grocer, Adam writes, "knows little of what he sells, other than the price at which he brought and the price he asks. […] Should you not have a practical knowledge of the goods on your shelves, in order to talk and sell your groceries intelligently […]?"[105] To be an intelligent grocer meant to study the composition of baking powders, when a jar of strawberry jam was, in-fact, pure strawberry jam or a substitute mixture, and when dyes were added. This knowledge was often reciprocal, as Adams concluded, "The customer should know what they are buying, and it will pay in the end, both morally and financially. The customer, who has absolute faith in the honesty of his grocer, is very hard for a competitor to take away."[106] However, this faith was not necessarily because of trust or charm of the clerk, but the result of careful decision-making, planning, and instruction offered by the domestic experts in women's magazines.

This knowledge was not solely to proudly boast a commitment to the modern and to science, but was required by law. *The Adulteration of Food Act*, enacted in the early months of 1910,

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[103] Monod, 140-141.
[104] Charles Adams, "Knowledge of Food Composition Needed in Buying," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 20, 1910): 88.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Adams, "Knowledge of Food Composition Needed in Buying," 88.

made the vendor directly liable for the quality of the goods sold. A. McGill, a Dominion government analyst, warned of the danger of selling adulterated foodstuffs:

> *The Adulteration Act* recognizes the importance, to the retailer, of his dependence upon the honesty of the manufacturer […] it is not too much to ask of any person, having intelligence enough to go into business at all, that he should be wise enough to secure himself by having such a guaranty furnished him, with all the goods he buys. […] the Act provides a form of guaranty, so that he cannot plead anything but his own gross ignorance or carelessness, if he fails to fully protect himself against all charges.[107]

Through consumer protection regulations like the *Adulteration Act*, the prescriptive expertise of the *Grocer* was legitimized by state intervention. Efficiency, discipline, system, and order were imposed by the government and upheld by the trade journal, their correspondents, and readers who self-reported their adherence to the knowledge and expertise that had been shared with them.

To further legitimize expert knowledge on the grocery trade, a series of lecture talks were organized, and reported by the *Grocer*. The lecture series was intended to instruct grocers how to efficiently manage their business. While the grocery trade had already begun to specialize in the 1910s and 1920s, in response to the growth of mass merchandising and mail-order houses, the competition of chain stores in the 1930s caused further introspection for the independent retailer. In 1919 the chain grocery store was an unknown quantity, but by 1929 fourteen chain-store companies operated 1,300 units in Ontario and Quebec and sold $80,000,000 worth of goods.[108] The Extension Course, held at the University of Toronto, was sponsored by the RMA. The Toronto Retail Grocers Association had formed in 1887, a year after the *Grocer* launched and amalgamated under the RMA in 1914 with a separate Toronto branch.[109] The purpose of the RMA was to support individuals in the retail trade organization, and this included active efforts

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[107] A. McGill, "Where Responsibility Lies in Adulterated Foods," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 1, 1910): 24.
[108] Hutson, "Has the chain grocery store come to stay?" 13.
[109] The Ontario Retail Grocers Association involved 5% of all food retailers in the late 1920s.

to secure the adoption of legislation designed to "cure all the ills which are supposed to beset the retailer."[110] The organized lecture series discussed retail management methods, display, marketing.[111] The *Grocer* not only reported on the events of the RMA and how to enroll in the Extension Course, but several of their regular correspondents, like Johnson Jr. were key speakers.

The first of the lecture series, "Margins, Mark-Ups, Overhead Expenses, Profits, Mark-downs, Bargain Sales," was held on January 8th, 1930, was given by Johnson Jr. At the time of the opening lecture, Johnson Jr. was recognized as the best-known writer on retail business in North America, he urged every merchant, retailer, and clerk to attend; "those who come out to hear him will be well repaid."[112] The second speaker for the series was T.P. Loblaw, president of Loblaw Groceterias Limited, a company that, by 1930, had developed a chain of 95 stores, selling over $18, 000, 000 worth of groceries a year.[113] Like Johnson Jr's glowing credentials to promote the previous lecture, Loblaw's success as a president separated the expert from the eager audience. The *Grocer* reported that the retailers who attended "the next meeting at which Mr. Loblaw is to talk, will undoubtedly get just as much to think about."[114] Various speakers, from Political Science Professors, company presidents, and merchandising counsels, lectured on

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[110] "Premier Resents Inference of Inaction on Part of Government," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 31, 1930): 20. The Grocer acknowledges that the R.M.A. has had some influence in securing legislation in the interest of retailers but this is only a small proportion of the recommendations that have been made over a period of years that have been taken seriously.
[111] "University Classes for Grocers Already Assured," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 17, 1930): 17. There were separate classes for grocers from other retail merchants.
[112] "Paul Findlay (Henry Johnson Jr.) To talk to merchants on margins and overhead on Jan. 8" *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 3, 1930): 13.
[113] "'Business possibilities' to be discussed by T.P. Loblaw," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 31, 1930): 28.
[114] Ibid.

topics such as store location, store equipment, mass window displays, shelving and counters, and scientific merchandising to an audience motivated to succeed in business.[115]

In addition to the more material conditions of the store (baskets, displays, and so on), lecture talks reproduced in the *Grocer* and other accompanying columns came from experts in the psyche-sciences. The application of modern psychology to business and industry, explained Professor S.N.F. Chant, would help retail merchants to understand themselves and others.[116] For example, disciplining employees in the past often meant shouting and frightening them. Chant explained that anger did not lead to co-operation and would never get employees interested in their work. Not only this, but psychology of the individual was advocated as important to the selection of grocery store employees. Industrial psychologists, who extended scientific management to the realm of human behaviour, meant treating workers' attitudes as a factor to be engineered like their bodies.[117] "People differ - they differ enormously sometimes – in their ability to perform a particular job. That point was not taken into consideration very much in business concerns twenty years ago."[118] For this, employers should place a potential employee on six months probation, administer a test to assess practical skills, and conduct an interview. Through the publication of Chant's lecture, the *Grocer* authorized to their readers that a combination of testing, placement, and a one-to-one interview and Taylorist industrial management would create a scientific, objective, hiring practice; one that would avoid passing

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[115] Monod, 151-152, 353. At the second lecture, there were 161 registrations: Grocers (69), druggists (47), dry goods and women's wear (27), and miscellaneous (18). Women typically dominated dry goods/women's wear departments at this time.
[116] "Psychology plays part in selecting and stimulating employees," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 5, 1930): 41.
[117] Ken Alder, *The Lie Detectors: The History of an American Obsession*, (New York: Free Press, 2007) 105-106. Rabinbach, 123, 151.
[118] Ibid., 42.

judgment before the facts.[119] In this lecture, mental testing and vocational aptitude were promoted as fundamental to ensure stability and efficiency in the labour force.[120]

The same fundamentals of psychology that had been reported to better assess the worker were applied to the consumer. Johnson Jr. repeatedly told readers of the *Grocer* to "not forget the psychological value of price appeal" in a new era of food distribution.[121] One tactic to satiate this appeal was to price by the odd cent. To compete with the lower costs of the chain store, for which Johnson Jr. was not a supporter, he contended how "odd pricings are up-to-the-minute in method and effectiveness. The grocer who fails to note this is holding himself back. […] Think such plans appeal only to women? […] If it is results a merchant seeks, let him open his eyes and see."[122] The odd pricing merchandise method, referred to as "magic figures," would produce pleasing results. A grocer would see great success if an item, regularly priced at $25, was remarked and advertised at the new reduced price of $24.95, would be sold in large quantities.[123] The psychology as a tool to sell the modern grocery store – and industry more broadly – is explored further in Chapter 3. Although these tips and tricks of the trade were offered to help the grocer increase their productivity and profit, the position of the expert through the columns of the *Grocer* or standing at the front of a lecture hall, created and sustained a hierarchy of authority in the retail trade.

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[119] Ibid., 41. See also Alder, *The Lie Detectors,* 20.
[120] Stephen's chapter "The Psychologist at War" in *Pick One Intelligent Girl* documents the use of mental testing as a form of nation building during the interwar period before it (and other psyche-sciences) were used to recruit Canadian women in World War Two. The guide to I.Q. testing *The Measurement of Intelligence* was a leading authority on mental testing in educational, industrial, and military screening. The application and measurement of a workers traits became a method to weed-out the inefficient, which often had gendered, class, and racial implications.
[121] Henry Johnson Jr., "How Advertising is Divided," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 24, 1931): 29.
[122] Henry Johnson Jr., "Pricing by the odd 'cent is both modern and effective'," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jun. 21, 1929): 26.
[123] "Bring on the "Specials" Early Part of the Week," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 3, 1930): 30.

The management of the modern household, often attributed to as an institution or business, and all that this encompassed was 'sold' to readers in a similar way as the modern grocery store. Women's magazines such as the *Canadian Home Journal*, *Everywoman's World*, and later, *Chatelaine* offered a range of expert advice from food preparation, food shopping, household maintenance, health, and childrearing and motherhood, so that "every thrifty housekeeper is to-day using scores of articles that their grandmothers had never heard of."[124] Frances Lily Johnson, member of the Department of Psychology at the University of Toronto, lamented that although every department of life had improved through scientific research and methods by experts, "proper parenthood" was not being achieved by some.[125] This was the first time, as Arnup has argued, that a new 'scientific' advice literature was available to the vast majority with the advent of mass magazines, where readers of *Chatelaine*, for example, were confronted with at least one article on infant or childcare from the magazines inception.[126] Much of the advice female readers were prescribed was tied to broader national aspirations of becoming modern by means of science and state regulation.[127]

Helen Campbell, an experienced journalist, home economist, and eventual director of the Chatelaine Institute, was heralded as an authority on proper home management and domestic reform.[128] Campbell cautioned the readers of *Chatelaine* with the following: "It's a wise woman who takes advantage of the help offered by magazines in the editorial and advertising pages, by newspapers, radio programs, manufactures of food and household appliances, public utility organizations and governmental agencies."[129] Similar to the prescriptive expertise of the *Grocer*,

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[124] Honorable Freeman Talbut, "Now and Then," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Jan. 1901): 8.
[125] Frances Lily Johnson, "What of Your Child?" *Chatelaine*, (Apr. 1928): 32.
[126] Arnup, 3, 7-8. Arnup cautions against using prescriptive literature to make inferences about child-rearing practices and lived experiences.
[127] Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth,* 19, 24-25.
[128] Hayden, *The Grand Domestic Revolution*, 186, 298.
[129] Helen G. Campbell, "This Business of Housekeeping," *Chatelaine*, (Feb. 1933): 45.

state policy, particularly where children were concerned, legitimized the business of housework and its experts.

As the household was regularly framed as a business concern, there were an increasing number of experts who advocated for the application of scientific management to reduce labour, waste, and effort, and make child-rearing easier. However, as Hayden and Cowan have described, housework differed from market work due to its unpaid and unspecialized labour, and because of this scientific management was an impossibility inside the home.[130] This did not stop efficiency experts and household engineers from trying to prescribe what Hayden calls "pseudo-scientific management."[131] This advice was often contradictory in nature, asking women to ascribe to the counsel of experts rather than rely on family systems or maternal instinct, while acknowledging "instinct and idealism make a home; all else unmakes it."[132] In 1916 *Everywoman's World* published the article "How I Would Run the Home if I Were a Woman," where Edward Purinton, efficiency expert and author of *Efficient Living* (1916), strategized to transfer the efficiency that had been "born in the stores and taken rise in the factories," and apply it to the system of the home.[133] He scolded magazine readers that "many a good woman – good but stupid – thinks so much of her home as a house that she forgets to be anything but a house-keeper," and scientific management was needed more than ever to prevent the spread of moral contaminant and social unrest.[134] Purinton viewed the efficient housewife as three women, "a wife, a mother, and a housekeeper" where "being a wife is an art, being a mother is a profession,

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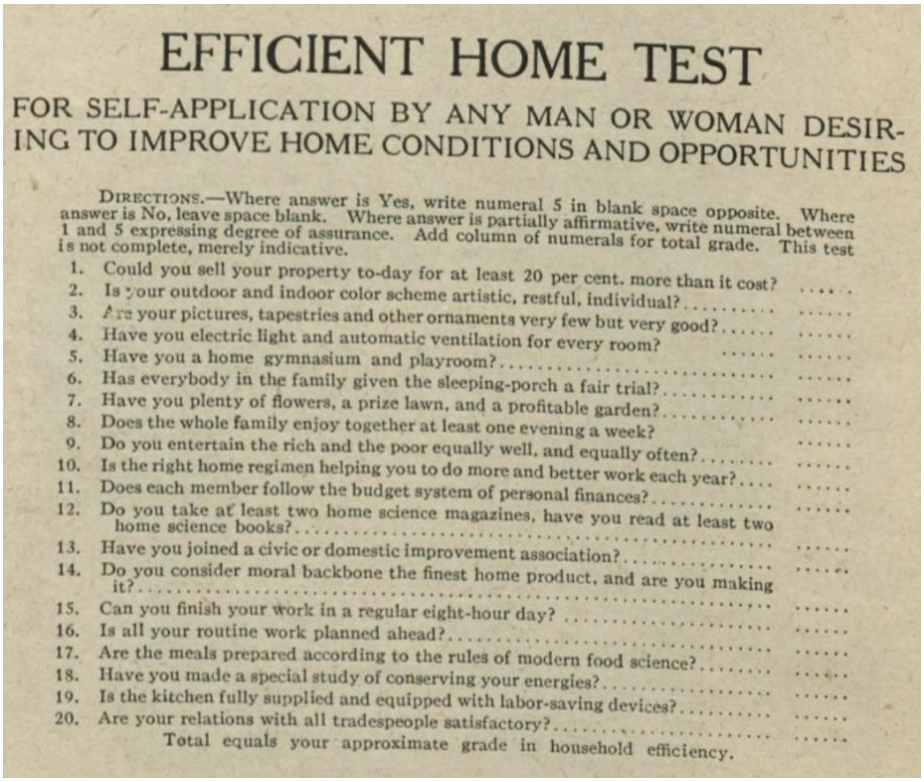
[130] Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave,* (New York: Basic Books, 1985): 5, 7-9.
[131] Hayden, 285. Christine Frederick, a self-described household efficiency engineer and consulting household editor for the U.S. magazine *Ladies Home Journal*, published *Household Engineering: Scientific Management in the Home* (1920) as a guide to standardized operations within the home based on the principles of scientific management.
[132] Edward Earle Purinton, *Efficient Living*, (Toronto: McClelland, Goodchild & Steward Ltd., 1916): 108.
[133] Purinton, *Efficient Living*, 92-93.
[134] Ibid., 94, 96. Edward Earle Purinton, "How I Would Run the Home if I Were a Woman," *Everywoman's World*, (Sept. 1916): 8.

and being a housekeeper is a business."[135] However, in his book, Purinton had two separate chapters for "Work and Efficiency," which did not mention women, and "Home and Efficiency," which mentioned women (as mothers, wives, and housekeepers), but did not mention labour.

The modern home as an efficient institution included knowledge of health foods and "home science" for the prevention of disease, cost-reducing on a scientific budget, and the application of physiological, psychological, and industrial principles embodied in the household.[136] This sentiment tried to displace advice passed from mothers to daughters (as new mothers themselves) for modern mothers should consult the modern schools of diet or study carefully crafted books of expertise.[137] Scientific management "started in the stomach."[138] This knowledge could be tested against Purinton's "Efficient Home Test," and the user could evaluate if they prepared meals according to the rules of modern food science or if the kitchen was equipped with labor-saving devices [Fig. 6]. This was not knowledge that could be happened upon accidentally, Purinton cautioned, it needed to be studied, "Am I theorizing or sentimentalizing? I am not – I have seen it done."[139]

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[135] Purinton, "How I Would Run the Home if I Were a Woman," 32.
[136] Ibid., 8.
[137] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled,* 126. Purinton, *Efficient Living*, 121. As part of Purinton's "Food Efficiency Test," there are questions such as: Have you studied at lest three modern schools of diet (Lahmann, the Christian, the Lust, or the Kellogg system)? Have you read at least three standard books on domestic science and the household economy? Has your drinking water been guaranteed pure by expert analysis? Do you buy food […] on a scientific system of economy?
[138] Purinton, *Efficient Living*, 69, 101. Purinton asks readers if they had consulted 'modern tables of food values' prior to the buying and preparation of daily meals for the family.
[139] Ibid., 33. One of the questions from *Efficient Living* for the "Food and Efficiency" test included: Is your grocer the best in your neighborhood – have you learned why? Which suggests that knowledge of food value (nutrition and cost) were expected to be known by housewives and grocers.



EFFICIENT HOME TEST

FOR SELF-APPLICATION BY ANY MAN OR WOMAN DESIRING TO IMPROVE HOME CONDITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

DIRECTIONS.—Where answer is Yes, write numeral 5 in blank space opposite. Where answer is No, leave space blank. Where answer is partially affirmative, write numeral between 1 and 5 expressing degree of assurance. Add column of numerals for total grade. This test is not complete, merely indicative.

1. Could you sell your property to-day for at least 20 per cent. more than it cost? .....
2. Is your outdoor and indoor color scheme artistic, restful, individual? .....
3. Are your pictures, tapestries and other ornaments very few but very good? .....
4. Have you electric light and automatic ventilation for every room? .....
5. Have you a home gymnasium and playroom? .....
6. Has everybody in the family given the sleeping-porch a fair trial? .....
7. Have you plenty of flowers, a prize lawn, and a profitable garden? .....
8. Does the whole family enjoy together at least one evening a week? .....
9. Do you entertain the rich and the poor equally well, and equally often? .....
10. Is the right home regimen helping you to do more and better work each year? .....
11. Does each member follow the budget system of personal finances? .....
12. Do you take at least two home science magazines, have you read at least two home science books? .....
13. Have you joined a civic or domestic improvement association? .....
14. Do you consider moral backbone the finest home product, and are you making it? .....
15. Can you finish your work in a regular eight-hour day? .....
16. Is all your routine work planned ahead? .....
17. Are the meals prepared according to the rules of modern food science? .....
18. Have you made a special study of conserving your energies? .....
19. Is the kitchen fully supplied and equipped with labor-saving devices? .....
20. Are your relations with all tradespeople satisfactory? .....

Total equals your approximate grade in household efficiency.

[Figure 5: Edward Earle Purinton's self-assessment Efficient Home Test provided for readers of *Everywoman's World*, Sept. 1916, 8.]

Furthermore, Purinton attributed the health of the household to the efficiency and knowledge of the housewife. This was an avenue many experts instructed their readers in. A "scientific housewife" was the "keeper of a man's morals" and his "Fat body, lean soul. Sick body, frail soul. Weak body, numb soul. Coarse body, hurt soul. The care of the body, for her husband, her children and herself, is a moral responsibility […] a man's capacity for work and a child's for study, analyzed and traced to their source, depend largely on the home regimen directed by the wife and mother."[140] At least "40% of a mans efficiency lies in the hand of women."[141] Because readers were inundated with information from experts on the science of food, nutrition, and value, proper menu planning was regarded as an important part of the housekeeper's program. Greater knowledge of food should, by default, lead to greater wisdom in

[140] Ibid., 32.
[141] Purinton, *Efficient Living*, 94.

meal planning and the proper crafting of the family's diet.[142] This expectation had broader moral and national implications during times of instability and crisis, explored further in Chapter 4.

Although the extent of vitamins and minerals and their linkage to deficiency diseases was in its infancy in the early twentieth century, columnists urged readers to factor this into preparing the grocery list.[143] For *Chatelaine*, Nellie Pattinson, Director of Domestic Science in Toronto, urged readers to see food more than a meal to ward off hunger.[144] "How much does it cost?" was asked by the average housewife, for she would spend upwards of one quarter, and often more, of the family income on food.[145] When drafting the family grocery list, women shoppers would have wanted to feel as if she was getting her month's worth. Acquiring the right kinds of foods for an adequate diet that was rich in vitamins, minerals, and calories was attainable for any housewife if she shopped and planned intelligently enough to purchase "sufficient food of the right kind for the money we can afford to spend."[146] Advice literature often ignored the class realities for many households who could not find or afford fresh fruit, vegetables, milk, or meat prescribed by modern medical and child-rearing experts.[147]

The onus continued to be on the woman of the house to be as economical as possible, despite a limited or free-flowing budget. Similarly, *Chatelaine* correspondent Ruth Reid asked readers: "Does expensive food mean very nourishing food, and does cheap food imply that it lacks some vital elements?"[148] Once the production of food is broken down, Reid wrote, it is

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[142] Helen Campbell, "Spring Tonics Up to Date," *Chatelaine*, (Sept. 1931):27.
[143] Vitamin C, for example, was not discovered until 1928. Nutritional deficiencies and vitamin benefits became a regular feature in food advice columns of women's magazines in the late 1920s. The Creation of the Canadian Council on Nutrition (CCN) was formed during World War Two. See, "Making and Breaking Canada's Food Rules: Science, the State, and the Government of Nutrition, 1942-1949" by Ian Mosby in *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics*, eds. Franca Iacovetta et. al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).
[144] Nellie Lyle Pattinson, "A Spring Tonic in Every Meal," *Chatelaine*, (Mar. 1928): 26.
[145] Ruth Davison Reid, "Food Costs Versus Their Caloric Values," *Chatelaine*, (Oct. 1929): 24.
[146] Pattinson, "A Spring Tonic in Every Meal," 26.
[147] Ladd-Taylor, 27. Arnup, 39. Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 132-133.
[148] Reid, "Food Costs Versus Their Caloric Values," 24.

easy to see that food is "actually a bargain."[149] There is the labour to produce the food, some root vegetables require more care, and shoppers should be willing to pay accordingly. Transportation raised these costs, Reid continued, particularly if perishable foods are being shipped, and demanding out-of-season foods required international transportation and cold storage to house and retain their quality. Grocers would price their products accordingly, so it was important to find the balance between a bargain and calories. Example menus were provided in all Canadian women's magazines, often for each season or holiday event, and on occasion – as Pattinson and Reid had – menus were purposefully crafted to demonstrate the cost, vitamins, and calories per item. Fresh fruits and vegetables, and good cuts of meat were emphasized as healthful protective foods. Housewives who lived far from markets and shops needed to be extra resourceful, "garden intelligently," and grow vitamin-rich food in their home gardens.[150] Vitamins were, after all, "what the spark is to the automobile…Everyday research workers are giving us more information…so that now we can actually measure definite quantities for our needs."[151] Food values were evaluated by experts and presented to readers on the basis of age, size, sex, climate, condition of health, and energy expenditure.

In 1929 *Chatelaine* magazine launched the Canadian Food Series for its readership. Authored by J.B. Spencer, who was affiliated with the Department of Agriculture, the series intended to examine the "foods in the Canadian market, how best to know their value and select them."[152] The first of the series focused on the importance of milk. Consumption and access to milk has long been a highly charged issue, particularly for Canadian mothers where the health of

[149] Ibid.
[150] Etta Campbell, "Find your vitamins growing wild," *Chatelaine*, (Apr. 1928): 65. See also Frances C. Steinhoff, "Gardening with intelligence," *Chatelaine*, (Mar. 1939): 57.
[151] Pattinson, 28.
[152] J.B. Spencer, "Canadian Dairy Food," *Chatelaine*, (Jan. 1929): 13.

their children was capitalized on.[153] Milk had long been considered the most essential food product in the kitchen.[154] The *Chatelaine* article made no exception. Spencer emphasized how milk held important value and health-promoting properties for the family; by 1929 the per capita consumption of milk was nearly nine-tenths of a pint per day, a 40% increase in the last six years.[155] As Spencer continued to list the benefits of milk – nourishment, energy, and cheapness – he cited a recent test issued by the Empire Marketing Board where young boys were separated into two groups: the first received an ordinary diet, the second received in addition one pint a day. The latter grew taller, and had gained more weight, and there illness was absent among the boys who had been given the milk ration. Demonstrably, milk was of high value in preserving and restoring health for young children; a value that would have been negligible to ignore for the shopping mother. Concern for contaminated milk was, at this time, highly regulated.[156] Distributors to shops or private customers, needed to first secure a license which was granted only if their stock and premises were found to meet provincial governments requirements for the sale of milk. Inspectors periodically would examine and inspect milk or cream offered for sale, including shops and their delivery vehicles.[157] This assurance was also a stark reminder of how high rates of infant mortality had been linked to contaminated milk. But to better protect consumers, regulations and public-health legislation had been enacted at the Provincial and

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[153] Julie Guard, "A Mighty Power against the Cost of Living: Canadian Housewives Organized in the 1930s," *International Labor and Working-Class History*, Vol. 77, (Spring 2010): 33-36. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, "Vim, Vigour, and Vitality: 'Power' Foods for Kids in Canadian Popular Magazines, 1914–1954," in *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics*, 391-393.

[154] "Milk as a Meat and Wheat Substitute," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Oct. 1918): 34.

[155] Spencer, "Canadian Dairy Foods," 13.

[156] Valverde documents how Pure Milk was touted as a social of beneficial social effects, temperance, purity, and morality by the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). The Toronto *Daily News* had published the article "Fewer Criminals with Pure Milk," (1910) which emphasized the moral health qualities from the consumption of unadulterated milk, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water*, 23-24.

[157] Spencer, "Canadian Dairy Foods," 13.

Federal level.[158] To further instruct consumers on the nutritional benefits, the regulatory powers exhibited by the Dairy Branch of the Department of Agriculture worked in co-operation with the Canadian Council of Child Welfare and the National Dairy Council to emphasize the dietary value of uses of dairy products.[159] Such instruction was presented in lectures, exhibits, films, posters, and booklets.

The Canadian Food Series continued to report government regulations on the grocery trade and presented shopping guides for readers to understand values, symbols, and grades associated with these regulations. In the case of red meats, chicken, fish, cereal, and vegetables, shoppers had the "double protection of their own judgment and the regulations that have the force of federal law."[160] For example, under the *Root Vegetables Act,* grades were assigned for potatoes, onions, turnips, and celery; Canada Number 1 classed the vegetable free from dirt or foreign matter, and any defect.[161] A similar process of regulation was adopted in the poultry industry. Chicken was graded on an A to D scale, and this adoption of standardization to describe the product was to be used by producers, packers, dealers, retailers, and consumers. For this, Spencer examined how "there will be a better understanding of market quotations and less opportunity for disagreements between buyer and seller. The housewives who do their own marketing will no longer find it necessary to make personal inspection of their purchases."[162] Just as there were bargains in clothes, "the woman who is getting her money's worth studies the food values of her menus."[163] As much as the series claimed to offer "inside knowledge" for the

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[158] Spencer, "Canadian Dairy Foods," 13. See also Anrup 26 where she documents the role of tainted milk supply and infant deaths. A number of voluntary organizations, like the Montreal Local Council of Women and the Toronto-based Pure Milk League, sought to improve the quality of milk. In 1908 the Canadian Medical Association established a Milk Commission to provide expert medical evidence on the problem.
[159] Ibid., 48.
[160] J.B. Spencer, "Marketing Canadian Vegetables," *Chatelaine*, (Oct. 1929): 28.
[161] Spencer, "Marketing Canadian Vegetables," 34.
[162] J.B. Spencer, "When you Buy a Chicken," *Chatelaine*, (Jun. 1929): 24.
[163] Reid, 24.

Canadian housekeeper, where the "leaning of which will give our women shoppers a distinct advantage," there was the implied sense of failure if the shopper did not listen and apply the words of the expert into their home.[164] How foods were graded on the market affected quality, cost, and size of the product, was an essential tool for the housewife to understand. Recognizing the distinctive labels of the grade of food, the "intelligent housekeeper will familiarize herself with the brands and choose the grade most suitable for her purpose."[165] Ultimately, culinary (and parental) merit was awarded to certain foodstuffs by experts for readers to digest, reflect, and visit their local grocery store to apply what they had learned. At least that was the hope of such prescriptive expertise.

The counsel of expert advice, especially for mothers, was encouraged to be passed down to their children. There was a paradox surrounding food as generational knowledge was prided and expected, and yet objective, modern, evidence-based expertise was meant to replace and outrank the mother. Frances Johnson, who had migrated from the Department of Psychology to the Parent Education Department at the University of Toronto, instructed readers of *Chatelaine* to train their children how to shop by bringing them along on household shopping tours and to discuss purchases would provide an opportunity to teach the child the meaning of money.[166] Interestingly, Johnson recommended the modern groceteria as the space to visit to teach this lesson. The open layout and ability to see and hold grocery items made the experience a tactile one. The parent should also explain discounts and price-watching, impressing the advantages of buying staples not at first display, but when they are low in price.[167] Teaching thrift early would

[164] J.B. Spencer, "Meats for Canadian Homes," *Chatelaine*, (Mar. 1929): 12.
[165] Helen Campbell, "Fish Values Every Woman Should Know," *Chatelaine*, (Mar. 1931): 19.
[166] Frances Lily Johnson, "What of Your Child?" *Chatelaine*, (Jul. 1930): 27.
[167] Ibid.

not only show how the family dollar could be stretched but would be an imperative skill to learn for when children, usually at ten or twelve years old, ventured on solo trips for their mothers.

The sentiment that the labour of grocery shopping was shared or shouldered by children was reciprocated by Loblaw Groceterias. In 1924 a Loblaw advertisement, in large, capitalized font called out "MOTHERS, TEACH YOUR CHILDREN THRIFT. Send them to shop at Loblaw's. It's just like play. It is all so simple that there is little chance for a mistake. There is always help on the floor who will gladly assist them in picking out anything you may desire."[168]Another promised special attention from store staff to the children sent to their busy groceterias in place of their equally busy mother.[169] The acknowledgment of the busy mother reflected the gradual (but growing) number of married women who were entered waged labour. In a series of advertisements, sketches of well-dressed mothers shopping with their children accompanied the weekly specials and a message to teach the children about thrift, and this transfer of knowledge further subverted the domestic economy for modern capitalism [Fig. 6].

[168] "Mothers, Teach Your Children Thrift," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Nov. 1924): 30.
[169] "Sonny Says –", *The Globe*, (Oct. 17, 1924): 14.



[Figure 6: Woman and young girl serving themselves and handling Loblaw Groceterias Co. products. A young boy pictured with a basket on his wrist who has likely been asked by his mother to go to the shop in her place. *The Globe*, (Oct. 19, 1928): 16.]

The above image is a contradiction to the tagline of "Alone – You Decide" and reveals the instability of modernity and women. The act of shopping alone in a Loblaw Grocterias was marketed as an act of authority, freedom, and individualism. However, for women, as quickly as they were cast as autonomous, they were repeatedly placed next to their husbands or children, to market modern shopping and appeal to folkloric fantasies of normative gendered roles. Prospective and actual female consumers were pulled into modernity as independent corporate actors while at the same time tied to their reproductive labour and moral responsibility as modern mothers. This prospect is visible in the advertisement below, "Children of Today are Loblaw Customers of Tomorrow" [Fig. 7]. The advertisement tracks the various life stages of a young girl shopping at a groceteria with her mother, attendance at school, her wedding ceremony, and the last stage where the new bride is joyfully shopping with her husband. Arguably, the

"customers of tomorrow" capitalized on a heighted concern of the health of the nation (through the health of children) following the events of the First World War, the 1918 Pandemic, and the ongoing Depression at this time. In a single image the Loblaw chain has anchored girlhood and womanhood to their store, a heterosexual marriage, and to food. The name "Loblaw Groceterias [was] as familiar to them as the A.B.C."[170] The young girl-turned-bride is smiling brightest holding a product and standing next to an aisle brimming with more goods to purchase.



[Figure 7: The Children of To-day are LOBLAW Customers of Tomorrow, *The Toronto Daily Star*, Apr. 21, 1932]

The Loblaw chain continued to market itself to mothers as a space to learn, to play, and a safe space for parents to send their children. In 1928 *The Globe* ran a series of comics called "Just Kids" and in March 1928 the illustrations focused on the dangers of automobile accidents. This led to the creation of the "Just Kids Safety Club" endorsed by mothers and schools across

[170] "The Children of Today Are LOBLAW Customers Tomorrow," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Apr. 21, 1932): 9.

Ontario.[171] Within a month, membership in Toronto and Ontario had reached 7,000 children - each with a club button with a character from the original comic strip, to show their promise to always mind the street. In addition to proudly carrying a symbol of their commitment to safety, children in busier Toronto neighbourhoods were escorted by policemen across the road. This was often the case on roads with streetcars, like Roncesvalles Avenue where high-traffic areas and unaware children and drivers could easily result in tragedy [Fig. 8]. Conveniently, a Loblaw Groceteria was located at 199 Roncesvalles, Toronto. Quick to use the campaign of the "Just Kids Safety Club," Loblaw ran an advertisement in June 1928, capitalizing on parental anxiety about their young children out and about near roads.



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1266, Item 13311

[Figure 8: Children being escorted across the road on Roncesvalles Avenue by a Policeman. Pictured in the background is the Forster Grocer shop. April 25, 1928. City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1266, Item 13311.]

The Loblaw Groceterias advertisement illustrated a policeman halting two automobiles and ushering a small group of young boys across the street into the shop [Fig. 9]. Once safely inside

[171] "Just Kids Safety Club," *The Globe*, (Mar. 30, 1928): 13.

the boys are then depicted with baskets, handling products, and doing their mother's shopping; below the advertisement included the following text:

> We want those same mothers to know that the safest place in Ontario for their children is a Loblaw Store. Furthermore, our Managers and Assistants are ready at all times to help the children do your shopping, and no matter what particular items you may require, if they are on our shelves, those items are what your children will carry away, after paying only the low prices marked in plain figured. Play safe and send your children to a Loblaw Store, where Food Specialists have taken every precaution to protect your family's interest.[172]



[Figure 9: "Safety First from every angle," *The Globe*, (Jun. 22, 1928): 16].

An occasional feature in the *Grocer* was advice columns for fellow grocers to best serve the mother, through the *children* who visited their store. It was important to secure the confidence of the mothers who sent their children for the groceries.[173] One way to secure this trust was to avoid substituting a product without the mother's approval confirmed by telephone first. Unlike their competitors, Loblaw Stores did not accept telephone orders, but instead, reassured mothers that the staff "pays special attention to children when sent to the busy groceterias to represent mother." A child in the store, entrusted with the family purse, was to be given the same attention and treatment as if the mothers came to the store themselves. Even when the mother was physically absent from the store, her needs, demands, and reputation were communicated with the shopkeeper – and vice versa. Representing their mother, their children needed to observe the

[172] "Safety First from every angle," *The Globe*, (Jun. 22, 1928): 16.
[173] "The Clerk's Page," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 25, 1930): 30.

store rules, be polite, and get the best quality goods for the best deal. The worker, also, needed to be mindful of the tales a child could report back home if they were not courteous, efficient, or unable to fill the order.



[Figure 10: Presenting the Thrift Twins Cash and Carrie. *The Toronto Daily Star,* (Jul. 2, 1931): 11.]

The Loblaw chain continued to use imagery of children to appeal to prospective and current female shoppers. In the above cartoon, thrift twins "Cash and Carrie" (a play-on the cash and carry system Loblaw Groceterias were known for) are presented to the royal court, Mr. and Mrs. Consumer [Fig. 10]. The advertisement states that the thrift twins were ambassadors from old Scotland and "on landing they immediately found their way to LOBLAWS by instinct, and of course we adopted them."[174] After the twins were adopted and presented to the court of consumers, they were expected to continually suggest how "wise and thrifty it is for one and all to shop consistently the modern LOBLAW way."[175] A child's interaction with the grocery store,

[174] "Loblaw's Present their Thrift Twins Cash and Carrie to the 'Court of Consumers,'" *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jul. 2, 1931): 11.
[175] Ibid.

then, did not begin after passing the front door, but at home, and on the sidewalk. Young children, particularly young girls, were branded as future shoppers.

The figure of the expert, as a knowledge producer and as a social position, was platformed in periodical literature in the early twentieth century at an unprecedented level. In almost all domains, scientific management was viewed as a tool to standardize and make the grocery store, employees, the household, the kitchen, housewives, and mothers efficient and modern. Through the medium of the *Grocer,* expert knowledge of the grocery trade was further legitimized by state policy and the psyche-sciences which ratified the application of scientific management as a tool of modernity. Efficiency experts of the home championed labour-saving technologies, child-rearing expertise, and the science of homemaking, yet did so without seeking to transform the traditional home or role as a housewife.[176] However, surveillance and scrutiny by experts of women's role as mothers, shoppers, and workers were much harsher than that of male merchandisers, husbands, and the retail industry more broadly. Purinton had lamented that for "every husband sued for non-support there are a hundred wives who should be sued for non-scientific management."[177] Not only did women assume national purchasing roles but ideologies of motherhood made their decision-making and purchasing power – to rear and feed the next generation – a potential threat to moral and national stability.

"Lady Demonstrators" and "Biscuit Girls"

Affixed in the store window, biscuits and candies were tastefully arranged. Upon entering the grocery store, fancier lines of chocolates were often kept behind spotless glass counters, with tempting boxed treats within reach on shelves or open bins. Without a purposeful display,

[176] Hayden, 195, 265.
[177] Purinton, *Efficient Living*, 76.

confectionery "wouldn't attract anyone but the undiscriminating youngster anxious to spend a cent that was burning his fingers."[178] When discussing the profitability of a well-stocked and well-displayed sweet section of their shop, grocers saw the confectionery girl as an essential – and cheap – team member. To compete with local druggists, who claimed a good portion of confectionery sales as the customer waited for their prescription and has the time to browse the stock of chocolates and toffee, the grocer needed to remember how they have the "first call on the customer."[179] To take advantage of existing relationships and securing new patrons, O.S. Johnson asked fellow readers of the *Grocer*: "Why shouldn't it pay a grocer a open up a dainty candy department and entrust that portion of the store to a neatly dressed and attractive young girl?" He continued that the girl "need only be paid a small wage and allowed a fair commission on all sales, so that there would be a strong incentive for her to dispose of a large quantity of goods."[180] One grocer claimed to have a trained a young girl, informing her to the essentials of the confectionery trade and has her in charge of the with a confectionery section. The manager reasons that it "is worth having a special saleslady to devote all her time to that department. It is not good business for a grocery clerk to wait on a child who has a few cents to spend, when there are customers in the store impatient to be served."[181] The use of the word dainty to describe the confectionery section helped feminize the department, drafting images of young women working behind the counter. The hired confectionery girls helped fulfill a sisterly and maternal role by tending to the child clientele while performing part-time, and lower-paid labour.

Although men and women were employed as salesclerks in grocery shops, the attractive saleswoman has been a key tool in image-making for retail stores. In department stores in the

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[178] "What Industry Did," *Canadian Grocer*, (Aug. 3, 1906): 69.
[179] "Brings People into the Store," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 2, 1912): 132.
[180] O.S. Johnston, "Salesmanship Chances in Confectionary," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 2, 1912): 132.
[181] "A Trained Girl in Charge," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 27, 1910): 85.

1890s, the staff were typically working-class and overwhelmingly female. As Susan Benson has observed, the figure of the "Shop Girl" was demanded by customers and managers to possess poise and information; to be an intelligible worker with the ability to transfer domestic skills to the salesfloor.[182] Male workers were less inclined to be involved in store hospitality.[183] The association of the 'girl' on the shop floor is what Belisle has argued, a form of paternalism. Paternalism was used to maintain a hierarchy of the public, customer, and employee in such a way to promote admiration, loyalty, trust, profitability, and efficiency.[184] In a similar way, the expert, whether through trade journals, lecture talks, and women's magazines, strategized to maintain their authority to encourage such qualities to those that would listen. The grocery industry sought to capitalize on the allure of the "neatly attired lady demonstrator" and what was prescribed as her traditional, gendered attributes to bring positive attention to the store and ultimately, move a product to turn a profit.[185]

It was these lady demonstrators at the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) that were a prominent selling point for brands and caught the eye of buyers and grocers alike. At the opening of the CNE on August 29, 1904, the Lieutenant-Governor gave an opening address and remarked that "The Exhibition is the greatest Exhibition of the kind which has ever been held in Canada."[186] The first exhibition ran from August 29th until September 10th. New buildings were added, and the grounds were improved, all to resemble a miniature city. Toronto assured the city residents and future visitors that the reputation of "Toronto the beautiful" would be upheld for the duration of the CNE. The event was dubbed a "golden harvest" for Toronto, with retail

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[182] Benson, 128, 130, 134.
[183] Ibid., 83.
[184] Belisle, *Retail Nation*, 84-85.
[185] Johnston, "Salesmanship Chances in Confectionary," 132. Stephen, Pick One Intelligent Girl, 34. Stephen articulates that it was the attributes of women, more so than the aptitude, that were used as material for vocational assessment and training.
[186] "Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto" *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 9, 1904): 36.

merchants reporting a large increase in the volume of business, and a national commercial and industrial spirit among Canadian citizens.[187] Walden's examination of the Toronto Industrial Exhibition, the antecedent of the CNE, shows how the Victorian penchant for thrift and self-control was replaced with a predilection for the modern. The CNE became a space to display the optimism associated with the new era of industry: speed, specialization, growth of managerial and technical expertise, and the proliferation of consumer goods in the marketplace.[188]

As one of the largest annual fairs in the world, it was an exposition of Canadian products and results. There was an "international character" to the fair, with exhibits showcasing products from Great Britain, the West Indies, France, and the United States, and with thousands of visitors representing other countries; the reach of the exhibit confirmed its success and reputation.[189] To represent its national character, the provinces had varying exhibits to show-off their agricultural prowess; Ontario's fruit, Alberta's wheat and prairie chickens, and Nova Scotia's mined minerals.[190] Although the CNE was a celebration of Canada's achievement, the fair celebrated Canada's economic and patriotic ties to the Empire.

The prescription of difference and otherness within the Empire was a successful marketing tool to exhibit modernity. Anne McClintock has examined how the 1851 World Exhibition, held in London, England, helped establish a narrative of linear progress where the illusion of the world's cultures was marshaled into a "single, visual pedigree of world time."[191] With this, imperialism was a commodity spectacle and advertising "took scenes of Empire into every

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[187] Ibid.
[188] Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, 125. See also Lears, *No Place of Grace*, 13 for a discussion of Victorian self-control and self-restraint as a triumph of what he calls the 'modern superego.'
[189] "The Canadian National Exhibition," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 18, 1908): 37.
[190] Ibid.
[191] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*, (New York: Routledge, 1995): 58.

corner of the home."[192] Grocers and their customers had increasing access, and fast access, to lines of food from across the globe like never before. Brands and advertisers were quick to use the allure and romance of exoticism, imperialism, and Orientalism to market to consumers and position the middle-class consumer as a world explorer.[193]

The benefit and profit that could be made by exhibiting the progress of modernity, vis-à-vis globalization, was a tool used by the Loblaw brand. F.E. Robson, former vice-president of Loblaw Stores, eulogized the "romance, the science and art that line the shelves of every grocery store."[194] Robson continued to idealize how far olives, coffee, sugar, and cocoa beans from "civilized and uncivilized" corners of the world had traveled to be sold on Canadian soil.[195] Housewives were assured by the chain that the food from across the globe had been carefully selected as "if she were able to go into the markets of the world and make her own personal selection."[196] T.P. Loblaw's travels around the world were often documented in the *Toronto Daily Star*. In 1925 he travelled to New Zealand, Australia, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), India, Aden, Palestine, Egypt, France, and Scotland. He arrived back in Toronto "laden with purchases and filled with impressions from the ten different countries he had visited."[197] The following year, in 1926, T.P. Loblaw introduced "Loblaw's Egyptian Blend Tea." Loblaw expressed how "no place could you procure a finer cup of Tea than that served and blended by the merchants at the

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[192] Ibid, 209.
[193] Ibid., 121.
[194] F. E. Robson, "Romance in the Grocery Store," *Canadian Grocer,* (Dec. 13, 1918): 31. See also, "The Romance of Business," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 27, 1917): 99.
[195] Robson, "Romance in the Grocery Store," 31.
[196] "Buying of Products Sold in Groceterias is Full of Romance," *The Globe*, (Nov. 19, 1926): 13.
[197] "Influence of Britain is Noted World Over," *Toronto Daily Star*, (Dec. 26, 1925): 2. Sri Lanka was referred to in the text as 'Ceylon.'

bazaars in Cairo, Egypt" and how the Cairo merchant had "guarded his recipe for his Tea blending with jealous care and secrecy, but it was our good fortune to procure the blending."[198] In this way the Loblaw name was able to co-opt and



[Figure 11: Egyptian Tea Blend by Loblaw Groceterias Co. Ltd. n.d. Courtesy of George Weston Archives]

appropriate Orientalism as a tool of imperial power and used these cultures to serve and sell their own ends.[199] [Fig. 11, 12]

[198] "Loblaw's Egyptian Blend Tea," *Toronto Daily Star*, (Nov. 15, 1926) 14.
[199] Lynn Hunt, *Writing History in the Global Era,* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2014): 33. Lears, *Fables of Abundance*, 10, 162. Leach, 91.



