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Hidden Non-Progressiveness: US Women's Magazine *Good Housekeeping* During Wartime and Emancipation of Mass Media Content

Abstract

This article aims to investigate whether the US women's magazine *Good Housekeeping*, a massively popular publication, linguistically reflected a perceived emancipation of the WWII American woman's identity and role at home and in the workplace. Specifically, a corpus of articles appeared on the magazine between 1920 and 1949 will be analysed using Corpus Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis to put to the test the theory that the 1940s texts are more emancipated or modern than those from the previous two decades. How do their Wartime linguistic strategies compare with those from the time of peace between the Wars? And how do they compare with the real, daily life in Wartime America, as reconstructed by historians?

1. *Introduction*

According to Thomas and Meriel Bloor, language is "a human social phenomenon, it develops and changes as people use it for social purposes" (Bloor T. and Bloor M. 2004, 228). The way we look at reality is influenced by our language and the way we use it. We are also partially conscious of this and therefore we might think we write and speak independently. Journalists and authors of content for mass media consumption have developed several linguistic strategies that can subtly influence not only our opinion of the society in which we live, but also the opinion we have of ourselves. These strategies aim at creating an Ideal Reader, through a representation of the ideal reader desired by the writer, or the representation of how the reader should be, hidden in the text. Readers might then unconsciously compare themselves to this Ideal Reader. Mass media content can be used to influence the reader into conforming into an iden-

tity, which can be a political identity, a national identity, or a gender identity: this is the Identity Construction. Popular magazines, in particular, might be considered innocuous, low brow reading material, but they have their own "particular ethos and ideologies [...] they can also reflect and construct cultural values" (McLoughlin 2000, XII).

This paper introduces a Corpus Analysis and a Critical Discourse Analysis of articles from the U.S. magazine *Good Housekeeping* from 1920 to 1949 and a comparison between the representation of American women in the time of peace between the two Wars and during Wartime, which will emerge from the linguistic analysis, and their actual daily life as reconstructed by historical sources.

The paper offers a general overview of what is the Gendered Language, followed by the methodology, which employs both a quantitative and qualitative analysis (respectively, via Corpus Analysis and CDA). Sections 4. and 5. Illustrate a diachronic study of the use of language related to gender in the magazine during the examined decades, and a necessary look into how the use of language in this kind of publication changes during Wartime. The following sections first analyse aspects of the examined Corpus followed by a comparison with the historical context of the time. The representation of housework, what kind of Ideal Reader the magazine is attempting to build and present to the Real Reader as a model, the work outside of the house, especially the factory, all are compared to the real life of Wartime American women, using excerpts from extensive work by historians and memory archives. The paper includes examples of media content to which the average American woman is subjected during Wartime, which is not part of the Corpus, or created by the magazine, but is contemporary and selected according to the similarity to *Good Housekeeping* content from the same years.

2. *Lakoff and the Gendered Language*

Language can be used to attempt a gender construction. There is a language commonly known as a more 'feminine' language that is taught to little girls, not innate, which is attributed to their gender by society. Robin T. Lakoff called it the 'women's speech' and made a comprehensive list of linguistic features that allow us to identify the 'women's speech'. According to Lakoff, a text written imitating the 'women's speech' implies that the text producer is

attempting a Gender Identity Construction, that is, building an Ideal Female Reader, an example of femininity to whom the writer wishes the reader will compare herself. The features of the 'women's speech' are:

- Vagueness: imprecise expressions like "such nice woolly jumpers..." or "not-quite"
- Emotional: as opposed to intellectual evaluation
- Intensifiers: like in "so grateful!"
- Diminutives
- Qualifiers: like in "a bit"
- Politeness
- Hedging: the use of hedges of various kinds.

Women's speech seems in general to contain more instances of "well", "y'know", "kinda", and so forth: words that convey the sense that the speaker is uncertain about what he (or she) is saying or cannot vouch for the accuracy of this statement. Another manifestation of the same thing is the use of "I guess" and "I think" professing declarations, or "I wonder" prefacing questions (Lakoff 2004, 79).

Identifying a gendered speech or a written text such as this, allows us to identify gender roles the way they are desired by the writer, and, in this context specifically, what the text producer considers an appropriate feminine behaviour. Using the Corpus Analysis to identify the 'women's speech' in a text and applying the Critical Discourse Analysis to the resulting data, allows us to create a profile of this 'ideal' person built by the writer.

3. Good Housekeeping*: the Corpus and the Methodology*

In this analysis we are specifically going to examine a corpus taken from the U.S. women's magazine *Good Housekeeping* and comprised of 548,860 tokens, 36,721 types, and 34,525 lemmas. All the texts are non-fictional items and have been taken from issues published between 1920 and 1949. This corpus can also be divided into sub-corpora by decades (1920, 1930s, 1940s) or by political and non-political content, that is, a first group of texts consisting of political articles, political editorials, columns on legislation, profiles of political figures; the second group consisting of articles and columns reporting on culture and

society, fashion, child-rearing, and housework. We will explore this corpus looking for linguistic variations in the magazine contents during Wartime, compared to the previous two decades, in order to look for a possible emancipation of the texts and the intents of the staff writing them. In the 1940s war propaganda was everywhere: shop windows, films, posters, advertisement, and magazines. Government's war propaganda was everywhere, and exhortations to participate to the war effort were echoed in the most popular publications, *Good Housekeeping* included. Unlike in the 1920s, women were asked to work outside of the house, take jobs in defence-related factories, which were lacking workforce, or work as nurses. Women were also invited to volunteer, buy War Bonds, donate blood, offer beds to travelling soldiers. At the same time, they were expected to work as homemakers, often in a household without a husband, deployed at the Front. Does this mean that the *Good Housekeeping* staff helped female readers to navigate wartime hardships, and give useful advice on how to reconcile the many duties requested to the citizens at the 'Home Front'? Or was the average writer of the magazine still very much preoccupied with building an ideal of femininity, as if it were a fundamental duty of the staff of a massively diffused publication targeting women? Do the texts of the corpus suggest an emancipation of a woman mainly identified by her work rather than her gender? An answer to these questions can be given through a linguistic analysis. The selected corpus will be first analysed with a data-based corpus analysis, using concordance software LancsBox. The software will be used to look primarily for the Raw Frequency of Lakoff's Words indicating an attempt at Gender Identity Construction, each decade represented by the same number of articles. Given that 'the same number of articles' does not mean 'the same number of words', we are also going to calculate the Normalised Frequency of the most frequent Lakoff's Words in the corpus.

The data resulting from the Corpus Analysis must then be interpreted using the Critical Discourse Analysis. In this case, we are looking to reconstruct the Ideal Reader that the text producers are creating for the readers, or what kind of exemplary woman emerges from the linguistic choices appearing in the texts, and in order to do so, Critical Discourse Analysis is fundamental, given that a software cannot give us that 'identikit' or the intentions of the staff, which can only be identified by a linguist. Finally, both data and this Ideal Reader we reconstruct, cannot be interpreted out of context. Critical Discourse Analysis is a vast interdisciplinary field, sharing interests with anthropology, sociology, ethnography, eth-

nomethodology, cognitive and social psychology, literary theory and philosophy of language and communication. Its methods, such as context analysis, observational and recording techniques, etc., are often shared with these disciplines, too. The reason why Critical Discourse Analysis is fundamental in linguistic studies, has been highlighted by Norman Fairclough:

> Language is widely misperceived as transparent, so that the social and ideological 'work' the language does in producing, reproducing, or transforming social structures, relations and identities is routinely 'overlooked'. Social analysts not uncommonly share the misperception of language as transparent, not recognizing that social analysis of this course entails going beyond this natural attitude towards language in order to reveal the precise mechanisms and modalities of the social and ideological work of language" (Fairclough 1992, 211).