[Figure 12: Pride of Arabia Coffee by Loblaw Groceterias Co. Ltd. n.d. Courtesy of George Weston Archives]

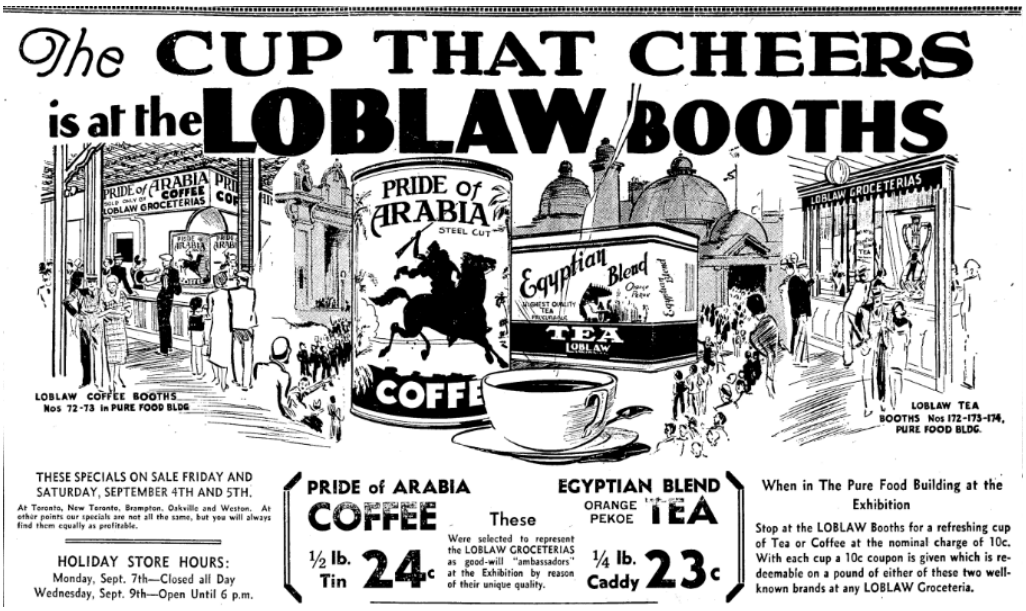
The packaging was typically decorated with non-descript images of camels and opulent Egyptian architecture in the distance. The addition of the fashionable women seated together drinking tea on the packaging reflected what the Loblaw brand had tried to promote, that their store was a place of socialization for women, and women were their target customers. McClintock has attested that colonial, primitive, and atavistic icons and relics were often used for advertising household goods to be consumed by the Empire. It was a method to signify an anachronistic relation to the technological time of modernity and imperial progress.[200] Shortly after in 1930, Loblaw launched "Pride of Arabia Coffee." While there were no women printed on

[200] McClintock, 121, 125. The inclusion of women on the Loblaw packaging supports McClintock's analysis of Empire as she moves beyond Edward Said's metaphorical use of sexuality and gender. Gender and sexuality are crucial to explore the dynamic between imperial and anti imperial powers, and to the building and sustainment of the imperial project.

the packaging, the company name of Loblaw Groceterias Co. was hung on a nearby tree as if to stake a claim in the land itself and demonstrate its imperial stretch. Such imagery of camels, palm trees, and buildings with spherical domes would likely be unfamiliar to customers, for Torontonian architecture was uniformly rectangular and it was horses that once pulled streetcars and wagons, but the Loblaw name plastered on the packaging would ease any uncertainty and would be a familiar, comfortable, and modern sight for the average housewife.



[Figure 13: An Eastern Oasis versus a Western Oasis, *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Aug. 25, 1932): 15]



[Figure 14: The Cup that Cheers, *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Sept. 3, 1931): 11.]

The Pride of Arabia Coffee and Egyptian Tea Blend were designated a booth at the CNE [Fig. 13, 14]. In one advertisement, the intentional divide between the "Eastern Oasis" and "Western Oasis" embodies McClintock's argument regarding the illusion of imperial progress, as the image on the left is depicted to show a lack of technological prowess (camels, not cars and pyramids, not skyscrapers), and racial difference. The suggestion was that women could safely dabble in the primitivism of lands beyond the "West."[201] The second advertisement includes a portrait of a Loblaw Groceterias stand which is decorated with vases with hieroglyphics and circular lanterns affixed from the top of the booth. In either advertisement, women are serving visitors, and female visitors are not pictured without a male figure (likely a husband) or child present, while male visitors are alone, which further hardened social and gender stereotypes. Visiting the booth earned the drinker a coupon redeemable on either brand at any Loblaw Groceteria location. Marketing the Empire became another tool of modernity to sell the modern grocery stores to shoppers, and the 'romance' of imported goods was sold to the well-travelled shopper from the confine of her kitchen.

For exhibit attendees and readers of the *Grocer*, however, the interest was in the displays of foodstuffs at the Exhibition. Heralded as the "Show Window of the Nations" the CNE became a key venue for manufacturers, grocers, and potential customers to gather.[202] Walden has argued that the space of the CNE gave middle-class women an opportunity to "escape the restrictive family hearth and to practice social interactions in public space" but the modern environment was "capable of unsettling and hardening social stereotypes."[203] For grocers especially, the fair was the ultimate indicator of what the public, particularly women, were interested in and what

[201] McClintock, 209. Ashley Kristen Bower, "Rebranding Empire: Consumers, Commodities, and the Empire Marketing Board, 1926-1933," PhD Thesis, Portland State University, (2020): 153-154.
[202] H.W. Waters, "The World's Greatest Show Place the CNE at Toronto," *Toronto City Directory* (1929): 13.
[203] Walden, *Becoming Modern in Toronto*, 30, 171.

should be added or promoted in their store. In the inaugural year, over 150 manufacturers had exhibits – each of whom had realized the value of representative displays of their products. Booths filled the space at the CNE, each eager to win the attention of the passerby. To give the appearance of abundance and grandeur, it was common for food products to be stacked high, often mimicking Toronto's expanding skyline. There were two main opportunities to attract the attendee, beyond a flashy arrangement of goods: free samples and product demonstrations. For either, booth attendees were often employees of the company, and their carefully crafted demonstrations, attire (or in some cases, costumes), and eager attitude helped affirm the quality of the goods their company was selling to "any who care to partake - which means everyone."[204]

The demonstrators were almost exclusively women, particularly if the product could be found on the pantry shelf. This helped earn the vote of confidence of interested housewives, to see the product used by women, and marketed toward them in a variety of ways. While the CNE was a modern moment and space of technology, spectacle, and progress, women were anchored back into domestic roles and imagery. The Purity Flour exhibit had two women demonstrators who were "expert and practical housewives" themselves; able to answer any questions while they performed baking demonstrations.[205] This booth was outfitted with an electric range and all the requirements of a modern kitchen – of a modern housewife. The brand, Jif, arranged their booth as a nod to the modern woman. Behind the stacked display of the flaked soap the wall was decorated with signs: "Save time money and labour." Emphasizing to the housewives and "business girls with an eye to economies" that flaked soap was born of the modern demand for a soap product that would allow them the time, money, and as a result, leisure to truly be

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[204] "Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto," (1908): 37.

[205] "The Purity Flour Exhibit attracted hundreds of women through its 'homey' practical atmosphere," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 12, 1930): 30.

modern.[206] This advertisement, and many like it, sold what Hayden claimed legitimized the business of housework without transforming domestic labour as the traditional vocation for women.[207] While most demonstrators were noted for their crisp, white, orderly uniforms, for one manufacturer, to excite grazing crowds about a new chocolate bar, "dainty cowgirls in picturesque costume were booth attendants, busy in passing out to the insatiable crowds the [new] Denver Sandwich."[208] The Red Rose Tea exhibit, however, kept to a uniform rather than a costume [Fig 15].



[Figure 15: Red Rose Tea booth at the CNE. There was a small seating area for tasting the tea and separate entrance for grocers so as not to have to wait for a demonstration. *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 10, 1910): 35.]

Housed in the Manufacturers' Building, the busiest building at the CNE, with thousands of visitors entering many had to wait their turn to get in. During their wait visitors were provided

[206] "Suds in a Jiffy," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 12, 1930): 31. Jif Flaked Soap, not to be confused with the popular Jif peanut butter brand.
[207] Hayden, 195, 265.
[208] "The Denver Sandwich Makes Big Hit at Exhibition," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 12, 1930): 32.

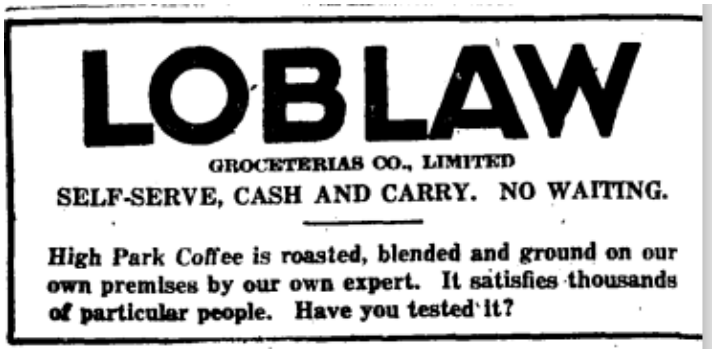
samples of tea "so daintily served and would not go without it. These waiting crowds every day of the fair bore remarkable testimony to the importance to the grocer of selling tea of such well known quality."[209] Special attention was paid to visiting grocers and a portion of the booth was reserved for them, and they were admitted by a separate entrance, so as not to have to wait.[210] Independent grocers especially hoped to mimic this special attention toward customers in their own stores.

Much like the CNE, the grocery store was a space to test various methods to captivate an audience. The first point of sale was through the medium of the store window, discussed in length in Chapter 3, but interactive demonstrations and prepared samples could build sales. Walden explores such demonstrations that took place in the space of the window, appealing to customers before they entered the shop. To the *Grocer*, one retailer recommended his method of demonstration to other readers: "Through the summer months we have a demonstration on Saturdays. I arrange a booth just opposite my main counter, and here is a young lady […] The booth is easily arranged and it is only matter of employing a young lady to look after it."[211] On a hot day, the women who come to do their Saturday shopping are tempted by the cool refreshments, ready to be served by the young lady in charge, and a sale is added to the stores' tally. Demonstrations also played to the other senses. To advertise coffee, for example, if the store had the space for it, a small table and chairs could be cheaply rented; dainty china, tea biscuits, and a coffee pot on a gas-burner or stove would create a successful demonstration set.[212]

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[209] "Red Rose Tea," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 20, 1910): 35
[210] Ibid.
[211] "Has Customers Sample Beverages and Builds Sales in this Way," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 28, 1930): 30.
[212] William Rhodes, "To Demonstrate Coffee," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 6, 1901): 10.

Coffee was a luxury, and for the customer, much more difficult to purchase than good tea; the line required a more intimate knowledge on the part of the seller [Fig. 16].[213]



[Figure 16: Loblaw Groceterias advertisement. Coffee was prepared on-site and demonstrated by a clerk, an expert on the product, *The Globe*, (Feb. 23, 1925): 13]

Keeping freshly ground coffee in the store, particularly first thing in the morning, would produce an aroma that was as convincing as the clerk's sales pitch.

While it was not a staple like eggs, milk, or butter, biscuits often found their way into the grocery basket of the early twentieth-century shopper. Surprisingly, biscuit variations were a reasonably new baking innovation. In the late 1890s, the soda cracker, raisin biscuit, and at most, three or four other varieties accounted for the average stock in the grocery trade. By 1903, *Grocer* excitedly reported that biscuits "of all descriptions and hundreds of varieties are now to be had […] and the quality of the goods has improved almost as much as their varieties have increased."[214] This increase was indicative of the general improvement across all lines within the trade. As such, the consumption of biscuits was at an all-time high; the supply was struggling to meet the demand.[215] All cakes, cookies, and biscuits sold under the Loblaw name were made in

[213] C.L. Marshall, "First Prize Essay," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 6, 1901): 7.
[214] "Confectionery: A Department for Retailers," *Canadian Grocer*, (Nov. 20, 1903): 58.
[215] Ibid. There were two main biscuit manufacturers in Toronto, Christie Brown Ltd. and Telfer Brothers Ltd. Both companies employed a majority female task force (approximately 92%: with the majority occupation as packers and makers [40 and 48% respectively]).

the company's bake shop. The annual report for the store first included the bakery in April 1919, with inventory valued at $3, 660.85.[216] By 1926, each week would see between four and a half and five tons of cake made to be sold to the public through the medium of the store.[217] This facility was later moved to the Loblaw Warehouse which opened in 1928, which housed the bakehouse, coffee, mayonnaise, bacon, butter, candy, and laundry departments.[218] The company bought in bulk and the candy department packed twenty-five thousand pounds every week.[219] Much like the confectionery girls hired as a tool to move product to increase profitability, the "Biscuit Girl" was a unique, albeit brief, feature of the groceterias stores across Toronto in the late 1920s. In several advertisements, the Biscuit Girl stands next to the biscuit display, in a hunched position to provide a sample to the woman customer [Fig. 17]. The sketch replicated the

[216] Loblaw Groceterias. Inc. Annual Report, (Apr. 30, 1919): 12. Courtesy of the George Weston Archive.
[217] "Sound Business Principle Was Followed When Far-Reaching Chain of Groceterias Was Built Up by Loblaw and Associates," *The Globe*, (Nov. 19, 1926): 3.
[218] "Groceteria Company May Spend $500,000 for New Warehouse," *The Globe*, (Jan. 27, 1927): 11.
[219] Ibid., 7.

general assumption that women would prefer to interact with female employees, or would have a false sense of trust, as the female customer is the only one to interact with the Biscuit Girl.



[Figure 17: Loblaw Groceterias advertisement. "The Biscuit Girl Will Serve You" appears on a placard above the young female employee, *The Globe*, (Nov. 30, 1928): 16]

The Biscuit Girl was an amalgamation of proper selling techniques, for Loblaws and other grocery stores. The groceteria layout emphasized the freedom of customers to serve themselves, but also prided themselves in having staff that *could* assist, persuade, demonstrate, and sell the lines of the store. The Biscuit Girl featured a short, modern hairstyle, like that of the other women customers in the illustration. She was young and attractive, her white uniform was clean, white, and orderly, mimicking the sanitary shop of where she worked, and others shopped. Clara Ducie was the first and only employee publicly registered as a Biscuit Girl at a Loblaw

Groceteria in 1929.[220] By December 1929, illustrations of the Biscuit Girl faded to a few lines of text in the occasional advertisement and by 1930 was never referenced again, yet the role of the female demonstrator, shop girl, and lady clerk and their prescribed womanly and traditional attributes continued to be capitalized on in the modern economy.

Conclusion

While the new era of the grocery trade was optimistic for retailers, there was immense pressure to follow closely the advice of food specialists, scientists, and economists. The *Grocer* offered no middle ground, the average retailer could become an amateur expert or a failure.[221] The lecture series sponsored by the RMA represented the literal supply and demand for expertise. The *Grocer* reported on the events as experts were invited to share their successes in the trade to a willing audience, eager to reap the benefits of the speakers guidance and instruction. A clerk needed to be not only open to learning the routine of the store, but required proper training in accuracy, punctuality, courtesy, and the stock. This included an understanding of the psyche-sciences to assess, gender, and problematize both workers and shoppers. From the perspective of the *Grocer* it was imperative for their readers to utilize the tools of modernity to sell their store.

In the home, there was the same expectation (and pressure) evoked from women's magazines that the grocer had faced, to manage the household scientifically and listen to the counsel of experts to do so. Reimagining the home as a business meant it could not be operable without the intervention of the expert. Maternal instinct was continually outranked by domestic, food, and efficiency experts in advice literature. The Canadian Food Series published in *Chatelaine* encouraged women to know their value of their food, to study calories, grades of products, and

[220] Toronto City Directory, (1929): 401.
[221] Henry Johnson Jr., "A Bookkeeping System for Retailers," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jul. 19, 1912): 26.

craft weekly menus for their family with careful expertise. While grocers who were unscientific, unmodern, and careless could lose profits and their business, women were frequently reminded of the harm they could cause to their children (and husbands) if they received a poor diet. Who held the ultimate authority regarding food while in the grocery store was unclear as women had been coached to understand grades, calories, and nutrition, while grocers studied their stock in a similar way. How to achieve the rank of expert, and therefore a mastery of what it meant to be modern (act modern, shop modern, or sell modern) was ambiguous.

The following chapter will explore the unevenness of how modernity penetrated the grocery industry and the home kitchen. Grocery stores were renovated to be sterile, clean, bright, and open.[222] The kitchen was remodelled to be smaller, efficient, technologically advanced, and yet, both spaces were unmistakably modern. As Leach has expressed, to keep up with modern demands and techniques, there retailers needed a "greater investment in mass production" and "required greater skill in mass seduction."[223] It was a challenge for the *Grocer* and its readership to make food appear desirable when it was a necessity and for profit needing to be made without alienating the buying public.

[222] Monod, 55.
[223] Leach, 298.

Chapter Three: Expanding Stores, Shrinking Kitchens

Introduction

As the tenets of modernity, particularly scientific management and technology, were prescribed and disseminated by the *Grocer* and *Chatelaine* in the early twentieth century, the "modern" was sold to readers in the space, architecture, and design of the grocery store and home kitchen. The grocery press was eager to make a claim for the modern and distinguish the industry from older forms of food distribution. Retailing increased across all trades, which led to multi-storied department stores and the gradual inauguration of chain stores in Toronto. The progress of a grocery store meant bigger, better, and more. Simultaneously, as the ultimate work centre, the modern kitchen was replanned to be more compact, and convenient, and to erase "enormous [kitchens] in older houses, in which a woman had to be a marathon walker to prepare one meal."[1] The reimagining of the grocery store, and the home kitchen happened in tandem with one another. The grocery industry imagined the home as a site of production and attempted to sustain wants and desires for quick, cost-effective, and nutritious meals with eye-catching arrangements and a promise to fulfill the housewife's need for labor-saving devices and foods that *Chatelaine* advocated for.[2] While modernity, by design, attempts to disrupt the relationship with tradition, this does not happen in the same way with food for women, and yet, modernity was continuously pulled-in and marked through the home kitchen.

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[1] John Alexander, *Maclean's Magazine*, "Replanning the kitchen" (Apr. 15, 1937) 72.

Much like how the apron signified a scientist's coat, the kitchen was envisioned as a home laboratory. This chapter analyzes how these two sites, the grocery store and the kitchen as sites of consumption and production were expected to evolve into something modern. The prescriptive expertise of the *Grocer* and *Chatelaine* created and sustained the ideal of the modern food producer and housewife in the early twentieth century.

The Shrunken Kitchen and the Chatelaine Institute

While the kitchen was considered private from outside judgment, and often further segregated and isolated within the home, there was little privacy in these purchases that made its way into the pantry rendering the kitchen open to outside scrutiny. Women's magazines prompted the surveillance of one another when it came to food. For example, if a child was seemingly malnourished this was a reflection on the poor buying decisions of the mother to feed her child adequately. The concern over infant mortality and the nutritional needs of older children in the early twentieth century became inseparable from the kitchen table, the grocery store, advertising strategies, advice literature of experts, and public policy.[3] The healthy appearance of a young child could confirm to outsiders that the modern mother had food shopped efficiently. There were other ways, too, to be privy to the affairs in the home kitchen. Before the self-service style of shopping, a customer would have to announce to the grocer what she needed for him to collect off the shelves behind them. The merchant or waiting customers could judge what had been requested; would the grocer reprimand her for outstanding credit in earshot of the other customer? Would the customer know of her husband's financial situation and

[3] Krasnick Warsh, "Vim, Vigour, and Vitality," 388. See Arnup, 19, 27. Prior to the First World War government officials in Europe and North America had begun to recognize the connection between poor national health and infant mortality. In Toronto the Division of Child Hygiene was established in June 1914 and the Bureau of Child Welfare was established in October 1916. The duty of the Bureau, as Arnup notes, was to conduct investigations in various communities to provide literature and advice to mothers in the care of their babies to reduce infant mortality.

if she was overspending? Had she requested an item that was exported when she could have purchased a Canadian-produced good? Purchasing decisions made for the home kitchen and what had been carefully packed into the paper bag were not necessarily private.

The home kitchen was lauded by popular women's magazines in the early decades of the twentieth century as "the most interesting room in the house" and where "the women of the […] home must necessarily pass the greater portion of the daylight hours in the kitchen."[4] In Suzanne Morton's *Ideal Surroundings* she observes how the kitchen was the most important room in the working-class home, a place of work, consumption, and respectability.[5] *More Work for Mother* makes a similar claim, that kitchens were as much a locus for industrialized work and innovation as factories were.[6] As the most interesting room in the house, there was plenty of discourse published in women's magazines concerning the layout, equipment, decoration, and labour inside the kitchen.

As the First World War entered its fourth year there had been a decline in the ability to afford to hire or work as a domestic maid. Advertisers capitalized on this gap. "She's Gone! If war work has summoned daughter for the home, or the maid to the munition factory, there are busier times than ever ahead – for women who stay at home. You need all the time-saving helps you can get hold of," the advertisement read, with a day-to-day list of how the product would reduce labour throughout the household.[7] The modernized, efficient home would replace hired

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[4] Mrs. E. Whiting, "A Model Kitchen," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Feb. 1922): 8; Collier Stevenson, "A Design for a Country Home," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Jul. 1909): 14.
[5] Morton, *Ideal Surroundings*, 32-33.
[6] Cowan, *More Work for Mother,* 4, 179. See also Sangster, *Transforming Labour,* 26.
[7] "She's Gone!" Gold Dust Washing Powder advertisement, *Canadian Home Journal*, (Oct. 1918): 24. The "Servant Question" had been a topic of discussion for several issues for the *CHJ*. One column, "Around the Hearth," by Jennie A. Moore suggests that a number of domestic workers are non-English speakers as sometimes woman o the house "undertakes to teaching them to speak our language," (Nov. 1911): 15.

help with "modern electric servants."[8] While some of the labour may have been completed by a daughter hired domestic help, instructions prepared by women's magazines regarding how to shop for groceries (and what to do with them) was almost always directed at the housewife or soon-to-be bride. The only mention of a maid or servant in the *Grocer* was in reference to Sun-Maid raisins.[9]

With the assumption that their readers *did* labour in the most interesting room in the house, *Everywoman's World* featured a regular segment called "The Experiment Kitchen," the *Canadian Home Journal* hosted a "Model Kitchen" competition, and *Chatelaine* profiled the "National Kitchen" after the Chatelaine Institute was developed. Katherine M. Caldwell was a regular contributor for the Food Department of *Everywoman's World* and in 1917 a new series where readers were provided a summary and instructions of various labour-saving devices, tested and endorsed by the magazine's Experiment Kitchen. For example, as "no woman ever willingly opened a tin can, if there was a man about whose services could be commandeered," a premium can-opener, available for 25 cents, would not only provide "hand insurance" but isolation when working in the kitchen; the user would not need assistance or company from her husband or son.[10] As the home kitchen was reimagined as a site of work, of less waste, efficiency, and isolation, it was progressively stripped of its social function and space to perform other household activities with other family members.[11] In her laboratory-like kitchen, Caldwell "conducted" tests for the household appliances and devices she profiled. Approved items

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[8] Margaret Hobbs and Ruth Roach Pierson, "'A kitchen that wastes no steps…' Gender, Class and the Home Improvement Plan, 1936-1940," *Historie Sociale/Social History*, Vol. XXI No. 41 (May 1988): 31.
[9] Advertisements in the *Grocer* exclusively encouraged grocers to sell to housewives, and near-all interactions from retailers reported in the journal were between a grocer and a married woman, with no mention of domestic workers shopping on behalf of their employer.
[10] Katherine M. Caldwell, "The Experiment Kitchen," *Everywoman's World*, (Sept. 1917): 28. Katherine M. Caldwell, "The Experiment Kitchen," *Everywoman's World*, (Oct. 1917): 22.
[11] Hobbs and Roach-Pierson, 29. Some floorplans physically cutoff women from the rest of the home, while other designs revised the home kitchen to maximize efficiency to prepare, plan, and produce for the family.

received the *Everywoman's World* seal of approval to certify the endorsement that "On these things you may depend." [Fig. 1] However, the Experiment Kitchen, and the later Chatelaine Institute, did not reflect poor or working-class households who continued to rely on family systems, and relatives, and had very few – if any – labour-saving devices.[12]



[Fig. 1. *Everywoman's World* Seal of Approval from the Experiment Kitchen for *Everywoman's World,* Sept. 1917, 28.]

The series appears to have been in print from 1917 until 1919, and Caldwell continued to author columns for the magazine including "Equipping the Bride's Kitchen" the following year. The "Model Kitchen" profiled Mrs. E. Whiting's home in Sidney, British Columbia. The editor prefaced the feature with: "The kitchen is pre-eminently the feminine kingdom and yet, for centuries, women have shown a strange lack of initiative in demanding or inventing the proper equipment for this principality of pots and pans," the Model Kitchen was "anything but a scene suggestive of dreariness and drudgery."[13] Mrs. Whiting proudly how her kitchen was function and exceptionally "bright, cheerful, light and clean" with a layout which "work reduced to a minimum and made a pleasure."[14]Arguably, the Model Kitchen was more of an ideal, as city

[12] Ladd-Taylor, 28. See also, Sue Bowden and Avner Offer, "The Technological Revolution that Never Was: Gender, Class, and the Diffusion of Household Appliances in Interwar England," in *The Sex of Things*, 251, 268-269.
[13] "Editorial Chat," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Feb. 1922): 1.
[14] Whiting, "Model Kitchen," 8, 57.

kitchens would hardly share the view of open countryside or mountains. The owner boasted "how many women have to look at their neighbour's wall from their kitchen window? My kitchen looks out into a nice garden."[15] The city home was often unable to have the kitchen at the front of the house, in "this place of honour" due to a lack of privacy.[16] Neither the city home nor city kitchen were prominently featured in the *Canadian Home Journal* as something to be modeled after.

The intersection of kitchen design, functionality, and food was further proselytized by the soon-to-be most-read women's magazine in Canada – *Chatelaine*. Bryne Hope Sanders, editor of *Chatelaine* (1929-1952) acknowledged how the magazine entered over 100,000 Canadian homes each month. In doing so, the magazine "must form a strong connecting link across the Dominion."[17] Similar to the reach and authority of the *Grocer*, the editors of *Chatelaine* seemed to view their readers as an imagined community who eagerly, and equally, applied the tools of their expertise. Often Sanders' editorials adopted a maternalist perspective with a keen focus on the family, childcare, marriage, and homemaking as a vital responsibility for modern mothers. She was critical of how the modern affected the home and worried that "the modern young people are impatient of restriction…they do not enjoy being with the family…parental authority is waning and young people are eager to hurtle down the years to disaster."[18] As Korinek has

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[15] Whiting, 57.
[16] Collier Stevenson, "A Design for a Country Home," 14.
[17] Byrne Sanders, "Editorial: The Meaning of a Magazine," *Chatelaine*, (Feb. 1930): 19. Valerie Korinek's *Roughing it in the Suburbs* (2000) analyzes *Chatelaine's* readership, messaging, and eventual feminist turn in the late 1950s and 1960s. In doing so, Korinek examines the various editorial directions the magazine took over the decades. Each issue of Chatelaine (minus 1954-1958 under the editorship of John Clare) included an editorial page that were written in an "intimate, woman-to-woman tone."
[18] Byrne Sanders, "Is family life of the wane?" *Chatelaine*, (Jun. 1930): 16. There was much concern for the youth "deserting" the church, which was a problem for both national life and the household, "Is the Church deserting youth?" *Chatelaine*, (Jun. 1930): 5

argued, Sanders adopted a nationalist tone and attributed the strength of the nation to the strength of the household.[19]

In one editorial, Sanders lamented how the percentage of malnutrition was the highest across a Canadian city (which she did not name).[20] Even worse, according to Sanders, was how the children had parents with plenty of intelligence, time, and money. Much of the social and welfare policies regarding child nutrition at this time placed responsibility and blame on the mother.[21] The cause of the cases of malnutrition, claimed Saunders, was a result of mothers not knowing the basic rules of proper feeding and thousands of women do not have an opportunity of such learning.[22] Sanders reflected on the audience of the cooking lectures and demonstrations at any night school that offered household science:

> You will see a surprising number of young wives – slim, swagger, flapperish. Apparently the type who like best to live on the delicatessen store and park the baby with a neighbor while the go to the matinée…Yet here they are, eager and enthusiastic to learn something of home making. They have never had an opportunity. Business life and an early marriage have thrown them into a home without the faintest idea of the duties required of them. The one career which every girl expects to follow, is the one which she is never trained.[23]

Here, Sanders has highlighted the opposition between modernity and the parameters of norms of familial constitution and gender roles. On one hand she has criticized an icon of modernity, the flapper, as a young woman who was unmoored from the family, while prescribing women as producers of the modern family household. As Roach-Pierson and Hobbs have articulated, the

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[19] Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 261-262.
[20] Sanders, "Editorial: The Meaning of a Magazine," 19.
[21] Arnup, 31. By the late 1930s, concerned mothers turned their attention to a lack of government intervention, and blamed high rates of childhood malnutrition on the rising costs of milk. See Guard, "A Mighty Power Against the Cost of Living," 27, 30, 34. Guard examines the 'price war' housewife-activists launched against the city government in the late 1930s. In 1937 200 women protested and urged Toronto's Board of Control to support their demands and lower their prices.
[22] Sanders, "Editorial: The Meaning of a Magazine," 19.
[23] Ibid.

imagined reader of the magazine was simultaneously "proletarianized into a home worker while being elevated to the status of a chatelaine."[24]

With such eagerness to learn, the establishment of the Chatelaine Institute was proposed as an answer to the questions young wives had. The magazine sought to be the voice of Canadian womanhood and through the Chatelaine Institute, could respond to readers' concerns and prescribe an order regarding family and gender. As *Chatelaine* anchored its readers to the home kitchen it was a way, similar to the grocery industry, to help soothe any perceived disruption of traditional roles that modernity had caused. As a result, female consumers were essential to the imagined modernity of grocery stores, even as their relationship with the domestic economy (kitchen and family food production) was never fully ruptured by the promise of becoming modern.

Helen Campbell reported to the readers of *Chatelaine* that there was a "back-to-the-kitchen movement" where "kitchen aprons are decidedly in style again."[25] This declaration followed three successful years of the Chatelaine Institute, which had been established in February 1930. The first announcement of the new Institute detailed how the magazine was to establish, under its own roof, a fully equipped demonstration and experimental kitchen and household research bureau.[26] The Institute would be under the direction of the best-qualified dietitians and cookery experts in Canada to present readers with the practical results of its investigations, new dishes, and recipes, menus based on certified standards of nutrition, and would solve the "hundreds of problems that daily confront the home-maker."[27] This included the feeding of the family and

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[24] Hobbs and Roach Pierson, "'A kitchen that wastes no steps…' Gender, Class and the Home Improvement Plan, 1936-1940," 31, 36.
[25] Helen Campbell, "The Business of Housekeeping," *Chatelaine,* (Feb. 1933): 46.
[26] "Announcing - The Chatelaine Institute," *Chatelaine,* (Feb. 1930): 22.
[27] Ibid.

allotment of the budget. As a science, the Institute promised to "work out your problems of preparing delicious food and serving it attractively with an eye to economy of time, labor, and money."[28] Following the preliminary announcement of the Institute, Helen Campbell was named as the director.

A seemingly suitable choice for Campbell was well known to the *Chatelaine* readers and by women across Canada. Prior to her appointment at the Institute, Campbell had worked for the Dairy Branch of the Department of Agriculture in Ottawa, working to increase the consumption of dairy products throughout the Dominion.[29] In the introduction to Campbell's new position, *Chatelaine* boasted how school children were familiar with Campbell's booklet series on the value of foods and health; teachers knew her educational health work in food education for children; home-makers had "tucked her books of recipes, given at one of her lectures or demonstrations among their kitchen lore."[30] By all accounts, Campbell was recognized as the most efficient and practical specialists in household science in the country. Having traveled across Canada, *Chatelaine* assured that Campbell would bring an "intimate and thorough knowledge" of Canadian homes to their Institute.[31] For Campbell, she hoped to support the readers with their problems of homemaking as

> these problems differ in many respects from those faced by the average housewife of the past generation; but the demands upon their time, intelligence, and skill, are just as great. More clearly than ever before, the housekeeper's importance, in family and social life, is recognized. Modern industry has her needs in mind and the resources of modern manufacturing are at her command. The Institute has set for itself the task of…[giving] guidance in the evaluation of time and labor-saving devices, and in the selection of suitable and satisfactory equipment.[32]

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[28] Campbell, "The Business of Housekeeping," 46.
[29] "Director of the Chatelaine Institute," *Chatelaine*, (Mar. 1930): 24.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.

Campbell would champion the home as a business, only operable through purposeful modern design choices, a sense of comfort, and efficiently managed by the homemaker.

As a visible stamp of authority and expertise, The Chatelaine Institute Seal claimed to safeguard the purchaser against extravagant and unjustifiable claims. The seal would also protect the manufacturer through the Institute's recommendation of what was good and declining to recommend what had failed during testing.[33] The Chatelaine Institute Seal occupied the advertising pages in the magazine, creating an ultimate buyer's guide to quality products [Fig. 2].

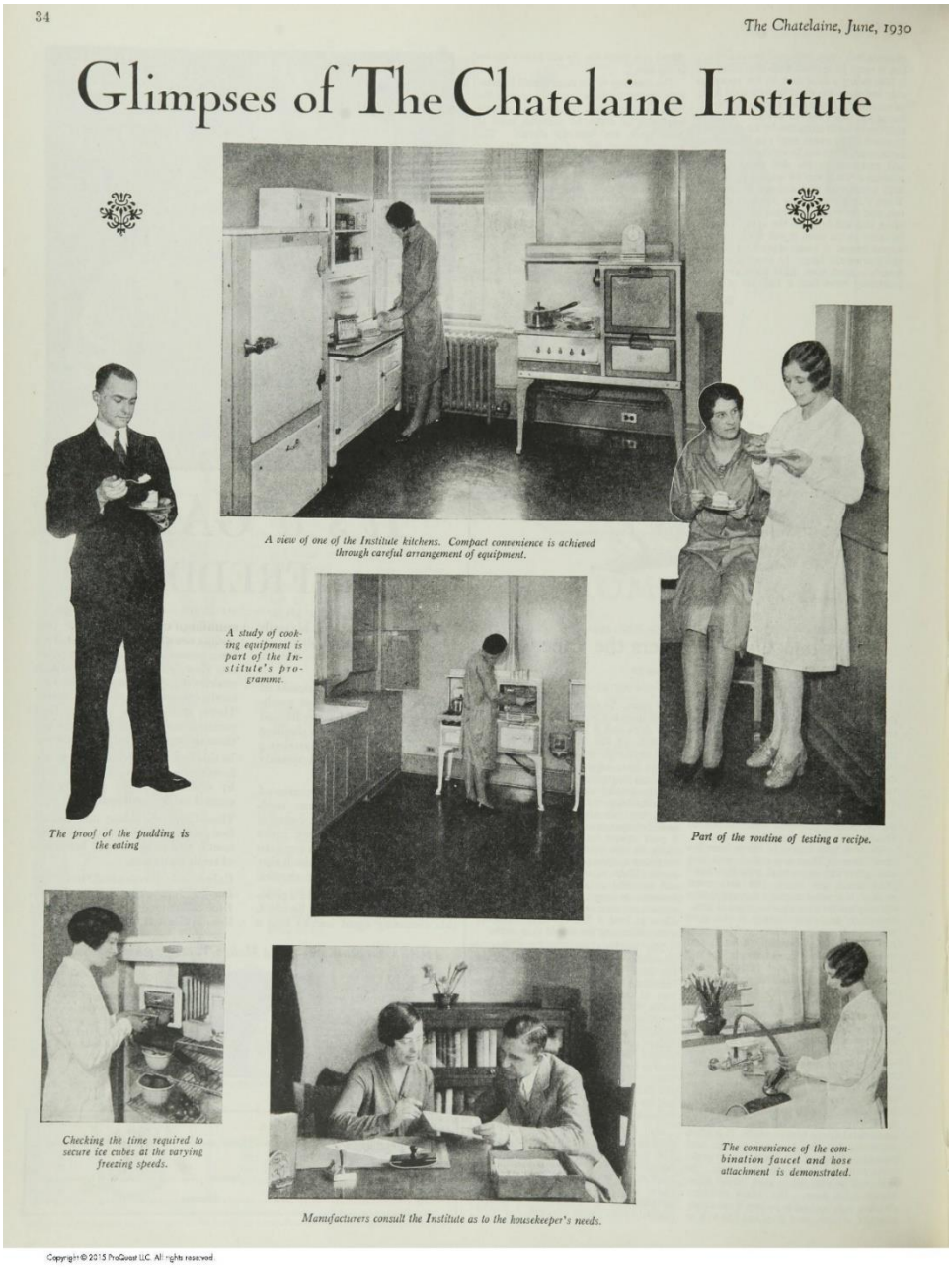


[Figure 2: Similar to the Seal of the Experiment Kitchen, products had been 'tested' in the kitchen laboratory, with the promise of objectivity and science. From: "More About the Seal of Approval, *Chatelaine,* (Sept. 1935): 52.]

Campbell explained "In the studio we study the appropriate use of what is new and smart in-home decoration; in the chemical laboratory we find out what's what in food products; in the engineering laboratory we test appliances for durability, convenience, and service."[34] What went into a readers' home and grocery basket was presented as an objective science accomplished by rigorous testing [Fig. 3]. Campbell asserted that if women were sensible and thrifty, if she were "choosy" in her selection of expensive equipment and small priced items, it would lead to her

[33] "Announcing - The Chatelaine Institute," 22.
[34] Campbell, "The Business of Housekeeping," 46.

"success and her reputation as a good manager."[35] The Seal could guide these sensible and rational purchasing decisions.



[Figure 3: Various photographs of the Chatelaine Institute. *Chatelaine*, June 1930, pg. 34]

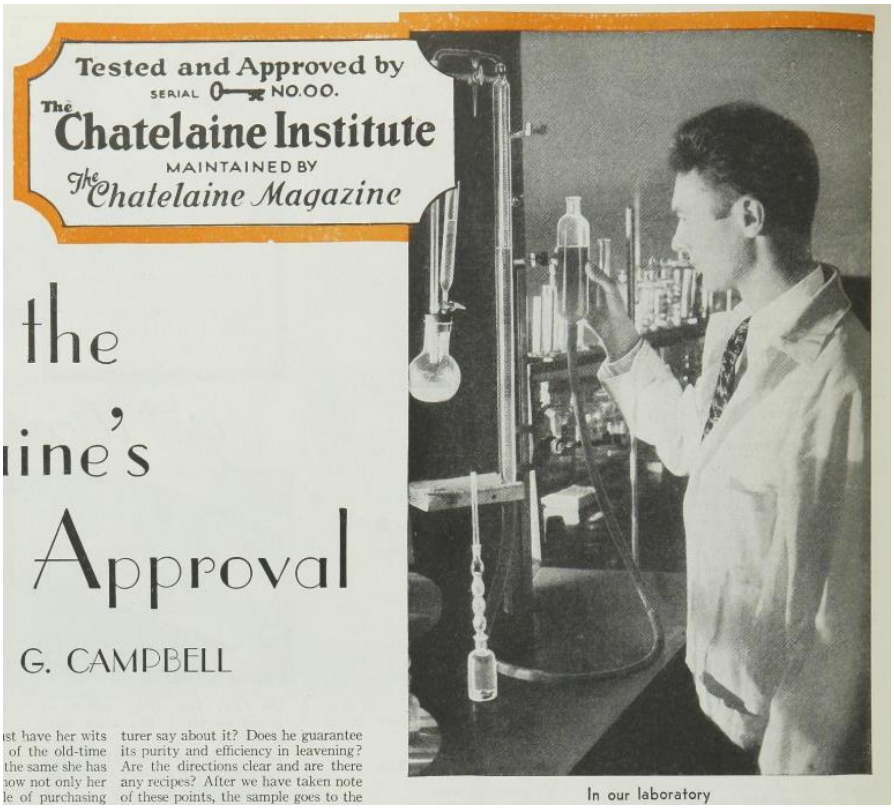
For products to receive the coveted Seal of Approval they needed to first effectively perform the job for which they were designed and second, provide good service for the user. For

[35] Helen Campbell, "Chatelaine's Seal of Approval," *Chatelaine*, (Jul. 1934): 53.

example, kitchen appliances were installed in the Institutes' demonstration kitchen and used day-to-day.[36] The image above depicts various stages of testing and demonstration and while male scientists of the Institute were regularly portrayed, they were never photographed using equipment *in* the kitchen or contributing to food preparation. In this way, the Institute held up traditional gender roles, and a proclivity toward female production in the kitchen, and yet, the kitchen was imagined as a site of consumption for Sealed products.

A careful check of performance and weaknesses of the product were documented by a male Institute engineer who had a "Doubting Thomas attitude toward things and takes nothing for granted…No guesswork about it!"[37] In addition to kitchen equipment, food went through a thorough testing process. Baking powder was examined by two experts: the home economist in the kitchen and the chemist in his laboratory [Fig. 4].[38]

[36] Helen Campbell, "Tested and Approved by the Chatelaine Institute," *Chatelaine*, (Jun. 1934): 58.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Campbell, "Chatelaine's Seal of Approval," 53.



[Figure 4: One of the Chatelaine Institute chemists involved in testing products for the Seal of Approval, *Chatelaine*, (July, 1934): 53.]