For this analysis, in particular, it is fundamental to make a comparison between the reconstruction of Wartime everyday life provided by historians, and the representation of this life on the pages of *Good Housekeeping*, given that the magazine and its writers did not exist in a vacuum.

4. *Diachrony of the Gendered Language in* Good Housekeeping

The gendered language is massively used in the texts from the 1920s and the 1930s: it seems to be the predominant style, even for political contents. On *Good Housekeeping* in the 1920s we find extensive opinion pieces on unemployment and Congress legislation, while millions of American women are voting for the first time, women's suffrage having been introduced very recently. The Magazine features recurring contributors like Frances Parkinson Keyes, and her column "Letters from a Senator's Wife", reporting on political associations, of both men and women, and political conventions taking place in Washington. In the 1930s, as well, we find the extensive and detailed articles on elections and legislation, women's rights, profiles of presidents and their wives, pieces on the rising European dictatorships, and deaf-blind reporter Helen Keller interviewing royals abroad. The most frequent Lakoff's Words identifying the 'Women's Speech' on the *Good Housekeeping* Corpus are: such, little, so, fine, should, lovely, attractively, delicate, exquisitely, fancy, grace/graced/graceful/gracefully, in both the 1920s and the 1930s. But we also find: feminine, delightful/delightfully, gay, pretty, bridelike. In one of the examined 1940s articles,

banks are described as "flirtatious", while a woman cooking for her husband, a lieutenant, and other two soldiers who are temporarily living in her house, is tempting ("tempt") the officers with her food. However, the ultra-gendered language is drastically reduced in the 1940s (Fig. 1):

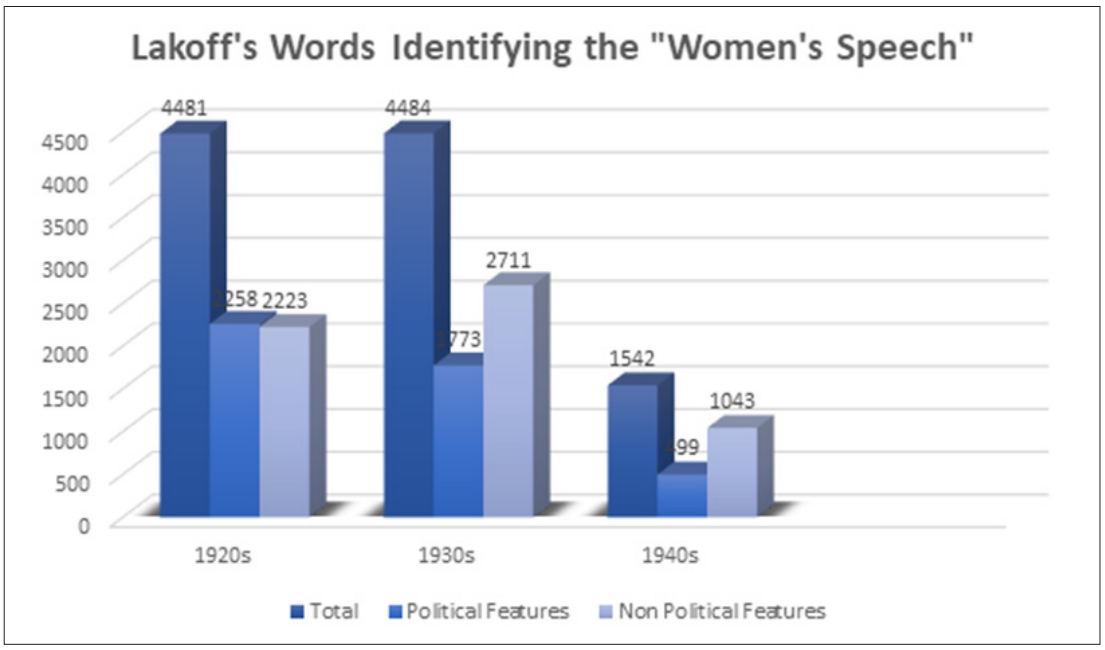

Fig. 1

The words in the corpus identifying a gendered language occur almost in the same number in the 1920s and 1930s (4,481 words, and 4,484 words, respectively), but dramatically drop in the 1940s (1,542).

We can verify this Raw Frequency by calculating the Normalised Frequency of these occurrences, for each decade. The Normalised Frequency is the Frequency per 10,000 words. So, the Normalised Frequency for the 1920s for example is: Raw Frequency (4,481) / Total number of words in the 1920s sub-corpus (231,025 Tokens) x 10,000 = Normalised Frequency in the 1920s sub-corpus. Therefore, we have:

4,481 / 231,025 x 10,000 = 193,96 for the 1920s.
4,484 / 226,927 x 10,000 = 197,59 for the 1930s.
1,542 / 89,536 x 10,000 = 172,22 for the 1940s.

We notice how the Normalised Frequency of the words of the 'women's speech' was getting higher in the 1930s, right before the War, and how the number drops during Wartime, even though the drop looks slightly less drastic.

From the data alone it looks as if the magazine's staff is not employing linguistic strategies aimed at building an hyperfeminine Ideal Reader. Without context, it might also look like the text producer decided to use a less gendered style, inclusive of a readership of any gender, instead of just women. This is why, even though Corpus Analysis is undoubtedly objective, while CDA is interpretive, the latter is necessary to understand the text in its context and to understand the goals of the author of said text.

As far as our corpus is concerned, the gendered language in the 1940s political columns is scarce, not because the language is more emancipated, but because *Good Housekeeping* significantly reduces the number of political columns and political opinion items during Wartime. There are fewer articles directly reporting on how the war is going, and most of these are personal experiences. The magazine's representation of everyday life in wartime, with its cheerful, upbeat articles from the 1940s, appears more and more unrealistic through the years. Even looking beyond the usual lexical choices and linguistics strategies made by the magazine's staff, when compared to the detailed social landscapes of the Great Depression painted in the 1920s and 1930s issues, and especially when it is compared to the products of historical research on the period, the magazine does not seem to give a fair representation of the decade's lifestyle in the United States. In fact, politics coverage and political opinion articles are drastically reduced, or are completely absent from some 1940s issues. The magazine features a political editorial for decades, until 1943 circa, when it becomes apolitical.

5. *Critical Discourse Analysis and Wartime "Advice"*

Looking for a semantic field of war in the 1940s non-political sub-corpus, and the words' frequency in the texts using LancsBox (Fig. 2) obviously we find that the most frequent word is war, but we also find words expressing civilians' extraordinary work for the Country, such as service, effort, and every form of the verb ration. Frequent are the expressions: war bride, war wives, war wedding.

War (31)	Suffer (10)	Nurse (6)
America (12)	Army (10)	French (6)
Death (11)	Service (9)	Stock (6)
Fight (10)	Battle (7)	Victim (6)
Europe (10)	Italy (7)	Escape (6)
Navy (10)	Resistance (7)	Ration/ed/ing (6)

Fig. 2

Therefore, expressions usually associated to the military are frequent in every item of the magazine, including articles about fashion, domesticity, children, cooking, weddings, etc. However *Good Housekeeping* also expects the reader to keep working towards certain social expectations. In the June 1943 issue, we find the article "Here Comes the War Bride", which opens as such:

> Whether it's because spur-of-the-moment marriages are so much in vogue or because lavishness is inappropriate to the times, elaborate wedding receptions are out until Victory. Instead, there are smaller, more intimate gatherings of relatives and friends who can be entertained simply and suitably – and just as delightfully – with refreshments easily prepared and served at home. Even so, a wedding is a gala occasion, and the food should be in keeping. We had this in mind when we planned the three after-the-ceremony collations suggested on page 84 (Marsh 1943, 82).