Both would determine if the baking powder was satisfactory, chemically and for the culinary purpose it was intended. The Institute also tested any recipes that were included on the packaging of food products and would make recommendations if the wording was vague, or the recipe was unsatisfactory. If the manufacturer's claims were justified and if the cost to the housekeeper was reasonable, the baking powder was endorsed by the Seal. Readers and buyers were assured that the Institutes' Seal was a merit of their approval, conducted with scientific knowledge and precision. It was this type of science that lifted much of the "old-time drudgery" from the housekeeper's shoulders.[39]

The Seal was not necessarily just a thing of goodwill to only protect the consumer, the magazine was in part responding to federal housing policy, which, in theory, sought to create

[39] Ibid.

more houses and therefore more *Chatelaine* approved kitchens. In 1935 the *Dominion Housing Act* (DHA) was initiated to support the social, economic, and political instability of 1930s housing issues across Canada. During the Depression conditions throughout the housing market deteriorated rapidly. When general economic recovery began in the late 1930s, the housing system (including residential construction) struggled to recover to pre-1929 levels.[40] Housing surveys in large cities, like Toronto, reported a "serious shortage of low-rent dwellings with modern conveniences."[41] In short, the DHA was intended to promote the construction of new, modernized homes and help buffer high unemployment rates. *Chatelaine* encouraged readers to apply for the housing loan, as an economical and practical decision, to build their dream home and that they too could "build a house in fourteen days for $2,800."[42] The magazine supplied readers with the necessary steps to apply for Dominion Housing Loans and profiled various floorplans of homes designed by architects for the DHA, as the "small house is in the limelight, partly due to altered living conditions and partly to the desire to minimize inconvenience and unnecessary labour," in the small house there was, "no early reason why any woman should be a slave to her home, that is the slave of labor occasioned by faulty house planning."[43]

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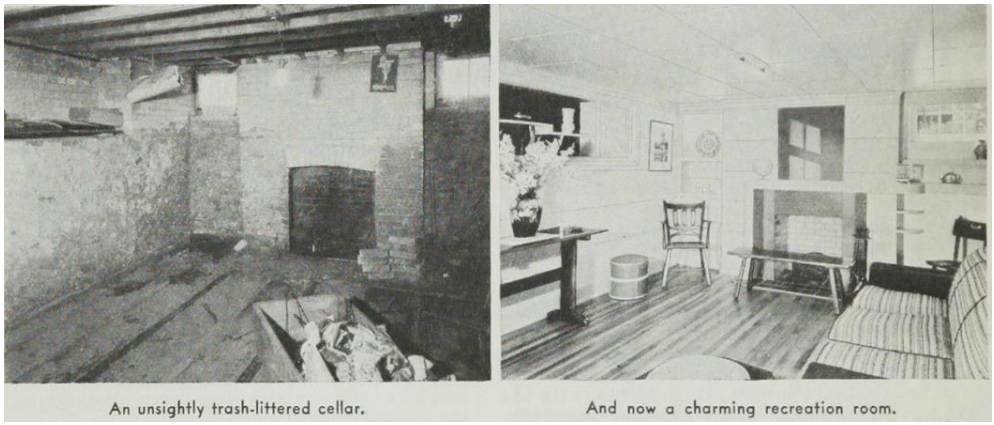
[40] J. David Hulchanski, "The 1935 Dominion Housing Act: Setting the Stage for a Permanent Federal Presence in Canada's Housing Sector," *Urban History Review*, Vol. XV No. 1 (Jun. 1986): 19-22. As Hulchanski notes, the 1934 Toronto study, the *Report of the Lieutenant-Governor's Committee on Housing Conditions in Toronto* recommended vigorous policy and modern and efficient town planning to repair or demolish unfit dwellings and new low-cost houses as rapidly as possible.

[41] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 122.

[42] "Do you know what the Dominion Housing Act can mean to you!" *Chatelaine*, (Sept. 1936): 47. "Build a House in Fourteen Days for $2,800," *Chatelaine*, (May 1938): 83. Under the 1935 Act the bulk of the loans for housing went to residents in Ontario and Quebec, leaving those in rural and remote areas out of luck. The Act was replaced in 1938 with the National Housing Act (NHA) which extended the scope to include such areas.

[43] Evan Parry, "The Small House," *Chatelaine*, (Apr. 1938): 90. "Do You Understand the 1938 Dominion Housing Act?" *Chatelaine* (Sept. 1938): 64.

An additional example of federal policy impacting and shaping the home was the Home Improvement Plan (HIP) of 1936, which also sought to create jobs in the construction industry, offered low-interest loans of up to $2,000 to encourage households (mainly women) to undertake renovations to modernize and streamline their home. Hobb and Roach-Pierson have thoroughly examined the Canadian state's role in the social constructions of class and gender relations under the HIP, wherein the plan reinforced the ideal of women at home and out of the paid workforce.[44] Moreso than the other two federal government housing initiatives, *Chatelaine* published numerous articles about "modernization achievement as developed under the Government's Home Improvement Plan."[45] To further sell the modern to the reader, Campbell promoted the plan as a "psychological moment to bring your house into step with modern times."[46] The magazine capitalized on the "manipulatory technique" of photography to present 'before' and 'after' side-by-side shots of homes to make people scrutinize their own homes and outdated features [Fig. 5].[47]



[Figure 5: Before-and-after photograph in *Chatelaine* of renovations completed under the HIP, Chatelaine, 1937): 41]

[44] Hobbs and Roach-Pierson, 18, 32, 36, 37. Women were indirectly targeted by the HIP as it the loans were to go to men and the employment to be generated was in male-dominated job sectors.
[45] Richard Fisher, "Modernizing," *Chatelaine*, (Feb. 1937): 72.
[46] Helen Campbell, "1937 Home Improvement Year," *Chatelaine* (Jan. 1937): 41.
[47] Hobbs and Roach-Pierson, 21-22.

This became a monthly competition where a $25.00 prize was awarded to readers who submitted the best before-and-after photographs showing renovations they had completed under the HIP.[48] However, many working-class families, with more than one breadwinner, could not afford to repay an average-sized loan.[49] Despite the realities of many Canadian households, and likely many readers of *Chatelaine*, in 1937 Campbell declared to readers, was the "great home improvement year" where "hundreds of antiquated houses will be given a new lease on life."[50] Although the HIP did not cover the costs of appliances and equipment for the home kitchen, there were many desirable changes that could be made to remodel the kitchen. The modernized, renovated kitchen was to be well-ventilated, with working surfaces of adequate and appropriate height, storage space and working surfaces, and labor-saving equipment (purchased with cash or credit under deferred payment arrangements) arranged in a logical step-saving manner.

While each room in the home was explored by the Chatelaine Institute – from dining room drapery to stylish salons – there was always ample direction to improve the kitchen space. Homes in the 1930s, for the most part, were smaller than a few years prior, especially those built under Dominion Housing Loans. Combination living and dining rooms were popular in many city apartments and smaller homes, both of which required furniture to address a variety of needs and household tasks.[51] The floor space of the kitchen also shrank. Described as "her little own kingdom" the kitchen that was efficient and under good management would prove any young

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[48] "Chatelaine's Home," *Chatelaine*, (Feb. 1937): 72. Richard Fisher, "Before and After," *Chatelaine*, (Mar. 1937): 20-21.
[49] Hobbs and Roach-Pierson, 18. The duo have argued on pg. 23 that there was an idealized picture that was projected by the HIP and popularized by Chatelaine. Furthermore, the cost-of-living index by the federal Department of Labour sustained the ideal of the five person nuclear family, with a male breadwinner and dependent wife and children, which excluded the extended family living situations or married women working (e.g., taking in lodgers).
[50] Campbell, "1937 Home Improvement Year," 41.
[51] Helen Campbell, "Modernity in Furnishing," *Chatelaine*, (Mar. 1931): 28.

bride as "the true helpmate of her husband."[52] For the newlywed bride, the furnishing of her home was an opportunity to exercise her taste and thrift. She would need to survey the kitchen, taking note of the size, shape, number of windows, and amount of wall space. Unsure of where to start, *Chatelaine* advised to turn to the woman's mother for she would know from experience what was "wrong with her own kitchen and what she would have different."[53] Manufacturers of equipment would have service departments; shops with assembled displays of products; interior decoration departments with trained staff; the Institutes' Seal, all of which could offer their co-operation and guidance to the lost shopper. It was important to consider the amount and type of work she would perform in the kitchen - whether she would frequently entertain formally or informally, and her sequence of duties in meal preparation.[54] A refrigerator needed to be appropriately sized; poor economy to be too small and poor design if it overtook the space of the

[52] Helen Campbell, "Selecting the Kitchen Equipment," *Chatelaine*, (Jun. 1930): 21. See also, Mary-Etta Macpherson, "The Bride Furnishes Her Home," *Chatelaine*, (Jun. 1930): 19-20.
[53] Helen Campbell, "That New Kitchen," *Chatelaine*, (Apr. 1933) 20.
[54] Campbell, "Selecting the Kitchen Equipment, 21.

kitchen floor. However, *Chatelaine* did not account for the class differences between their readers [Fig. 6 and Fig. 7].





[Figure 6: An example of the Iceless Refrigerator from the Experiment Kitchen. Readers were provided instructions from the Montreal Women's Food Economy Committee and Katherine Caldwell on how to construct the refrigerator because the price of ice had increased and even iceboxes were costly to fill. *Everywoman's World*, Aug. 1918, 19.]
[Figure 7: An image from the article "Your Electric Refrigerator," *Chatelaine* (Jul. 1932). Although the Institute frequently featured similar models such as this, it would have been both a rarity and luxury in the early 1930s.]

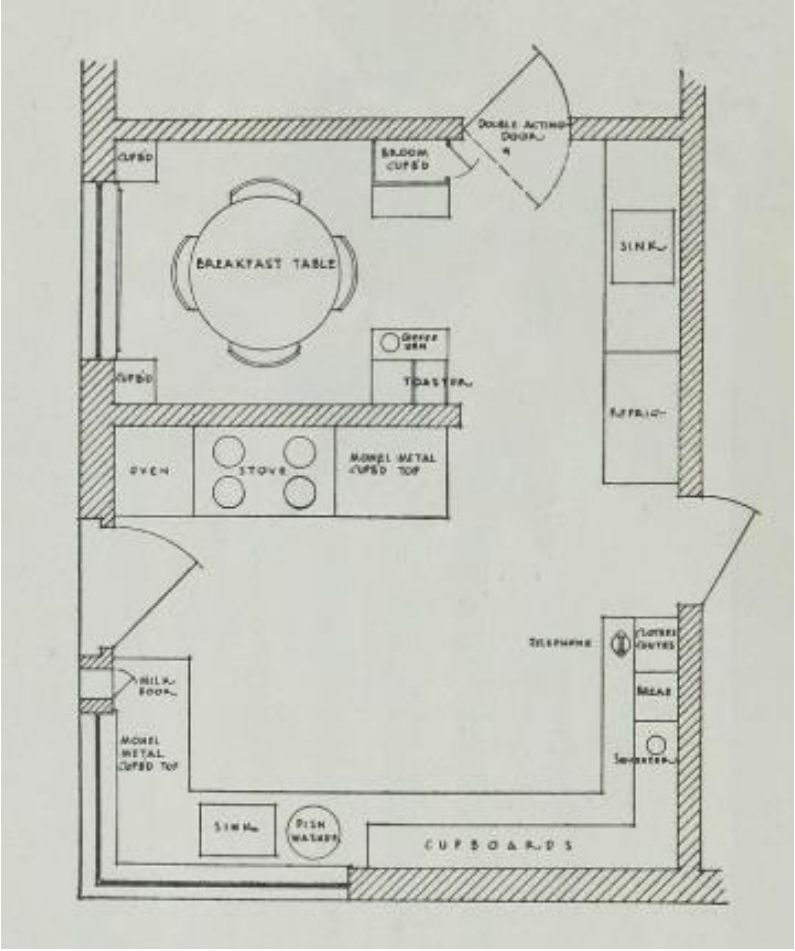
The bourgeois and working-class kitchen were closer together, in theory, than ever before, however, in one small space one had the privilege to have an electric refrigerator and the other an icebox; both were technically modern with the reduction of steps, but only one of these was profiled by the Institute. Just having a small kitchen did not make it modern, a compact kitchen could be just as inconvenient, what was important was the relief from kitchen drudgery from an efficient workspace and new equipment.[55] Electric refrigerators were considered luxuries and by 1941, only 21% of Canadian homes had them.[56] Much of meal preparation was centralized around the kitchen cabinet. The kitchen cabinet could provide a worktable and storage space for

[55] John Alexander, "Replanning the Kitchen," *Maclean's*, (Apr. 15, 1937): 72.
[56] Parr, *Domestic Goods*, 29. City kitchens without a refrigerator would have relied on iceboxes for food storage, compared to country or suburban homes with access to cold storage in a basement.

utensils and other cooking equipment and ingredients. The multi-use cabinet meant the number of steps taken was reduced, especially if the cabinet was placed near the refrigerator.[57] At this time, electric ranges had become increasingly popular due to their ease of use and ability to keep clean. Gas ranges were still common in many homes, particularly if a house was not equipped with the wiring for an electric one.[58] In either range many new convenient features included automatic time and temperature controls to simplify cooking and save the housekeeper's time and labour.

[57] Campbell, "Selecting the Kitchen Equipment," 21.
[58] Ibid., 57.

The dinette, or a breakfast alcove, was a desirable feature of the modern kitchen. The Institute proposed that the small space be used for planning menus, informal luncheons, late suppers, or to attend to the "business end of housekeeping" [Fig. 8].[59]



[Figure 8: An example of the floorplan of a modern and efficient kitchen designed by the Institute, *Chatelaine*, (Nov. 1934): 48]

The dinette was not a new idea and was in homes years prior, but rather it was repackaged as a modern solution for storage, and kitchen appliances, and created a separation from the kitchen – the housewife's supposed kingdom (yet still the helpmate of her husband) – while still in the same room. This way children could be watched with ease. Similar to the installation of the *passapiatti* in Italian kitchens that Diana Garvin has examined, these alcoves had the potential to

[59] "Chatelaine Institute Plans the Kitchen, Laundry and Dinette," *Chatelaine*, (Nov. 1934): 49.

confine sights, sounds, and smells to the kitchen.[60] In doing so it further marked the kitchen as a gendered space of isolated household labour. While the grocery store sought to expand and remove barriers, the modern kitchen, according to *Chatelaine*, began to recede in size under the "new household regime based on scientific management."[61]

These factory-like kitchens in the 1930s, where steps were reduced for optimum efficiency and food preparation resembled an assembly line, marked a clear change in kitchen design and meaning. For example, Garvin's study notes how Italian architectural designers of "Fascist model kitchens" were jealous of North American factory standardization and rationalist design to ensure productive work.[62] The kitchen at the Institute was smaller to promote the shrunken room as modern, meticulously planned, and a logical layout for the sequence of essential housework, preparation, and serving of meals. The intent to market this kitchen as the correct and desirable option was further reified by *Chatelaine* calling it a "National Kitchen."[63] By coining the kitchen design as a national product there were two implications: the first, the Institute kitchens and equipment which received the Seal were often produced by Canadian manufacturers.[64] To alleviate the crush on the economy during the Depression, women – as purchasing agents for the family – were heavily encouraged by magazines and their grocers to purchase Canadian-made goods. Second, there was the impression that if readers' kitchens looked and operated differently, not only could they be a failure in the business of home-making, but they could fall short of meeting the new, suggested, national standard.[65] National, factory-like kitchens may have been

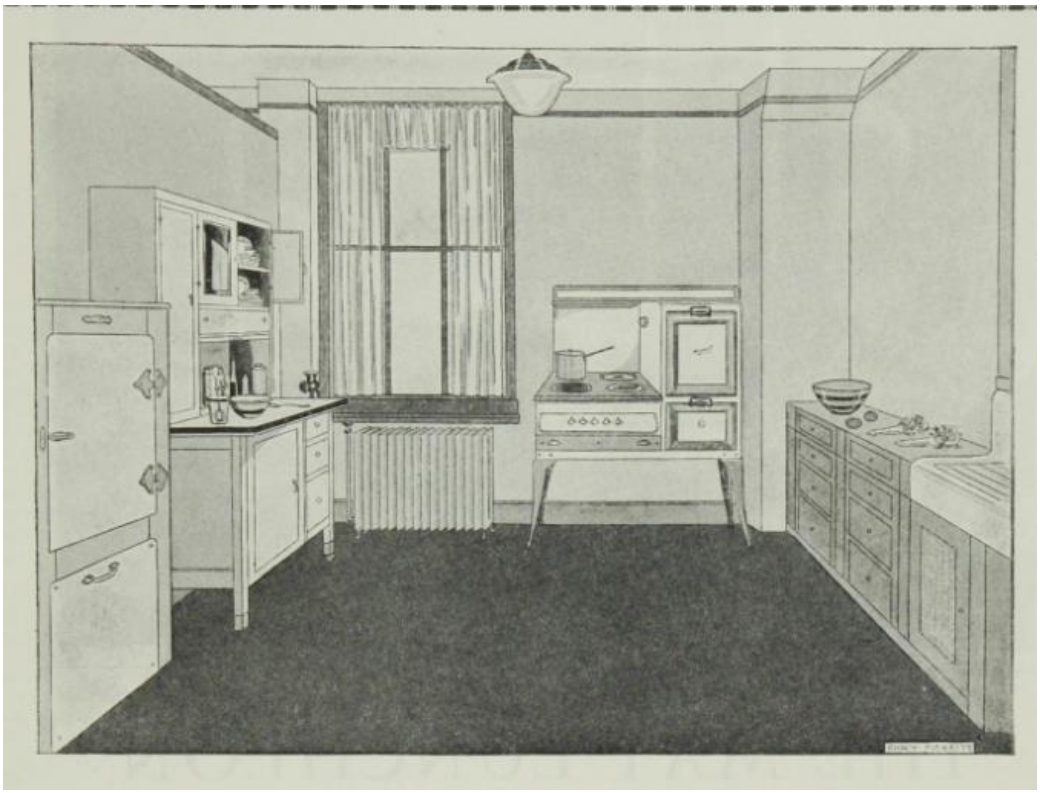
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[60] Diana Garvin, *Feeding Fascism: The Politics of Women's Food Work*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2022): 120. The *passapiatti* was a semi-open shelving unit where meals would be passed from kitchen to the salon and dirty dishes could be passed back and was popular in Italian kitchens in the 1930s.
[61] Mary Agnes Pease, "New Magic in the Kitchen," *Chatelaine*, (Nov. 1931): 32, 79.
[62] Garvin, *Feeding Fascism,* 158-160.
[63] Helen Campbell, "Creating a National Kitchen," *Chatelaine*, (May 1930): 19.
[64] Ibid., 62.
[65] Ibid., 19.

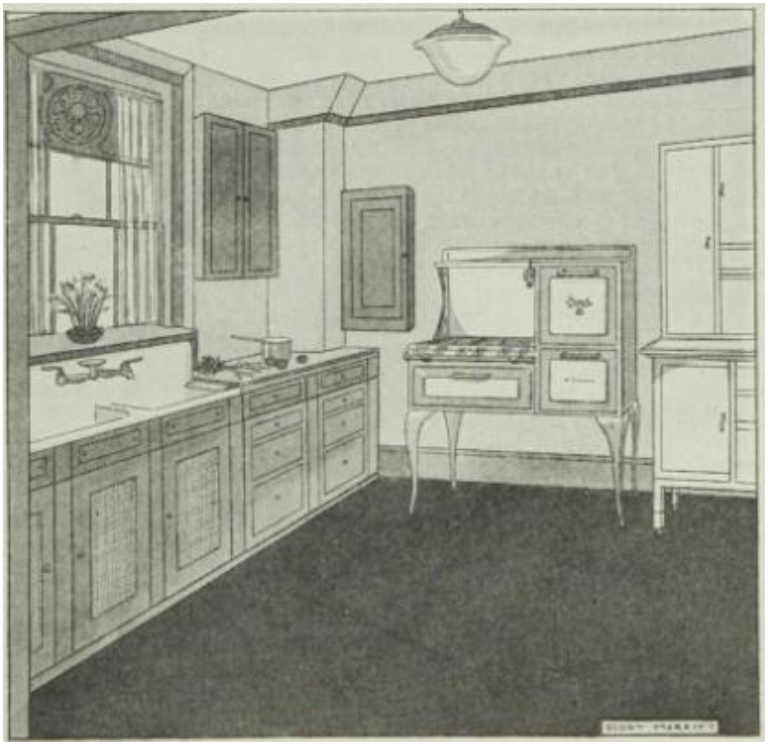
marketed as the ideal, but the reality was many middle-class or working-class kitchens did not have the luxury for rationalist revision. While the Institute insisted there was "no one ideal kitchen" and the housekeeper should consider the size of her family, the work performed in the kitchen and may sometimes need to accommodate other activities.[66] Despite this insistence it was clear that the Institute had proctored a blueprint of the efficient kitchen. The magazine entered hundreds of thousands of Canadian homes each month and hoped, through the kitchen, to become a permanent feature and survey women's food-related tasks.

There were two arrangements of the National Kitchen both of which championed labour and time-saving layouts [Fig. 9]. This meant that the home kitchen needed to shrink. "Gone were the days when the nice big kitchen was looked upon as an advantage, for it was found to cause many unnecessary steps and tired feet."[67] Parallel to the reduction of steps, the expansion of grocery stores ultimately created *more* steps for women, especially with the counters that were removed for easier roaming while shopping. Both were marketed as solutions for a more pleasurable experience while performing productive labour.

[66] Ibid., 62. It was common in farm homes to make butter in the kitchen and appropriate space would be needed to accommodate this. Urban kitchens, wherever possible, were encouraged to shrink to reduce steps and therefore reduce energy spent on productive labour.
[67] Ibid., 19.



[Figure 9: National Kitchen Arrangement Number 1. “Good location of equipment makes convenient work centres in the kitchens of the Chatelaine Institute.” *Chatelaine*, 1930.]



[Figure 10: National Kitchen Arrangement Number 2. “The ventilated sections and drawers of this built-in cupboard provide good storage space.” *Chatelaine*, 1930.]

In either kitchen, the height of the cabinets and counters were carefully decided. A sink placed thirty-two inches from the floor was responsible for "many tired backs" while thirty-six to thirty-eight inches was considered the "comfort height" for women.[68] The second kitchen was slightly different as it provided the space to do laundry work. A combination sink and laundry tub were equipped to simplify multiple household chores into one space [Fig. 10].[69] In either iteration, the National Kitchen was designated as a site of work.

Not unlike how food was considered a personal choice but has been influenced by other external factors and marketing, interior decisions of the home kitchen were promoted as a choice to fit the household managers' individual taste, but still streamlined by the Institute to create a curated list of options.[70] Colour had the power to create a "pleasant working centre" and the wise use of colour in the kitchen was a "relief from the grey drabness which was the order of the day in the kitchens a few years ago."[71] Linoleum was a decorative but also the most practical floor covering and wall finishing; it furnished homes and grocery stores alike. Linoleum was "right in line with modern style demands" with bright checkered or floral accents to brighten up even the smallest kitchens.[72] The durability and easily washable texture of linoleum reduced labour and cleaning time, a sign of an efficient and up-to-the-minute kitchen.[73] The scientific use of space and the "resultant conservation of human energy solve[d] many housekeeping problems."[74]

If readers wished, they could visit the Institute kitchen for themselves in Toronto. For readers who resided outside of the city, Campbell enticed them with the thrill of the busy and modern

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[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 62.
[70] Iacovetta and Korinek, "Jell-O Salads, One-Stop Shopping, and Maria the Homemaker: The Gender Politics of Food," 432. Iacovetta and Korinek refer to government, education, multinational food corporations, and mass media as influencers of personal food choice and tastes.
[71] Campbell, "Creating a National Kitchen," 62.
[72] Helen Campbell, "Smart Floors with Linoleum," *Chatelaine,* (May 1933): 52.
[73] Hobbs and Pierson, 9, 12.
[74] Pease, "New Magic in the Kitchen," 79.

environment. Downtown "among the skyscrapers…you enter the lofty Maclean building, an elevator whisks you upward - past editorial sanctums, clipping cluttered pressrooms, gigantic printing machines, and there at the end of a corridor are the offices and laboratories of the Chatelaine Institute."[75] For readers the Institute could become synonymous with modern Toronto. During their trip inquisitive visitors were impressed by the seamless layout of the room, equipment, decoration, and overwhelming spotlessness.[76] To further embolden the authority of the Institute a 1937 *Chatelaine* edition remarked on the high-profile guests who had recently toured the facility. Among these guests were Miss Bess McDermand, Superintendent of the Women's Institutes for Ontario; Miss Violet Ryley, Supervisor for Eaton's restaurants in Toronto; Mrs. Mary Barret, Home Economist for Canadian General Electric; and Miss Olive Cruikshank, Director of Household Science at Macdonald Institute.[77] The expert guests were photographed inspecting the kitchen and equipment, quoted with giving high praise of the efficiency and attractiveness of the Institute.

One of the largest retail department stores, the Toronto Eaton Company, and the Institute collaborated for a three-week demonstration. This was a logical choice at the time as the Company had launched a series of T. Eaton Groceterias across Canada and had a grocery store department at its largest Toronto flagship.[78] The Company's location in downtown Toronto launched a Housekeeping Centre with equipment such as stoves and refrigerators, utensils, food products, and so on brought together in one place for the "convenience of women who just keep house." It would be such an allure to house all "the bright, modern kitchen things, the labor-

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[75] Helen Campbell, "The Dining Room of The Chatelaine Institute," *Chatelaine*, (Jan. 1930): 19.
[76] Helen Campbell, "The Chatelaine Institute Mirrors Your Own Kitchen," *Chatelaine*, (Jan. 1931): 20.
[77] Helen Campbell, "Among our Guests," *Chatelaine*, (Oct. 1937): 26.
[78] "Eaton Groceterias are Doubled in the Past Nine Months," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 4, 1929: 20). There were 26 T. Eaton Groceterias located in Ontario by January 1929, one of these was in Toronto but it was a full-service location in the department store building. The remaining were located in the Maritimes (16), Western Canada (16), and Quebec (3).

saving devices, the newest foods, all on one floor…with each exhibit to tell you all about them. It would give any woman a thrill - might make even a self-sufficient young businesswoman change her idea about a career." Stationed within the Housekeeping Centre, the Institute setup a "Chatelaine Circle" where a stage kitchen (albeit more of a square shape than a circle) was occupied by four female members of the Institutes' staff. Whether nestled behind a CNE booth or grocery counter, women were the primary demonstrators to appeal to a primarily female audience - even though the Institute often featured the male Institute engineers and chemists. In their crisp white uniforms, the women demonstrated such things as cakes, salads, desserts, sandwiches, and candy behind orderly counters. Products that had received the coveted Seal were displayed around the Circle and featured in the demonstrations in a variety of ways. A large audience filled the seat to observe the daily demonstrations and discussions on efficient food preparation and service. If interested, audience members could purchase the products used or take home Institute-approved recipes to test out at home.

The business-minded housekeeper was encouraged to fill her pantry shelves with instruction booklets. These booklets, available for purchase from the Institute, would form a Reference Library in any kitchen. A comprehensive list of articles was provided to the reader with the most up-to-date information on a variety of subjects relating to food values, diet, entertaining, church suppers, economical luncheons, and special occasions.[79] With 232 possible options, some titles included: "Rapid recipes," "A Modern Kitchen is a Planned Kitchen," and "Feeding the Child for Health."[80] The creation of a Reference Library, and its maintenance with current offers and advertisements, was the key to running the household like a business. A neat filing system could be easily accessed when planning weekly menus or grocery orders; the Reference Library was

[79] Helen Campbell, "Build a Reference Library for your Kitchen," *Chatelaine*, (Feb. 1935): 64.
[80] Ibid., 82.

presented as a labor-saving tool and a short cut to provide near-immediate answers.[81] It was also a filing system intended to replace tried-and-true family recipes with ones that had been designed by a team of experts. Armed with a list of Institute approved products and tasked to improve nutrition, lessen preparation time, and consume intelligently, the grocery trade needed to respond, evolve, and expand for women to test out what they had learned in their laboratory kitchen on their shop floor.

"The Eye Minded Age": Grocery Store Exteriors

As women's magazines and their home department experts sold the modern home kitchen as well-ordered and scientifically planned, the *Grocer* similarly promoted the science of selling through the redesign of storefront windows and other visual cues. This section enriches existing scholarship on consumption and department stores, by analyzing how the grocery store window was needed to elicit desire and allure on necessary goods without alienating shoppers. As an authority on the retail industry, the *Grocer* cautioned those that were negligent to change. The journal claimed a retailer's yearly profits "depend upon the estimate which the public place upon his progressiveness" and they would need to embrace the "methods of modern shop display" and the "*fin de siecle*" of window trimming.[82] However, despite the expectation that to be a modern grocer meant to have order, the process itself was messy and uneven.

Originally, the purpose of a shop window was to simply show the wares within. However, as Leach has observed, glass changed the way people related to goods. It signaled a shift from open-air market-place shopping, popular in rural and working-class neighbourhoods but also created a "new culture of class – that is, it helped to demarcate more clearly the affluent

[81] Ibid., 64.
[82] "Embellishing the Modern Store," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 5, 1899): 11.

from the poorer buying public."[83] Glass had the ability to close off the ability to smell and touch the products, it "amplified the visual, transforming the already watching city person into a potentially compulsive viewer."[84] While this is true in the context of the department store, as Leach presents it, the grocery store, as this chapter explores, became a more tactile shopping experience. Because food was ordinary and a necessity, the same tools of luxury and creating desire were not easily transferable to the grocery trade. The gendering of desire, where men were supposedly driven by ration and reason, women by desire and impulse, did not and could not apply evenly to food.[85] Additionally, the scholarship of department store displays, the allure of fashion and luxury behind glass, and shopping to disrupt productive and reproductive roles of women has been investigated well.[86] Less so is the scholarship on the desire created by the window display or the aesthetic allure in the grocery store.

Monod and Walden have investigated, to some degree, how retailers had the preconception that female customers made decisions based on impulse, rather than reason or ration, and arranged the store in such a way to garner "the very desideratum wanted."[87] I hope to add to this discussion. Most grocers were quick to seize the opportunity to convert the window into an enclosed, dust-proof, and transparent advertising space. The shop window mirrored and

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[83] Leach, *Land of Desire*, 61-62.
[84] Ibid., 63.
[85] Richard W. Fox, "Epitaph for Middletown: Robert S. Lynd and the Analysis of Consumer Culture," in *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980*," eds. T.J. Lears and Richard W. Fox, (New York: Patheon Books, 1983): 131. Fox examines Lynd's perception of consumers who believed that 'it is probably nearer the truth to regard human beings as partially rational bundles of impulses and habits…" See also, Wright, "'Feminine Trifles of Vast Importance,"232. Belisle, "Conservative Consumerism," 124. Cohen, 197. Leach, 119, 300, 340, and Monod, 154 for a discussion of desiring and desire in the context of other material goods.
[86] *Land of Desire* (1993), *Shopping for Pleasure* (2000), *Retail Nation* (2011), *Purchasing Power* (2020), *Counter Cultures* (1986), and Wright "Feminine Trifles of Vast Importance': Writing Gender into the History of Consumption," see also Wright's "The Most Prominent Rendezvous of the Feminine Toronto.".
[87] Monod, 154-155. Keith Walden, "Speaking Modern: Language, Culture, and Hegemony in Grocery Window Displays, 1887-1920," Canadian Historical Review, Vol. 70, Is. 3 (Sept. 1989): 289, 301.

reflected an imagined modernity, as passersby saw themselves surrounded by abundance and quality goods sourced from across the globe.

Window dressing was regarded as the "twin brother of advertising" where no up-to-date grocery store could be complete without it.[88] The storefront window became one of multiple ways of modern selling. The advertising power of the window had not been utilized in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, with the window left barren or in disarray. After the launch of the *Grocer* there was a sense of urgency for grocers to tastefully advertise products to capture passersby and window shoppers, in an age where "the time to advertise is all the time."[89]

The window trimmer was considered a "purely modern evolution, and the adoption of his profession was the means of creating a decidedly important calling…where the man who can successfully arrange the windows to attract the attention of the passerby receives from 25 to 50 percent more than his fellows."[90] The *Grocer* further remarked that the skill of a window trimmer was not easily learned, and "like the true genius in the purer realms of art…is born, not made."[91] In the following decades, grocers would refute such a claim and consider window trimming – and all other exterior and interior design – a form of specialization that could be taught to any willing and creative staff member, or some may rely on their wife or daughter.[92] The average independent grocer would likely not be able to afford to pay a salary for an exclusive window trimmer. The same article claimed that a properly trimmed window had the potential to distract a woman from her laborious daily routine. It claimed that

> many a tired woman, denied all the amusements of an uplifting nature, shut up all day in a bare home, and condemned to a steady round of dull drudgery, finds the one brightening element of her life and its one refining influence in gazing into the brightly-

[88] "The Window-Dresser's Corner," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 4, 1895): 32.
[89] Leach, 43.
[90] "How Shop Windows Help the Public," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 25, 1896): 34.
[91] Ibid.
[92] H.L. Hall, "The Retail Merchant and His Show Window," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 6, 1910): 44.

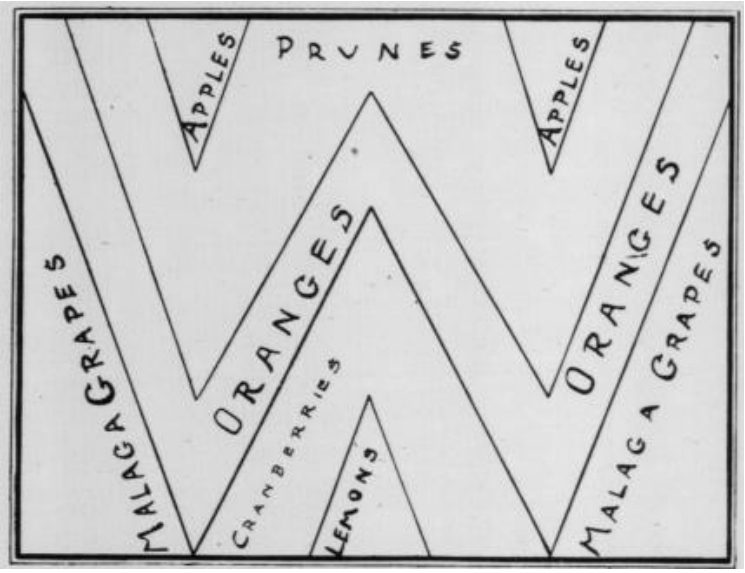
> lighted windows which line the city's principal streets…The day's burden seems unaccountably lifted, the horizon of the future extended, by the evening's stroll on her husband's arm, looking into these pretty little glass sample rooms of the great city's supplies.[93]

Although future articles in the *Grocer* tended to not describe the shop window as a housewife's paradise in so many words, the sentiment of the display as glamourous, a spectacle, and desirable persisted in nearly every issue in the early twentieth century. As Rappaport has described, shopping was as much of a visual as it was a public pleasure.[94]

A well-designed window display was a right of passage for any successful grocer. If done well, the window was worth 25% of the store's rent.[95] Window trimmers needed to be creative and aware of the customers they hoped to attract. Due to the small size of grocery stores, often some with only one glass pane to dress, in comparison to the department giants, everything from arrangement to lighting needed to be attractive. In his study of the ritual quality of the window, wherein the language of modernity could be heard clearly, Walden contends that the "very mundaneness" of the grocery window created authority, where it "impressed penetrated slowly and thoroughly, convincing people by their seeming mediocrity."[96] The *Grocer* had once listed ten commandments as doctrine for window trimmers to follow. Some of these included: "do not use price tags and display cards which show fly specks and other evidences of former use and age; do not feature colors which clash. Study color harmony and observe it rigidly; don't 'think up' a window display as you put it in. Plan for it in advance; don't be satisfied with limited accomplishment…Consistently strive for improvement until it comes." [Fig. 11][97]

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[93] "How Shop Windows Help the Public," 34.
[94] Rappaport, 14.
[95] A Meat Display Man, "Store Windows Are Made to Pay Over 25% of Store Rent," *Canadian Grocer*, (Feb. 12, 1932): 31.
[96] Walden, "Speaking Modern: Language, Culture, and Hegemony in Grocery Window Displays," 304, 307-308.
[97] "The Ten Commandments Applying to Window Displays," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 25, 1930): 70.



[Figure 11: A suggested arrangement for a simple but attractive window display of fruits. *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 1, 1912): 60.]

Despite a clear list of which window sins to avoid, some merchants chose to forgo the advice of others. This was not due to willful negligence but ignorance of the value of the window, the *Grocer* claimed. For this, there were plenty of "unattractive and ill-kept windows" encountered in the cities and rural towns and villages.[98] The merchants who recognized that the "window is the soul of the store" were praised for being progressive grocers and moved their lines of goods seamlessly.[99] Some merchants declared that to take their windows away was to strip them of their business.[100]

How the window was dressed could pre-emptively decide which customers were permitted to shop there. This was an implicit caution in *Grocer* columns. Without careful planning prospective buyers could be alienated by accident:

> the window trimmer must put himself in the mental aspect of the average person outside who pauses to see the display. If this person is a rich man, will he be impressed with the fact that here is a store where he can procure not only the luxuries he desires, but the

[98] "Window as a Sales Creator," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 19, 1912): 85.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.

> more modest necessities, as well? If he be a man of the average, will he be frightened away by the sumptuousness of the window?[101]

A grocery window that was filled with luxuries, within the reach of wealthy patrons only, may make a pleasing display from the sidewalk, but it would not attract necessarily coax more business past the front door.[102] Those with a strict budget could not afford to venture out on a shopping tour without first inspecting what filled the display and at what price.[103] The grocer needed to consider what type of class it hoped to cater toward. One high-class fruiterer had garnered the reputation "among the best families in Toronto by always giving them the best goods," and tourists for his lavish baskets of fruit (even if it was off-season) that were sold as gifts for up to $6 or $7 – when the average fruit budget was between 17-27cents.[104] If a store had only one class of customers and wanted no others, the shop window was simplified to these patrons. If a store hoped to attract various classes, more consideration was needed to pique the interest of and attract these customers.

The window would look the most attractive during the fall or winter, when days were shorter, and the goods could be illuminated in stark contrast to the evening dark. Good lights were a costly investment, but merchants were promised to reap the benefits of their installment.[105] From 1908 the Toronto Hydro-Electric System began the installment of 18,000 single incandescent bulbs and 500 cluster lights on 30,000 poles [Fig. 12].[106] As technology

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[101] "The Personal Touch in Displays," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 27, 1910): 91.
[102] Ibid.
[103] "How Shop Windows Help the Public," 34.
[104] "The Window the Sole Asset of High Class Fruiterer," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 27, 1910): 105. See also, Nellie L. Pattinson, "The Family Food Budget," *Chatelaine*, (Nov. 1931): 26. Pattinson provides a breakdown of the "food dollar" for various food groups: meats, fish, and eggs 17-22 cents, fruits and vegetables 17-27 cents, and milk and cheese 20-30 cents. In this division Pattinson does not suggest how often this amount, per food group, should be spent but makes the claim that it is more economical to "go to the store frequently" rather than a big purchase where food waste and perishability was a concern.
[105] Hall, "The Retail Merchant and His Show Window," 44.
[106] "Turning on Toronto: Street Lighting for Safety," City of Toronto, Accessed April 1, 2024. Web. https://www.toronto.ca/explore-enjoy/history-art-culture/online-exhibits/web-exhibits/web-exhibits-local-government/turning-on-toronto-a-history-of-toronto-hydro/turning-on-toronto-street-lighting-for-safety/

reorganizes people's relationship with time and space, light had the power to make remake the evening sidewalk and store unfamiliar, yet familiar. Much like the below photo of two retail stores, a tobacco shop and a shoe store, on Queen West in Toronto, they are well-lit during a winter night which would have previously been dark. In addition, light could extend the sale period of goods in a shop window long after closing. In his study of American department stores, Leach explains how "electrical advertising" gradually began in the 1890s, and by the 1920s Modernist artists were eager to utilize new techniques to dramatize luxury goods.[107] These artists favoured spotlighted windows where "one only sees the chair," a background in neutral, uniform gray, to "break up vistas, isolate objects, [and] use every constructional means to focus vision instead of dissipating it."[108] Grocery stores, however did not use the spotlight method that department stores favoured. This is because abundance of food, or at least the illusion of

[107] Leach, 11-12
[108] Ibid., 306.

abundance, was a frequent tactic to ease qualms during times of crisis. Unlike other consumables, it was difficult to dress up staple food lines as anything other than a necessity.



[Figure 12: 1498 Queen West Parkdale. Sutherland tobacco, A Grapple Shoes, F.G. Martin Grocer. 1920. City of Toronto Archives. Fonds 1034, Item 826]

Despite this difficultly, the *Grocer* held annual Christmas Window Contests to encourage merchants to not only take advantage of the dark and light up their display but to persuade customers to venture into the cold to be impressed by their shop spectacle. Once more, the extent light was used for spectacle was different between grocery and department stores. For example, Leach documents how department store giants like Wanamaker, created such lavish, illuminated displays and entertainment such as parades with trumpets and drummers leading into the children's toy department – sometimes turning the lights off completely to increase anticipation for a big reveal – and these spectacles became the "most anticipated events in the year."[109] The

[109] Ibid., 88, 331, 336.

Christmas Window Contests were more an opportunity to portray skill, modern selling methods, and compete for customers among a fast-growing profession. There were two classes for the competition to keep odds fair; Class A was for towns and cities under 10,000 population and Class B was for centres over 10,000.[110] It was judged on three main criteria: selling value, the novelty of the idea or arrangement, and the general attractiveness. To enter merchants or any clerk of the store were to submit a photograph of the window to the editors at the *Grocer*; the prize for first place was $10 and second place was $5 ($149 and $74 equivalent today).[111] Grocers were tasked with the installation of an attractive – but not too elaborate – abundant – but

[110] "The Christmas Window Contest," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 24, 1920) 36.
[111] Ibid.

not cluttered – arrangement that would generate buzz among the locals and profit. First prize was awarded to those who achieved this balance [Fig. 13].



[Figure 13: First Place Winner Class A. *Canadian Grocer*, (Nov. 5, 1920): 1470]

The winner of first prize in the Class A division was dressed by Harold Crone from Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. He was rewarded for his splendid display of cigars, olives, Turkish figs, bottles of Christmas wines, and fancy boxes of chocolates; each item clearly ticketed so that "customers busy and hurried for their Christmas shopping do not have to bother to come in and ask price details."[112] Another winning store, located in Toronto, had dressed their window in such a way that it was worth bringing friends and family to admire the display. First place meant that, "Passing it, a woman sees exactly the Christmas goods she needs…look so clean and tempting,

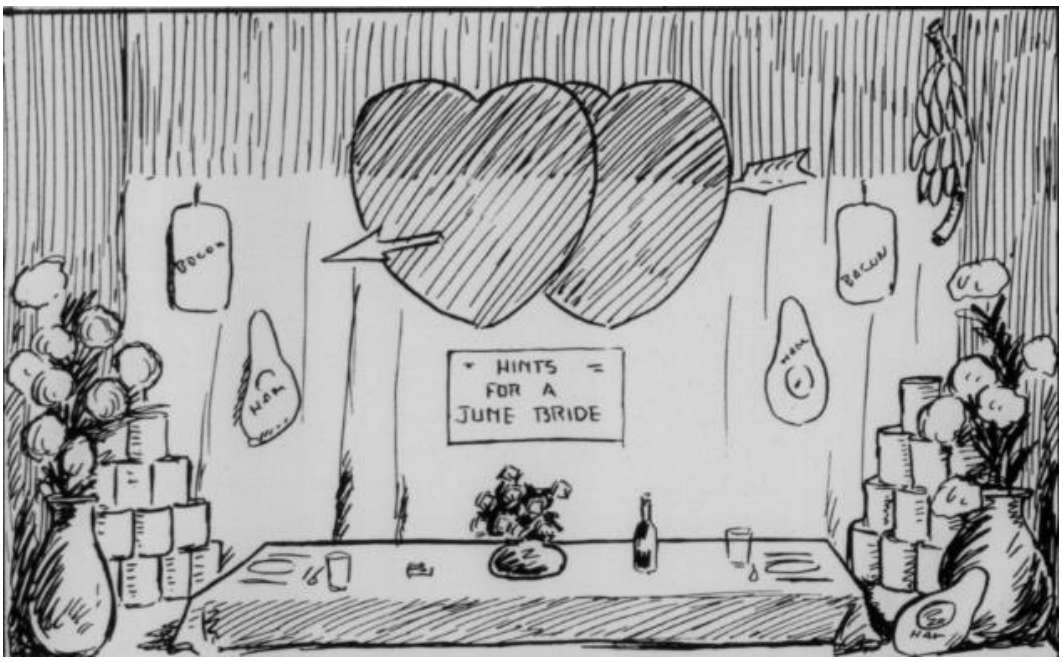
[112] "Splendid Window from Moose Jaw," *Canadian Grocer*, (Nov. 5, 1920):147.

she goes in and makes purchases from it. The goods are arrayed in such a way that she is not afraid of spoiling the effect by getting her share."[113] As Walden rightly argues, theme displays were designed to train and reinforce consuming habits and were never more effective than the festive season for their presumed impact on children.[114] Some stores sought to extend the holiday cheer beyond their windows. The Loblaw Company, for example, adorned the exterior of their office building and warehouse with two large and highly decorated Christmas trees framing the door. [115] For the average grocer, their storefront display was enough to generate enough of a spectacle for the holiday season.