The lexicon of the article imitates military speech and uses military terms even to describe the decoration of a wedding cake. The Advisor introduces the problem ("elaborate wedding receptions are out until Victory", which sounds like an order given by a commander). The reassurance and requests of trust from the reader, by the author ("we had this in mind when we planned the three after-the-ceremony collations") are typical of this kind of problem-solution column. In the introduction we also notice another directive imitating the government's material for the media, typical of the time: even if bride and groom are not financially struggling, the gathering must be modest, because ostentation is inappropriate to the times ("lavishness is inappropriate to the times"), that is, it is supposedly offensive to the country fellows. The article describes at length all the elements of the banquet, from table clothing to recipes, which contain ingredients available among the rationed food; the text producer directly addresses the reader and future bride in the text of the recipes; therefore,

it is a given that the whole menu has to be cooked by the bride herself. The text produced notices that "spur-of-the-moment marriages are so much in vogue" and that "smaller, more intimate gatherings of relatives" nicer, as if these were choices only dictated by trends, style and fashion, instead probably by the circumstances. From this introduction, though, we can gather which these circumstances are. However, the bride has some inescapable duties: to organise a sober party; to cook the wedding menu; to serve it; to entertain the guests ("friends who can be entertained simply and suitably- and just as delightfully- with refreshments easily prepared and served at home").

Finally, that "spur-of-the-moment marriages are so much in vogue", really required an investigation into the historical context. The increase of spur-of-the-moment marriages is presented as "in vogue", as if suddenly getting married on a short notice was a fashionable thing. In the rest of the article no other explanation is provided. A spike in weddings being celebrated in the 1940s is due to the United States' Selective Service regulations.

> When Congress authorised what would become the World War Two draft in 1940, 65% of the 17 million men who registered received dependency deferments. This meant that fathers and married men without children would not be drafted. Many had rushed to the altar. Documents in the National Archives show that marriage rates for draft-aged young men jumped by 25% between 1940 and 1941. Birth rates similarly spiked. Congress eventually amended the law to allow only those dependents conceived or acquired by marriage or adoption before Pearl Harbor to guarantee a deferment. This change led the Selective Service to develop detailed policies about how to measure the approximate date of a baby's conception. A pregnancy started before December 7, 1941, would gain the new father at deferment, but those started after that date would not guarantee similar privilege (Rutenberg 2020).

In 1943 Montana's Senator Barton K. Wheeler, a local draft board member, vowed not to draft any father claiming: "I have said that no father in the United States should be called... until the slackers are taken out of the Government bureaus. Fathers should not be called until the slackers are taken out of the industries where they are hiding today" (Time magazine 1943), while senator Revercomb, a member of the military affairs committee, claimed that "if too many fathers are killed, we may have wolfpacks of children roaming the streets and highways" (Deseret News 1943). The War Department, however, needed more men, and there simply weren't enough who were not husbands or fathers to meet that need. By mid-1945, only 0.5% of men still held their dependency deferments. Ac-

cording to Rutenberg "It is true that almost 80% of American men born in the 1920s eventually served in the military during World War II and relatively few declared themselves as conscientious objectors or actively resisted the draft. But millions of men searched for legal ways to avoid qualifying for the draft in the first place" some of them with the help of women: "in mid-1942, an estimated 500,000 wives quit their war jobs in order to strengthen their husbands' claims to a dependency deferment." Rutenberg's judgement is harsh:

> Even during World War II, a moment of supposed unity and resolve to beat Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, American men balked at the draft. While the lasting memory is of the "Greatest Generation" rushing to join up in the wake of the attack on Pearl Harbor, their willingness is more myth than reality (Rutenberg 2020).

The rush to get married, however, will forever be immortalised on the pages of *Good Housekeeping* as something "in vogue", almost romantic and without apparent explanation.