Holiday displays were arguably the most glamorous, but like contemporary stores, grocers were eager to capitalize on other special occasions to sell stock. Although most displays were catered toward women as she was often the purchasing agent, June was targeted toward a particular demographic: the bride. June was the month for weddings and grocers would see "countless new homes established throughout the length and breadth of the country. This creates new trade…[to] secure new customers from among the ranks of the newlyweds."[116] With numerous articles from women's magazines encouraging the "first grocery order" of a new bride, the grocer would have taken a paternal position as caretaker and expert, as the woman transitioned into married life.[117] The *Grocer* claimed "the newly married people cannot live for long on the proverbial love supposed to take the place of food. At an early date they must call upon the grocer to provide the necessities of life…"[118] The arrangement typically featured a

[113] "Winners in Canadian Grocer's Xmas Contest," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 22, 1915): 34.
[114] Walden, "Speaking Modern," 295.
[115] "Portraying the Christmas Spirit," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 20, 1932): 27.
[116] "Trimming a Window to attract June brides," *Canadian Grocer,* (May 2, 1910): 104.
[117] Helen Campbell, "The First Grocery Order," *Maclean's Magazine*, (June 1, 1936): 51.
[118] "Window Dressing for the June Bride," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 31, 1912): 38.

medium-sized table with a clean white tablecloth, a minimal amount of cutlery, and a vase of roses in the centre to mimic the bridal bouquet [Fig. 14].



[Figure 14: Window Display Idea for the June Bride. *Canadian Grocer*, May 2, 1910]

If space and budget allowed, a bridal arch of evergreens and roses, a wedding bell, and a life-sized dummy figure of the bride and groom under the arch in their wedding attire was touted as good window design.[119] However, grocers or their window trimmer should be mindful of leaving their window unfinished or with minimal effort, for "even the children have a sense of appropriateness that will pick out the flaws and it is then a question whether it had been better or not to have made the attempt."[120] The foods on display might include several lines of canned goods, desserts, jams, jelly powders, and custards; all quickly prepared. Cooked meats, butter, and eggs should adorn the arrangement too, for these were the essential items on any grocery list. The grocer may not win the business of every newlywed couple, so it was important to still

[119] Ibid.
[120] "Trimming a Window to Attract June Brides," 104.

attract other potential patrons and regular customers; perhaps even those "who took the same step in the years gone by."[121]

Price cards were an essential feature of both interior and exterior decoration. As mentioned above, the hurried or thrifty window shopper could make judgment on the stock before setting foot inside if lines were clearly marked. The basic rule of price tickets and display cards was to have smaller, plainer cards on high-class goods. As magazines like *Chatelaine* urged women to shop intelligently, grocers were aware that "when buying foods women customers make comparisons so that the price ticket often helps make the sale."[122] These cards should not be sloppily written or dirty. One manufacturer hoped to market themselves to grocers through their claim that their Clamp-Swing was the modern way to price goods. Similar to household equipment that was advertised as timesaving for women, the unmodern method of printed cards was "too slow for these rapid times!" and "too inefficient for these efficient times!" for modern grocers.[123] However, the printed card was certainly the most economical and popular before the late 1930s. Stylistically, block lettering was used on cards to be seen at a distance, whether from the street or within the store to direct customers to the different departments.

The price card served another purpose too, it had the potential to eliminate the barter between customer and dealer. If a product was clearly marked then the value was predetermined and it would be difficult to haggle a lower cost or for the clerk to lean into customer biases and discount (or raise) prices at their discretion. Some grocers, particularly in the early decades of the century, worried that price cards cheapened the appearance of the store. At a gathering of

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[121] Ibid.
[122] "The Value of Display and Price Tickets," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 18, 1929): 37.
[123] "How do you tell your customers the price?" *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 13, 1931): 27. A small ink bottle in 1910 would cost fifteen cents which could last a small store for months, and cardboard could be purchased for five cents per sheet (22x28 inches). R.T.D. Edwards, "Economies in the Writing of Store Show Cards," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 2, 1910): 28.

retailers in 1912, the clerks debated the propriety of the price ticket. One asserted that "'when people see the price they know if they can afford it or not. Supposing a person sees an article in the window, but there is no price on it. He comes in to inquire the price. Now it may be more than he wants to pay…Although he may purchase, he feels he should not have done so, and that is not a good feeling for the customer to have."[124] To this, another responded and argued that a price card on a high class good would scare a customer away and the clerk would miss the opportunity to educate the patron on the high quality of the product.[125] Despite a few misgivings on the efficiency of a price card in a store window, there were few grocers who chose to forgo them. With good lights and a well-crafted arrangement with price cards, the space of the window would continue to advertise beyond closing time.[126] Windows worked twenty-four hours in the day and had success inviting in those who had seen the display in the evening into the grocery store next morning.

Another tactic to capture the attention of new and existing customers from outside the store was through advertisements. As the *Grocer* was considered an authority on business operation with thousands of subscribers from across Canada, their advertising power was substantial.[127] Manufacturers who had paid to advertise their goods within the trade journal were marketed toward the grocer, not the general public. For this, the manufacturer needed to be on-trend with current consumer habits and concerns. For example, the Eastern Canning Co. proposed that if their cans of baked beans were displayed in a "scientific fashion" it would "please even most exacting customers;" Brompton Kraft's advertisement warned the merchant that poor quality paper bags could tear when women carried their groceries home, leading to a

[124] "Views on propriety of the price ticket," *Canadian Grocer,* (May 24, 1912): 39.
[125] Ibid.
[126] "Window Displays in evening means sales the following day," *Canadian Grocer,* (Nov. 5, 1920): 128.
[127] "By the advertising Manger," *Canadian Grocer,* (Sept 30, 1910): 12.

loss of customers; or how The Canada Starch Co., called upon merchants to stock their shelves with their syrups as a nutritious purchase where "healthy customers mean a bigger consumption of food, and that means bigger business for you."[128] These brand messages would then be translated by the grocer to their customers to move lines.

A similar tactic was employed by manufacturers' advertisements in women's magazines. The syrup company, The Canada Starch Co., advertisement in *Chatelaine* informed readers that they could "feed the family for less" without compromising nutrition or taste.[129] In the *Grocer* their advertisement was a simple illustration of the syrup can with basic nutritional facts. In *Chatelaine*, a very similar message of the health qualities of syrup accompanied the illustration, but in this case the drawing was of a young woman, likely a mother, serving syrup to a table of small children. A large majority of advertisements in *Chatelaine*, especially where it came to food, featured a small child eating the product or a mother figure serving the children.[130] Although this was prescribed as a normative familial role for women, standards for nutrition had increased under the impact of the new terrain of experts, which centred the mother and her child in food advertisements.[131] As Cheryl Krasnick-Warsh has articulated, imagery of food reflected public health campaigns and trends. In her article "Vim, Vigour, and Vitality" Krasnick-Warsh notes how advertisements for children's food reflected a series of patterns of continuity and change: sweet treats in the 1910s, canned food and nutritional supplements by the 1920s, and the convenience of quick meals from the 1930s.[132] In this way, advertisements responded to and

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[128] "Made to sustain a reputation," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 1930): 39. "Keeping your customers healthy," *Canadian Grocer*, (Feb. 14, 1931): front cover.
[129] "Eat more of these syrups," *Chatelaine*, (Apr. 1931): 40.
[130] "Clark's Soups," Chatelaine, (Sept. 1929): 11. "Kiddies simply love them," *Chatelaine*, (Sept. 1929), "No need, ever again, to urge children to eat cereals," *Chatelaine*, (Oct. 1929): 22. See also, Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled,* 145-171.
[131] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 129, 145.
[132] Krasnick-Warsh, "Vim, Vigour, and Vitality," 388-389.

exacerbated, parental anxiety about child welfare, nutrition, thrift, and easily preparable meals. As Strong-Boag has claimed, the pragmatic tone of advice literature regarding children viewed the infant as a machine and "mothers across Canada were urged to take the business world as their model."[133] While advertising messages were external to the grocery store, such anxieties, whether related to the health of a business or the health of the home, influenced decisions made across the doors' threshold. If a reader was ever unsure of where to purchase such a remedy, most advertisements recalled: "available at your local grocer!"

When grocery stores needed to advertise themselves beyond the store window and when the budget allowed, a sizable sum was paid to dedicate a page or small section to their location in local newspapers and magazines. An estimated cost for purchasing advertising space was one-half percent of the entire gross receipts, with some grocers paying up-to four percent of their gross sales; it was not common to hear of any store spending less than one-half per cent and surviving.[134] Advertising was viewed as a necessary business investment where one needed to spend money to make money.[135] It was a waste of money, however, if an advertisement was not well thought out. In one comparison of advertisements run by small town merchants and mail houses, it was determined that "if city stores were to use the advertising methods of the country store they would go under in quick order."[136] This was because small-town merchants were in competition of the "best brains of the advertising world" who were tasked with effective

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[133] Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, 162-164. There are several Canadian scholars who have examined the intersection of motherhood, health, welfare, and the State. See, Chambers, *Misconceptions*, 5, 86, 111. Myers, *Caught*, 16. Sarah Carter's, "Creating 'Semi-Widows' and 'Supernumerary Wives': Prohibiting Polygamy in *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past*, eds. Myra Rutherdale and Katie Pickles, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006): 139, 146 presents similar contradictions seen in Chamber's investigation of legislation to improve the lives of children from perceived incompetent or poor mothers, while causing more harm and little-to-no protection for the children.

[134] "Retail Advertising," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jul. 9, 1915): 25.

[135] A.B. Lever, "Wanted - Miraculous Results," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 15, 1909): 46. T. Johnson Stewart, "Effective advertising," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 17, 1907): 81.

[136] "Hot Shot for the Advertising Slacker," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 19, 1919): 26.

catalogue creation and were successful to make the "farmer's wife jump into her car and come into town" and have the "city housewives flock down to the big stores everyday."[137] In the comparison, the *Grocer* noted how the small town merchant had wasted space and money with their local advertisement. It was considered a failure for those in the surrounding town who already knew of the store and the articles that were carried there; there were no suggestions of new stock or limited time values on items to make purchasing worthwhile.[138] A more effective

[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid.

advertisement was one with a similar layout to the Loblaw Groceterias flyer in *The Globe* [Fig. 15].



[Figure 15: Loblaw Groceterias Advertisement. *The Globe*, (Nov. 22, 1928): 3]

The flyer included bold, easy-to-read trusted brand names and prices, an illustration of the store, a list of the specials of the week, a store slogan, and amplified their unique shopping experience of cash and carry. These were the elements the *Grocer* recommended. Design of a window display or flyer could be costly, but it needed to be executed well because "if you buy a space in the pages of a magazine you pay for the privilege of exhibiting your announcement…a goodly

number of people will stop to see what you have to say."[139] Furthermore, a key marker of the modern Loblaw Groceterias chain was the tactile experience of shopping where goods were quite literally at a customers fingertips. As chain stores began to encroach on the retail grocery space from the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s, merchants of independent stores were encouraged by the expert correspondents of the *Grocer* to exercise their artistic flair to compete for, win, and maintain and grow their customer base.

Modern Interiors

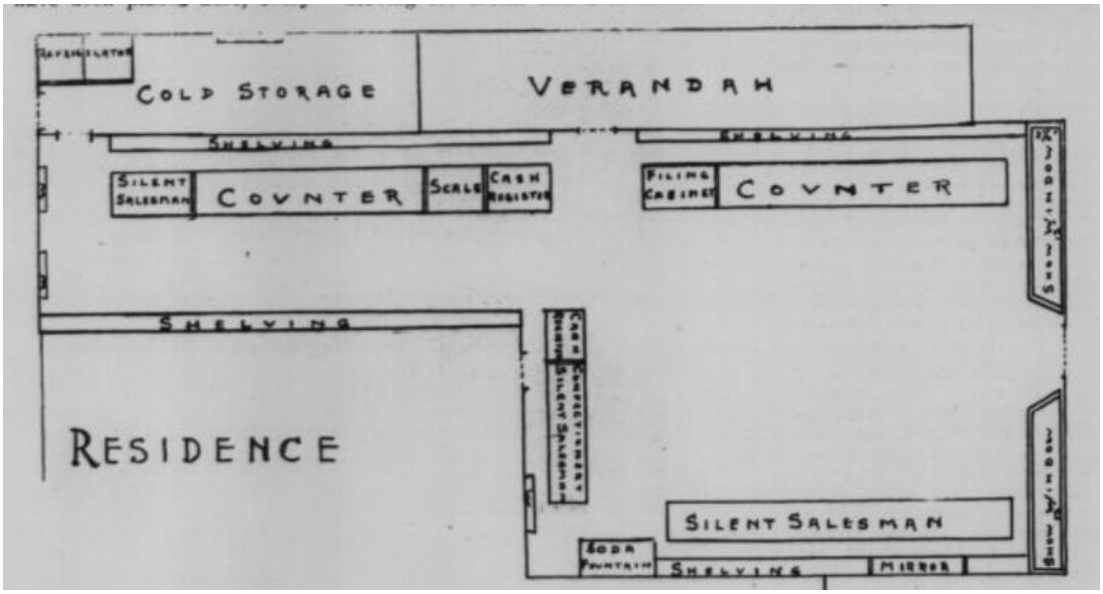
Although the replanning and remodeling of the grocery store was generally an improvement in appealing to new and old customers, there was the occasional appeal to the wrong clientele. Soon after its inauguration, the *Grocer* cautioned its readers to be wary of thieves descending upon their shop. While the doorbell could notify the clerk of potential customers and start their watch, the *Grocer* was keen to publish some early solutions to pocket-stuffers. The journal reported how there were two classes of people who pick and steal in grocery stores: the first, those who "familiarly and openly sample things…and do it with an air of frankness that makes the offense quite decent-looking" and those "who do the thing slyly…and would be crushed if you caught them."[140] The same grocer took the petty theft of prunes from his shop into his own hands when a young man would visit each day for bread but would help himself to a handful of prunes. Instead of confrontation, the grocer opted to sprinkle cayenne pepper in the prune box before the boy arrived, this tactic worked for the boy "comes into the store now and he does not seem to want to touch anything for fear it might be loaded."[141] Even manufacturers were eager to market to grocers worried to theft. An oil tank company warned

[139] Hall, "The Retail Merchant and his Show Window," 44.
[140] "Brazen Pilferers and Sneak Thieves," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jun. 12, 1891): 8.
[141] Ibid.

grocers that there was a "class of people who can't or at least don't, distinguish between what's *theirs* and what's *yours"* and would thieve whenever the grocer was absent. Their Bowser Oil Tank, which could be installed on the main floor, would make it so the grocer would not have to abandon their shop to attend to the oil tank in the basement, "It fools the pilferer. It is better than a bulldog."[142] Accusation of a guilty customer could be more costly than the loss of what was stolen. The possibility of shoplifting and surveillance, the watchful eyes of the staff, and the individual intentions of those looking to buy and those to sell meant that the space of the grocery store could be unpredictable and volatile each time the bell rang. Much like the woman in the home kitchen who could keep a careful eye on her children, a manager's office with visibility to the shop floor allowed them to see "see everything that is going on, and when a customer comes in to whom he wishes to show some special attention, he can see her enter."[143] In this way, entrance into the grocery store was an immediate evaluation of a customers trustworthiness for credit, a profit, or theft.

[142] "Little Leaks Sink the Ship," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 26, 1902): 45.
[143] "Goods Well Displayed are Half Sold," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 18, 1907): 88.

By the 1910s the *Grocer* had correlated the successful management of a grocery store with modern scientific management ideas.[144] This correlation urged grocers to redesign and reimagine the interior of their shop. However, unlike the home kitchen, the grocery store was expected to expand. In February of that year the journal had profiled an Ontario grocery store that had once been "handicapped" with a small floor space of 12 x 16 feet but had relocated to another location to accommodate a larger grocery department on a floor space of 42 x 27 feet [Fig. 16].[145] The floor plan below was a standard interior for a grocery store in the 1910s. Before

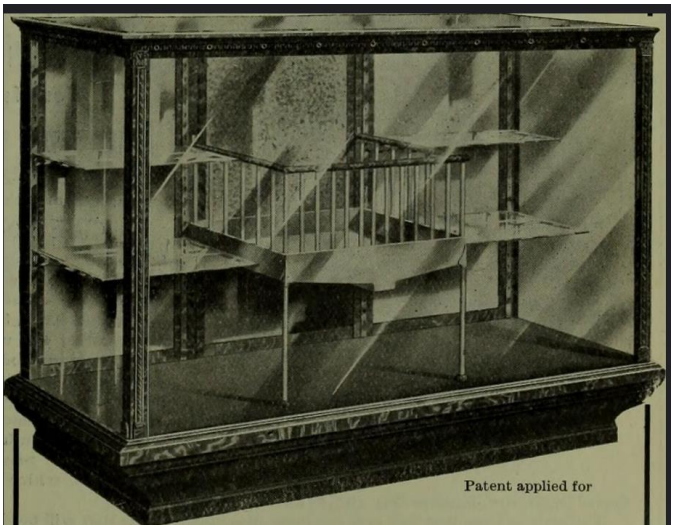


[Figure 16: Ground Floor Plan of Alfred Patterson's New Grocery Store, Now Open to the Public. "Some Pointers in Regard to Store Architecture," *Canadian Grocer*, (Feb. 18, 1910): 28.]

customers were invited to serve themselves most grocery shops were small, narrow, and housed foodstuffs on tall shelves that were accessible only to the clerk behind the counter. The interior was lined with long counters, silent salesmen (a glass cabinet), the use of a mirror, cold storage

[144] A. H. Atkinson, "A Score of Practical Suggestions for the Clerk," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 27, 1910): 115. Henry Johnson Jr., "Getting Rid of the Lines That Do Not Pay," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 30, 1913): 30.
[145] "Some Pointers in Regard to Store Architecture," *Canadian Grocer*, (Feb. 18, 1910): 28. For comparison, the first two Loblaw Stores owned by T.P. Loblaw in 1902 at 459 College and 461 College Street in Toronto were 15 x 35 ft. and 12 x 25 ft. respectively.

before the installation of electric refrigerators, and a scale for accurate, objective pricing [Fig. 17].



[Figure 17: An example of a silent salesmen. This version could be used for refrigeration with a removable ice pan placed underneath. *Canadian Grocer*, (May 27, 1910): 65.]

The use of mirrors on walls of on display stands was a popular method to create the appearance of not only a larger selling floor space but an illusion of more products, visible on all sides.[146] Practically, the installation of silent salesmen protected food from dust and was a display case. Symbolically, the glass enclosure achieved what Leach has argued, that the goods placed behind glass were more appealing than if they were in their natural setting and cut off the consumer from the sensory and tactile shopping experience.[147] As attractiveness was a requisite for the interior design of the store and was painted, as much as possible, in white. This mimicked the crisp white of the salesperson's apron, the sterile cleanliness of a laboratory, and permitted surveillance from customers and managers alike as dust and grime would be easier to spot. This also signalled a further shift away from older, or unmodern forms of food distribution (as depicted by the grocery press), where the modern store was a rupture from nature. There would

[146] "Make the Public Look at the Goods," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 2, 1912): 87.
[147] Leach, 40, 61.

be no muddy hands that would have worked the land that might be seen at the farmer's market. Only pristine uniforms and food from the soil were neatly repackaged or tinned. Illuminated further by the light from the shop window, the shelves, ceiling, and walls were painted white to create an image of brightness and cleanliness; the white coats of the salesman, too, were inviting to the customer.[148] The below image captures the lab-coated clerk, metallic ceiling tiles to reflect natural and artificial light. To disguise an unsightly pillar in the centre of the shop, goods were arranged to wrap around the pillar [Fig. 18].



[Figure 18: Interior of a grocery store. There is a metallic ceiling to attract and impress customers inside and outside the store. The canned goods are wrapped around the pillar. *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 1912): 95.]

The pillar became an opportunity to showcase a tower of products, visible from all angles and areas of the shop. Grocers hoped that the accessibility and visibility of the lines they carried would prompt impulse purchases, even on the tightest of budgets and carefully planned grocery list.

[148] "The Planning of a Modern Retail Grocery Store," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 1, 1910): 50.

The various lines that filled the store were not haphazardly displayed. Proper store management required creativity, psychology, and an innate understanding of reaching the target audience. The arrangement of goods need to not only look attractive but needed to be desirable enough to be noticed, handled, and brought to the attending clerk by a browsing customer. In fact, a sale made "by an interior display costs little energy."[149] The way in which goods were presented was often as important as the goods themselves.[150] Women customers were a primary concern, for if she did not telephone her order in for delivery service, then her entrance into the store needed to be assuaged by the careful and creative design of foodstuffs. The psychology of business, expressed by experts in trade journals and lecture series, continued to permeate interior design. For example, the *Grocer* reprinted the advice from a reader:

> In early childhood, the babe grasps at everything within reach without discrimination…The more advanced in years it becomes, the greater are its powers of discrimination between the valuable and the cheap. This characteristic clings to it till maturity: and here we have the purchaser in the store buying goods for the table. By nature, therefore, a woman who is particular about the health of her family, is attracted by a clean, bright display of quality goods.[151]

One Ontarian grocer defended that an attractive interior design was not about forcing goods on the customers, but "diplomatically" placing items to be seen.[152] For example, the grocer placed new marmalade and jam on the checkout counter and one woman picked up a jar, as did another woman, and another later in the afternoon.[153] Placement and design could be as convincing as the clerks' own power of suggestion.

The design of the store needed to benefit the grocer and their staff too. Lack of interior order, the *Grocer* claimed, meant one store with six clerks could produce only $20,000 in business,

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[149] "Editorial notes," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 27, 1912): 35.
[150] Monod, 155.
[151] "The Interior as a Creative Salesman," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 27, 1912): 31.
[152] "Make the Public Look at the Goods," 87.
[153] Ibid.

while another could turn $30,000 with just three clerks.[154] The store with half a dozen clerks had no method to their interior layout and a clerk would be forced to hunt for several minutes for nearly any article requested, while the second store where everything had its place, could tend to a handful of customers in the same time. When waiting on a customer, a clerk should be able to "turn directly to the spot where the article would be. Every minute lost in the search is so much money lost, when there are customers enough to require the services of man than one salesman."[155] To remedy the narrow shop floor bin and shelf fixtures were "of the modern variety" to display goods while creating a passageway for the browsing customer.[156]A guaranteed way to irritate a waiting customer was hesitation or to utter the phrase "we have it here *some* place" all while the customer "mentally comment[s] on the lack of order in evidence" and likely concludes that the store is of second-class merit.[157] The rush of modern life meant there was not a second to be wasted in a disorganized shop.

The disorganization was not always the fault of the grocer. Monod points to the limits of transportation and communication which meant retailers had no choice but to carry an extensive stock.[158] Despite this reality, the failure or success of a business was frequently advertised as a direct result of the methods of the grocer. In 1912 National Cash Register Co., a popular brand of cash registers in Canadian grocery stores, asked readers of the *Grocer* "What Progress have YOU Made in 10 Years?"[159] The advertisement showed the timeline of two grocery stores in their first, second, third, fifth, and tenth year in business; on the left, "C.I. Standstill" and on the right "The Progress Store." Both entered their first year in business with new stock and modern

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[154] "Window and Interior Displays," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 9, 1904): 11.
[155] Ibid.
[156] "Careful Attention Paid to Interior Arrangement," *Canadian Grocer,* (Jan. 1, 1910): 23.
[157] "Window and Interior Displays," 11.
[158] Monod, 151.
[159] "National Cash Register Co.," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 1, 1912): 2.

equipment, but by the second year the first store was doing "fair business, but not quite as much as had been expected" while the Progress Store had grown in business, customers admired his methods and needed to move to a larger premises to accommodate demand. For the third, fifth, and tenth year in business C.I. Standstill is pictured at the same location, goods in the window front, and women passing by the display without a glance. The Progress Store has moved to a new location, goods in the window front are arranged more methodically and suggest abundance, and customers gather in the doorway of the store and pedestrians are shown peering into the window. By the tenth year, the Progress Store mimics the grandeur of a department store stretching multiple stories, customers lined up along the block, and a small fleet of delivery vehicles on standby.[160] While progress was attributed in this advertisement to the use of a National Cash Register to administer accurate receipts for every transaction, the rapid growth of grocery stores on the horizon and the range of shops offered – groceterias, self-service, dual service, full-service, credit, meateterias – in Toronto alone, required strategic planning to avoid bringing business to a standstill.

As news of influenza made headlines across Canada, the grocery store (already amid gradual redesign to become more modern) needed to adapt to public health measures and consumer concerns. There had been an uneven application of federal and provincial government regulation throughout the 1918 pandemic, and while municipal by-laws tended to impact retail grocers the most, this was inconsistent too. While a by-law had been passed in November 1918 for the early closure of retail stores, including grocery stores, across Calgary to prevent overcrowding and the spread of influenza, merchants in Ontario were reluctant to acquiesce. An early closure by-law would require the grocery stores to close at five o'clock, which some argued

[160] Ibid.

would be detrimental to their business.[161] For an early closure by-law to occur in Ontario, the *Grocer* assured that as far as Ontario was concerned the law in the case "is that on the presentation of petition signed by 75% of the merchants interested a by-law shall be passed requiring the closing of all stores doing business in the line dealt with in the petition."[162] Stores in Ontario could be closed by civic action "other than to meet some grave danger as in the case of the influenza epidemic without the unanimous consent of merchants interested" this, however, never came to fruition for Toronto grocers.[163] The *Grocer* acknowledged the legislative desire to prohibit contagion and the unnecessary mixing of crowds, but the journal relented that "three meals a day must be prepared whether there is an epidemic or not."[164]

Precautionary measures for food retailers called for merchants to cover exposed fruits, meats, confectionery, and pastries to prevent possible contamination. For example, oatmeal was once scooped out of an open bin, which was fair game for mice, and open fruit on display (particularly soft fruits like dates) was a haven for flies. Grocers that offered delivery service instructed their delivery men not to enter the home of the patron.[165] Properly packaged food was a growing demand at this time and continued to grow throughout the following decades alongside the demand for quick and processed foods. There was the assurance that when "she buys [food] in a nicely lithographed package, she knows it must be pure and clean. She has been taught to believe that nothing unclean goes into a tightly sealed package" as upon unwrapping in

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[161] "For the Days to Come," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 11, 1918): 28.
[162] "By-law discussed," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 6, 1918), 30-31.
[163] Ibid.
[164] Ibid., 122. Some retail merchants that 4pm closings would impact their business terribly and offered their solution of keeping stores open until 7pm which could help reduce overcrowding in the streets, as the public could space out its shopping over a longer period of time, and employees could return home after rush hour. See Fahrni, "Respectfully Submitted": Citizens and Public Letter Writing during Montreal's Influenza Epidemic, 1918-20" in *Epidemic Encounters: Influenza, Society, and Culture in Canada, 1918-20,* eds. Magda Fahrni and Esyllt Jones, (Vancouver: UBC, 2012): 81-82.
[165] "Business in Toronto Remains Satisfactory," *The Toronto World,* (Oct. 5, 1918): 11.

the kitchen, she "will surely notice" if the meal is unclean.[166] This perspective affirms the knowledge female customers were expected to have and the expectations they set for their grocer. Such modifications reflected, and were supported by, health officials and experts at a time where the poor quality of the nation's health was apparent to leaders of the day.[167] As influenza cases climbed in the city, everyday spaces and experiences, like grocery shopping, needed to adapt if it managed to skirt closure – which they had succeeded in doing. At the same time, the grocery trade had entered a new era. Science became a part of a grocer's selling strategy. This was evident in the clerk uniform, packaging, shop layout, and knowledge of food needed to be modern. The ongoing threat of influenza prompted a closer devotion to hygiene, not only as a preventative measure but to entice shoppers back into their space.

The 1920s interior evolution consisted of the introduction of modern equipment. This ranged from scales, refrigerators, refrigerated counters, bins, cash registers, and displays. Clean, scientific, equipment was deemed necessary for attracting new patrons while appeasing regulars.[168] The store of C. R. Parker in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario prided itself in being one of a kind as one of the first electrically heated stores. The technology provided two main benefits: heating by electricity created an almost dust-proof store, which protected the cleanliness of the varying displays; the uniform temperature preserved stocks of fruits and vegetables, even if they were out-of-season and more likely to rotten.[169] The exchange of ice boxes for refrigerators was a welcome addition to keep food fresh and firm; it was not only practical insert but a tidy, clean, and modern replacement. Most Loblaw Groceterias were equipped with an undetectable cold storage system. There was no ice box nor evidence to suggest an untidy system for keeping

[166] "The Case for Bulk Goods," *Canadian Grocer*, (January 18, 1918): 26.
[167] Arnup, 19.
[168] "Good Equipment Necessary in Attracting New Trade," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 15, 1929): 42.
[169] "A Large Volume with Small Staff," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 6, 1922): 26.

perishable goods cold, unsightly pipes were arranged throughout the tables and counters which were unlikely to be noticed.[170] In doing so, the subtly refrigerated tables and counters containing butter, lard, cheese, and other perishables remainder open and convenient as any other section of the store.[171] Another Toronto shop, operated by George Calgey on Dundas Street East, had been associated with the meat business for over fifty years and had a similar cold storage system. To observe his success, the Canadian Meat and Provision Buyer representative visited his store and found "nothing on view but the appetizing platters of fresh cuts of meats behind glass…The equipment in the store consists of a long display counter with a glass front and top, and meats shown under refrigeration below. These are nicely spread out on white platters, spotlessly clean."[172] Unlike the perishables in the groceterias which were accessible to the customer, the food in Mr. Calgey's store was closed off by glass. By serving quality goods, one customer who had been satisfied would tell another and someone passing in their motor car would surely drop in for fresh produce. For Mr. Calgey, the "advertising value of a satisfied customer" could not be underestimated.[173]

In a similar fashion to department stores seeking to cater to new and regular patrons by adding attractions, such as arcades, salons, and bathrooms, some grocery stores tried to provide some comfort for their consumers.[174] This included the installation of a water tap for thirsty customers, live demonstrations or samples of products (biscuits, for example), and seating areas.[175] The grocer boasted how the innovation was popular, especially in a business "catering largely to women and their children" and not only were the thirsty pleased with the refreshment,

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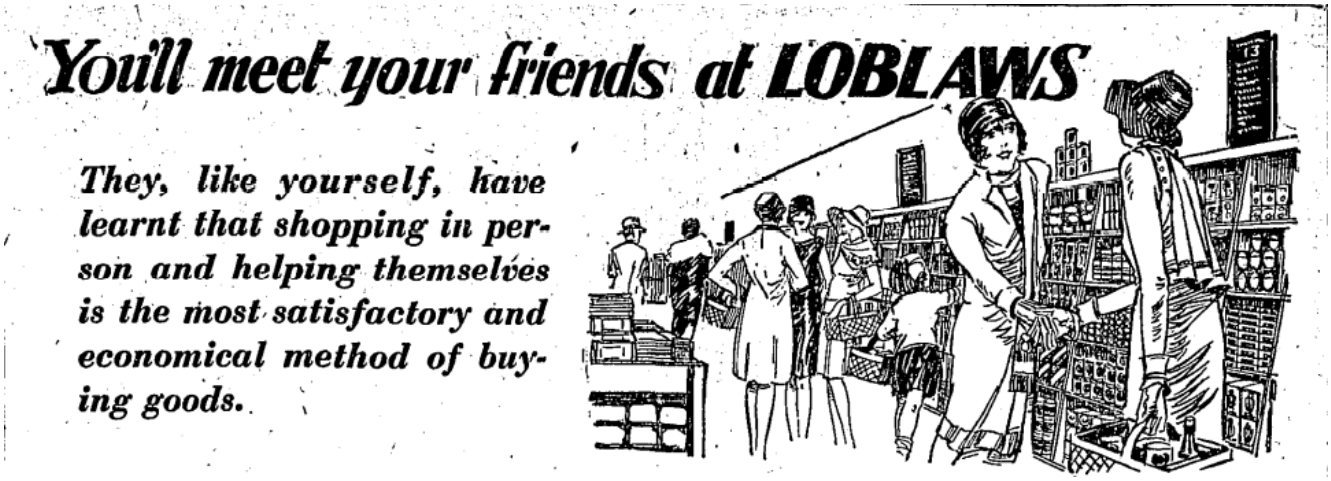
[170] "Each Store Equipped with Refrigeration," *The Globe*, (Nov. 19, 1926): 9.
[171] Ibid.
[172] "Long Glass Topped Counter to Increase Fresh Meat Sales," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 23, 1930): 17.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Rappaport, 79, 82. Leach, 79.
[175] "For the Thirsty Customer," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 1910): 56.

but many became customers after feeling obligated to spend something in return.[176] If there was space to do so, chairs are provided for customers, particular in full-service stores, to dissuade impatience while waiting.[177] In one shop an arrangement of a "handsome oaken table decorated with a jar of cut flowers and surrounded by three or four comfortable chairs occupied a sheltered corner in the store, where ladies could sit down and dictate their orders to the young lady clerk, who, order book in hand, sat opposite. For elderly ladies especially, shopping must have been a pleasure in that store."[178] While grocers attempted to eliminate wait times with maximum efficiency with their interior arrangement, if a customer did need to wait, there was less of a chance of an impatient foot-tapping if there was a place to rest. If there were others gathered at the table, the grocery store became a social space.

Not everyone was welcome to congregate freely, however. Monod notes how grocers were advised to "not permit men and boys to lounge in the store […] Housewives hate to walk into a store that is crowded with loafers who stare at blankly as she makes her purchases."[179] Preferential treatment was, of course, for the female buying public. Loblaws was quick to recognize the acceptable social setting that their aisles could create. The advertisements that would greet the reader of *The Globe* would feature not just weekly specials and savings, but

[176] Ibid.
[177] "Careful Attention Paid to Interior Arrangement," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 1, 1910): 23.
[178] "The Comfort of the Customer," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 1, 1910): 26.
[179] Monod, 155.

sketches of women customers chatting to one another. This type of gathering was encouraged and acceptable behaviour for the female customer and her (hopefully) wealthy friends [Fig. 19].



[Figure 19: "You'll Meet Your Friends at LOBLAWS" Advertisement. *The Globe*. July 20, 1928.]

The above advertisement for Loblaw Groceterias pictures multiple groups of customers; two women in the foreground shaking hands, three women gathered in the centre talking, a small child helping herself and her basket to the open shelves; a man and woman in the background possibly doing their weekly shop together.[180] Unlike how modernity was associated negatively with the dance hall, theatres, or the street, as a place for women to leisure, the modern grocery store had been constructed in periodical literature as an extension of the household and an acceptable social setting. Wary of too many customers gathering in any one store causing congestion, several months after their "You'll Meet Your Friends at LOBLAWS" advertisement, Loblaws proposed a solution in a following advisement. With the announcement of another "Modern Loblaw Groceteria" opening at 2424 Bloor St. W., the text pledged to relieve "congestion previously experienced at 2314 Bloor St." with expanded floor space, parking accommodation, and to "keep pace with the rapid strides being made."[181] The advertisement

[180] "You'll meet your friends at LOBLAWS," *The Globe*, (Jul. 20, 1928): 16.
[181] "An all-day call at Loblaws," *The Globe*, (Oct. 4, 1929): 3.

additionally asked readers to shop at the store closest to their home to avoid clustering within the store to give way to the usual comfortable shopping experience.[182] Soon, the proliferation of Loblaw Groceteria locations, created an easily reachable "thrift zone," across Toronto where customers could shop in comfort, a not clustered [Fig. 20].



[Figure 20: *The Toronto Daily Star*, Oct. 15, 1931 pg. 13.]

Entrance into the grocery store, whether to catch up with a friend or quietly restock the pantry goods, food shopping was a social experience; it was a meeting place as much as it was a place of purchase.[183]

For the modern grocer, there was incredible value placed upon the neatness and comfort of their customers. The sensory experience of shopping was paramount for making a sale. In 1930 *The Grocer* asked their readers if the grocery trade of each city should employ a professional smeller to see that the odors in stores do not drive trade away. The Modern Science Institute Inc.

[182] Ibid.
[183] Deutsch, 201.

alerted readers that "modern business has applied the stethoscope to the type of retail store that fails and found its lungs badly infected."[184] Most commonly, the cause of this business infection was poor ventilation in the store, which caused what the Institute referred to as Shopping Fatigue. Shopping Fatigue, for which "every woman has suffered and which retail store owners dread more than any other one thing" led progressive retailers and chain store operators to rectify a controlled ventilation system to provide the necessary amount of fresh air for customers and employees.[185] As the woman was regarded as the purchasing agent of the family, a woman's nose was "accustomed to determining how near the roast is cooked or the cake baked by the odor, the excellence of a perfume by the fragrance and the freshness of a room by the smell, is developed far in excess of man's."[186] A clean, sweet, and pleasant smelling space would be reflected in the sale made at the cash register.

A properly ventilated space was integral to more than the customer's comfort. Colds and sickness among employees, which could cut the sales force to a minimum during busy holiday seasons, were less likely to occur when ventilating systems refreshed the air and regulated humidity and temperature.[187] The odor of a poorly ventilated grocery store that carried a selection of meats or cheeses, could shock the senses of any woman who entered from the fresh outside air, while undetectable to the clerk behind the counter. Shopping in grocery stores "should be a pleasure, and if the customer doesn't get any fun out of it she is not likely to repeat very often."[188] In a pleasurable atmosphere the customer would spend more time shopping and

[184] "Professional Smeller Wanted," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 17, 1930): 32.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid., 33.
[188] Ibid.

consequently make more purchases. Ventilation and odor control was a win-win solution for any modern merchant and their staff.

In 1932 in an address at the Grocers and General Merchants Convention in Toronto, W.A. Bothwell, the manager of the National Grocers Company discussed store arrangement and layout. As an expert on the subject, W. Bothwell declared that the grocery business needed to adapt with the changing conditions to succeed in the future.[189] Much like the new fashions of the day, the layout of the shop space needed to be on trend. Bothwell explained how apparel styles had changed in the past decade:

> first opposed by the women but finally accepted as inevitable…in May of 1919, Mrs. Smith comes to breakfast in a suit, the skirt of which, rather tight at the ankles, hangs just six inches from the ground. She reads in the latest fashion magazines the alarming news that skirts are going to be shorter…Her hair is long and Mr. Smith threatens divorce if she ever thinks of having it bobbed. In Mr. Smith's mind short-haired women and long-haired men are, in some way or other, associated with radicalism, if not with free love…The breakfast table to which Mr. and Mrs. Smith sit down, is the good old-fashioned kind, with calories and vitamins unheard of…They are discussing a burning subject - the high cost of living. Everything is going up; food, rent, clothing, taxes…A new era is being ushered in…Groceterias, cafeterias, meateterias, electric refrigeration…are still something unheard of. But enough of the past. All of these things are now realities.[190]

In his reflection of the past – from fashion to the pressing issues of the day – Bothwell revealed that hesitation and resistance to change is futile; trends will travel forward, and merchants and customers alike will need to adapt. Change, however, did not need to look identical. It would be "just as foolish to suppose that one could name a spring outfit that could be equally well worn by every woman in Toronto" for each store layout to look the same.[191]

However, each store needed a plan that would fit the size, shape, and length of that store. A non-negotiable for Bothwell were the five qualities of a successful business: attractiveness,

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[189] W.A. Bothwell, "Store Layout, Depends on the Size, Shape and Length of Each Store," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 8, 1932): 19.
[190] Ibid., 19.
[191] Ibid.

accessibility, adaptability, cost, and reputation.[192] Merchandising attractiveness was not an overuse of ribbons, gaudy show cards, and excessive crepe paper; an outlandish display had the power to leave products unsold. According to Bothwell, the buying public "does not like to be cluttered up" and all lines should be made easier for people to buy quickly and in comfort.[193] Long counters and large open bins were outdated, and products should, at this time, be conveniently placed within reach or view. Where space allowed, the owner would conceal customers from bleaker parts of the store by segregating the office, bookkeeping space, and storage from the merchandising ones.[194] The interior of the store should be identified as a place of consumption and nothing else.[195] However, the Loblaw brand also participated in the modeling and regulation of the kitchen as a place of production and consumption. The tested and approved series of simplified recipes, by staff dietitian Gwendolyn Taylor, acknowledged the modern woman with her short, bobbed hair and use of measuring equipment [Fig. 21]. The advertisement strategy tried to extend the labour of the isolated home kitchen into the socialized setting of the grocery store.[196] The advertisement "to sell me – you must show me!" quite literally situated the homemaker in between the two spaces [Fig 22.] At the very least, the Loblaw brand was not about to forgo the opportunity to promote their own stock, approved recipes which included products available at their locations, and ability to market toward their prospective female customers.

And last, every merchant needed to be cognizant of those (especially women) who could encourage or hamper the success of the store from the outside. In his closing remarks, Bothwell

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[192] Ibid., 20.
[193] Ibid.
[194] Leach, 75.
[195] Ibid., 75-76.
[196] McKillop, *Matter of Mind*, 124-125. See also, Wendy Mitchinson's *The Nature of their Bodies: Women and their Doctors in Victorian Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991) 14-15.

expressed: "a word in regard to the ear. You can just bet they are all listening. Bridge parties, pink tea artists, commercial men, competitors, and even the common corner roustabouts, have their ears wide open" to spread the gospel of new changes in appearance and functionality of the store, or circulate complaints of the old-fashioned grocery store that refused to adapt.[197]



[Figure 21: Loblaws Flyer. Simplified Recipes Series, Tested and Approved by Staff Dietitian, *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Sept. 6, 1934): 9]

[197] Bothwell, "Store Layout, Depends on the Size, Shape and Length of Each Store," 19-20.