6. *Wartime Housework: Representation and Reality*

As we have seen, data analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis cannot be extrapolated from the historical context. This does not mean that the linguist analyses a corpus only to detect whether this may reflect some type of technical or ideological manipulation in varying contexts. A linguist can also perceive a change in use of language and society through linguistic variations. Critical Discourse Analysis combines critique of discourse and explanation of how it figures within and contributes to the existing social reality, as the basis for action to change that existing reality in particular respects. In the words of Norman Fairclough: "in CDA as I see it, being critical is not just identifying features and types of discourse which are open to criticisms of various sorts (e.g., are false, or manipulative), it is also asking: why is the discourse like this? In other words [...] being critical means looking for explanations." (Fairclough 1988, 7). A Wartime American woman in the 1940s was subjected to a series of government's messages which not only invited to apply for specific jobs, donate blood, time, and work, offer a guest room to soldiers, to not waste resources and electricity, to buy war bonds, and dealing with shortages of some materials (such as metal). US women were also invited to write to soldiers at the front and be careful of what they were saying in public.

Receiving letters from the front might have meant having information on the position or movements of the soldiers, and citizens were invited not to talk about them in public, in case spies were near, listening (Fig. 3). In the same years, the pages of *Good Housekeeping* start echoing the government's recommendations. The magazine's staff however also adds guidance on how to be more lady-like in these trying times. In a recurring item, similar to a satirical comics strip, illustrated and in rhyme, we find behaviour recommendations (Fig. 4), articles like "How to Behave in Hospital", and articles on how teenage girls should behave on a date. In every issue, the staff's content is accompanied by advertising content referring to the war, often promising that a product is helping to win the war or women's work is helping to win the war, or the occasional 'counter-propaganda' style of advert, evidently in response to propaganda content from the enemy, promptly used to advert a commercial product.

Fig. 3

While the pages of *Good Housekeeping* during the War presented a positive and light-hearted tone, historians reconstructed the actual daily life of working women during Wartime. Clearly *Good Housekeeping* content implies that the

expected role of a woman was also to be a proper homemaker, even if she was working outside of the house, therefore, in this paragraph, we will focus on that role. During Wartime there was a housing shortage, it was hard to find day-care for children, food was rationed, and people lived in fear of a possible attack by Japan on the West Coast.

Fig. 4

Kimberly A. Hall for the San Diego Historical Society conducted a series of oral interviews of women who lived in San Diego during the wartime era. The women were selected randomly and had different experiences. They were wives of aircraft workers and military men, as well as single young women. Many people were actually forced to live in cramped quarters (Pourade 1977, 8). Popular magazines suggested other alternatives and *Good Housekeeping* in particular suggested living in a barn (Draper 1943, 131). One of the interviewed women, Mary Jane Babcock, had to live in a garage after her marriage in 1942. "There weren't many places [available]", she recalls. Louise Johnston had a similar experience after her migration from Oklahoma to San Diego. She relocated because her husband obtained a job with Consolidated Aircraft Corporation. She explained, "I never saw such little apartments in my life. The bed was made into the floor, you couldn't move it." Many women followed military men to San Diego to say goodbye before they left for war.

The city was known as a "port of Navy wives." The women were viewed as a nuisance by the city because they were thought to use up space needed for defence workers. As Collier's Magazine put it, "San Diego wishes heartily that they'd all go back where they came from... they sleep everywhere" (Huntington Smith 1944, 15,75-76). With insufficient housing women slept in hotel lobbies, city parks, cars, and theatres. A building rush in San Diego lured construction workers who were forced to live in tents with their families. "Women were encouraged to have children, increasing their work. Only months before the United States declared war, the San Diego Union published an article entitled "Four Babies Needed in Each Family" (San Diego Union, 28 September 1941). That number was needed, the Union argued, to maintain the population. "In San Diego the birth rate rose from 18.49 per 1,000 in 1941 to 21.7 in 1945. Nationally, the population aged 5 and under grew 25% between 1940 and 1943" (Hall 1993).