[Figure 22: "The shopper is immediately conscious of the good values on the account of the modern way LOBLAW foods are packed and presented," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Mar. 10, 1932): 9]

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the customer was instructed to shop intelligently, and this included studying the values of meats, flours, sugars, fruit, and vegetables. The customer who became an expert in recognizing poor grades of food, could not be easily duped by an overzealous clerk. The customer needed to visualize the product that was stacked neatly in a pyramid in the store arranged carefully in her pantry, and able to make its way to the kitchen table to feed her family. This was all part of the grocery shopping experience, even before the threshold of the store had been crossed. The potential customer might encounter the store through local flyers and advertisements or a well-lit window desperate for their attention. Upon entrance into a store a customer might have the attention re-directed onto them after the doorbell rang. The doorbell was a common feature in small, independent stores and it would alert clerks to a customer's arrival. In chain stores, particularly by the early 1930s, the bell was not a feature as foot traffic was much higher and many chains relied on self-service. There was little need for a bell to summon salespeople. One grocer of a small shop complained of the store bell and explained: "this is a little piece of snobbery that we will soon outgrow…It makes them feel as if

they were under surveillance."[198] But some do not remember the bell in such a negative light. In an interview with Eleanor Irwin, long-time Torontonian, she recalled the bell that rang atop the door of the O'Leary's store when she shopped with her mother in the late 1930s. When I asked Eleanor about if she remembered the bell, she laughed and replied: "Absolutely, yes. You would know that somebody had come in. I can even hear it!"[199]

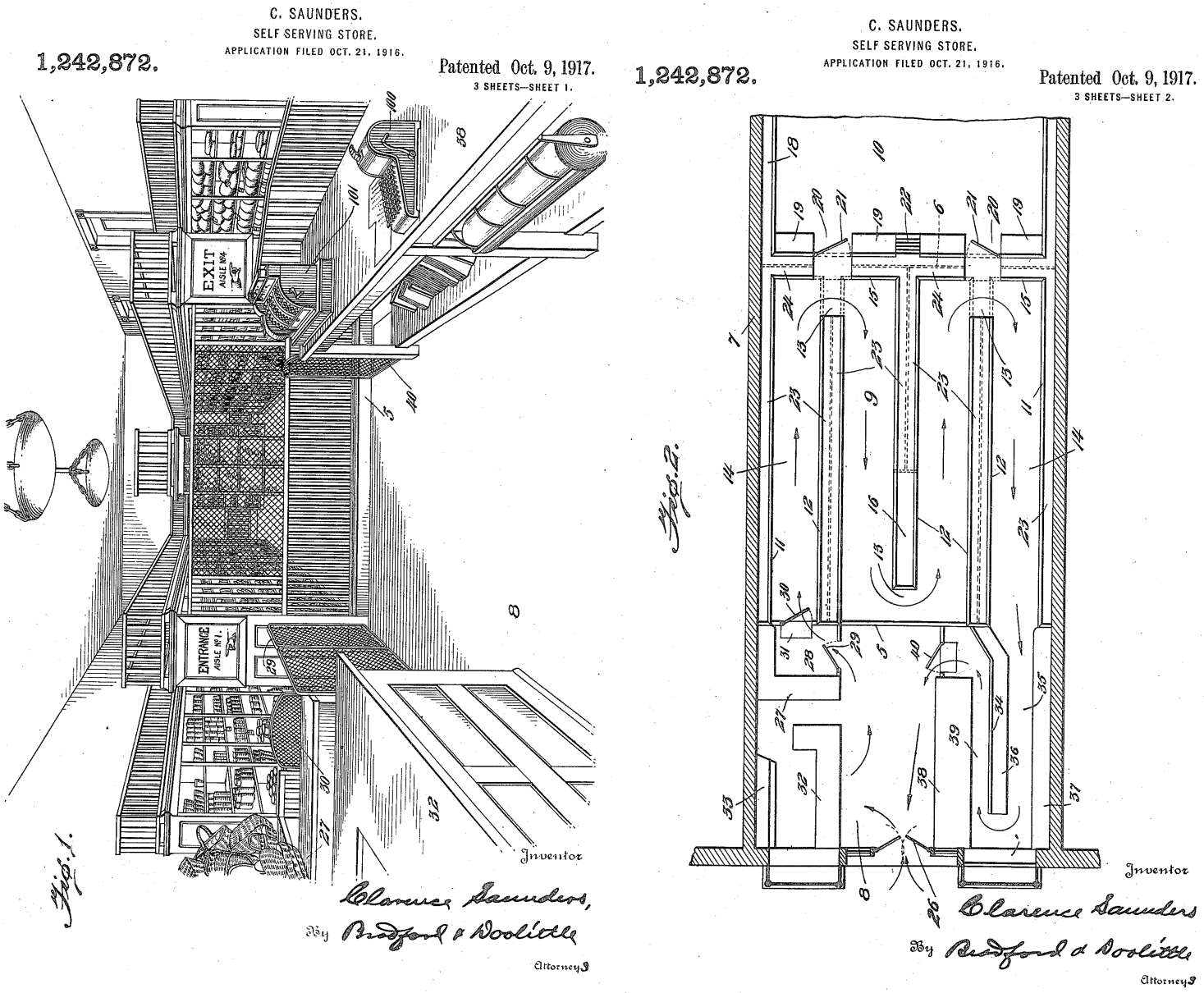
Self-Serve Satisfaction

The transformation and modernization of the grocery trade in Toronto in the early twentieth century is visible through what the Loblaw Groceterias chain achieved in these decades and how they (claimed to) change the way women shopped. T.P. Loblaw's frequent trips, with his wife, to the U.S. throughout the 1910s would ultimately inspire the future of the Loblaw Groceterias shopping experience as they encountered a new form of selling.[200] In 1916, the first self-service store opened in Memphis, Tennessee under the Piggly Wiggly name and the founder, Clarence Saunders, patented the term "Self-Serving Store."[201] [Fig. 23] These patent drawings reflected a more tangible shopping experience, where customers could make their purchases without interference from the clerk. To avoid congestion in the aisles, the first image directs the customer to the entrance of one aisle and then redirects out of a separate exit, and the second image indicates the predetermined path for the shopper to pass through. Self-service marked a new era of modern selling which went against the traditional conventions of personalized advice

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[198] "Store door-bells," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 13, 1893): 17.
[199] Eleanor Irwin, Interview, February 21, 2022.
[200] Deutsch, 52, 54. Lisa Tolbert "The Aristocracy of the Market Basket: Self-Service Food Shopping in the New South," in *Food Chains: From Farmyard to Shopping Cart*, eds. Warren Belasco and Roger Horowitz, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009): 79. "Social Events," *The Globe,* (Jun. 21, 1906): 5.
[201] The Piggly Wiggly chain expanded into Canada in 1925. The first store was opened in Vancouver March 1925 and by March 1929 there 27 stores in the Greater Vancouver area, 6 in Calgary, 1 in Lethbridge, several were under construction in Victoria and Winnipeg. The Canadian units of the Piggly Wiggly were sold in 1935 and the company left Canada. "Piggly Wiggly Stores in West Are Consolidated," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 15, 1929): 46.

and service.[202] The first Loblaw Groceterias opened in May 1919 and mimicked a similar, albeit more simple, interior design and through their advertisements and commentary from the *Grocer*, the chain was endorsed as a beacon of modernity for female customers.



[Figure 23: Clarence Saunders' Patent for the Self Serving Store, (Oct. 21, 1916) https://worldwide.espacenet.com/patent/search/family/003310669/publication/US1242872A?q=pn%3DUS1242872]

[202] Deutsch, 53-54.

The Loblaw Groceterias interior had many scientific and modern hallmarks [Fig. 24]. In the below photograph of a 1920s layout, artificial light is abundant, uniformly stacked goods, clearly listed price tags, "jog to memory" section marquees with each item for sale listed, and the only counter in sight is at the cash register at the front of the store. Beyond the open aisles, which allowed women and their children to choose and evaluate food without assistance, there are



[Figure 24: Interior of Loblaw Groceterias, 1920s. Courtesy of George Weston Archive]

other indicators to suggest this design was catered toward women. First, the table display of eggs is accompanied by a "commercial standard grades" information sheet. As mentioned, the intelligent housewife would have been concerned with purchasing the highest-grade product for the best value. Second, the adjacent table display, in ease of reach, was stacked high with process and time-saving foods such as pudding, Heinz spaghetti, and puffed rice. These had been marketed toward women in *Chatelaine* and *Everywoman's World* as "ready to serve,"

"economical," and "thrifty but nourishing," to be enjoyed by the whole family.[203] While this may have been staged for the photograph, the centre displays each have an attractive arrangement of flowers, which may have brightened up the floor space or been purposefully placed to mimic the home.[204] A shorter centre table was not only accessible to the patron but allowed the clerk to keep an eye on the whole floor and discourage attempts at pilfering.[205] It was this design, in addition to the cash-and-carry system, that added "pleasure and satisfaction" to the "work of shopping," and what "was formerly a worrisome drudgery to many a housewife, is to-day, a source of delight."[206]

Throughout the 1920s, advertisements for Loblaw Groceterias stores advocated a modern way of grocery shopping. It was claimed that the self-serve groceteria layout and the cash and carry system had "changed the buying methods of over one hundred thousand thrifty grocery buyers who come to our groceterias every week convinced that it pays to be a Loblaw customer."[207] Another boasted of the new methods of the groceteria, where the "day of the 'cracker barrel' and the 'prune drawer' are gone forever" and in its place, food was packaged in attractive bottles and cartons because "modern civilization calls for higher standards."[208] In this way, the Loblaw chain advertised the scientific arrangement of their stores as what their primary target – the modern housewife – wanted as they shopped uninterrupted and the brand considered

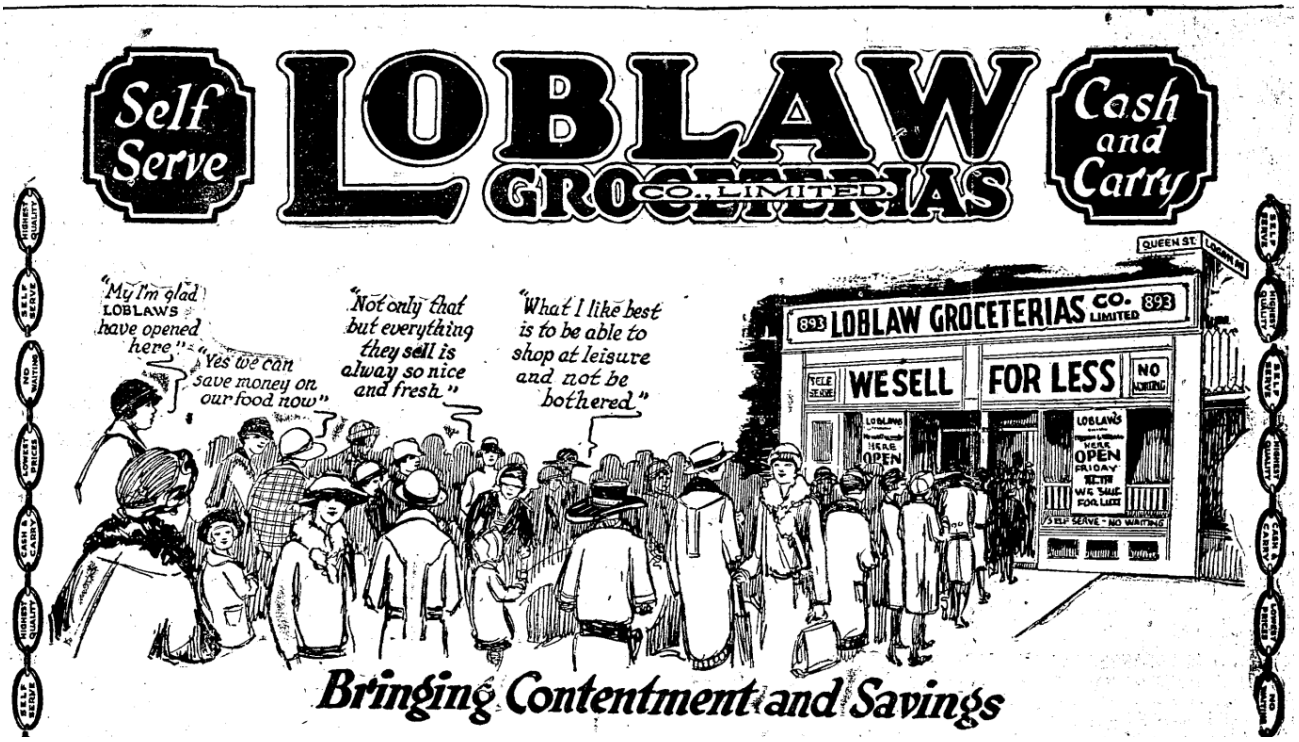
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[203] Marjory Dale, "Inexpensive Menus for a Family of Four," *Everywoman's World*, (May 1917): 60; "Amazing Food Value! Heinz Cooked Spaghetti advertisements," *Chatelaine*, (Jul. 1932): 30; "Puffed! Now More Delicious than Ever, Quaker Oats Advertisement," *Chatelaine* (Jun. 1932): 66.
[204] *Chatelaine* magazine advised that flower wallpaper or tiles in the kitchen would brighten up the space and to have flowers throughout the home. Mary E. Pease, "Four Walls do not a Prison Make," *Chatelaine*, (May 1929): 21; Anne Elizabeth Wilson, "The Home Bureau," *Chatelaine*, (May 1930): 26.
[205] Theft in a self-service store was a serious expense, however, in a later article (1948) about Loblaws *Maclean's* remarked that "Loblaw's pilferage loss is one of the smallest on the continent" because of a clever layout the clerk could easily survey.
[206] "High Cost of Living, Loblaw Groceterias Co. Ltd. Ad.," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jul. 16, 1924): 27.
[207] "Loblaw Changed," Loblaw Groceterias Co. Ltd. Advertisement, *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Apr. 3, 1924): 29.
[208] "Loblaw New Methods," Loblaw Groceterias Co. Ltd. Advertisement, *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Sept. 19, 1924): 22.

these shoppers empowered to purchase well-priced, high-quality food. Although Johnson Jr. was less favourable to the grocery chain, he did not deny how psychological studies revealed that "if a customer gets an article into her hand she is apt to sell it to herself" and it was the grocers responsibility to anticipate every need and desire of the shopper.[209] The "Loblaw Way" became synonymous with the 'modern way,' where "it [was] rare indeed for a Loblaw customer to be heard complaining."[210] Despite the advocacy for lower prices, the open floorplan and easy-to-reach goods sometimes had the opposite effect. One reader wrote to the *Grocer* to explain his experience inside the groceteria. By request of his wife to purchase baking powder that was unavailable at the corner store, the husband went to a chain groceteria, and he reflected how "many people do not buy in a groceteria simply because they can buy for less. It is because they like it. Visit one some day and watch the customers as they shop, see them pick up things, examine them and put them in their baskets. […] People seem to like seeing and feeling things at close range […] particularly the women folk."[211] He continued that unfortunately, because customers can feel products as they carry a basket around the store – which becomes filled quickly as a result – grocery bills are more extravagant.[212] Eye-level goods in bright colours, "black and white labels [were] poor salesmen," and available baskets could carry far more merchandise than a pair of hands – it was "simple psychology."[213]

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[209] Henry Johnson Jr., "Experience Shows Sales Increase if Goods are Displayed in Aisles," *Canadian Grocer,* (Dec. 19, 1930): 22.
[210] "Loblaw Your Favorite Brand," Loblaw Groceterias Co. Ltd. Advertisement, *The Toronto Daily Star,* (Jul. 15, 1924): 2.
[211] "Bring Your Troubles Here," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 25, 1930): 62.
[212] Ibid, 116.
[213] C. Fred Bodsworth, "Store With a Million Salesmen," *Maclean's Magazine*, Vol. 61 Iss. 21 (Nov. 1, 1948): 64.



[Figure 25: Loblaw Groceterias advertisement, *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Sept. 30, 1926): 11]

The self-serve groceteria enabled purchasing power to extend beyond financial means but not beyond normative gender roles. The shopping experience offered "freedom of action," where "at Loblaw's you may select what you want with the same feeling of authority that you would select a piece of fine furniture for your home."[214] Similarly, in the above advertisement, the women waiting in line to enter the Loblaw location excitedly chatter about the new location – which, based on the map of the growth of the chain, was likely near transit and middle-class neighbourhoods – the prospect of high-quality goods at lower prices, and the ability to shop leisurely. This advertisement almost exclusively depicts well-dressed women and children, seemingly buzzing with excitement, conversation, and freedom to purchase groceries. As prospective customers, women were portrayed as mothers to take on a traditional role to invoke

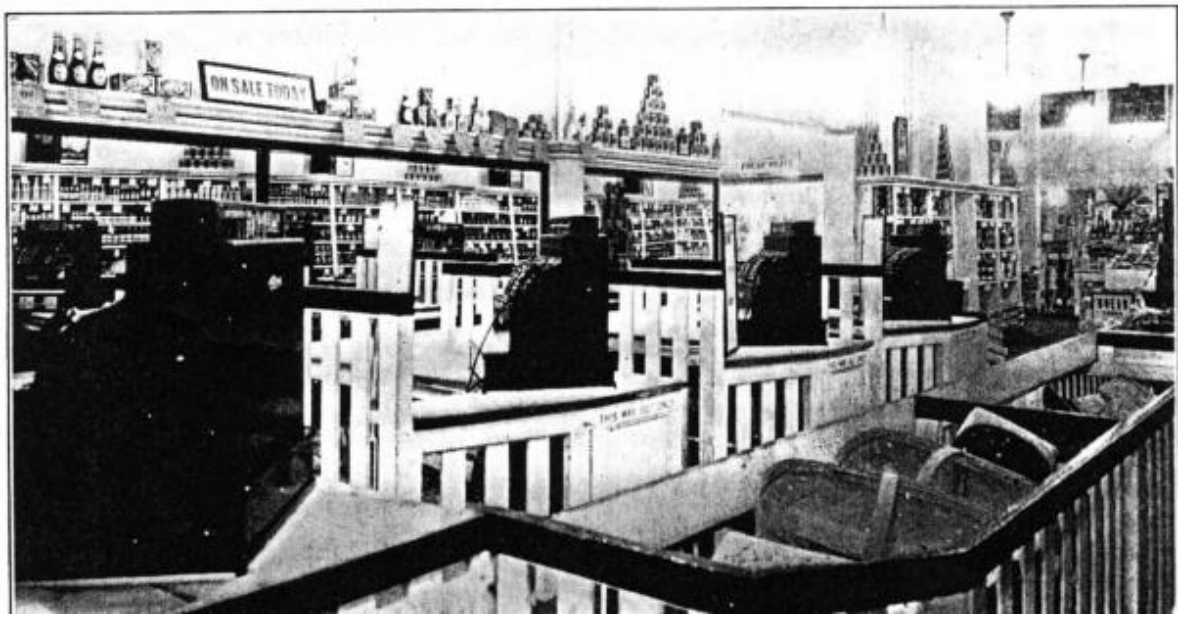
[214] "Loblaw Groceterias Freedom of Action," Loblaw Groceterias Co. Ltd. Advertisement, *The Toronto Daily Star,* (Jul. 19, 1926): 4.

modern shoppers. Although modernity was associated with the notion of agency, authority, and freedom, the anxiety that women would become too modern and unmoored from the family was neutralized through a consistent affiliation and containment within familial roles in advertisements [Fig. 25].

By the 1930s, chain grocery stores had proliferated throughout Ontario and Toronto, and these chains were eager to innovate and renovate to appeal to female customers. For example, the two largest chains in Toronto, Loblaw Groceterias and Dominion Stores integrated modern meat counters into their interior design to rival local butchers while becoming a one-stop shop. Following the success of their relatively free-flowing layout in their groceterias stores, the Loblaw chain introduced the "meateterias" in Toronto in the fall of 1931.[215] T.P. Loblaw told the *Toronto Daily Star* that the public had demanded a better method of buying fresh meat and, "after many months of research work in connection with refrigeration, wrapping, and modern display," the new system was established.[216] Loblaw Groceterias advertisements, regarding the new installment of meateterias, included photographs of the company's meat cutting department

[215] The first meat-remodel for Dominion Stores was at the corner of Bloor Street and Spadina Avenue in Toronto in 1929. At first, Dominion had added delicatessen products to their grocery selection, and then a refrigerated glass topped counter for fresh meats was added, this operated as a full-service section. Loblaw Groceterias followed suit in 1931 but with a self-serve meat section.
[216] "Buying Your Meats at a Loblaw Groceteria!" *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jun. 16, 1932): 4.

and meat wrapping department, each department staffed exclusively by men and women respectively. The transparency of how this product was prepared and packaged was how the



[Figure 26: The grocery section of the Loblaw combination meat and grocery store at 1204 Bloor St. West, Toronto. This picture includes four newly installed cash registers and customer baskets. *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 24, 1933):24]

company assured customers of their "quality-first" approach.[217] The meateteria fixture was a large, refrigerated display with cabinets that contained trays at the bottom for the display of surplus stock and space above accessible to customers with various cuts of meat preserved cellophane packaging.[218] Each cut of meat had a tag to indicate the price per pound and price per cut to allow the customer to select the cut desired; no clerk interference was needed [Fig. 26]. Availability of various meat products continued to expand throughout the decade from a limited selection of side or back bacon to cooked ham, smoked rolled pork, pork cuts, wieners, and the occasional roasted chicken.[219] Once evaluated by the customer, she would place her selection in her basket and make her way to pay cash at the checking desk. As a result of such satisfactory

[217] Ibid.
[218] "Selling Meats Self-Serve Expands," Canadian Grocer, (Aug. 26, 1932): 20. Stock was replenished by means of large hampers which were rushed from the cutting room in the Loblaws warehouse.
[219] Ibid.

sales and satisfied customers, by the following June 1932, 13 of the 46 Loblaw Groceterias in Toronto were fitted with the meateteria section.[220]



[Figure 27: Loblaw Groceterias advertisement, *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jun. 22, 1933): 7]

The Loblaw brand continued to expand, in profit and size, throughout the 1930s. As the above advertisement suggests, businessmen planned the space for women to shop with their comfort and pleasure in mind [Fig. 27]. In addition, the chain offered other conveniences such as customer parking and seemed to bridge between the city buildings on the right and the single-family homes on the left; the Groceterias was seemingly accessible to any lifestyle and location. By the summer of 1933, the Loblaw Markets had begun to populate Toronto's grocery landscape. This was a new type of store, which still opted for the cash and carry system and self-serve method, where customers could exclusively purchase fresh meat and produce [Fig. 29].

[220] "Every Loblaw product Wins This Race!" *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jun. 23, 1932): 27.



[Figure 28: View of the refrigerated case of a modern Loblaw meateteria section, with customers selecting their cuts of fresh meats. The cabinet trays below hold the surplus stock. *Canadian Grocer*, (Aug. 26, 1932): 20.]

Where space allowed, a groceteria store would be fitted with a meateteria, but if not, then a Market store was established next door. The photograph below is an example of the exterior of one of the Loblaw Market stores on Bloor St. in Toronto [Fig. 29]. Although this photograph is outside the timeline of my analysis, it reflected a typical Market store on the left, where produce and meat were available (and mimicked that of a weekend marketplace) in conjunction with the groceteria style on the right, where dry goods could be purchased. The Loblaw Market store and Loblaw Groceterias continued to operate across Toronto until the late 1930s, where the Groceteria name came to symbolize the company rather than the interior. By January 1939, the "Market" and "Groceterias" had been dropped from the storefront sign and rebranded to what they are known as today – Loblaws. However, the convenience of acquiring everything under one roof, coupled with the promise of low prices, would fuel competition between chain stores

and independent grocers, explored in Chapter 4, and re-ignite tensions from when mail-order houses encroached on grocers' terrain throughout the 1910s [Fig. 30].



[Figure 29: An example of the exterior of a Loblaw Market and Loblaw Groceterias store, 2314 Bloor St. Toronto, 1945. Courtesy of the George Weston Archives.]



[Figure 30: The Loblaw Market stores were rapidly renovated and established in Toronto. The Loblaw advertisement shows this speed with the exhausted man on the right; tired from nailing a new location to the board. *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Nov. 23, 1933): 9]

Conclusion

The food products that lined the walls and display tables were intentionally chosen and tastefully arranged for the female customer and her kitchen. In the same way, the women who patronized the grocery store intentionally and carefully selected what they needed. Women's magazines had urged readers to heed the advice of their experts to meticulously menu-plan, budget, and evaluate the food they would purchase. This challenged the preconception retailers had about their female customers as innately impulsive in their purchases.[221] However, even the best intentions could be interrupted and intervened by the salesperson, the customer, stock and supply, and the weekly budget. For the grocer, there was value in a well-organized interior display to achieve a quick turnover of displayed products for profit. There was also value in the

[221] Monod, 154-155. Walden, 289, 301.

reputation earned for the merchant and the store, which served as a continual advertisement.[222] For the customer, their behaviour or lifestyle could determine if they fell under the suspicious clerk wary of pilfers or were excluded by the luxury goods that embellished the window.

To become a progressive store, it needed to sell the space as modern. This was achieved in several ways. Installation of modern equipment, utilization of glass and eye-catching reflective materials, a commitment to hygiene, and an understanding of what the customer needed *and* wanted. Others hoped to offer a sense of airy spaciousness for ease of movement, to catch up with friends, or to graze the self-selection displays. Similar to the space of the grocery store, visual appeal and orderliness in the home kitchen drove decorative decisions and labour productivity. *Everywoman's World*, *The Canadian Home Journal*, and later, *Chatelaine*, and The Chatelaine Institute hoped to sell readers, especially new brides, a modern home kitchen, smaller in size but much more efficient than its predecessor. Supported by federal housing programs and capitalized on by the experts at *Chatelaine*, the shrunken kitchen of the 1930s was redesigned as a space of active consumption, particularly of expert-approved products, and reduced productive labour. There was an inherent struggle between the industrial kitchen and what women could afford and needed to do for families, especially in times of crisis (the latter explored in the following chapter).

The following chapter will explore how this disdain for grocery chains was amplified in periods of crisis. Although chains such as Loblaw Groceterias championed affordability and accessibility, rather than exclusivity, and hoped to cater to the mass public, their cash-only policies automatically excluded those that relied on credit. Access to cash was a luxury, but food was a necessity, and credit customers would struggle to make it passed the turnstile as chains

[222] "The Interior as a Creative Salesman," 31.

came to dominate the grocery landscape in Toronto. While the space of the grocery store was redesigned for the modern era, for modern methods and scientific shopping, it simultaneously became a site for economic citizenship and practical patriotism. At the same time, female shoppers had begun to test and, in some cases, challenge the limits of the so-called free market. The necessity of food, heightened during times of crisis, meant modernity failed to mobilize female shoppers and grocers evenly.

Chapter Four: Citizen Consumers and Corporate Citizens

Introduction

The events of the First World War and the Great Depression and their impact on consumer trends are well documented within Canadian historiography.[1] There is, however, much less dialogue on how the grocery press and the state instructed women to reorient the very consumer trends and habits that had been valorized prior to and between these two periods of economic and social crisis. As Chapter 1 examined the grocery trade, Chapter 2 went inside the store, and Chapter 3 considers the consumer as a vector between the store and the home, this final chapter revisits two periods of political and economic instability and crisis to explore how female consumers were brought into conversation with federal and provincial states, which themselves were intervening in more elements of everyday life. This chapter demonstrates how nationalist and patriotic discourse in periodical literature encouraged women to be good consumers, workers, and to suspend their consumer mentality temporarily, and to substitute their food, take limited options, and ration for the collective good during these two moments of crisis. There were a variety of strategies promoted by the press and federal agencies for grocers and consumers to follow. Victory gardens were planted by women (as some grocers supplied the seeds), some households committed to voluntarily rationing (as grocers suggested substitute

[1] Donica Belisle, "Conservative Consumerism: Consumer Advocacy in *Woman's Century* magazine During and After World War I," *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, Vol. 47, No. 93, (May 2014): 111-138. Sarah Glassford and Amy Shaw (eds.), *A Sisterhood of Suffering and Service: Women and Girls of Canada and Newfoundland during the First World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2012); Srigley, *Breadwinning Daughters* and "Clothing Stores: Consumption, Identity, and Desire in Depression Era Toronto (2007); Belisle, *Purchasing Power*; Julie Guard, "A Mighty Power against the Cost of Living: Canadian Housewives Organize in the 1930s" (2010); Stacey Zembryzycki, "'We Didn't Have a Lot of Money, but We Had Food': Ukrainians and Their Depression-Era Food," in *Edible Histories* (2013); Joan Sangster, "Mobilising Women for War," in David MacKenzie, ed., Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005): 157-193 and "The Role of Women in the Early CCF: 1933-1940," in *Beyond the Vote: Canadian Women and Politics* (1989); Denyse Baillargeon, *Making Do: Women, Family and Home in Montreal during the Great Depression* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2014).

lines), the credit was extended when cash was in short supply, and the call to consume only Canadian-made products. In addition to individual responsibility and action, there was intervention at the federal level, often prompted by consumer advocacy.[2] From advertising campaigns, a production crusade, restrictions and regulations, the federal government intervened, with varying success, in the operation of the nation's storefront, grocery basket, and kitchen.[3]

Meanwhile, for consumers it became a battle of not only what to purchase, but where to purchase, and with what they could afford. Women were ushered to move away from the savvy, modern, and individualistic food shopper as the press attempted to ground and weave collective and national interests into women's civic obligations. However, by doing this, the press and the state valorized and gendered this period of consumption in ways that were unintended. Women were reframed from feeders of the family to feeders of the nation and, as a result, gained a higher political stake and were enabled to talk back to public policy regarding the market.

Fight with Food: World War One

The outbreak of the First World War in 1914 had a global impact on nearly all aspects of daily life. As the *Grocer* reported on trade around the world, they signalled to their readers on July 31, 1914, to "proceed cautiously" and while "this is no time for much speculation, and the man who plays safely will scarcely have to regret his action should the worst come to the worst – which God forbid."[4] The following weekly issue posed some mixed signals. The feature piece titled "Havoc Created by War on the Price of Foods" was worrisome, but the two-page article concluded with the following: "We in Canada are fortunate, when our fellow-creatures in Europe are considered. With a resourceful soil […] we have great cause to be thankful. There is little

[2] Guard, *Radical Housewives,* 4.
[3] Ian Mosby, *Food Will Win the War,* 5.
[4] "The War in Europe," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jul. 31, 1914): 28.

necessity of worrying. We must await the outcome with patience and bright hopes. The essential foods for the sustenance of life are plenty, and, beyond a temporary rise in prices, which is anticipated […] there is nothing in the present situation to cause undue worry."[5]

The following week, the *Grocer* posted a similar reassuring message: "The grocery market is in a state of chaos – no other word can describe the condition which prevails as to the relations between supply men and wholesales; wholesalers and retailers; and the retailers and consumers." But, despite this chaos, the reader should be comforted that the bulk of imports were "comparative luxuries," and Canada could "go a long way towards maintaining herself."[6] One Director of Publicity told his audience at the Toronto Advertising Club, "It is a mistake," he continued, "for the people to talk of retrenching in business because of the war. The motto he thought should be '*more* business than usual.' […] Business has to finance the war and it can't be done out of savings. The only way business can do it is by going right on as in ordinary times."[7] This was a typical stance that was adopted for public messaging; that Canada was involved in a crisis, a time of war, but the country was abundant in food, materials, and other resources. The experts at the *Grocer* confidently reported that the modern market was, and would be, just fine. However, the federal government, the grocery industry, and individuals turned to – and on – one another in the effort to support the war effort and Canada's allies overseas.

The increasing cost of living throughout the 1910s led to the inauguration of the Toronto Housewives' League, the Canadian Housewives' League, and the Canadian Consumers' League to protest inflation.[8] The cost of living and food prices continued to climb during the war,

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[5] "Havoc Created by War on the Price of Foods," *Canadian Grocer*, (Aug. 7, 1914): 25-26.
[6] "Grocery Market in a Chaotic State," *Canadian Grocer,* (Aug. 14, 1914): 28.
[7] "American Advertising Expert Speaks before Toronto Advertising Club," *Canadian Grocer*, (Feb. 1, 1918): 20.
[8] "Housewives' League," *The Toronto World*, (Dec. 16, 1913): 1. "Poor women and the League," *The Toronto World,* (Dec. 31, 1913): 36. This column commented that there should not be a mandatory fifty cents fee for membership to the Canadian Household Economic Association – which women needed to be a member of to join the Housewives' League – because prevented the enrollment of the working women who was the "very housewives

bringing consumers, state officials, and the grocery press into closer dialogue with one another. The *Grocer* documented how retail grocers fought back and pointed to their increasing rent, the cost of lighting, heating, and upkeep of store appliances have all advanced and prices needed to be raised in proportion.[9] Citizen consumers were not convinced. The high prices of food were referred to as "the monster that has invaded our country, in every home," and for retailers to engage in food profiteering to take advantage of consumers to become rich, was a "sin" which caused women and children to suffer."[10] The greed was "positive torture" to "more than one woman to know what to get to eat – not for herself – but for her family, and I do not doubt that more than one woman today is denying herself nourishing food, because she cannot afford it."[11] The framing of food profiteering as sinful reflected the association of food as a moral good and as a necessity of life, and as a result, food distributors – from the independent to the chain store – would be held to a moral standard, unlike other retailers.

There were a variety of strategies and exercises of economic and political citizenship in response to accusations of food profiteering and the rising cost of living. Across the country, women helped lead boycotts against these rising costs, rallied and opened their own markets – effectively eliminating the middleman – to sell farm produce at affordable prices to other women.[12] Fahrni has argued that consumer boycotts were different than the public, vocal, and occasionally violent nature of a strike. Decisions about what to and what not to purchase, Fahrni

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that the league hoped to assist and benefit." Food prices in 1916, for example, rose quickly. The average weekly budget increased 3.5% between January and August 1916, and increased once more between August and December that same year by 11.6%.

[9] "Eggs are down to sixty cents," *The Toronto World*, (Dec. 19, 1913): 8.

[10] Another Housekeeper, "The High Prices of Food," *Toronto Daily Star*, (Oct. 2, 1916): 6.

[11] Ibid.

[12] "Conservative Consumerism," 130. Belisle notes how following the inflation of prices due to the war there were a number of organized protests held by Household Leagues in Victoria, Halifax, and northern Ontario, the Consumers' League in Calgary, and the Housewives League in Quebec City organized protests, and boycotts such as one led by Jewish women in Toronto against increased bread prices. Cohen also documents how housewives in local communities successfully boycotted to bring down prices, pg. 29.

continues, were most noticeable in their absence from the store.[13] Substitution, food production and preservation were popular methods of participation, too.[14] Housewives' Leagues often advocated for the surveillance of grocers to protect the consumer, urging women to watch and report any advance in price, noting that "honest merchants" will not take advantage of them.[15] Alice Kessler-Harris, a U.S. labour historian, has argued that the language of economic citizenship not only captures women's exclusion from jobs but from the typical routes of citizenship and, instead, demarcates women's efforts to occupy equitable relationships to corporate and government services.[16] Gender was central to these consumer movements, a part of daily life, Canada's capitalist economy, and never far from the grocery store.

Despite assurance that Canada was abundant in resources, nervous consumers, who could afford to do so, began hoarding food. This trend was noticed and reported by grocers who witnessed their customers purchase far and away in excess of their regular demands. The war had caused "something of a panic" inside grocery stores.[17] The *Grocer* differentiated between the small buyer, who "buys for his own use, and confused by panic buys far more than his requirements" and the profiteer who hoards for profit and will "release his holdings at a profit" but, in either case, the retailer should explain to the customer that if they purchase more what they need, they are withdrawing these goods from circulation, and only add to the high cost of

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[13] Fahrni, 122-123.
[14] "Women plan to cook plain food cheaply," *Toronto Daily Star*, (Dec. 19, 1916): 19. A war thrift campaign had been organized which included a committee of fifty women who urged Toronto women to 'Produce, Serve, and Save." The thrift committee was against waste, unnecessary spending, and encouraged home production of food. See also, "Women are talking of declaring boycott," *Toronto Daily Star,* (Dec. 19, 1916): 20. Discussion at the Canadian Household Economic Association included the treat of boycott to secure the legalization of the sale of margarine as a substitute for butter which was a great source of fat for children, but costly. "No Boycott of Turkey in Spite of its 40 Cent Price," *Toronto Daily Star*, (Dec. 19, 1916): 19. Again, Toronto women had threatened to boycott but had not organized quick enough as the holidays were near, they instead recommended goose, duck, or chickens as a more affordable alternative.
[15] "Housewives fight advance in foods," *Toronto World,* (Aug. 7, 1914): 4.
[16] Alice Kessler-Harris*, In Pursuit of Equity: Women, Men, and the Quest for Economic Citizenship in 20th-Century America,* (Oxford University Press, 2003): 5, 12, 18.
[17] "Grocery Market in a Chaotic State," 28.

living. One editorial brief complained that "if it had not been for the hogging of sugar on the part of the consuming public, it is certain that it would not have run up so high and rapidly."[18] The increase in certain lines of foods created some hostility toward the grocer, who were accused of price gouging and profiteering in times of crisis. This type of accusation was unfounded, according to the *Grocer*. The trade journal admitted that the increase in the price of eggs, ham, butter, and cheese was for the "well known" reason of greater demand and a comparative shortage of supplies and confidently claimed "everyone knows that the retail trade has nothing to do with advances in [food]."[19] Unfortunately, these items figured more conspicuously on the consumers' table than most others.

Hostilities grew between the everyday consumer, workers, and grocery retailers. Even the former Mayor of Toronto, Thomas Church, made several unsuccessful trips to Ottawa to urge government intervention and inquiries into food profiteering.[20] This hostility was on the heels of the authorization of the *War Measures Act* in August 1914, which provided the Borden government unprecedented regulatory power in the private sector and civil society. The Act symbolized a second wave of regulations, extension of state control, and eventually, the gradual increase of power over food distribution, production, and trade that had been awarded to the Food Controller and Canada Food Board. In his examination of wartime profiteering, Targa has argued that workers and farmers were influenced by producerism in agrarian and labour organizations of the period and held a great deal of contempt toward big business.[21] Farmers and workers maintained that their labour created real value through the production of physical goods

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[18] "Editorial Briefs," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 4, 1914): 45.
[19] "Has the Cost of Living Increased in Recent Years?" *Canadian Grocer,* (Jan. 1, 1914): 45.
[20] "The Extreme Need of Action," *Toronto Daily Star,* (Oct. 5, 1916): 17. "Mayor Gunning for H.C.L," *Toronto Daily Star*, (Aug. 7, 1919): 2.
[21] Targa, "Great War Profiteering, Patriotism, and the Democratic Revolt in English Canada, 1914 to 1922," 16-17, 242.

in comparison to "modern capitalists [who] reaped massive fortunes through mystified and manipulative strategies."[22] These groups generally supported the Act and believed it could be used to prevent and persecute immoral grocers for food profiteering.

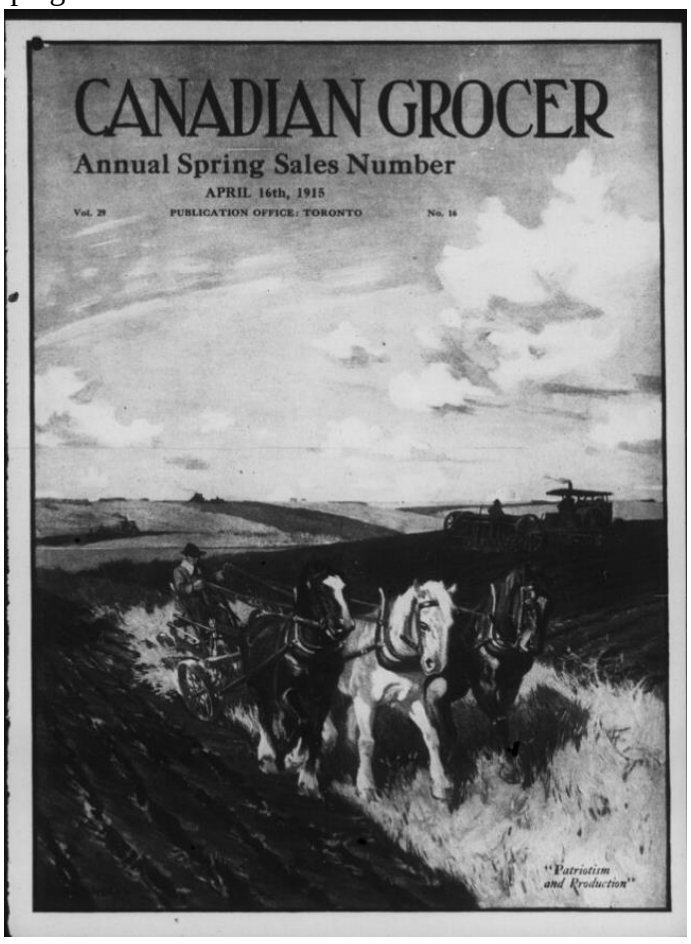
The *Grocer* responded and maintained that there were far and few cases of retailers who had unfairly raised prices. However, public criticism of the trade pervaded as war loomed. The *Grocer* defended accusations and insinuations of price gouging were vague, unfounded, and at the "expense of the reputation of a reputable body of fair and honest men."[23] However, the case against the William Davies Company gained notoriety. The Toronto-based meat-packing company, the largest in Canada, was charged by the High Cost of Living Commissioner with food profiteering.[24] Once again, the *Grocer* came to the defence of their colleague. A three-page statement from the Company was published in the *Grocer* which claimed the indictment by the Department of Labour was "untrue" and has "provoked public unrest" based on "erroneous and damaging statements."[25] The Company was clear in its statement that it did "not challenge the legal or moral right of the Government to investigate business enterprises when public interest directs such an investigation" and how the Company had supported, in writing, to appoint a Food Controller "with full power to do what he saw fit."[26] Although it was an active investigation, the *Grocer* continued to support the Company and claimed it "has yet to be proved that the [Company] is at fault," and proceeded to profile the Company's "most attractive booth" at that year's CNE and recommend the Company to readers as business as usual.[27] Despite the

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[22] Ibid., 17.
[23] "Unjustified Criticisms of Retailers," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 4, 1914): 44-45.
[24] Targa, 142, 165, 168, 173.
[25] "Alleged Profits of The William Davies Company in 1916 on Bacon, as Indicated by the Department of Labor to be Five Cents per Pound, Untrue:" Canadian Grocers, (Jul., 1917): 17.
[26] Ibid., 19.
[27] "Editorial Briefs," *Canadian Grocer*, (Aug. 24, 1917): 36. "William Davies Company, Limited," *Canadian Grocer,* (Sept. 14, 1917): 38.

Company being cleared of any wrongdoing, the publicity of the case, as Targa has argued, helped fuel the sensationalism of the food profiteering controversy and led to a greater demand for regulation of food processing and distribution systems.[28] Tensions between the grocer, the consumer, and the state officials continued in the pages of popular press as the war raged on and the food economy desperately needed to be mobilized by all parties.

In 1915 the Minister of Agriculture launched the first Canada-wide food production campaign entitled "Patriotism and Production." In short, this campaign ensured a much larger acreage under cultivation than usual, and seed was required in large quantities.[29] To maintain this, farmers were urged to increase wheat production in Canada at any price to help feed Britain and their allies. This campaign was reflected on the front cover of the *Grocer*. [Fig. 1]



[28] Targa, 171-173.
[29] "Some Big Advances in Seeds," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 21, 1916): 19.

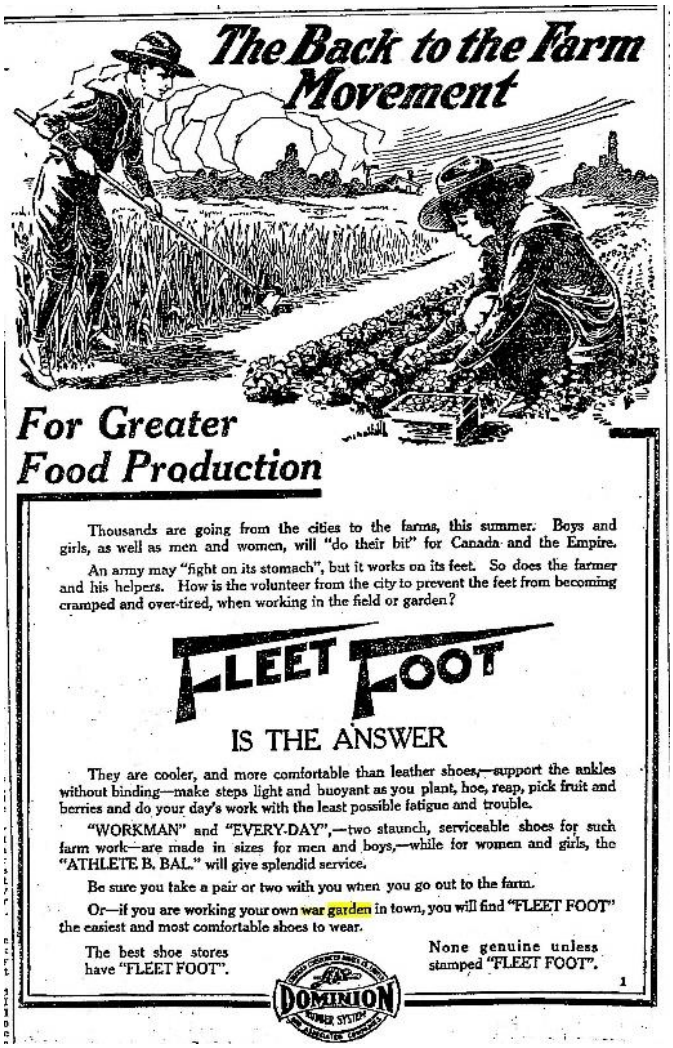
[Figure 1: "Patriotism and Production" by C.W. Jeffreys, one of Canada's most prominent artists. [Symbolizes in a direct way what took place in the Canadian West. Cover Art. *Canadian Grocer,* (Apr. 16, 1915)]

The cover is meant to symbolize the abundance of harvestable land in the Canadian West. The artist's emphasis on older horse-reliant methods of production romanticized and valorized what are inferred to be traditional agricultural techniques. The skyline remains untouched by offices or factories, and the work is performed by individuals, not machines, rather than intervened by the expert.

Part of this reimagining of tradition during the war was a re-articulation of women's productive capacity for farmwork and food production. As women were being instructed to reorient their consumer spending on food (rationing, substitution, practice thrift), they were being encouraged to take on a second role during the First World War as producers of food. Carmela Patrias has traced the recruitment of "daughters of Canada" into the seasonal agricultural workforce, many of them middle-class, Anglo-Canadian, university and high-school students, teachers, young businesswomen, and clerks, to fill labour shortages created by the wartime expansion of fruit and vegetable production.[30] In the opinion of farmers, university girls were among the most reliable and capable workers, "working away like good fellows."[31] The press described this agricultural work as national service and called upon women's patriotism to draw them into the fields, packinghouses, and canneries. In the first six months of 1918, the Department of Trades and Labour reported that 11,984 women were placed in various

[30] Carmela Patrias, "More Menial than Housemaids?: Racialized and Gendered Labour in the Fruit and Vegetable Industry of Canada's Niagara Region, 1880-1945," *Labour/Le Travail*, Iss. 78 (Fall 2016): 72, 83, 86. Patrias demonstrates how this class of women and girls who were recruited by the provincial and federal government received preferential treatment (hospitable sleeping arrangements, respectable uniforms, and higher wages) in comparison to foreign and racialized seasonal workers in the Niagara region. She argues that the racial designation, class confidence, education, and knowledge of English permitted Farmerettes to improve their working conditions in ways that were not open to women who depended on seasonal farm work for their own and family's livelihood.
[31] Ibid.

employment roles: 800 were employed in farm labour, 300 in canning factories, 1,249 in other factories, 1,776 as permanent domestics, and 7,621 as causal workers in various roles.[32]



[Figure 2: Advertisement for Fleet Foot shoes. Aimed at the men and women workers who moved from their homes in the city to the rural areas to aid in food production. The advertisement also acknowledged the commitment to home-grown war gardens. *Toronto Daily Star,* (Jun.18, 1918): 9]

In the above advertisement, a young (white) man and woman had joined the "Back to the Farm movement" to support food production [Fig. 2]. The gendered labour of agricultural work was perpetuated by the press, particularly through fashion choices. The footwear advertisement, aimed at those tending to the farm or a city garden, uses all the conventional tropes of gender.

[32] "Feminine Labor is Greatly in Demand," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jul. 19, 1918): 14. Between March 1917 and July 1918 female labour had tripled in Ontario.

The man in the sketch is taller and using equipment, whereas the woman in the sketch is bent down, physically touching food and tending to the farm with her hands; the woman is drawn with a soft smile and soft features, with a short modern haircut and a looser fitted uniform. In a fashion segment in *Everywoman's World,* a similar style, in the sketch below, is reflected in the fashionable "Milady of the Rake and Spade" with her flowy jacket, short hair, and soft facial features.[33] Despite the juxtaposition of agricultural labour and modern women, the press tended to reader concerns about modern femininity. These "feminine sirens of the soil" could help "fight the battle in the kitchen, the pantry," and from "the modern garden of valor."[34]



[Figure 3: Fashion decreed for "Milady of the Rake and Spade," *Everywoman's World,* (May 1918): 37]

The Toronto Daily Star captured three women from Toronto who had committed to the "back to the farm movement" as they left the city for Drayton, ON [Fig. 4]. The photograph challenges

[33] Helen Cornelius, "For Milady of the Spade and Hoe," *Everywoman's World*, (May 1918): 37.
[34] Ibid.

the delicacy of the women in the two sketches. The picture has the three women standing straight and looking directly at the camera; they are carrying their luggage, dressed in a fitted soldier-like uniform, and about to board a train – the icon image of modernity.[35] However, when the Farmerettes were celebrated in a victory parade in Montreal, on display to a crowd of mostly men, reproduced a similar image to the *Grocer* front cover, of women romanticized and sentimentalized with traditional transportation, to valorize their commitment to traditional agricultural work, as they were pulled by horse and wagon [Fig. 5]. How best to recruit and represent women in the food production effort further reveals how images and messaging of modernity were often contradictory about gender. Farmerettes and "sirens of the soil" were presented with modern sensibilities (hair, dress, and performance by touching food with their hands instead of tools), and as is the case with the flax pickers, used modern transportation to facilitate this work. Yet, in the sketches and in the victory parade, where many of the men had returned, Farmerettes were positioned alongside an imagined past and of traditional labour as they were carted through the street of the largest Canadian city.

[35] The Farmerettes are dressed in khaki which was a stark difference to the gendered professional uniforms of war time nurses.



FLAX PICKERS OFF TO DRAYTON.

These Toronto girls are now at Drayton, Ont., 81 miles from here, pick g flax for the Ontario Government. They are shown leaving Toront esterday.

[Figure 4: Toronto women who had left to aid in the production of flax in the rural township of Drayton, ON. *Toronto Daily Star,* (Jul. 1918): 44]

While much of this work for the "Patriotism and Production" campaign was performed by Farmers and Farmerettes, canners, and seasonal pickers, producing foodstuffs at the rate needed to feed home and allies was a mammoth task. The production of food exports was a pillar of wartime support. The *CHJ* pleaded that "the women of Canada must do more. They must produce! Forty million men are on active service at the front. Ten million men are on war duty behind the lines. Forty million men are engaged in the war industries at home. These […] men are not producing food. These […] men are consuming food and must be fed."[36] With similar

[36] Ishbel M. Ross, "Sparks from the food board anvil," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Jul. 1918): 27. The Government of Canada passed an anti-loafer law in 1918. It provided that "all persons domiciled in Canada shall, in the absence of reasonable grounds to the contrary, engage in useful occupations." Ross had also commented on how regretful it was

urgency, *Everywoman's World* reported how a "lack of food [threatened] the battle line."[37] Luckily, food production for the sake of Canada's allies and Canadians at home could be tackled in a small backyard plot. While not every young, able-bodied woman could attend to farmland, if she possessed the space to do so, she was tasked to cultivate her war garden. Ian Mosby's research on war gardens during the Second World War reveals similar motivations in 1918 behind cultivating a homegrown, patriotic patch. Mosby writes how access to war gardens was a proclivity among middle-class homeowners and less so among lower-income families with no private garden, who would utilize public, vacant lots or community patches.[38] Even the *Grocer* urged retailers to do their part and plant their own victory garden. The call-out to readers suggested: "the grocer should be one of the apostles of production. For patriotic reasons that contention is indisputable, for business reasons it is equally so […] This is your great chance to help the cause of Democracy, to help your country, to help your neighbor, and to help

to be "served behind a counter by a husky, able-bodied youth or served by young waiters hanging around. See, "What the Food Scarcity Means and the Reasons for New Food Regulations," *Everywoman's World*, (June, 1918): 31.

[37] "Lack of food – threatens the battle line," *Everywoman's World*, (Apr. 1918): 24.

[38] Mosby, *Food Will Win the War,* 104-106.

yourself."[39] While it is unclear how many grocers, particularly those in Toronto, participated in this trend, they involved themselves with war gardens in a more profitable manner.



[Figure 5: A horse-drawn cart carries a number of "farmerettes" through Montreal's Sherbook Street during the 1918 Victory Loan and Bonds Parade. George Metcalf Archival Collection, CWM 20030331-019.]

A "War Garden Bulletin" was posted daily in *The Toronto World* as a practical guide for vacant lot and backyard gardeners. The bulletin was not an out-of-touch call for productivity, as there were 1,850 plots of vacant lots used for cultivation in Toronto and the suburbs.[40] The advice ranged from substitute foods as prices rose on certain lines, overcrowding vegetables, preventing pests, and maximizing food uses. With their homegrown harvest, any and every "patriotic woman should can or dry enough food for her family needs for the winter" to reduce the strain on transportation lines when war gardens would be inoperable.[41] The gardening campaign was so effective that there was concern there was *too* much production of fruits and

[39] "Let the hoe help the sword," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 17, 1918): 89.
[40] "City's War Gardens Helping Production," *The Globe*, (Jun. 25, 1918): 8. The *Globe's* claim is in contrast to Mosby who asserts that there was little space in Toronto and Montreal for these war gardens by WWII.
[41] "Imperative need of food conservation," *Toronto Daily Star*, (Jul. 19, 1918): 44.

vegetables. In August 1918 The Canada Food Board urged those whose gardens have produced more than what the household could reasonably consume or can to dispose of their surplus by sale or free distribution to their less fortunate in the community.[42] The appeal of cultivating a war garden was laced with the glamour of patriotism and was rich with promise.[43] Much like the rallying call heard by women during the Second World War in Mosby's research, the momentum behind "food will win the war" was at its peak in 1918.

For grocers, the "Patriotism and Production" campaign, which had inspired the rise of victory gardens, became a business opportunity. A pamphlet, "A Vegetable Garden for Every Home," was issued by the Ontario Department of Agriculture. It was an instruction manual for the amateur city gardener, and the government pamphlet included a list of seeds and supplies sold by grocers.[44] In return, it was advisable to connect store displays with the Government campaign to some extent at least. Rennie's Grocery, located in Toronto, ran weekly specials to promote a collection of war garden vegetables [Fig. 6] In doing so, the store – and others who adopted a similar selling strategy – bore a commitment to the war effort and support for individual production efforts. The grocer hoped to meet the demands of female customers eager to tend to their garden. It was ironic though, how the grocery press and women's magazines instructed readers not to purchase commercial goods that could be grown in the garden but to purchase the commercially produced seeds they carried in store. The *Grocer* advised that seed displays should be placed at the front of the store where they would catch the eye of the passerby.[45] In addition to the seed displays, signage with such phrases as "Do Your Bit," "Help Feed the Country," and

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[42] "Canada's War Gardens Produce $60,000,000," *The Globe*, (Aug. 22, 1918): 3.
[43] Ishbel M. Ross, "Sparks from the food board anvil," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Jul. 1918): 27 See also, "What About the New Thrift and War Savings Stamps?" *CHJ*, (Jan. 1919): 44.
[44] "Garden Business," *Canadian Grocer*, (Sept. 3, 1915): 82.
[45] James Nelson, "Good Seed Business to be Got," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 16, 1915): 81.

"You Can't Use a Rifle - Use a Spade" never hurt.[46] A seed display symbolized support for Canada and its allies, but throughout the war it was an opportunity where patriotism and profit went hand-in-hand.



[Figure 6: Example of a grocery store promoting a "war garden collection of vegetables" to satisfy patriotic patrons and the store's image. *Toronto Daily Star*, 26 April 1918 pg. 10.]

Similarly, grocers attempted to capitalize on substitution, conservation, and voluntary rationing efforts resulting from increasing food regulations. In June 1917, Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden established a new era in home-front food conservation with the appointment of the first Food Controller, William J. Hanna of Toronto.[47] The role of the controller was to investigate the quantities and prices of food supplies and determine food requirements for Canada to facilitate export of the surplus to Great Britain and allied nations.[48] The Controller had the ability to enact regulations deemed for public interest, which included prices, storage,

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[46] "Push the Small Garden Scheme," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 27, 1917): 82.
[47] "Legislation and Principle Events of the Years 1916 and 1917," Statistics Canada, (n.d.): 694. William Hanna was a Food Controller from June 21, 1917, until January 24, 1918.
[48] Stacey Joanne Barker, "'Save Today What Our Allies Need Tomorrow': Food Regulation in Canada During the First World War," M.A. Thesis, Carleton University, (July 2003): 5-6. Barker explores in-depth government intervention and public action surrounding food preservation and regulation.

production, distribution, and sale of food and food products. Although, to the chagrin of much of the public, Hanna's focus was on conservation and production efforts rather than exorbitant food prices.[49] The Office of the Food Controller was shortly replaced by the Canada Food Board, under the jurisdiction of the Department of Agriculture. Although Canada was not subject to a mandatory food rationing system, unlike some of their allies, there was a growing list of food restrictions and controls. The *Grocer* had hoped such restrictions were just a rumour.[50] March 8, 1918, the *Grocer* announced to its readers that all retail grocers would be under license by May 1st, and, by order of the Food Control Board, it would not be legal for a grocer to do business without a government-issued license.[51] The Food Control Board ordered that: "the licensee shall not buy, contract for, sell, store or otherwise handle or deal in any food or food products for the purpose of unreasonably increasing the price, or of restricting the supply, or […] attempting to monopolize […] any food or food products" and "the licensee shall not destroy any food or food products which are fit for human consumption, and shall not knowingly commit waste…"[52] In total there were eighteen regulations for the retail grocer posed by the new licensing system. In this way, the Board pulled the grocery industry, as a corporate citizen, into civic obligations under war conditions.

The *Grocer's* commentary of the Canada Food Board was ambivalent at best. Some of the methods of the Board were questioned, even if there were positive results, particularly in comparison to food regulations in the United States.[53] For example, as the Board strongly favoured meatless days or meatless weeks (the U.S. had discredited this idea), the *Grocer*

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[49] Targa, 178.
[50] "Radical Changes in Restaurant Regulations," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 5, 1918): 26.
[51] "Grocery Trade License Required May 1," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 8, 1918): 21. The license fee was $2 on every $20,000 of business, and an additional $2 on every additional $20,000 of business.
[52] Ibid, 22.
[53] "The Year in Retrospect," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 21, 1917): 16.

reported this difference in approach was "rather strange," on part of the Board, and it simply added one more restriction to "the most drastic of the regulations that […] will come into force."[54] The journal sometimes acknowledged the benefits of the system. In the case of milk, the Board had fixed the price to prevent profiteering between producer and consumer and see that production was not discouraged for "high milk would have been bad, but scarce milk, or no milk at all in many cases, would have been a national menace. The Board had the children particularly in mind."[55] By centring children in a discussion of poor consumption practices on the part of the industry, the Board responded to the agitation of consumer citizens, who, valorized for their role as mothers by the press, pushed the government to regulate business in the interest of consumers.[56] Government intervention, on a federal and local level, further reified food as a moral, emotional, and rational necessity, and this spilled over into female consumer demands and how the grocery press attempted to grapple with this. The majority of the *Grocer's* approach to the Board throughout 1918 implied the caveat "providing that these regulations are necessary, no one will complain."[57] The word necessary was nearly always written with an invisible asterisk. However, the journal urged its readers to abide by the regulations closely, despite the burdensome associated costs and potential ire of customers.[58] In reality, there was little choice but to abide to these war-time controls and by the end of 1918 the expanded role and responsibility of the state included the licensing system to monitor and regulate consumption and distribution.[59]

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[54] "Radical Changes in Restaurant Regulations," 25.
[55] "Canada Food Board, R.I.P," *Canadian Grocer*, (Feb. 7, 1919): 45.
[56] Guard, "A Mighty Power against the Cost of Living" 30, 38.
[57] Ibid.
[58] "Tariff Changes in Tea, Coffee and Tobacco," *Canadian Grocer*, (May 3, 1918): 19.
[59] Targa, 190.

In addition to the sale of victory bonds and war garden seeds, grocers needed to use their expertise to coax their customers to purchase substitute products for previous essentials, such as wheat, milk, and butter. In doing so, this supported the regulations set by the Board and signalled their practical patriotism. This included promoting fish as a meat substitute and corn syrup for sugar. While grocers refused sugar to customers, they also observed how customers would claim they needed sugar as preserving and canning, which had been instructed to women to do to reduce waste, generally required it. The smooth-talking grocer who could divert their customer to corn syrup instead of sugar was commended by the *Grocer* as an "extra patriotic contribution" that "no progressive grocer could afford to neglect."[60] To promote syrup, as part of a growing retailing strategy, it was placed in smaller bottles rather than large tins, as it was both inexpensive to do and more attractive to display for the buyer. Some grocers opted to use the power of their window display to make their patriotic contribution.[61] This included a showcase of substitution foods such as barley for wheat flour, seafood for meats, and margarine for butter. In addition, due to the limitations of imported goods, substituted food included Made-in-Canada goods. Although it was not an official campaign during this time, most grocers carried and spotlighted Canadian manufactured goods. This was viewed as "practical patriotism" wherein they supported Canadian industry to sustain a more prosperous Dominion.[62] For those that did not advertise such lines, they could face the wrath of public opinion. One impassioned citizen wrote to the editor of the *Grocer* to share his concern with what he saw in stores throughout Toronto: "With all this talk about patriotism, and all this need for it, is it not a pity that we don't achieve more practical patriotism by simply stopping and thinking over little things? […]

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[60] "Tons of Syrup as Sugar Substitute," *Canadian Grocer,* (Oct. 25, 1918): 93-94.
[61] "Window displays teach conservation," *Canadian Grocer,* (Sept. 21, 1917): 43.
[62] "Malcolm's Made-in-Canada Milk Products," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 28, 1916): 19.

Turkish cigarettes "Made in Turkey" or several grocers in this city still selling gum and chewing candy with "Made in Germany" printed as large as life on each packet…Patriotism, if it means anything, means support of one's country. Yours for Patriotism in Detail!"[63] He signed his letter, Simple Soul. While the purchase of Canadian-made products was the most direct contribution, carrying Empire-produced goods was a suitable substitution as, ultimately, it was profit earned for Canada during the war.

The increasing food regulations from the Food Controller and, later, the Board were reported in women's magazines simultaneously through articles and advertisements [Fig. 7].



[Figure 7: "Food Controller Urges Restrictions," Kellogg's Corn Flake advertisement, *Everywoman's World*, (Sept. 1917): 24.]

[63] "Letters to the Editor," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 5, 1915): 31.

With urgency, as the war entered its fourth year, *The Toronto Daily Star* reported that "War has made it imperative that every ounce of foodstuffs produced in this country be used. Never before has so large a part of the world been so near starvation."[64] Canadians were expected to eat less white bread, less sugar, less pastry, and less fat, and substitute meat for fish. The onus was on the Canadian public to respond to the Board, but as the purchasing agents for the household and the ones responsible for food preparation and planning, women became an inescapable target for state imposition and advertising campaigns. Kellogg's, for example, the image above highlighted the need for women to economize their grocery list, and their responsibility for preparation of food, their family would welcome the substituted product. Women could be patriots without absolving themselves from gendered expectations inside the home and while shopping. Through their buying activities, as Belisle has claimed, it was an avenue for women to demonstrate their economic importance and legitimize their claims to citizenship.[65] In July 1918, the *Canadian Home Journal* had published that food waste was illegal.[66] Provincial and legal authorities had the power to make wasted food a punishable and fineable offence.

Substitution and conservation efforts were likely inconsistent, and it depended on a variety of factors. In an *Everywoman's World* article, in an effort to inform readers of the reality of substituting fish for other meats, the writer, Katherine Caldwell, urged readers to fight back. As the government launched its slogan – "Eat more fish," "But we can't get it!' wailed the women" in response, and when they bought fish – not the particular fish they had planned, but "*what they could get*."[67] The article continued that women knew, through generational knowledge or advice provided by experts in magazines, good quality fish and "if your dealer hasn't got good fish, he

[64] "Imperative Need of Food Conservation," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jul. 19, 1918): 14.
[65] Belisle, "Conservative Consumerism," 119.
[66] "Food Waste is Illegal," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Jul. 1918): 5.
[67] Katherine Caldwell, "The Truth About the Fish Situation," *Everywoman's World*, (Oct. 1917): 24.

can get it; if he won't another will."[68] Even the grocer who complained he had no way of handling fish in their shop, the author responded that this was easily managed as the government had a special fish case designed that was "easy to make, cheap, and was a whole fish shop in itself" and were available "wherever there are merchants of the live, progressive type."[69] The article included commentary from "Mrs. Toronto" and how fish was "not much cheaper than meat," for this problem, the Caldwell urged readers to go fishing. "'Let's go fishing' – and use the means at hand to catch something – your women's institutions, your political organizations, your Food Controller. […] it is up to the women to recognize their needs and make other people recognize – and fill – them!"[70] Writing to the Food Controller had become a national pastime for concerned women and Hanna considered himself a "confidant of the housewife."[71]Adopting the same position as Caldwell, the magazine editors published an open letter by Mrs. L.E. Allen who highlighted her grievances with Hanna. In this letter, Mrs. Allen criticized how food that has been prohibited for the average consumer (wheat, malt, rye) is used in liquor-making: "You ask women especially to conserve food, to sign food pledge cards […] hypocrisy and mockery for you to ask us to economize on food," she continued, "the Government has no right to press the people to eat less."[72] Mrs. Allen wanted to trust that Hanna had the people's best interests in mind, not those of big business or monopolists.[73] In the centre of Allen's letter, in bolded text, the editors addressed their readers: "Remember always, that this is STILL a democratic country. Democracy still rules and the voice of the people – YOUR VOICE – cannot remain unheeded."[74]

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[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 52.
[70] Ibid.
[71] T.B. Costain, "Canada Has Exceeded Objective," *MacLean's Magazine*, (Sept. 1918) 96-98.
[72] Ibid. Donica Belisle discusses in Chapter 1, *Purchasing Power*, how the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) helped shift consumer spending away from alcohol and toward temperance-approved goods and services that could be better spent on the needs of women and children, 18-42.
[73] Ishbel M. Ross, "Some Things Going Wrong on Food Control," *Everywoman's World*, (Oct. 1917): 25.
[74] Ibid., 19.

If the expectation for women was to shop, reduce, and substitute their way to victory, then women had every right to talk back.

Although some women continued to be vocal about the food regulations and substitutions, now imposed by the Board after Hanna's departure, when able to do so, women's magazines adopted a business-as-usual ethos. Ishbel M. Ross, from the Canada Food Board, authored an article for *Everywoman's World* to discuss the role of the housewife in food conservation. Ross contended that "the best brand of patriot is the practical patriot. Instead of criticizing the Government, the Food Board, the grocer, and everyone else you can conveniently aim a brick at, wouldn't it be wise to […] have a heart to heart talk with yourself as a housewife? You are such an important nowadays! This is no flattery. It is a fact. […] The food shortage for as long as it lasts, is definitely determining woman's sphere."[75] Ross continued, a digest of the regulations issued for food regulations should be cut out and pasted up in the kitchen, "make it your kitchen law" and soon "your household machinery will run just as smoothly as before."[76] She urged readers, this time those of the *Canadian Home Journal,* with a similar message, to "observe the food regulations – go further if you will, but never fall short."[77] Although never mandatory in Canada, voluntary rationing was an avenue to show support to the nation and its allies overseas from the comfort of the kitchen.

Ethel Chapman, for *Maclean's,* reaffirmed the importance of women as food controllers at home as it was through the "intelligent, eternal vigilance in our kitchens to see that every possible pound of the kinds of food our armies and allies want is saved for them."[78] In defence of

[75] Ross, 31.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ishbel M. Ross, "Sparks from the Food Board Anvil," 27 and "Compulsory Rationing Not Immediate," *Everywoman's World*, (Mar. 1918): 20.
[78] Ethel M. Chapman, "Voluntary Rationing at Home," *Maclean's Magazine*, (Jan. 1, 1918): 42.

those who worried rationing or substitution would impact children directly, Chapman claimed that there were plenty of nutritious alternatives. For example, the ration of bacon – considered "the most wholesome fat we have, next to butter" – was an understandable objection for the fear of underfeeding children at home, but the recent permission of the sale of margarine in Canada meant there was an available, and affordable, supply of fat.[79] A meeting was held at the Y.W.C.A in Toronto to encourage, and guilt, members to pledge to voluntarily ration. Mrs. L.M. Gurnett suggested meat be limited to 2lbs, bread 4lbs (or flour, 3lbs), sugar 1lb, and fats to ¾ of a pound, each per person per week.[80] Other speakers reprimanded the women of Toronto for purchasing what they did not need and in doing so, it was unpatriotic and hampered the country "in her fight against the enemy." A member meekly defended her hesitancy: "How could I pledge my household to a system of voluntary rationing until I consulted with them?" but later conceded that she would discuss it and after would find her family "all ready for it," and believed that "the Toronto women will also do what they believe to be right."[81] Belisle has documented the class implications of voluntary rationing in her analysis of *Women's Century* magazine. She highlights how poorer women had already practiced food economy by necessity, and if resources were limited then the affluent women should not spend frivolously on luxuries.[82] Women's magazines wove collective interests of food conservation, production, and consumption as a communal civic responsibility, yet shifted the conservation burden onto the individual woman.

In addition to information meetings held by local Y.W.C.A's, war time recipes were often circulated in women's magazines reduce the guesswork of substitution and ease nervous would-be ration-ers. War bread was a common re-imagination of the typical loaf, with other grains such

[79] Chapman, 62. The price of butter was beyond the means of many families in Canadian cities.
[80] "Women Hear Some Facts on the Subject of Food Control," *Toronto World*, (Mar. 5, 1918): 7.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Belisle, "Conservative Consumerism," 122-124.

as bran or barley as the replacement.[83] Others like Edith Lorway, writer for the *Canadian Home Journal* presented a how-to article on food conservation. Lorway advised that because a military law of rationing was not in effect, they could not coerce the public so "[women] must lead them gently, we must make war-time eating attractive, and we must make public opinion so strong against the unnecessary consumption."[84] To do this, Lorway suggested readers, as "soldiers of the kitchen," hold an "educational food sale" of war-time baking to show naysayers how delicious substitution could be.[85] Voluntary rationing in private homes of wheat, sugar, and fats was depicted as an easy restriction but a big responsibility for the collective good. Again, there was the assumption that food conservation was a good to do rather than a lived reality for poorer families.[86] The Board counted on the cooperation of women to save food without hesitation, and women received instruction, encouragement, and warnings to do so through their favourite magazines.

As the war progressed, the *Grocer* encouraged its readers to sell victory bonds out of their shops [Fig. 8.] One such

[83] "Some War Time Recipes: Advised by the Ontario Provincial Board of Health," *Everywoman's World*, (Apr. 1915): 11.
[84] Edith H. Lorway, "Set the Pace in Your Own Home Town," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Aug. 1918): 13.
[85] Ibid., 37.
[86] Belisle, "Conservative Consumerism," 122-124.



[Figure 8: "Invest your dollars in your country," *Canadian Grocer*, (Nov. 8, 1918): 22.]

advertisement intended for retailers called out with the following: "he goes 'over' with gun and bayonet, let us go 'over' with an open pocket-book."[87] In addition, there is the commitment to Canada's allies with "Help Haig to hammer the Hun," refering to Douglas Haig, a senior officer for the British Army. Canadian merchants were urged to sell victory bonds to customers on the premise that it was a sure investment and an assurance of positive victory.[88] It suggested that the wary soldier in the advertisement would have less to fear if the war effort was well funded and supported by Canadian pocketbooks. Some grocers shared their experience of selling victory bonds to the trade journal and recounted that it had been a good business decision, in addition to a patriotic one. In some cases, a grocer would accept bonds as a form of payment for goods. For

[87] "Walter Woods & Co. Advertisement," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 8, 1918): 22.
[88] "American Pad & Textile Co. Advertisement," *Canadian Grocer*, (Nov. 8, 1918): 25.

example, the merchant in the small town "could handle all the bonds that they were offered. They would have a ready sale among farmers with money to invest, who could be easily persuaded to buy them."[89] Another Ontarioan grocer argued that bond buyers became better customers. Other advertisements featured in the *Grocer* were more blunt than others. [Fig. 9] In the below image, an advertisement from a wholesaler grocers group, there is a stark reminder that talk of patriotism was a feeble effort, but the purchase and sale of victory bonds was an action that any patriotic grocer could, and ought to, undertake. The advertisement warned "I will judge you by the material aid you give to the fighting men who are facing death" and "all men fear me!" referring to public opinion. The threat of public opinion would have caught the attention of most grocers at any point, but the context of the war meant their customers, who were gaining political stake as citizen consumers, had been encouraged to purchase rationally, carefully, for the collective good and national interests. A perceived lack of support for the war effort and inability to conform to a morality of consumption threatened their reputation as a corporate citizen.

[89] "Victory Bonds Help Credits," *Canadian Grocer*, (Nov. 8, 1918): 19. The *Grocer* did not report if this practice occurred in Toronto or larger cities, but if payment was at the indiscretion of the independent grocer it may have been accepted.

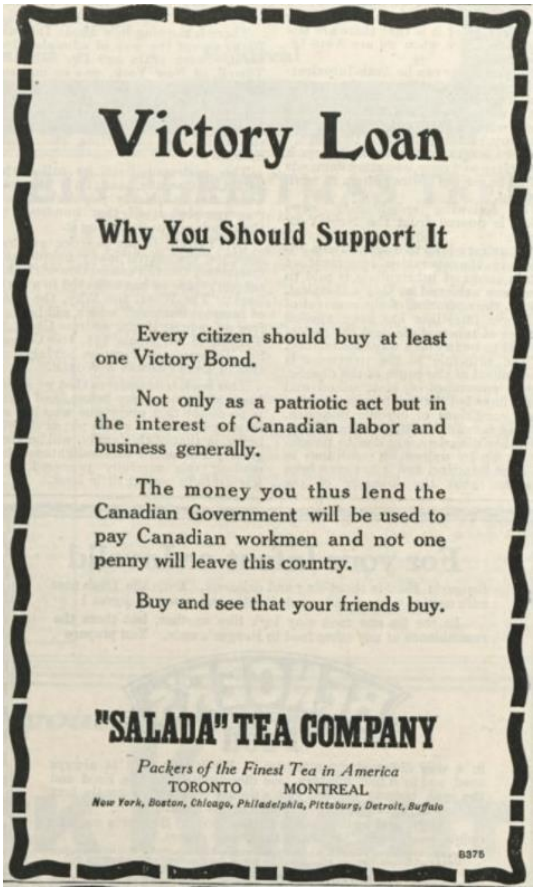


[Figure 9: "Don't talk patriotism over here, unless your money is taking victory Over There," *Canadian Grocer,* (Nov. 8, 1918): 35.]

Women's magazines such as the *Canadian Home Journal* and *Everywoman's World*, and the regular updates from *The Toronto Daily Star* helped curate gendered expectations of women's participation in the war effort. While grocers attempted to move victory bonds, women were urged to reciprocate. It was a common phrase to see "every woman who buys Bonds stands behind a soldier" printed at the bottom of war-related articles in the *CHJ*.[90] In 1918, *Everywoman's World* featured the doctrine of victory bonds, "A Victory Loan Catechism" with various questions and answers regarding the use and benefits of the system. This included the

[90] *Canadian Home Journal,* (Nov. 1918): 44, *Canadian Home Journal,* (Oct. 1918): 3; O'Hara, "The Girls' "Carry-On" Column," 47.

warning that without the Loan, the war effort would collapse, and all industries would "suffer a great breakdown" and the assurance that without the Loan, the cost of wheat, cheese, and meat would have been like a "drug on the market."[91] Popular brands that appeared frequently in the *Grocer* and on shop shelves, such as Salada Tea, took up similar space in women's magazines like the *Canadian Home Journal* to encourage a new audience to purchase bonds [Fig. 10].



[Figure 10: Salada Tea Company advertisement, *Everywoman's World*, (Dec. 1917): 33.]

In addition to the purchase of Bonds, women were encouraged to "send every cent you can" to various relief funds of ally countries.[92] Every penny saved with careful grocery planning and shopping was money toward the war effort. This act of service was framed as a "glorious"

[91] "A victory Loan Catechism" *Everywoman's World*, (Nov. 1918): 31. See also, "Your Victory Bond," *Everywoman's World*, (Dec. 1917): 33.
[92] "Germans Commandeer All Belgian Produce," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Dec. 1918): 58. "Belgium Needs Your Help More Than Ever Before," *Canadian Home Journal*, (Dec. 1918): 32.

opportunity for the individual for "Mrs. Canada will feel a glow round her real mother-heart" for her ability to scrimp now, invest in bonds, and as a result, support the "fighting needs of the infantryman."[93] "Mrs. Canada" was an amalgamation of the gendered expectations the press had for women during the war for she was married to her country and was tethered to motherhood. In addition to this, the linkages between economic contributions and a sense of citizenship further valorized women in ways the grocery industry and the state had not intended.

However, there were many barriers to being a financial patriot such as this. Until the early months of 1919, a Bond was purchased for fifty dollars and was regarded as a privilege to loan money to the Dominion of Canada "and feel that they were directly helping in this way to win the war and assist in the enormous schemes of reconstruction."[94] The removal of this loan limit meant nearly any person could participate. A thrift stamp could be purchased for twenty-five cents, and one full folder of stamps (equivalent to ten stamps or $4.00 dollars) could be exchanged for one war-savings stamp. Advertised as an avenue to support Canada's soldiers and a "new system of saving," parents were encouraged to have their children buy their first thrift stamp at the earliest opportunity as the principles of saving were best established during childhood.[95] Victory Bonds and the eventual accessibility of war-saving stamps allowed the average Canadian, of any age and sex, to contribute financially to the war and eventual reconstruction effort.

As the war drew to a close, women were regarded as essential to reconstruction efforts. Health was a primary concern for women during the reconstruction period as it was for experts on childcare. Discourse on eugenics had long infiltrated the advice literature surrounding child-

[93] Elizabeth Clare, "The Family and the Victory Loan," *Everywoman's World*, Vol. 9 No. 5 (Nov. 1918): 56.
[94] "What About the New Thrift and War Savings Stamps?" *Canadian Home Journal*, (Jan. 1919): 44.
[95] "What About the New Thrift and War Savings Stamps?" 44.

rearing, but the fear of racial degeneration and the legacy of eugenic theory gained prominence in the aftermath of the war.[96] Children were to be mentally, morally, and physically strong to ensure the "future of the race."[97] Columnists in women's magazines claimed that the war would revolutionize the existing state of affairs and have a direct bearing on the women in the home. Women were told to "be prepared to carry on where our boys have left off" for no nation was greater than the home and the home produced "the future men and women – the greatest crop of all."[98] Similarly, retailers needed to stay alert for the end of combat did not signal the immediate end of food conservation efforts. Brands that had benefited from substitution were eager to keep their place in homes and on shelves. It was a common tactic to remind the grocer that the thrifty housewife had come accustomed to their products and, often, the savings, and it would be unwise to revert to pre-war conditions so quickly.[99]

After the dissolution of the Board in March 1919, the *Grocer* noted that it would be a "hard and ungrateful thing if the Canada Food Board should go out of being unwept, unhonored, and unsung. It has been the target for more criticism than, and as much abuse as, any public institution created in Canada."[100] However, the journal also noted how "we are a very democratic people in Canada, and therefore impatient of control," which, likely, accounted for the hostility of both consumers and retailers toward the Board – despite its good intentions. As the columns in

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[96] Arnup, 36. In her examination of advice literature, Arnup has argued that eugenics represented one of the most 'compelling responses of the day' as experts were concerned about 'race suicide' due to a lack of interest in motherhood and poor child-rearing habits leading to high rates of infant mortality. Valverde, 109-110. See also, Stephen, "'Factory Girls' and the Toronto Psychiatric Clinic," 412. Carolyn Strange has similarly explored how the Ontario Minimum Wage Board was consistent with eugenic policies promoted by those who battled 'feeble-mindedness' and the minimum wage was designed to expose workers who were categorized as inferior and undeserving of even the lowest wage, pg. 201.

[97] "What shall we do now that the war has been won?" *Canadian Home Journal*, (Jan. 1919): 45.

[98] Ibid.

[99] "Now that Victory has crowned our efforts let us not relax the principle of food conservation," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 3, 1919): 11.

[100] Ibid., 33.

Everywoman's World and the *Canadian Home Journal* made clear, women remained the main controllers of the household's food supply, despite a government-sanctioned Food Controller and Food Control Board. This meant that women could be pulled into the war effort through various food campaigns; war work was the most accessible to them through the garden, kitchen, and grocery basket. During this crisis period, periodical literature exhorted grocers and housewives to "carry on" as usual as food remained a necessity.[101]

The press and the state resorted to similar strategies during the Depression to curb the consumer mentality that was encouraged in the postwar era to stimulate the economy.[102] The Federal Government, through the Department of Trade and Commerce, used advertisements on a large scale to promote the buying of "Produced-in-Canada" goods. For this campaign, Canadian manufacturer and retail merchants co-operated with the government by advertising such goods. It was a strategy where grocers could do their part from behind the counter. It was a plan for relief of unemployment wherein preference for Canadian merchandise was to be a priority. While imported goods were not prohibited, as not all goods were indigenous to Canada, and the campaign frowned upon lines that were duplicates of those made by Canadian manufacturers.[103] The Minister of Trade and Commerce pledged that this campaign would create jobs for Canadians, but it depended on buyers' cooperation. The Minister claimed it was a great opportunity, a movement, created "for the people to be of great service to their country and […]

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[101] Betty O'Hara, "Girls Carry On," *Canadian Home Journal,* (Apr. 1919): 30.
[102] Douglas McCalla notes that inflation during the war was viewed as an "understood" part of winning, but post-war inflation did not peak until 1920. After 1920 prices fell quickly but in 1926 prices were 50% higher than before the war. "The Economic Impact of the Great War," in David Mackenzie, ed. *Canada and the First World War: Essays in Honour of Robert Craig Brown*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005): 147. See also, Belisle, "Conservative Consumerism," 118.
[103] "Dominion Government Launches Produced-in-Canada Campaign," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 10, 1930): 28.

to themselves […] this could be done without cost to themselves in time or money but merely by exercising intelligent discrimination in their daily buying."[104] [Fig. 11]



DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE
OTTAWA, CANADA

October 4th, 1930.

To My Fellow Citizens,
In Every Part of the Dominion.

To Give Canadians Work, Buy Canadian Products!

To-day the opportunity is yours to render your country a service of inestimable value. And you can do it absolutely without cost to yourself in time or money. Exercise a little intelligent discrimination in your daily buying, and the thing is done!

As you know, thousands upon thousands of your fellow Canadians are out of work. Unemployment, always a serious problem when it occurs, is more serious than ever just now, not only because it has lasted so long and been so widespread, but because of the unusually large numbers who, by reason of it, are being forced to suffer real hardships.

And it is all so unnecessary, so easily preventable!

Every year for the past few years Canada has been importing $800,000,000 worth of merchandise that she might just as well have been producing from her own mines, on her own farms, or in her own factories. Some things of course, like raw cotton and raw rubber, she must import. But making due allowance for such items, the fact remains that $800,000,000 of her annual imports have been of a class or kind that she was quite capable of producing for herself.

With the aid of statistics giving the annual value of Canadian factory production and the number of persons employed therein, it requires little figuring to show that every $5,600 worth of goods turned out has meant a job for one person. Assuming that something close to that ratio would hold good as the average for all classes of products, it follows that were we to produce in Canada the $800,000,000 worth of merchandise that we have been importing unnecessarily, we would be giving direct employment to 147,527 workers more than are now employed, to say nothing of the thousands of others to whom employment would come indirectly, as a result of this new stimulus to business in general.

Now do you see how true it is that were we all to practise a little intelligent discrimination in our daily buying, our unemployment problem would quickly and permanently disappear?

Every time we buy an imported article, when we might just as easily have found a Canadian article to serve our purpose equally well, we are helping to do some fellow Canadian out of a job, and making the job of some foreign workman just that much more secure! Conversely, every time we purposely give the preference to a Canadian article, we are helping to create employment for Canadian workers, and doing our bit towards making Canada as a whole more prosperous!

Think it over! Discuss it with your friends! Study it if you will not only from the standpoints of patriotism and charity, but from the standpoint of self-interest. The farther you go into it the more convinced you will become that giving Canadian products a preference over foreign products is the common sense thing to do.

Very sincerely yours,

H. H. Stevens

Minister of Trade and Commerce.

[Figure 11: Department of Trade and Commerce urges Canadians to Buy Canadian Products, *Canadian Grocer* (Oct. 10, 1930): 8.]

[104] Ibid.

The benefits of the campaign, said the Minister, were threefold: patriotism, charity, and self-interest. Once again, the press and the state evoked the linkage between economic citizenship for female shoppers and the need for the grocery industry to conform to a morality of consumption. The plan could not be more straightforward, advertisements would make clear if they were in fact Produced-in-Canada, grocers would spotlight them, customers would purchase them, and Canada would benefit from increased profit and labour demand.

These campaign advertisements pleaded with Canadians to "spend money freely on the consumption of goods, than that they should save" to eliminate unemployment and overproduction.[105] Published in *Chatelaine*, readers were instructed to "do your part to speed the return of prosperous times" and not to hoard their dollars.[106] On the other hand, there were some mixed messages for all consumers, particularly women as they were heralded as thrifty housewives, those that knew how to stretch a budget and save what they could. For example, the Chatelaine Institute continued to publish recipes for "inexpensive dishes" as thrift remained "one of the cardinal virtues," and the mark of the good home manager was making "pennies count toward the health and morale of our families."[107] Simultaneously, an advertisement informed grocers that Bee Hive Corn Syrup, a Canadian-made product, was the "choice of Thrifty Housewives" and "when dollars are scarce, each one must be stretched to the limit […] shrewd grocers" should put special emphasis on the sale of this line.[108] However, one economist concluded that "saving and thrift do not mean stinting ourselves. They merely imply the practice of good judgment in buying."[109] Penny pinching was the mark of an intelligent household

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[105] "BUY NOW! Act on the advertising that urges you to buy "Produced-in-Canada" goods…" *Chatelaine*, (Feb. 1931): 48.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Helen G. Campbell, "Inexpensive Dishes", *Chatelaine,* (Nov. 1932): 21.
[108] "Bee Hive Corn Syrup," *Canadian Grocer,* (Feb. 27, 1931): 5.
[109] A.W. Blue, "Careful Budgeting Essential to Sound Savings Policy," *Maclean's Magazine,* (Mar. 15, 1930): 88.

manager, the purchase of Produced-in-Canada products was practical patriotism, and for grocers and housewives alike, both – as the Minister of Trade and Commerce stated – was the commonsense thing to do.

Retail Relief: The Great Depression

The *Toronto Daily Star* once reported the "war between the Cost of Living and Mrs. Housekeeper goes on forever."[110] The battleground for affordable and nutritious food during the Great Depression received new attentiveness by the popular press. This attentiveness sustained the perception that the limits of the grocery industry were being tested and challenged as new relief programs intervened between grocers and customers.

By applying Cohen's definition of the citizen consumer, it helps us understand how shoppers had become more "self-conscious about their identities and interests as consumers" and tasks that had once been "viewed as private and domestic were brought into the civic area and granted new political importance."[111] The impetus of the citizen consumer was to organize politically to advance the rights of individual consumers and a different definition of the public good. While grassroot activist groups formed (and older groups were rejuvenated) to tackle the cost-of-living crisis, this section is primarily concerned with how citizen and consumer consciousness had taken on new awareness in the pages of the popular press as women were represented as more vocal, rebellious, and empowered in their grocery shopping decisions during the Depression.

The Depression revitalized pressure from consumers for government intervention and accountability for food prices. In *Domestic Goods* Parr asks how can consumers talk back when gender "has little influence over the shape of the material world in which they must live?" The

[110] "A Little Bit of Everything," *Toronto Daily Star*, (Apr. 1916): 10.
[111] Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 41, 89.

ability to respond to public policy was further hampered as women were not granted the vote until the final few months of the First World War.[112] However, as the press reported on grassroot organization, boycotts, and the intervention of relief policies (and consumer response to such policies) the perception that women were and *could* 'talk back' grew. I build on the scholarship of Cohen and Parr with my examination of the following argument: the reorientation of consumer thinking supported by the press and the state, framed saving and grocery shopping as a moral and communal responsibility.[113] This undercut the production of the modern housewife in her modern kitchen – who was to attend to her individual needs, wants, and desires – that *Chatelaine* had marketed and the *Grocer* hoped to capitalize on. Instead, this reorientation prompted citizen consumers to ask editors of women's magazines, the *Toronto Daily Star, and* other readers how the nation was collectively serving them and their interests. The second unintended result of the periodical press gendering expectation and gendering action during these points of crisis has been a sustained conversation over the last century: the moral obligation of a grocery store.

As a corporate citizen, the foundation for the grocery store to conform to a morality of consumption was established during the First World War and later heightened in and throughout the 1930s. The context of these two crises reframed women as rational and reliable consumers as food, fulfilling their moral, civic, and domestic obligations.[114] Food, however, as a rational

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[112] Women were granted the right to vote and hold public office in Ontario by April 12, 1917. *The War-time Elections Act* of September 20, 1917, allowed British subjects the vote who were the wife, widow, mother, sister, or daughter of a relative in the military who was serving or served with Canada or Great Britain. Women who were British subjects and 21 years of age were granted the right to vote in federal elections by May 24, 1918. First Nation women were unable to vote unless they forfeited their status and treaty rights until March 31, 1960. "Women's Right to Vote in Canada," Parliament of Canada, Accessed July 1, 2024. Web. https://lop.parl.ca/sites/ParlInfo/default/en_CA/ElectionsRidings/womenVote

[113] Cohen, 91.

[114] Meg Luxton's analysis of the housewife argues that the position as household manager and financial considerations forced these women to be "rational" in a way that other household members need not be. Meg

necessity, compared to frivolous spending, became increasingly moral and emotional as it was continuously tied to nationalist and patriotic discourse by periodical literature.[115] As a result, the grocery trade was also pulled into civic duties. The moral expectation of the market to serve and respond to public interest never fully infiltrated departments or other material stores in the same manner as the grocery store. As a result, for grocers – independents and chains alike – it was "frankly a struggle for the survival of the fittest" as credit, cash, service, self-service, delivery, and even charitable commitments were demanded by the public.[116] The Depression years, as Monod has stated, "served as a kind of corporate endurance test" and exposed the "frailties of the weak."[117] From the perspective of the press, it is difficult to ascertain which stores were inefficient, but the general sentiment of failure centred the importance of modern retailing methods and meeting the demands of the customer, the latter of which grew as women were framed as legitimate, moral, and rational consumers through food.[118]

Unfortunately for most grocery chains, as expectations of a moral responsibility to the community grew, independent grocers were eager to capitalize on this rift. Hostility among independent grocers had long targeted corporate competition and the rapid expansion of chain stores in the 1930s prompted a heated debate and competition. Loblaw was one chain that committed to its modern marketing techniques such as cash-and-carry (while others reinstated credit or accepted vouchers) and profited throughout the Depression years. Loblaw was able to

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Luxton, *More than a Labour of Love: Three Generations of Women's Work in the Home,* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1980): 162, 172. Wright, "'Feminine Trifles of Vast Importance'," 231-232.

[115] Belisle, "Conservative Consumerism," documents how *Woman's Century* magazine framed shoppers who purchased imported goods during WWI as 'ignorant and immoral' and the advocacy of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) sought to eliminate unnecessary (and all) spending on alcohol. See also, Wright, "Feminine Trifles of Vast Importance," for a discussion on the association of working-class women's love of fashionable clothing with sexual immorality.

[116] J.E. Boyle, "Competition More and more on Quality and Service Basis," *Canadian Grocer,* (Mar. 1, 1929): 25.

[117] Monod, 217.

[118] "Jobber puts blame on chains for low prices in foods," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 4, 1929): 17.

sustain its corporate reputation as other chains similarly tried to close the distance with the purchasing public and reify their connection to the local community.

Despite the advent of the Great Depression, the *Grocer* in 1930 assured its readers that retailers had faced harsher conditions before. The merchants of today, the trade journal read, had learned from the mistake of overinflated inventories and had, instead, purchased their stock carefully on a "hand-to-mouth basis."[119] Later that year, the *Grocer* again reassured readers that although business had "not been all it might have been" retailers – and the buying public – should look forward, not backward during the holiday season intended "to make us forget our troubles."[120] It was, in their opinion, that in the very nature of things that better times awaited in the trade in the future. The Depression and the rise of the chain store, which occurred simultaneously, were large factors in the eventual revitalization of the credit movement in 1929 and throughout the 1930s. The conditions of World War I and the way in which the periodical press had valorized and gendered consumption of food had solidified that food was, in fact, different than other consumables such as clothes or furniture. With food framed as a rational and moral necessity, and with women donning the title 'feeders of the nation' space had been created for women to talk back. While the federal government provided financial assistance, and by 1932 relief was the main means of assisting the unemployed in Canada, many Torontonians relied on formal and informal charity within the community, and the extension of credit from their grocers when their relief allowance could only stretch so far.[121]

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[119] "Today and 1921," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jul. 18, 1930): 20.
[120] "A Merry Christmas," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 19, 1930): 18.
[121] Mary Mackinnon, "Relief Not Insurance: Canadian Unemployment Relief in the 1930s," *Explorations in Economic History*, Vol. 27.,(1990): 46-47, 51. Until 1935 the mothers' allowances were not payable to women with only one dependent child and were never paid to deserted wives who knew the whereabouts of their husband. One in five Canadians became dependent upon government relief for survival.

Although men populated the unemployment figures of the 1930s, women and girls were directly implicated in the unemployment problem. In her collection of oral histories of Depression-era Toronto, Srigley has argued that the Depression shifted family roles wherein women became the family breadwinner.[122] Women were often uniquely positioned to enter a labour market for low-paying work that their fathers nor brothers would not or could not take.[123] There was a lingering superstition that women need never be out of work – was there not always housework to be done? – with one out of every five women as a wage-earner.[124] The Depression had deepened popular sensibility which opposed married women entering the paid labour force. Although some came to the defence of married women, which often centred the necessity to work rather than the right or choice, Hobbs has noted that by 1933 new legitimacy was given to reframing these women as stealing jobs or working only for selfish luxuries.[125] Some grocers, including T.P. Loblaw, did not hire married women for a period during the Depression, as one former employee reported: "There was a lot of unemployment in the '30s. Loblaw's policy was not to employ married women…"[126] Politicians, including Prime Minister McKenzie King, often received angry letters from working-class men and women who protested the employment of married women. One disgruntled merchant wrote the following to the *Globe*, "If I were Mr. King…I would bring down legislation to force the removal from industry and business establishments of all married women whose husbands are employed and all single women whose families can provide for them. This would release tens of thousands of jobs for unemployed

[122] Srigley, *Breadwinning Daughters*, pg. 82, 85.
[123] Srigley, 85.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Hobbs, "Equality and Difference 202, 207, 214.
[126] J.W. Page, *George Weston Limited: 125 Years*, 32.

men."[127] However, because women worked in different occupations than men, women were not simply 'taking' the jobs of men.[128]

Political economist Leonard Marsh, member of the left-wing League for Social Reconstruction and eventual advisor for the federal Committee on Post-War Reconstruction, emphasized the economic welfare of the family yet failed to acknowledge women's indirect contribution to the economy through their purchasing power and unpaid work.[129] As Stephen has argued, the acknowledgement of women's work in the home did not equate to policy for the remuneration of household labour – household and market labour remained separate in the gendering and construction of state welfare policy.[130] In popular press, Helen MacGill, judge of Juvenile Court and a member of the B.C. Minimum Wage Board, told readers of *Chatelaine* that earning money was often imagined and accepted as a male experience, but there was considerable burden on the women in the family to assume financial responsibility. MacGill penned how a social survey revealed that "more daughters than sons are found giving all or a large proportion of their earnings to, and accepting responsibility, for the family. The girls of the family more frequently pay board to their parents than do the boys. The survey indicated that in many cases women wage-earners contribute all and in most cases some of their wages to family support."[131] The survey supports Srigley's examination of "dutiful daughters" which she describes as a frequently used term during the Depression to describe young women who had forgone their individual desires for marriage or education to support their families economically and socially.[132] According to MacGill, because of the necessary contributions to the family the

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[127] Mr. John Citizen, "Citizens' Schemes to End Depression Cover Wide Range, *The Globe*, (Oct. 30, 1935): 11.
[128] Stephen, *Pick One Intelligent Girl*, 24.
[129] Ibid., 106.
[130] Ibid., 106-108.
[131], Srigley, *Breadwinning Daughters*, 82, 86. Helen Gregory MacGill, "The Jobless Woman" *Chatelaine*, (Sept. 1930): 5.
[132] Srigley, "'In Case You Hadn't Noticed!'" 82.

out-of-work self-supporting woman was a tragedy. Beyond the financial support paid to the family, some women had no choice but to enter the industry. For married women and unmarried daughters, unemployment, low wages, illness, imprisonment, incompetency, divorce, or desertion of husbands and fathers were common prerequisites for their own employment.[133]

There were several legislative interventions from 1930, under Prime Minister Bennett, to assist Canadians as unemployment soared. Despite concerns of food security and potential social unrest, the federal government had resisted the national responsibility for the unemployed.[134] Erik Strikwerda has argued that this resistance at the federal level burdened municipalities who were often left responsible for, and constrained by, federal and provincial agencies, local businesses, community interests, and the unemployed.[135] Across Canada, cities had been funding relief costs through public borrowing.[136] However, as the conditions of the Depression worsened and relief was "impervious to local solutions," this culminated in a greater federal control over welfare policy.[137]

The first to infer benefits for groceries appeared in *The Act respecting Unemployment Relief Act* which assented April 6, 1932. In this agreement, direct relief would be provided for necessary food, clothing, fuel, and shelter.[138] However, retail grocers in Toronto believed that the relief business was handled poorly by the civic welfare officials. The current system, in 1932,

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[133] MacGill, "The Jobless Woman," 5.
[134] Jim Struthers, *No Fault of Their Own: Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State, 1914-41*, (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1983): 208.
[135] Eric Strikwerda, *The Wages of Relief: Cities and the Unemployed in Prairie Canada, 1929-1939*, (Edmonton: Athabasca University, 2013): 2. Strikwerda's analysis places the city at the centre of his analysis as he argues cities (he analyzes Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Saskatoon) were often the front lines for delivering relief. Toronto was a similar case.
[136] Struthers, 83. There were differences within Toronto. Struthers has found that taxpayers in East York, where 27-30% of the population was on relief in 1933 paid, per capita relief costs of $18-$20 per year, compared to wealthier neighborhoods in Forest Hill or Swansea, where 5-8% were on relief and paid $4-$6 per year.
[137] Strikwerda, 3.
[138] *An Act respecting Unemployment Relief*, SA, (1932), c 10, 4, https://canlii.ca/t/54078.

had every relief family receive their food from the House of Industry.[139] There were murmurings among grocers that they had a better understanding of what people on relief needed. Similar to Toronto, in Heron's study he found that the city of Hamilton supported its' inhabitants. A Spokesman for the local Retail Grocer's Association praised the local grocers of Hamilton as they had "over a hundred thousand dollars owing to them by the citizens in general" and that "grocers had done far more to relieve the situation than the city ever had. Small grocers were the real relief department of the city."[140] Another commended grocery stores for their role as "lifesavers" during the Depression.[141] Where government intervention for relief fell short in the eyes of retailers and housewives alike, some members of the community found a sense of security, particularly through credit, offered by their local grocer. For example, the Piggly Wiggly in Winnipeg posted a notice in the local paper: "Free Milk Offer to Needy Mothers," which was published for the purpose of "bringing emergency relief to needy mothers who may have little ones for women they cannot afford to buy the proper nourishment for a limited time […] we will accept an order from your doctor or the social service worker in your district for one quart of fresh milk every day for a month."[142] In addition, grocers continued to complain to the trade journal that the current system resulted in an enormous waste of food which in turn, cost the taxpayer a great deal of money.[143] This was because people on relief were permitted to secure only certain kinds of foods, such as rolled oats, rice, syrup, jam, and other similar lines. But "human nature is human nature […] people want a change from time to time; but they are unable to get anything beyond what is handed to them at the House of Industry."[144] The *Grocer* reported

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[139] There were two public relief agencies in Toronto, the House of Industry and the Division of Social Welfare.
[140] Heron, *Lunch-Bucket Lives*, 165.
[141] "Chain Competition Makes Grocers More Efficient," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 2, 1931): 32.
[142] "Advertise Free Milk to Needy Mothers," *Canadian Grocer*, (Feb. 13, 1913): 42.
[143] "Families on Relief Wasting Food So Retailers Claim," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jul. 1932): 12.
[144] Ibid.

that in many instances because there was more than one line of food that could be consumed in the regulation period of time it was thrown into the garbage. This concern was shared by other officials in Toronto.

Relief groceries was a gendered and political issue inasmuch as a retail one. Food allowances followed a scale dependent on the number in the family; a family of five with one parent and four young children would receive the same allowance as a family of two parents and three adult dependent children. As food shopping and preparation was framed as a domestic duty, women were tasked to spend this allowance accordingly. *The Relief Act* continued to build on the discourse of previous policies intended to support family stability. Mothers Allowance, which had been enacted in Ontario since 1920, had been intended to ensure families, particularly those among the lower classes, "could be brought into line and sustained by efficient professionals."[145] As Strong-Boag has argued, the mother was the "best employee the state could hope for."[146] This is further interpolated by Margaret Little who had stated that because women's identity had been increasingly linked to their role as a mother at the turn of the century, it enabled middle-class social activists to help enact policy to support this new familial ideology.[147]

In the early 1930s, vouchers that were redeemable at specified stores for a limited range of items were issued, but by the 1936 most cases received a cash allowance for food.[148] The grocery store became an integral site for relief for both the federal government and the family. In August 1932, the Ontario government, under Premier George S. Henry, appointed a special commission

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[145] Veronica Strong-Boag, "'Wages for Housework': Mothers' Allowances and the Beginnings of Social Security in Canada," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. 14 No. 1, (Spring 1979): 25.
[146] Ibid., 24.
[147] Margaret Hillyard Little, "Claiming a Unique Place: The Introduction of Mothers' Pension in B.C.," *BC Studies*, Nos. 105-106, (Spring/Summer 1995): 84, 87. Little notes that in addition to the growing importance of the mother in the context of postwar and post-influenza, there were fears that racialized immigrants had higher fertility rates and would overwhelm the Anglo-Celtic population. As a result, the Mothers' Pension excluded immigrants who were non-British subjects, pg. 88, 99.
[148] Mackinnon, "Relief Not Insurance," 54. "Handling the Relief Business," *Canadian Grocer,* (Sept. 9, 1932): 46.

– returning to similar conditions described earlier as seen during WWI – to investigate the problem of accessibility of relief, monotony of what was available, and food wastage among recipients.[149]

During the Toronto mayoral and controller race in 1933 one candidate expressed his desire to return purchasing power back to families in the hope of maintaining the "spirit of independence" among Torontonians on relief. Sam McBride, on his campaign platform for controller, supported the open meat voucher, which was not a plan to spend more money on meat but to permit the "individual-family to make its own selections within the cost which the voucher provides."[150] This was an integral step, McBride urged, to allow women the right to select their groceries and to shop around for bargains that suited the family taste, all within the limits of the voucher. There was another caveat behind McBride's campaign. First, it responded to the problem of reducing food waste. Second, public opinion was not kind to those on relief. Relief was often linked to moral failing and a feeling of degradation involved in any request for municipal assistance.[151] It is likely McBride hoped to assuage the second, while also reducing the monetary burden of relief on the city. In another interview, McBride echoed the *Grocer's* observation with the problem of dietary micro-rotation: "It is shredded wheat, rolled oats before you every morning. That is why the people are rebelling against it, that is why our scavenger carts are loaded with these discarded foods."[152] He continued, the people are not objecting to what they're getting; they're objecting to being forced to take something which they don't

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[149] "Dispensing Relief Through Food Depots Serious for Grocers," *Canadian Grocer,* (Aug. 18, 1932): 9. Report on the special commission concluded there would be no interference from the Government and that the situation was now being taken care of efficiently and satisfactory.
[150] "Elect Simpson, McBride Pearce, Ramsden, with Mr. Stewart as Mayor," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Dec. 29, 1933): 14. McBride was elected controller for Toronto.
[151] Strikwerda, 41.
[152] "Spread on Relief Groceries 15 per cent., council told," *The Toronto Daily Star,* (Jun. 27, 1933): 5.

want."[153] McBride supported an open-voucher system and cited several benefits, mainly for the women grocery planners, budgeters, and shoppers of the family.

Another who was opposed to the current system was Ishbel R. Currier for *Chatelaine*. She did not support an open-voucher system like McBride had campaigned on but instead made a compelling case for redesigning of the voucher allowance for cash allowance. In a feature article in the 1934 March issue of *Chatelaine*, Currier argued that the voucher system caused as much of a "depression of minds" as the financial collapse did.[154] There were a few factors for Currier's argument. First, public opinion regarded relief as charity extended by the municipality from a sense of pity. Second, the provisions for the relief family and their grocery, fuel, rent, and clothing order left not one cent for their free spending. Finding odd jobs to earn money was tricky, for if a person concealed any earnings they would be penalized and removed from the relief program, and there were rarely odd jobs to begin with. Third, thrift was encouraged in a negative way under relief provisions as there was no advantage for the relief family in trying to stretch what they received over longer than the regulation period. In some cases, relief families sold extra relief provisions that they had saved or did not use; for example, milk could be sold to others in the neighbourhood or back to the grocer for half its original retail price.[155] Combined, these factors led to a "temptation to outwit the relief agency, and a certain feeling of injustice because of the impossibility of obtaining any benefit from the exercise of self-denial, both drive the recipient toward subterfuge and dishonesty."[156] Cash relief, Currier demonstrated, had mental, moral, and economic benefits.

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[153] "T.T.C. Detriment M'Bride Declares," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Dec. 28, 1933): 3.
[154] Ishbel Robertson Currier, "Direct Relief," *Chatelaine*, (Mar. 1934): 73.
[155] "Families on Relief Wasting Foods So Retailers Claim," 12.
[156] Currier, "Direct Relief," 14.

Out of the total relief expenditure paid under the *Relief Act* of 1932 until March 1933, only 7.54% of participants received cash. The remaining 92.46% of all direct relief for the Dominion, approximately $23.7 million was given in the form of orders for food, fuel, shelter, and clothing.[157] Relief paid out as cash would not lower the total expenditure but could lower the administrative costs estimated between 3% and 5%. Arguably, an allowance paid in cash helped protect the pride and reputation of the recipient from public opinion. Even a grocer would not know that a family was on relief for all cash looked the same.[158] Currier's strongest argument in favor of cash relief was for a more maternal reason: the protection of children. She expressed that the "thousands of the families on relief are good citizens and need only the normal opportunities and responsibilities of good citizens to continue as such. Three or four years ago these men were wage-earners. They were anxious to give to their children something better than they had themselves – better health, wiser choice of food […] a higher living standard."[159] However, these barriers were more systemic than Currier described as the linkage between immorality and poverty of mothers was especially deep rooted in the administration of child welfare.[160] The undercurrents of the previous chapters intersect here with the discussion of relief policy – nutrition, intelligent parenting, budget, morality, gender, and purchasing freedom – which are repeatedly re-purposed and transmitted for a consumer audience.

In defence of the relief system, a revealing article by Arthur Lendrum was published in *Maclean's* in 1933. In this article Lendrum reflected on his experience of being on relief. He confessed that an inspector from the House of Industry asked to see his bank passbook and other

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[157] Ibid., 15. $25,659,908.20 in nine provinces was paid under the Relief Act of 1932 up to March 31, 1933. 1,935,174.16 in cash remainder in orders.
[158] Ibid., 14.
[159] "Ibid., 72.
[160] Arnup, 145, 148. Advice literature during the Depression set standards which many mothers, especially those on relief, were unable to meet.

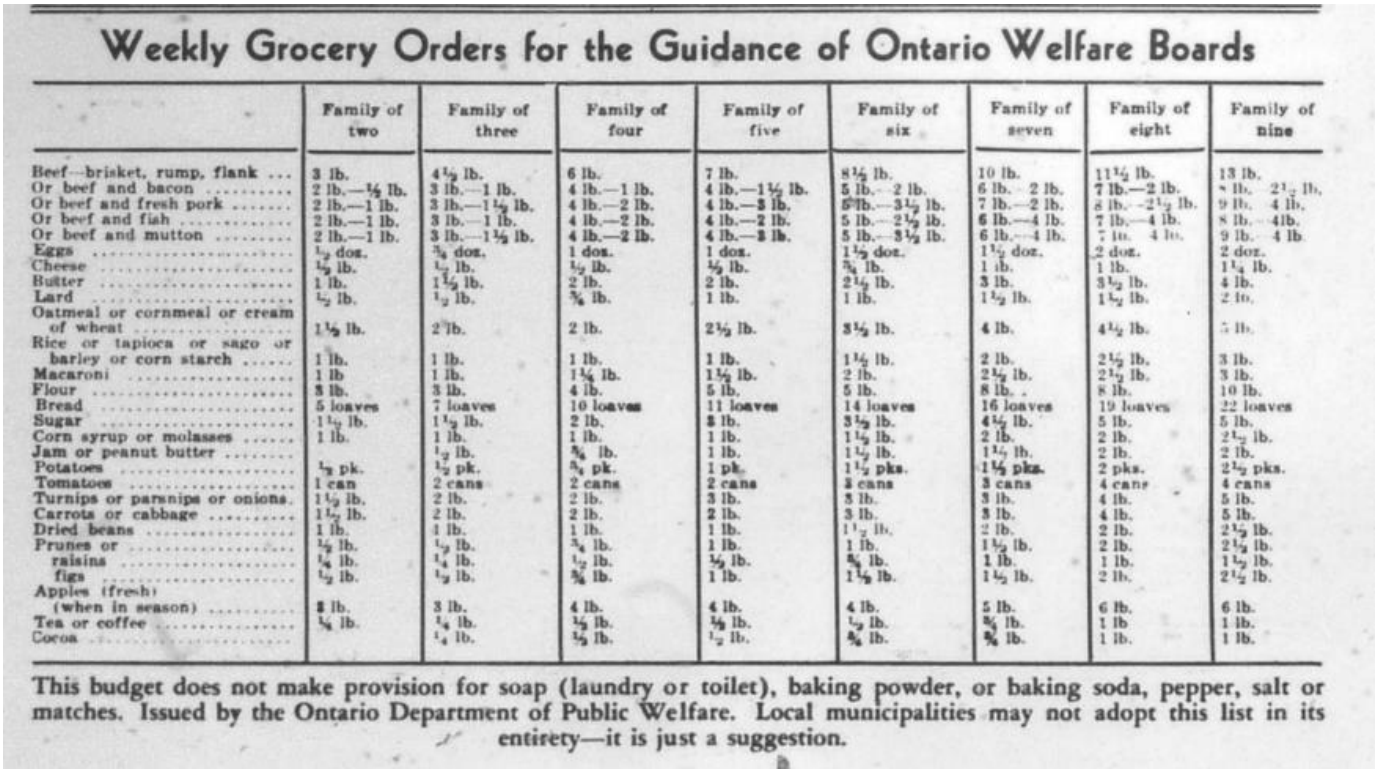
personal details, and when he left, the inspector knew "more about our private affairs than our relatives do."[161] When Lendrum entered the House of Industry he expressed how mortified he felt, like a dog with its tail between its legs, but the other men and women there took no real mind of him, and much of his discomfort was self-inflicted. After another well-dressed man asked Lendrum if this was his first time here, the man sensed his embarrassment. "Oh, you needed worry about that. We're all alike." The realization swept over Lendrum. "'All alike.' I mused as I looked over the full benches. How true! There we were, sitting with our backs bowed above the backless benches – business executives, laboring men, mechanics, artisans, housewives, salesmen, accountants, clerks and tramps. All social and industrial rank banished. Everybody down to the primary level of want."[162] Lendrum, like others on relief, were handed tickets that were squares of white paper which were the vouchers for milk, butter, and bread. Much to Mrs. Lendrum's surprise, the milkman nor the baker worsened the situation. The milkman reassured Mrs. Lendrum when she handed him a voucher that "none of my customers will ever know who is and who is not getting relief" and showed her a thick stack of vouchers received from those in the district.[163] While many were despondent for accepting relief, particularly as unemployment and hardship were indiscriminate for skill, pay, or years worked, Lendrum assured others in his situation that not only was the voucher system orderly and mundane, he was simply "just another man on relief."[164]

Retailers in Toronto proposed that the city relief business be handled through the grocers themselves. This proposal included a card to be printed containing a definite, but lengthy, list of

[161] Arthur Lendrum, "On Relief," *Maclean's Magazine*, (Apr. 1, 1933): 9.
[162] Ibid.
[163] Ibid., 41.
[164] Ibid., 9.

foods that each recipient of relief would be permitted to get at their local store.[165] Patronizing their local store also meant additional savings on car fare to get to the House of Industry.

The delegation on retailers met Premier Henry and argued that the distribution of food relief through the individual grocers on the voucher system could be accomplished more efficiently and more economically than any other plan. "It was shown that thousands of grocers had carried families on their books until their own credit facilities were exhausted. […] The system imposed unmerited humiliation on sensitive people and it was further maintained that it was difficult for municipal depots to handle food sanitarily and to the standards maintained by grocers."[166] The Premier's reply was partly favourable but noncommittal. [Fig. 12]



Weekly Grocery Orders for the Guidance of Ontario Welfare Boards

	Family of two	Family of three	Family of four	Family of five	Family of six	Family of seven	Family of eight	Family of nine
Beef—brisket, rump, flank	3 lb.	4½ lb.	6 lb.	7 lb.	8½ lb.	10 lb.	11½ lb.	13 lb.
Or beef and bacon	2 lb.—½ lb.	3 lb.—1 lb.	4 lb.—1 lb.	4 lb.—1½ lb.	5 lb.—2 lb.	6 lb.—2 lb.	7 lb.—2 lb.	8 lb.—2½ lb.
Or beef and fresh pork	2 lb.—1 lb.	3 lb.—1½ lb.	4 lb.—2 lb.	4 lb.—3 lb.	5 lb.—3½ lb.	7 lb.—2 lb.	8 lb.—2½ lb.	9 lb.—4 lb.
Or beef and fish	2 lb.—1 lb.	3 lb.—1 lb.	4 lb.—2 lb.	4 lb.—2 lb.	5 lb.—2½ lb.	6 lb.—4 lb.	7 lb.—4 lb.	8 lb.—4lb.
Or beef and mutton	2 lb.—1 lb.	3 lb.—1½ lb.	4 lb.—2 lb.	4 lb.—3 lb.	5 lb.—3½ lb.	6 lb.—4 lb.	7 lb.—4 lb.	9 lb.—4 lb.
Eggs	½ doz.	¾ doz.	1 doz.	1 doz.	1½ doz.	1½ doz.	2 doz.	2 doz.
Cheese	½ lb.	½ lb.	½ lb.	½ lb.	¾ lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.	1¼ lb.
Butter	1 lb.	1½ lb.	2 lb.	2 lb.	2½ lb.	3 lb.	3½ lb.	4 lb.
Lard	½ lb.	½ lb.	¾ lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.	1½ lb.	1½ lb.	2 lb.
Oatmeal or cornmeal or cream of wheat	1½ lb.	2 lb.	2 lb.	2½ lb.	3½ lb.	4 lb.	4½ lb.	5 lb.
Rice or tapioca or sago or barley or corn starch	1 lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.	1½ lb.	2 lb.	2½ lb.	3 lb.
Macaroni	1 lb	1 lb.	1¼ lb.	1½ lb.	2 lb.	2½ lb.	2½ lb.	3 lb.
Flour	3 lb.	3 lb.	4 lb.	5 lb.	5 lb.	8 lb.	8 lb.	10 lb.
Bread	5 loaves	7 loaves	10 loaves	11 loaves	14 loaves	16 loaves	19 loaves	22 loaves
Sugar	1½ lb.	1½ lb.	2 lb.	3 lb.	3½ lb.	4½ lb.	5 lb.	5 lb.
Corn syrup or molasses	1 lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.	1½ lb.	2 lb.	2 lb.	2½ lb.
Jam or peanut butter		½ lb.	¾ lb.	1 lb.	1½ lb.	1½ lb.	2 lb.	2 lb.
Potatoes	½ pk.	½ pk.	¾ pk.	1 pk.	1½ pks.	1½ pks.	2 pks.	2½ pks.
Tomatoes	1 can	2 cans	2 cans	2 cans	3 cans	3 cans	4 cans	4 cans
Turnips or parsnips or onions	1½ lb.	2 lb.	2 lb.	3 lb.	3 lb.	3 lb.	4 lb.	5 lb.
Carrots or cabbage	1½ lb.	2 lb.	2 lb.	2 lb.	3 lb.	3 lb.	4 lb.	5 lb.
Dried beans	1 lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.	1½ lb.	2 lb.	2 lb.	2½ lb.
Prunes or	½ lb.	½ lb.	¾ lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.	1½ lb.	2 lb.	2½ lb.
raisins	¼ lb.	¼ lb.	½ lb.	½ lb.	¾ lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.	1½ lb.
figs	½ lb.	½ lb.	¾ lb.	1 lb.	1½ lb.	1½ lb.	2 lb.	2½ lb.
Apples (fresh) (when in season)	2 lb.	3 lb.	4 lb.	4 lb.	4 lb.	5 lb.	6 lb.	6 lb.
Tea or coffee	¼ lb.	¼ lb.	⅓ lb.	⅓ lb.	½ lb.	⅔ lb.	1 lb	1 lb.
Cocoa		¼ lb.	⅓ lb.	½ lb.	⅔ lb.	⅔ lb.	1 lb.	1 lb.

This budget does not make provision for soap (laundry or toilet), baking powder, or baking soda, pepper, salt or matches. Issued by the Ontario Department of Public Welfare. Local municipalities may not adopt this list in its entirety—it is just a suggestion.

[Figure 12: Weekly Grocer Orders for the Guidance of Ontario Welfare Boards, *Canadian Grocer* (Dec. 30, 1932): 8]

[165] "Families on Relief Wasting Foods So Retailers Claim," 12.
[166] "Dispensing Relief Through Food Depots Serious for Grocers," 9.

The *Grocer* reported that various municipalities nationwide had not followed relief regulations and were retailing unethically. Retail grocers were not permitted to split welfare orders by giving part groceries and part cash; merchandise only should be given in exchange for relief orders.[167] Mario Marrese was the first grocer to be taken into court for the charge of welfare order splitting. He was found guilty of giving Ethel Gadley, a young woman shopping on behalf of her mother, $2 in groceries and $2 in cash, in return for a $4 grocer order.[168] The report warned fellow retail grocers that the city court judges promised to deal stiff penalties to those found guilty.

In many municipalities, the grocer became the second point of contact for the voucher system. Recipients presented the voucher to the merchants who were restricted to a definite list of foods.[169] This included milk, eggs, bread, and other daily necessities that were rationed through the relief system. Access to milk would become central for women to organize and talk back to the grocery industry, discussed later in this chapter.[170] The House of Industry, where those on relief like Arthur Lendrum went, would be given both parcels of food and vouchers to be paid to the local milkman or baker.

The *Grocer* adopted the position that merchants were entitled to the relief business for the reason that many on relief still owed them money, there would be less food waste, and an opportunity for some changes in the food selected.[171] The supply of relief groceries had been a serious political issue in Canada between 1930-1932. E.H. Crimp reflected on his experience as an alderman (councillor) and a grocer. As a councillor he found the task impossible to get retailers to adhere to diet lists and as a result, received many complaints that the unemployed

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[167] "Merchants charged with giving cash to those on relief instead of merchandise," Canadian Grocer, (Jul. 29, 1932): 12.
[168] Ibid.
[169] "Handling the Relief Business," 46.
[170] Guard, "A Mighty Power against the Cost of Living," 27.
[171] E.H. Crimp, "Should Municipalities Go into the Grocery Business," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 21, 1932): 48.

were getting many things which were considered luxury goods, not necessities. There was also the reality of customers who were not on relief feeling jaded by the voucher system. For Crimp, this was a common situation among many retailers. The customer who was not on relief, but who had possibly cut expenses and budgeted to the limit, and in doing so, is without many of the things she thought were necessary but could not afford, sees the person on relief who purchases with a relief slip goods which she herself could not afford, and for which she paid taxes to supply the other party who is on relief.[172]

By the close of 1933, the voucher system replaced the House of Industry as the main source of food relief in Toronto.[173] While any intervention in people's diets was met with resistance by the much of the public, vouchers issued to the districts throughout Toronto were viewed by some as a necessary regulation to protect local merchants.[174] Mr. Wrenshall, a comptroller in Toronto, told *The Star*:

> I wish I were just as half as sure of having debts paid to me as the grocers are of receiving their money. The reason many of them have to wait so long is that the vouchers are turned in to us in every conceivable form and there is tremendous amount of work involved in checking them and making payments. Some of the grocers turn in their vouchers weekly, some bi-weekly and some monthly. My staff is never able to get caught up. But there is no danger of the grocers not getting paid.[175]

Similar to the bonds purchased during WWI, the vouchers ensured the government would repay the grocers in due time. "If relief groceries were not purchased from independent stores, credit would be denied to regular customers."[176] Under the voucher system recipients needed to go to a grocer who was a member of an organization. It meant that some small and independent grocers

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[172] Ibid.
[173] Srigley, *Breadwinning Daughters*, 14.
[174] "Salary-Slash Plan Gets Big Support," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Dec. 28, 1932): 2.
[175] "All Relief Vouchers will be Liquidated" *The Toronto Daily Star*, July 6 1932): 20.
[176] "May Use Chain Stores for Grocery Orders," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Sept. 7, 1932): 20.

do not get any business.[177] "The big stores are getting it all. I don't think members of council know what they are doing. The profits are too great…"[178]

Some stores stated that they could not be bothered with relief business, while others charged exorbitant prices for relief supplies.[179] Those in the outskirts of Toronto claimed that even with the freedom to choose their merchants, they were limited to whatever township they lived in. As a result, some stores charged more than double for potatoes, eggs, milk, and tea than a chain store located in the city.[180] Whether or not this was a deliberate merchandising method to reap profit, the reality was that small, independent stores could not buy as cheaply as the chain stores. Once the voucher system had been integrated in Toronto as the medium of distributing unemployment relief the merchants of the city, who had supplied the food, had operated on a spread of approximately 15% between the wholesale and retail price of groceries.[181]

As citizen consumers, women believed their economic participation and rational food consumption granted them a higher political stake and earned them the right to participate in relief work. In April 1933, a deputation of twenty-five women who represented the National Council of Women approached Premier Bennett with the suggestion that women be given a greater opportunity to assist with the administration of relief and the selection of foodstuffs for recipients.[182] In an article for *Chatelaine* authored by Helen Jordon, she questioned if it was "possible that the women of Canada are contentedly leaving their businessmen husbands to do for the State work which they would never entrust to them at home?"[183] The feeding and clothing of families, Jordon argued, had been the special province of women for generations:

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[177] "Meat Contract Confirmed to Save Many from Want," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Apr. 20, 1933): 4.
[178] "Spread on Relief Groceries 15 per cent., council told," 5.
[179] "Claim exorbitant prices demanded for relief foods," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Aug. 9, 1933): 30.
[180] Ibid.
[181] Spread on Relief Groceries 15 per cent., council told," 5.
[182] Helen C. Jordon, "Women and the Relief Boards," *Chatelaine*, (Apr. 1933): 19.
[183] Ibid.

"Even today, when her interests and sympathies are widening in so many directions, her chief work remains in the home. Both experience and training have qualified her to understand the needs of growing children, the balancing of diets, husbanding of good health, and economical buying."[184] Jordan, and *Chatelaine* at this time, adopted a maternal feminism position advocating women's unique and special ability to provide care to children and their spouses.[185] In one instance, a well-to-do woman was eager to do some investigative work on the quality of relief food. By special arrangement with the city's authorities, she had placed herself on the relief lists and fed her adult family on the supplies sent her from the depot for one week; she testified that the food was adequate and quite good.[186] This testament, however, was misleading. Jordon confirmed McBride's stance, that people would reject being forced to consume and purchase such a limited range of food. Moreover, the investigative woman failed to remember that there was a difference between feeding a healthy family for a week, and feeding for multiple months, without variation where "men and children whose bodies are impoverished by cold and other hardships."[187]

There were other factors to consider for women's intervention for food relief distribution and decision-making. As mentioned, individual taste was a prominent reason for food waste or being unable to consume the product before the next regulation period, but food culture was a condition overlooked by city relief departments. Jordan offered the example of an immigrant woman who sought olive oil for cooking; "they didn't know how to cook without it. The

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[184] Ibid., 19, 74.
[185] In her examination of *Chatelaine* Valerie Korinek contends that former editor, Bryne Sanders, maintained a maternal feminist position for she believed that the power of the household could, and should have an impact on the nation and women were a special force to be reckoned with (261). In a similar manner, Julie Guard's "Canadian Citizens or Dangerous Foreign Women? Canada's Radical Consumer Movement, 1947-1950," classifies the actions of the Housewives Consumers Association, in the late 1940s, as "militant, politically responsible citizen-mothers."
[186] Jordon, "Women and the Relief Boards," 19.
[187] Ibid.

Canadian food given out in the breadline was strange to them and made them ill. Often they threw it away and went hungry. Children refused to eat it."[188] Children were frequently centred in debates about food and nutrition as part of the political strategy of maternalism.

Accompanying the article by Jordon was a snippet which broke the news "Milk is thrown away – children do without," which explored the findings of a recent Montreal report where welfare workers admitted children are not as healthy as the were formerly.[189] As Guard has shown, concerned mothers rallied together through the Toronto Housewives Association, discussed later in this chapter, and blamed high rates of childhood malnutrition and illness on the rising costs of milk.[190] As the press had valorized the position of the mother-as-shopper or shopper-as-mother, this generated the space activists (and regular folk) needed to make their demands. The report concluded that "nutritional defects in patients examined by the Health Service of Child Welfare Association (HSCW) increased from twenty-six to thirty-nine per cent during the years 1931 and 1932 and every type of physical defect showed some increase."[191] The cause of this increase was determined to be an insufficient amount of milk in the daily diets of the city's poor. The recommendation for at least one pint of milk a day, and for babies more so, would cost a family $2.10 a week – an impossible figure for many families whose weekly allowance scarcely exceeded this amount.[192] On the production side, there was no shortage of milk from farmers. The depressed purchasing power of so many across Canada meant milk went unsold from suppliers and was reportedly poured down the sewers of farms or fed to livestock while the children in the city went without.[193] Despite the case made by Jordon, or the

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[188] Ibid. See also Franca Iacovetta, "Recipes for Democracy? Gender, Family, and Making Female Citizens in Cold War Canada." *Canadian Woman Studies*, Vol. 2 No. 2 (2000): 15.
[189] "Milk is thrown away - children do without," *Chatelaine*, (Apr. 1933): 19.
[190] Guard, A Mighty Power against the Cost of Living: Canadian Housewives Organize in the 1930s," 27, 33.
[191] "Milk is thrown away - children do without," 19.
[192] Ibid. Milk was approximately ten cents a quart.
[193] Ibid.

deputation of twenty-five women, Premier Bennett determined that the decision lay with the Provincial governments and left the remedy of formal relief help from women unresolved.

Another organized effort for women's participation in the relief system occurred at the King Edward Hotel in 1933. Located in the center of downtown Toronto, a protest erupted against the omission of women from the civic commission. The commission had been appointed to study and advise on the municipal relief situation. The protest was led by the Local Council of Women who suggested the following women as possible representatives for the commission: Mrs. J.P. Hynes, president of the Local Council of Women, Mrs. W.G. Lumbers, municipal regent of The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (I.O.D.E.), and Miss Marjorie Bell, director of the Visiting Housekeepers' Association.[194] Bell had been vocal with other activist groups across Canada and expressed her dissatisfaction with the central depot or warehouse to receive relief as it diverted "trade from natural channels and [gave] undue publicity to recipients of relief" and much preferred the voucher system.[195] The Council's concern was that there seemed to be a tendency to remove women from any and all civic commissions. A recent removal included Miss Belle Thompson and Mrs. Singer from the Mothers' Allowance Board. Their frustration was that women had assumed much of the relief work, including fundraising and administration of these funds, yet had been ignored for appointment in the commission for city relief.[196] To this, Mayor Stewart responded to this frustration by stating it was a financial matter and menus were to be considered by the commission, but at the meeting Hynes said: "'What do men know of menus? […] Women's organizations had taken a prominent part in unemployment relief, but women had been leaders in social work for 25 years; that leaders in women's community organizations had

[194] "Local Council Makes Protest to Mayor," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jul. 17, 1933): 20.
[195] Strikwerda, 81.
[196] "Local Council Makes Protest to Mayor," 20.

had more experience than the average man in actual participation in social activities."[197] After the Council had forwarded its' resolution to appoint women to the commission, Mayor Stewart's response, much like Premier Bennett's, was non-committal and said it was "not impossible to add to the committee."[198] To add insult to injury, the column documenting this important protest regarding the exclusion of women from city relief, was sandwiched between wedding announcements and swim meet updates in *The Toronto Daily Star* – distanced far away from the front page.

As *Chatelaine* was a participatory medium where many readers had their letters published each month as if to respond to one another or the editor, the topic of milk continued to be a pressing concern. The same month Jordon questioned where the women were for relief work, an anonymous letter, "I am a Canadian Mother" was published, and readers were invited to respond for a future issue. In this letter the woman reflected on how the depression had impacted her ability to be a mother and support her young children – trouble she framed as not just her own but a widespread reality. The role of a mother, she wrote was unmatched: "I am a Canadian mother and my country honors me. […] When danger threatens, courageous men risk their lives for my protection. […] Songs are inspired by my name. My country realizes that my children are its greatest asset."[199] However, despite motherhood being positioned high on a pedestal, the letter asked, "When depression comes, my country rushes to the rescue. But when the S.O.S. goes out, do Canadians cry 'Mothers and babies first?' Is my name exalted when it appears on the relief list? Hardly."[200] The letter explored her role as a mother through the lens of food. While women were expected to be independent corporate actors, who consumed and shopped their way to

[197] Ibid.
[198] "Committee on Relief may include Women," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jul. 17, 1933): 20.
[199] Anonymous, "I am a Canadian Mother," *Chatelaine*, (Apr. 1933): 18.
[200] Ibid.

modernity, they were tied to prescribed normative, gendered traditional roles such as motherhood. The ability to *be* modern, then, was further hampered as access and ability to purchase food was a casualty of the conditions of the financial crisis. The writer's experience of relief provided her with groceries but no milk, no butter, and no meat. Her allowance for one month was the following: 1 and a half bags of flour, three pounds of shortening, one pound of tea, ten pounds of sugar, one gallon of molasses, ten pounds of beans, four pounds of pork, six pounds of broken codfish, ten pounds of rolled oats, and two boxes of yeast cakes. "This is the allowance for a family of seven. We are nine."[201] The letter continued to list the hardships the mother and her children had faced, and how their health was ailing as a result of relief groceries that were allotted for them each month. The author ended her letter with a poignant statement that "unless Canada feeds her children with food intelligently selected […] save our children for us. It will soon be too late. […] Milk is not as cheap as beans, but health is cheaper than sickness."[202] The response to this letter was divided.

There were other self-proclaimed Canadian mothers who had faced similar hardships on and without relief, others who supported women's position on Relief Boards, some who believed women were needed first at home and not working for the State, and one hostile response which blamed the author for her inability to provide for her children. One response documented in *Chatelaine*, echoed a similar sentiment to Jordon empathized: "I am a Canadian mother of five children. I have never been on relief but have lived through many hard times when for days at a stretch I never saw a cent […] my husband served on the Relief Board of this town last year, and so I can understand how little men know about such things" and help in this work did not mean

[201] Ibid.
[202] Ibid. 18, 74.

any woman would be fit for the role.[203] Her letter continued, "there was one woman on the Board, but a woman who never knew want and enjoyed every luxury in her own life […] it needs someone who has learned to economize".[204] This had occurred in an Ontario city. An "Ontario Mother" wrote to the magazine to explain how a woman was head of the Relief committee in her district, and as a result the food was of good quality, varied, included necessary vitamins, and families received the equivalent of a quart of milk a day which was adjusted to two to three quarts for larger families.[205] A reader from Manitoba was more critical and argued that "no couple have a right to get married without some means of livelihood and certainly no right to bring children into the world without means of supporting them […] no parent has any right to foist this responsibility on to the community."[206] Relief – and arguably the role of motherhood – for this contributor was not a collective effort extended from neighbours or family, nor even a government responsibility, but an individual burden.

The conditions of two periods of crisis: World War One and the Depression, and the unwavering linkage between food and women, communal responsibility and civic obligation heightened expectations that public policy and the grocery industry reciprocate and support their needs. There were several countercurrents that challenged depictions of modernity as a totalizing force in the early decades of the twentieth century. Shoppers and retail grocers were prompted by periodical literature and state intervention to suspend consumer mentality and conform to a morality of consumption for national interests. This included traditional methods of gendered agricultural labour, food production, and suspension of the purchasing freedom that modernity promised female consumers inside the grocery store. The grocery sector and women struggled to

[203] Mrs. D.K.A., "I am a Canadian Mother," *Chatelaine*, (Jun. 1933): 22.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid., 44.

fully embrace modernity as both were constrained by the necessity of food, especially in times of crisis. Despite their rapid growth throughout the 1930s, chain stores had a difficult time satisfying the moral expectations of potential patrons and independent grocers hoped to increase that dissatisfaction in the community.

Reputable Retail(ers)

As the number of chains increased rapidly in North America in the late 1920s and early 1930s, enthusiasm for the innovation of what the chain model could offer tempered. Joseph M. Fly, president of the National Chain Store Grocers' Association, responded to a question about the current wave of antagonism to chains with the following: "The time has passed when the chains can expect to gain the good will from any kind of advertisement […] Sentiment has grown too rapidly against them for this, whether they are aware of this fact or not…"[207] Arguably the public outcry against chains was loudest in the United States, but as grocery chains – like Loblaw Groceterias – had infiltrated both sides of the border, public upset was easily heard in Canada. For example, a Southern U.S. based group, the Merchants' Minute Men, led by W.K. Henderson and likely named after an American Revolutionary group, was organized in opposition to chain stores.[208] Henderson was an owner of a local radio station and used this as his medium to attack chain store operations and his "vitriolic messages" made their way into the homes of Canadians.[209] At one point the radio show was intervened with by a U.S. senator as Henderson would frequently use swear words during a chain store tangent.

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[207] The National Chain Store Association was organized in 1928, it represented fourteen leading chains in the U.S. as council in charge of their lobbying activities against discriminatory legislation. Godfrey Lebhar, *Chain Stores in America 1859-1950*, (New York: Chain Store Publishing Co., 1952) 159, 191. "Price Concessions Said to be key to Chain Store Troubles," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 14, 1930): 16.
[208] Michael McDonnell, "Popular Mobilization and Political Culture in Revolutionary Virginia: the Failure of the Minutemen and the Revolution from Below," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 85 (1998): 968.
[209] "Radio Agitation Against Chains Termed Mixture of Sincerity and Blatancy," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 14, 1930): 18.

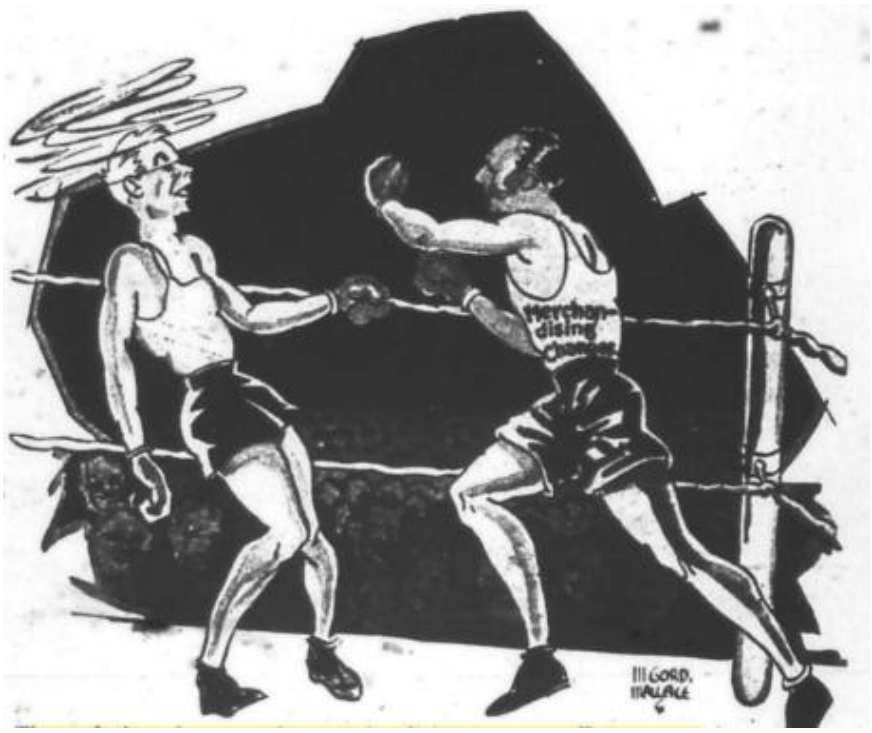
Printers' Ink, an advertising and business trade journal, pointed out that the Merchants' Minute Men had started recently but had grown rapidly with an estimated 10,000 local businessmen enrolled in the chapter with "much whoop and hurrah."[210] The editor of *Printers' Ink* provided the following quote to the *Grocer,* which was in a box at the top of the page with the phrase "judge for yourself" in bold:

> The agitation seems to us to be a queer mixture of unquestioned sincerity and the best of motives on the one hand, the most arrant and even blatant, demagogy on the other. In certain respects it might be likened to a racket. Nevertheless, it is no laughing matter for the chains. […] The chain store people say they are not worried. They should be, for the end of this thing despite its illogical premises is not in sight, and probably will not for some time.[211]

In an era of heightened competition, where C.I. Standstill could be eliminated by other independent merchants who espoused modern and scientific methods, the threat of the chain store – which set many standards for modern retailing – was an easy, and arguably valid target for animosity.[212] [Fig. 13]

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[210] Ibid. *Printers' Ink* was a U.S. based business trade journal launched in 1888 - the first national trade magazine for advertising - proponents of criminal penalties for false advertising (1911). See also *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 30, 1920): 6.
[211] "Radio Agitation Against Chains Termed Mixture of Sincerity and Blatancy," 18.
[212] Gordon Corbaley, "Individuality important factor in retailing," *Canadian Grocer*, (Oct. 21, 1932): 74.



[Figure 13: Merchandising changes could eliminate eject competition from the business ring, Canadian Grocer, (Oct. 21) 1932: 27.]

Chain stores had capitalized on the foundation built by department stores and mail order houses, this allowed them to occupy the retail space with some ease. However, what was a, perhaps unexpected, inheritance was the hostility that befell their predecessors. The early decades of the twentieth century brought with it much agitation for the purpose of "keeping trade at home."[213] While the *Grocer* generally, with the exception of Johnson Jr.'s columns which tended to favour the independent, provided a balanced view of chain stores: they reported the positive selling strategies and high-net profits with the complaints of independent merchants not to isolate a demographic of grocer – large or small – this was not the same case for mail order houses. The *Grocer* frequently, particularly by the 1910s, cast mail-order houses in a negative light. Articles featured titles such as "Plans to Overcome Mail Order Trade," "Mail Order

[213] "Radio Agitation Against Chains Termed Mixture of Sincerity and Blatancy," 18.

Menace," and "Battle for your Own."[214] A mail-order house in Toronto had sent out catalogs which weighed 30 tonnes, which extended its potential customer base from city to countryside with relative ease. In response, the *Grocer* declared: "Let this be the rallying cry for those merchants who are losing trade through the inroads of the mail order house to battle for the trade that rightly belongs to them" it continued, "Now is the time to act before the outsider gets a hold on your trade that will not be so easily broken."[215] Although the mail order system declined dramatically in the 1920s, hostility and agitation to loss of trade and encroachment on retail space continued to increase as chain stores rose to prominence.

When chains first emerged on the retail scene, their emphasis was on lower overhead costs and lower prices for the customer. At first, it was purely a price competition between them and the independent.[216] While chain stores still maintained their stance on price competition there was a trend toward quality and service. A U.S. professor stated that the big three the customer wanted was cheapness, quality, and service.[217] Boyle further claimed that "chains are agents of the consumers. The independent retailer was between the devil and the deep sea, for he was being financed largely by some wholesaler or jobber and consequently he was likely to come to feel responsible to the wholesaler first, to is customers last. But the chain […] appeals direct to the consumer."[218] Some contended that chains had reached their peak and the modern merchant was better equipped to meet the encroachments of chain organization.[219] However, it was this type of direct connection, not necessarily the personal touch, that Boyle predicted would eliminate many current and future independents. Ultimately, chains bought for a quick turnover

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[214] "Plans to Overcome Mail Order Trade," *Canadian Grocer*, (Aug. 11, 1911): 33."Mail Order Menace," (Jan. 20, 1910): 23, "Battle for your Own," *Canadian Grocer*, (Dec. 20, 1910) 26.
[215] "Battle for your Own," 33.
[216] J.E. Boyle, "Competition More and More on Quality and Service Basis," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 1, 1929): 25.
[217] Ibid., 39.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Ibid., 25.

which kept them in the closest possible touch with customers and enabled them to establish a reliable barometer for gauging consumer demand even in the most turbulent of times.

Chains often had a central office outside of the community where it was run. This created, some independents and community members argued, a lack of interest in the community's well-being. Deutsch has argued that a lack of personal ties to the community made the chain store well suited for imposing federal regulations as customers could not pressure managers and employees to sell goods at a reduced price or under the table.[220] There was no *real* need for a chain store, Loblaw Groceterias, Dominion Stores, or otherwise, to accept municipal responsibilities. A counterargument for this was that chain stores had a financial benefit to the town because they were able to secure low prices for goods. The cost of these goods represented approximately 80% of their selling price. The remaining 20% went toward overhead expenses such as wages, taxes, rent, advertising, utilities, delivery and other incidentals that were to be paid for locally, and the benefit went to the local district whether chain or independent.[221] This argument did not carry much weight as chain stores were frequently charged with undermining community life and injuring the business centres in which they were located.[222]

Former president of the Montreal Wholesale Grocers' Guild, J.L.A. Grenier, claimed it was the wholesaler or independent retailer who was a community resident was of more value to a customer. This was because there was a clear stake in the community: "[they] take pride in the well-being of the community, as compared with a huge chain organization, whose staff, at best, are transients, whose profits do not in any way assist the community, and in all probability are not retained there."[223] In a more scathing manner, a speaker at the Business Men's Association in

[220] Deutsch, 181.
[221] Hutson, 70.
[222] Ibid., 70, 74.
[223] "Claims chains do not take interest in community life," *Canadian Grocer*, (Jan. 3, 1930): 27.

1930 denounced the impact of chain stores on community life. Charles E. Redeker, of Windsor Ont. Expressed the following sentiment:

> Before the great war we had hardly any chain stores, today we are deluged with them. These have come not as pioneers to share the foundation work in community upbuilding nor join hands with us in community service. They do not put their dollars into any local charity […] I did not give serious thought to the evils of the chain store system, until I made a comparison between the generous and ever ready response of the local merchants […] and the total lack of spirit shown by the monopolistic corporations who take every dollar out of our city that it can.[224]

While some maintained that chain stores were the live wires to attract potential customers to the city streets where their independent shops sat, the competitive nature of the grocery industry, in combination with a depressed economy, forced chain stores into a series of damage-control strategies.

Situated above Redeker's resentful speech, the *Grocer* included the point of view of U.S. mega-chain store JCPenney. He expressed that he, and his company, had received a great number of letters complaining that the manager of the local chain store had refused to make a superscription to community organizations or charity; Penney claimed the letters were often bitter and abusive in nature.[225] When the store manager is approached to contribute he must respond, "I have no authority to give you any of the company's money and I cannot afford to give you any of my own. I can only refer your request to headquarters […] a maximum of ill feeling all around."[226] While Penney admitted that chain stores had mostly adopted an impersonal attitude toward the stake of the community, he offered no concrete solution to this fact but defended the store manager who equally had the obligation to refuse to contribute to schemes that seemed to offer little benefit for the town.

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[224] "Denounces chains in strong terms to men's Association," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 28, 1930): 27.
[225] "Point of View of chains when asked to contribute money to local charities and local development purposes," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 28, 1930): 27. This article was originally published in the Saturday Evening Post. J.C. Penney was head of the large dry goods and variety chain stores in the U.S.
[226] Ibid, 27.

A more direct response to this argument was adopted by the Loblaw brand. A series of advertisements throughout the 1930s for the chain suggested a stake in the community, strong employee benefits, and a welcoming environment. Advertisements included claims that "LOBLAW'S are like an open book," (disputing claims that they were a monopoly), the "Family Larder," and the "Safe" place for the "director of the household purse to shop," as the chain promised safe food protection, sanitation, and the economy as fundamental principles.[227] The chain also adopted a unique plan to allow customers of their stores to know about their organization and supply source. 500 customers of the Loblaw Groceterias at 357 Broadview Avenue, Toronto, received invitations in their parcels of merchandise purchased at this location for a tour of the Loblaw warehouse on Fleet and Bathurst Street. Guests were introduced to T.P. Loblaw, led through the various candy, bacon, butter, and cold storage departments, the bakehouse, packing and weighing plant, and at the close of the visit each guest received an invitation to a concert held at the warehouse by the "Loblaw Players."[228] In addition to the illusion of transparency, cleanliness, and benefit for the family, the Loblaw chain ran several advertisements regarding employment and employee satisfaction [Fig. 14].

[227] "LOBLAW's are like an OPEN BOOK," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Nov. 27, 1930): 13. "LOBLAW'S – the Family Larder for 1931," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jan. 8, 1931): 4. "LOBLAW'S the 'SAFE' place to buy," The *Toronto Daily Star*, (Jun. 4, 1931): 11.
[228] "Interesting Their Customers in Source of Supply," *Canadian Grocer*, (Mar. 28, 1930): 46.



[Figure 14: "Loblaw Groceteria Employees Leave for Their Half Holiday Wednesday, *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Mar. 20, 1930): 8.]

In a "Message from the President," T.P. Loblaw announced Loblaw Groceteria locations would close on Wednesday afternoons. The reason for this, he said, was "if the public was to receive the benefit of the highest possible efficiency, the welfare of the employees must be a foundation principle."[229] The President reported that this approach was well received by his employees as the above sketch depicts. The sketch of the employees also suggests that they were paid well enough to afford to present themselves in an aristocratic, fashionable manner, with the female employees who could be easily mistaken for their ideal female patron archetype.

In a 1936 advertisement, the chain provided readers with some "facts about Loblaws." This included the number of locations (111 stores, 48 of which were the Market variation) for which "more than half a million people visit each week."[230] Beyond the popularity facts and figures, the list included taxes paid and employee benefits. Direct taxes for federal, provincial, and municipal that were paid by the company the previous year amounted to $262, 107.00. The company employed 1175 persons and as a "Canadian enterprise backed by Canadian capital employ[ed]

[229] "A Message from the President*," The Toronto Daily Star*, (Mar. 20, 1930): 8.
[230] "Leadership makes History," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (May 28, 1936): 15.

hundreds of Canadians [to serve] the Canadian public."[231] In addition, the company boasted that wages were the highest paid in any grocery store in Canada, employees with six months of service receive holidays with full pay, and employees enjoy Group Insurance at a "very small cost."[232] While it is not clear what an average Loblaw employee was paid, this acknowledgement by the company was perhaps to counteract the negative image chains had regarding low wages (especially during the Depression years) and how some felt they were "simply existing" with "no recreation, no training for the future. […] simply a slave."[233] The company attempted to assure prospective and current customers that the company contributed and paid taxes fairly and that employees were well taken care of, Canadian, and that their employee's happiness resulted in customer satisfaction. As Cohen has explored in her book *Making a New Deal*, this welfare capitalism agenda shifted to an ideal of moral capitalism, where, if the employer was fair and moral, and provided benefits or vacation, then, even under private ownership the worker could benefit.[234] These advertisements were designed in such a way as to solicit a personal connection between the reader and the presumed unfeeling and detached chain store. This suggests that both chain stores and independents were personified as key figures in any community with a moral obligation to do good by the residents was a condition for success.

A second strategy to assuage hostility and showcase corporate morality was adopted by T.P. Loblaw and his partner, Cork, who had appealed to the community through philanthropy. While this was not a new commitment by the time of the Depression and its aftermath, the monetary

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[231] Ibid. "104 Spotlessly Clean Loblaw Groceterias," *Toronto Daily Star*, (Jun. 9, 1932): 7. There were recreation rooms at the Loblaw Groceteria warehouse at Fleet and Bathurst, Toronto. This included bowling and billiard rooms, several small lounging or card rooms, and one large room which was used for small dances and other entertainment. "Recreation Rooms Formally Opened," *The Globe*, (Oct. 4, 1928): 13.
[232] "Leadership makes History," 15.
[233] Monod, 223. This quote from a delivery boy for an undisclosed chain store as Monod examines how some chain stores relied heavily on part-time workers to circumvent provincial minimum-wage laws.
[234] Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939*, (Cambridge University Press, 2008): xxxv, 286.

contributions and investments into the community helped sustain the moral image of Loblaw, the brand, as a corporate citizen. During an Association gathering in 1926, Loblaw was applauded by members and the press for his generous donation of $100,000 toward a hospital in the town of Alliston where he was born. “Mr. Loblaw is one of those men who do not seek to carry their money to the grave […] He believes in doing some good among the people with whom he was brought up, and who he loves.”[235] Loblaw’s commitment to his hometown, to his first community, was a clever public relations strategy, whether intentional or not. At a time when the tension between independents and large, wealthy chains was increasing, it was likely reassuring to be informed by the press that civic pride and public-spirited virtue had not disappeared from businessmen like Loblaw and “it all proves that in the mind of man there is no place like home.”[236] The philanthropic nature of Loblaw and Cork extended beyond the town of Alliston. In 1929 the duo donated one million dollars toward a new hospital to the City of Toronto which earned them the accolade of “two of the best friends of Toronto’s charitable needs.”[237] In addition to a busy life as president of Loblaw Groceterias – that were quickly expanding across Toronto – Loblaw also served as the president of the social organization, the Old Boys and Girls’ Association.[238] Even after his death in 1933, the Loblaw company and name were praised for the establishment of the Loblaw fund committee for the Toronto Kiwanis Club, which intended to help reduce juvenile crime in the area “almost to the vanishing point through keeping these lads off the street.”[239] Again, this was a clever marketing strategy for the brand name. This mimicked

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[235] “Doings in Alliston Recalled at Dinner,” *The Globe*, (Dec. 9, 1926): 13.
[236] ‘No Place like Home,” *The Globe*, (Jul. 1, 1929): 4.
[237] “One Million Dollars donated to hospital by generous citizens,” *The Globe*, (Feb. 27, 1929): 13.
[238] *The Mildmay Gazette*, (Jun. 25, 1908): 4.
[239] “Loblaw’s Gift to Kiwanis Slashes Boys’ Delinquency,” *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Jan. 8, 1937): 3. The Kiwanis club was located in the Trinity Park area in Toronto which enabled nearly 900 boys access to gymnasiums workouts, vocational instruction, and other activities. The Loblaw fund for work among underprivileged youth and other charities was expected to reach $1,000,000.

the efforts that the Board had taken to respond to female citizen consumers who had advocated for consumer protections, particularly where children were impacted by an unregulated market. The investment into the Toronto community, with children centred, may have been viewed positively by their intended customer – the modern shopper, accompanied by her child or purchasing for them at home.

For their philanthropic efforts, Loblaw and Cork were awarded high praise in the press. *The Globe* penned that "Mr. Loblaw, to whom Toronto is indebted for generous contributions to boys' work through the Kiwanis Club" and his financial donations to the hospital in Alliston and Toronto.[240] Another claimed that the duo were successfully converting the name Loblaw "from a household word into a by-word for civic generosity."[241] However, Loblaw insisted that *he* was indebted to the city of Toronto, not the other way around. He claimed that "Toronto had made him, that he owed all that he had to this city, that in making this donation, he was simply paying back something of what he had received from the city, and that he did not get more pleasure out of anything than in helping the needy sick."[242] For, what housekeeper had not patronized the Loblaw Stores at one time or another?[243]

In addition, the Loblaw chain consistently participated in window dressing competitions like those mentioned in Chapter 2. The below photograph shows the 2134 Bloor Street Loblaw Groceterias store window that had been lavishly decorated for the Ontario Farm Week Products competition [Fig. 15]. Not only would this have been an opportunity to attract passersby, but it showcased provincially produced and grown foods, and by proxy, supported Ontario farms and farmers. For their modern methods of window dressing (use of lighting, abundance but not

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[240] "One Million Dollars donated to hospital by generous citizens," 13.
[241] "Grocery Magnates Give $1,000,000 to Hospital," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Feb. 1929): 3.
[242] "One Million Dollars donated to hospital by generous citizens,"14.
[243] Ibid.

clutter, clear price cards), and commitment to sell "Ontario farm products for Ontario people," the store was crowned the prize winner by the Department of Agriculture.



[Figure 15: Loblaw Groceterias Window Display Prize Winner, Courtesy of the George Weston Archives. Oct. 1930]

Despite the various tactics chains (and independent) grocery stores evoked to demonstrate their commitment, morality, and investment in the community, female-led consumer organizations grew. The conditions of war and the Depression had been two watershed moments for female consumer activism as the health of the nation and, by extension, the nation's children seemingly depended on their competency as mothers and savvy shoppers. Women had been solidified by the state and the press as the feeders of the nation with a political stake regarding the now-conflated national and consumer interests. As a result, women's organized consumer activism reached a new peak in the late 1930s. As this dissertation has shown, female shoppers were anchored to their position as mothers and/or traditional roles with food as workers, prospective customers, or current customers. This enabled the Toronto Housewives' Association

(THA), and various predecessors, the ability to invoke their position as modern shoppers with the moral authority of concerned mothers to advocate for the necessity of food for their children's health.[244] This position had been conditioned by the publishing press, *Canadian Grocer, Everywoman's World*, and *Chatelaine,* as women had been continually anchored as mothers by the grocery industry itself.

The THA formed on November 8, 1937, entered into a "price war" and vowed to collectively boycott every dairy in the city if demands were not met.[245] In response to this call to action, Mrs. Bertha Lamb, THA president, had received a letter threatening her child if the newly formed housewives' league protested against increased milk prices. Lamb did not take the threat seriously and contended "I am no more inclined today than I was yesterday to be frightened by the note warning me to stop my activities for cheaper milk. I didn't ask for police protection yesterday and I don't intend to today."[246] The Association continued to be at odds with the Toronto District Trades and Labor Council president who argued boycotting any one particular food would not work out satisfactory, "It might aid in reducing the cost of one food it would have no effect on the others."[247] In addition, A.C. Wilson, sales manager of the City Dairy, lamented that "the so-called boycott is not very effective […] I really think it is time the ladies listened to reason. There are surely enough control boards […] to convince them that we are not making big profits. We'd sell the milk for 10 cents gladly - if we could."[248] However, Lamb and her delegates continued to advocate for milk as an indispensable food, instigated other campaigns such as the "Butter Week Boycott," and often encouraged men to join their boycott

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[244] Guard, "A Mighty Power against the Cost of Living," 27.
[245] Guard, *Radical Housewives*, 17-18.
[246] "Police Keeping Watch on Mrs. Lamb's Home," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Nov. 9, 1937): 1. See also, Guard, *Radical Housewives,* 19.
[247] "Housewives Discuss Polls as Next Move," *The Toronto Daily Star,* (Mar. 28, 1938): 8.
[248] "Dairyman Maintains Boycott Weakening," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Nov. 19, 1937): 18.

causes.[249] She hoped to "form a united front to break the milk trust, the bread trust, and the other trusts that are paying such low wages to our husbands."[250] As Guard has thoroughly investigated the THA gave consumers a voice in setting milk prices and evolved from a grassroots movement into a genuine political force.[251] The foundation for consumer activism groups, particularly those led by women, was set for those who would continue to talk back for the right to lower food costs in the postwar period.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated how the state and periodical literature grocery evoked patriotic discourse to motivate women to reorient their modern individualistic consumerism for the national good during two periods of prolonged economic and social crisis. Women were told to substitute, ration, purchase on vouchers, contribute to the production of food at home or on a farm, and "fight with food."[252] This analysis adds to previous scholarship on consumerism during the war and the Depression while showing how, because food was a different consumable, there were civic and moral obligations that were expected of women and the grocery industry. To respond to varying government campaigns and intervention, the grocery press and women's magazines popularized various strategies for their readership for how to best feed a family, endorse patriotism, stretch a budget, and make a profit – all while navigating the

[249] Guard, *Radical Housewives,* 26, 29, 31. Guard also examines the gas meter campaign where delegates attempted to abolish the 50 cents monthly gas meter charge. This campaign was ultimately unsuccessful. This campaign was dramatized by the Association at Forrester's Hall, called "One Woman's Family" starring Mrs. Mary Almos, Mrs. K. Wilson, and Mrs. Mae Johnston. "Housewives Dramatize Their Cause," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Apr. 15, 1939): 12.
[250] "Dairyman Maintains Boycott Weakening," *The Toronto Daily Star*, (Nov. 19, 1937): 18.
[251] Guard, "A Mighty Power against the Cost of Living," 38, 43. A Royal Commission to investigate the pries of milk was won in 1946. See also, *Radical Housewives,* 110.
[252] "Fight With Food," Food Conservation Poster, Distributed between 1914-1919, Canadian War Museum, Web. https://www.warmuseum.ca/collections/artifact/1990330

realities of war, interrupted trade, reduced income, and unemployment. Some tried their best to see the positive:

> Thank Old Man Depression […] has made better managers of most of us. […] When the challenge was thrown out by way of lowered incomes and flattened pocketbooks, housekeepers gallantly rose to the occasion and set about revising their food budgets to meet the situation […] not a question of reducing expenses by merely using less food or buying inferior quality. […] means more careful shopping, much planning, good cooking, and pleasing service.[253]

In so many ways, the early decades of the twentieth century were "frankly a struggle for the survival of the fittest."[254]

The Depression was hard on the entire grocery industry, including chains. Over the course of the 1930s, 15 Dominion branches had been shuttered as impoverished shoppers avoided their cash and carry policies.[255] The Loblaw company was one of the few to maintain profits and continue to expand, albeit at a slower pace, during the Depression.[256] There is no clear reason why the Loblaw chain stayed afloat. Arguably it was a combination of location, reputation, and modern shopping experience. First, the Loblaw franchise was overwhelmingly a feature of the Toronto retailscape. The company operated throughout Ontario, but its prime location was in Toronto. By 1932 the company operated 108 Loblaw Stores with approximately 80 of these stores in the Greater Toronto Area.[257] And, as noted, Toronto was the only major city where

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[253] Helen G. Campbell, "Inexpensive Dishes," *Chatelaine*, (Nov. 1932): 21.
[254] Boyle, "Competition More and more on Quality and Service Basis," 25.
[255] Heron, 165. "Dominion Stores Make Net of 2.14% in 1930 – Sales and Profits Lower," *Canadian Grocer,* (Jan. 30, 1931): 38.
[256] Total sales - $18,435,000. Increase in Sales 1,882,261. Average sales per store - $210,000 Average profit per store - $13,500 Average profit per day, per store - $45. Faced a decline in the early months of 1931, decline of 7% but tonnage sales and net profits were up over the previous year. Profits up in 1931 February 2% in sales. By 1932 the annual statement of Loblaw Groceterias Company issued a net profit 7.8% the largest in the company's history (compared to 7.09 in 1931) Earnings per store had dropped slightly, but T.P Loblaw contended that profits in the past year have been well maintained. "Net Profit on Sales Highest in Loblaw History," *Canadian Grocer,* (Jul. 15, 1932): 34. "Loblaw Net Amounts to 6.6. of Sales; Unit Sales Average $146, 780," Canadian Grocer, (June 26, 1937): 110. In this same financial news segment, the *Grocer* notes that profits were down for other competitors such as A.& P. and Stop and Shop.
[257] "Now 108 Loblaw Stores," *Canadian Grocer,* (Nov. 4, 1932): 28.

chains outperformed independents in their share of the grocery business. Based near busy intersections, Loblaw locations were overwhelmingly accessible to prospective patrons. Second, despite the impersonality that self-service and cash and carry stores offered, which earned chains the hostility of their competitors, T.P. Loblaw and his partner Cork, were recognized as strong financial contributors to the well-being of Toronto.[258] During a period of economic hardship and hostility, the chain was able to sustain an image as a moral corporate citizen with a vested interest in the community and its employees. Last, self-service and the cash and carry method was advertised as a very appealing option to those of moderate income who sought out some privacy as they surveyed the store and the affordability of the goods which lined the shelves. Even as the state and grocery press urged a reorientation of consumption, Loblaw Groceterias were unwavering from its modern marketing techniques. The Loblaw brand, and other surviving chain stores, had come to stay.

An intense filtering out of so-called inefficient grocers, independent and chains alike, resulted in a well-equipped pool of retailers. With the expansion of chain stores in the 1930s, there was now a variety of options for purchasing one's groceries: the budget-friendly option, the

[258] Even after T.P. Loblaws death he was well-received in the media.

convenience store, the one-stop shop, one which offered credit, delivery options, and the shopkeeper who greeted you by name. It was now an era of competition.[259] [Fig. 16]



[Figure 16: The Shopper, *Canadian Grocer,* (Oct. 21, 1932): 38]

In this era, there had been a perceived shift, as reported in the pages of the *Grocer* and women's magazines, in the power of the shopper. The once steadfastly loyal customer now had more agency to operate as a shopper. The shopper now had the ability to shop around where they pleased; if they possessed the moderate income to support themselves, then they were no longer beholden the independent grocer who offered them credit or even the open-plan chain store. Johnson Jr. warned readers of the *Grocer* that buyers were no longer customers, but shoppers, "hence we must meet shoppers' instincts."[260] Unlike much of what has been described in this chapter and previous, the 1930s ushered in a new condition where the shopper was in the position to dictate the grocers who served them. This included a rise in consumer activism led by women's organizations. Their valorized position as a mother-customer would enable them to talk

[259] "The Housewife's Confidence," *Canadian Grocer*, (Apr. 8, 1932): 8.
[260] Johnson Jr., "Experience Shows Sales Increase If Goods Are Displayed in Aisles," 22.

back to the grocery trade. In an address to the Toronto Extension Course, Frank Stockdale informed the attendees that, "Today, the shopper is high-hatting the store owner in exactly the same way that the store owner used to high-hat the customer."[261] It was the perception in the popular press that the mid-to-late 1930s had become a shoppers' market.

[261] "The Door to New profits," *Canadian Grocer*, (Feb. 28, 1930): 18.

Conclusion: Shopping Around

The mobilization of the tools of modernity transformed food distribution and production over the course of this thirty-year period. The thrust of scientific management and the development and installment of new technologies helped sever the modern grocery sector from nature, the farm, and the market. This rupture was visible in the groceteria style of grocery shopping, where the space was maximized for merchandise and food was (largely) unmediated by the producer or retailer. This style of grocery shopping was further popularized by the Loblaw brand in Toronto and came to represent the modern market and modern shopper by the grocery press. The influence and authority the *Canadian Grocer* had on the industry was fundamental to this transformation. What had begun as a monthly periodical in 1886 with the intent to 'gain the confidence of the trade' evolved into a weekly publication with a national reach and their audience became an imagined community of grocers. As the trade journal championed modern marketing techniques, it began to set a standard of the layout, style, and fixtures of a modern grocery store, while it dictated proper retailing expectations, dress, and behaviour of workers. However, the state, and in a number of ways, the consumer, would continually disrupt the corporate autonomy of the *Grocer* and the grocery sector.

The role of women in the growth of the grocery sector, as workers and as consumers, was different than in other retail sectors. The early integration of female workers in the grocery trade had capitalized on the gendering of administrative labour in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and routinely hired single women as bookkeepers and stenographers. The figure of the department store shop girl was similarly used as a sales tactic inside some grocery stores. Unlike the department store shop floor, female grocery clerks were not the majority

employee and worked alongside male clerks and male managers. In this way, the grocery store floor was gendered in a way the department store was not. The *Grocer* sustained this division by publishing opinion pieces of retailers who debated the worth, profit, and at times, the detriment of hiring a 'goo-goo-eyed' saleswoman. Further still, the journal promoted views of grocers who saw the benefit of delegating female workers to the confectionary section of their store to tend to children, while they, or their male clerks tended to priority (adult) patrons. The figure of the Biscuit Girl of the Loblaw Groceterias and the Lady Demonstrator symbolized the assumption that female customers were more likely to trust the recommendation of fellow women. This interaction helped sustain the moral economy of food. Unlike a new fur jacket, there was a level of trust that, from one woman to another, understood the value of food for the home, and by extension, the family.

This dissertation has argued that the contradictions between modernity and tradition were visible in the figure of the female grocery shopper. The infiltration of scientific management in the grocery sector permeated the home kitchen in a similar fashion. However, as both spaces were redesigned in print to be more modern by their respective authority figure (the *Grocer* and *Chatelaine*), women were anchored back into domestic roles and images. At a time when most goods or experiences marketed toward women during this time were considered socially dangerous, the fear of making women *too* modern and rupturing their relationship to domestic obligations pervaded the printed press.[1] The launch of the Chatelaine Institute invoked this contradiction between modernity and tradition as the kitchen was imagined as a site of active

[1] Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem*, Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled*, Bradbury, *Working Families,* Chambers, *Misconceptions*, Myers, *Caught*, Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York*, (Pennsylvania: Temple University Press, 1986): 33, 50-51, 113. See also Peiss's chapter "Making Up, Making Over: Cosmetics, Consumer Culture, and Women's Identity," *The Sex of Things,* 311-336.

consumption of Seal-Approved goods which included pre-packaged and easy-to-prepare foods, for modern shoppers to purchase. The caveat was that the Institute championed introducing technology and science into the kitchen to modernize it without disrupting the gendered norms, expectations, and actions that were expected of their female readers. The Loblaw Groceterias almost exclusively used images of their imagined modern female customers, represented by their short hair, lean and slim-fitted clothing, and could shop with 'authority' and 'freedom.'[2] These advertisements depicted children accompanying the female shopper nearly as frequently. The Loblaw simplified recipe series similarly depicted a woman with bobbed hair using modern tools such as measuring cups (rather than intuition). The figure of the modern shopper, depicted by periodical literature, was not representative of the 'business girl' on her way home from work but a woman tethered to the responsibility of children, familial obligation, and domestic labour in the home kitchen.

Because the figure of the modern grocery shopper was created to be an extension of domestic responsibility and expectation, it enabled women to talk back to public policy and by proxy, the grocery industry. In this way, the shoppers of my dissertation embodied Cohen's definition of citizen consumer where their identity and interests as consumers had been granted new political importance.[3] This is evident in the formation of the Toronto Housewives' League, formed in the 1910s to combat rising costs of living and the inability to feed their children properly, had demanded government intervention in the market. *Everywoman's World* and *Chatelaine* had encouraged their female readership to perform the lessons on food budgeting, shopping intelligently, and the nutritional value of foods, that their experts had taught. Food

[2] "Loblaw Groceterias Freedom of Action," Loblaw Groceterias Co. Ltd. Advertisement, *The Toronto Daily Star,* (Jul. 19, 1926): 4.
[3] Cohen, 41, 89.

shoppers were taught to not purchase on impulse but to consume rationally during times of crisis, and because of this, expected grocers to sell their lines in an equally rational and fair manner. However, this was not always the reality for shoppers as the *Grocer* had documented much of this tension between individual consumers and their local grocers and came to the defence of their readers. Ironically, because periodical literature and the state had valorized and gendered food consumption and production during the First World War and the Great Depression unprecedently, this generated the space for consumer advocacy. As women took on the prescribed traditional role as mothers to evoke modern shoppers, they gained a higher political stake as they were promoted from feeders of the family to feeders of the next generation, future soldiers, and of the nation.

The rise of the citizen consumer amidst public debates about morality and consumerism forced grocery chains to foster their reputation as corporate citizens. Food was irrevocably moral as it had been continually tied, by women's magazines and the state, to the moral responsibility and upbringing of the home. During times of crisis the morality of food was heightened by periodical literature and the state that had urged a reorientation of consumer spending and framed food shopping as a national, moral, and communal responsibility. This framing caused female consumers to expect the market to serve and respond to public interest in ways that did not affect other retail sectors as the Great Depression (and recovery period) unfolded. These conversations of the grocery industry's obligation to consumers continue to haunt Canadians today, with the Canadian Grocery Industry Code of Conduct, although it is not gendered in the same way.[4] The

[4] "Canadian Grocery Industry Code of Conduct Provisions," CanadaCode.org, June 26, 2024. https://canadacode.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Final-Grocery-Code-Provisions-June-26-2024.pdf. "'Deeply Unhappy' grocery shoppers plan to boycott Loblaw-owned stores in May," BNN Bloomberg, Apr. 29, 2024, Web, https://www.bnnbloomberg.ca/business/company-news/2024/04/29/deeply-unhappy-grocery-shoppers-plan-to-boycott-loblaw-owned-stores-in-may/

Grocer documented how some retailers had reverted to extending credit as unemployment soared and access to cash dwindled, how small grocers were the 'real relief department of the city,' and how some grocers had broken relief regulations (which the journal did not condone) by splitting welfare orders by giving part groceries, part cash to desperate customers. As independent grocers responded to the needs of their community, hostility toward chains grew as they were viewed as detached and impersonal. Chain stores evoked a moral commitment to their customers in various ways. The *Grocer* was careful not to alienate either readership. The Piggly Wiggly chain presented itself as they offered free milk to 'needy mothers' which responded to the demands of female customers, who, in turn, responded to the moral responsibility of preserving the health for their young children that had been prescribed by the women's magazines and the state. Other chains, like Loblaw Groceterias, did not change their modern selling techniques and continued to operate under a cash-and-carry system. Instead, the Loblaw brand sustained its image of a corporate citizen through proclaimed high wages and satisfaction of locally employed workers, and philanthropic investments for City of Toronto. The grocery industry had been brought into civic obligations under the conditions of the war, but it was the Great Depression that further valorized women's economic contributions, as citizen consumers, to demand moral obligations by the independent or chain grocery store to their individual and community interests.

Modernity in the grocery trade could never fully cleave consumption from the 'logical' need for food that consumers faced. My scholarship builds on other scholars who have explored the concept of modernity and consumerism in the early twentieth century. For others, the concept of modernity often loses the materiality and operates in the imaginary. For example, Strange's *Toronto's Girl Problem* has explored the modern through the perceived fear and anxiety of girls in the city, Srigley's *Breadwinning Daughters* examines perceived constructions of identity

through fashion or work, or Walden's *Becoming Modern in Toronto* has viewed consumption through the stimulation of desires for goods and perception of a modern identity among strangers at the Toronto exhibition. This dissertation focuses on the materiality of food rather than the production of desire for luxury goods. Because I focus on the material, this dissertation has shown how the state intervened in ways that other consumables did not have. Government regulation solidified (and gendered in many ways) food as a moral and rational necessity, and it was the materiality of food that was regulated, not desire.

This dissertation has argued that grocery retailing embraced modern marketing techniques and the gendered responsibilities for food provision in most households. It has shown that purchases in the grocery store were not a one-sided transaction but a series of personal choices, skepticism, budget, knowledge, and expectation. The grocery industry cannot be told without investigating how women were pulled into modernity as workers, consumers, and prospective shoppers and the limitations of this. The unevenness to mobilize and invoke modernity in the grocery sector meant women were simultaneously portrayed as independent corporate actors while anchored to their reproductive labour. In this way, mothers took on traditional roles to invoke modern shoppers. Similarly, food was not as vulnerable to the same tools of modernity and mass production that infiltrated department stores as goods could easily perish. The local demand for food was very different from the demand for clothes, furniture, and department store goods. As a result, in the early twentieth century, the grocery industry was dependent on the participation of women, as shoppers and workers, to effectively modernize.

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