Housekeeping was an endless challenge during the war. Women performed household tasks without adequate appliances. The production of washing machines, vacuum cleaners, sewing machines and other appliances stopped in February 1942. Many were expected to perform housekeeping chores of the 1940s using methods of the pre 1920s. Washing clothes by hand was commonplace. *Good Housekeeping* suggested: "wash often ... it lightens the work ... soak dirty clothes ... do not boil" (Kendall 1943, 111- 112). [...] Babcock had her name on a list to purchase [appliances] as many women did when production of appliances resumed in 1945 (Hall 1993).

The government rationed sugar, coffee, meat, and butter. Across America women were encouraged to grow food in their yards. Johnston used her rationing stamps to purchase everything possible, regardless of need. Babcock was solely responsible for fixing meals for herself and her child. While her child ate baby food, she improvised with cereal and tea made from reused tea bags "anything but a balanced diet."

Popular magazines were giving hints to women on conserving energy and materials. Ladies' Home Journal detailed instructions for women on "how to rinse, bleach, hang, and iron sheets to cause the least fabric stress." Dusting light bulbs was recommended. Dust, women learned, could cut light by 20%, so "many women dutifully dusted their light bulbs" (Weatherford 2009, 207-209). Hall is critical of the discrepancy between magazines' contents and suggestions, and the reality of the time:

> *Good Housekeeping* kept women informed with articles such as "Cleaning Your Aluminum Pots and Pans without Steel Wool." To deal with the metal of rationing, the article advised women to preserve their kitchen utensils and pots. Women were told to preserve their pots and pans by keeping stove temperatures low to "prevent burning and boiling over." "Fill them with water", the article suggested, "and...soak on the range [after use]...don't keep them jumbled together in a cupboard... they'll come tumbling out and be... damaged." After lengthy instructions on the use of pots and pans during wartime, women were informed that "to do the job right you'll need time and patience" (Kendall 1943, 138) apparently, the women's magazines were unaware of the work required to abide by this type of advice. More important things awaited" (Hall 1993).

Women solved the problems of food rationing by canning. However, the 15% rationing of steel, cut the availability of can lids. The rubber shortage further affected storing foods in jars. Harriet Daum recalls her mother canning fruit: "My mother worked real hard... She was always canning fruit... I always swore I would never... work as hard as she did."

Nationwide, films, shop windows, newspapers, and women's magazines put women under constant pressure to do something for the war effort. Many San Diego women were busily trying to do their share. Some took jobs while others did volunteer work.

"I was frightened to death all the time... afraid of a bomb... we had drills; we were under our desks more than we'd be sitting at the desks" remembered Johnson. Last but not least, most women did not know their husbands'

location during the war. A letter or a phone call from a loved one made a big difference in their lives. On the pages of *Good Housekeeping* soldiers are mentioned on every issue, and almost in every item, but they are never represented suffering or even fighting. For example, an August 1943 advert that appeared in the magazine represents the troops in their spare time and happy (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5

7. *Beauty is Patriotic: the Ideal Reader according to* Good Housekeeping *During the War*

The War Effort included keeping an attractive appearance. Amidst a shortage of cloth, numerous articles instructed women on how to make old clothing appear fashionable. The San Diego Union Encouraged women to maintain their looks and reported on women who pledged: "We resolve to be fragile and faintly perfumed... where weary men gather... to be diverted from the hard tasks of the day" (San Diego Union, 3 January 1942).

Hall describes these as "fantasies nearly impossible to fulfil." Despite the War, the San Diego Union instructed women to "Face it... always show a smiling face, learn to bear the unbearable." *Good Housekeeping* keeps the same tenor. In the June 1943 issue several pages are dedicated to beauty advice. Emblematic is the article "MEMOS from HOLLYWOOD", for which the staff recruits some of the most famous female celebrities of the time in order to show the readers how they maintain their looks. At this time female citizens have rationed resources for hygiene products and have been invited not to waste them. The celebrities tell, in a not particularly realistic way, how they maintain their looks with homemade products and tricks. This article looks like one of the most innocuous ones from *Good Housekeeping*, but it might be one of the most unrealistic. The header image is of Jane Wyman portrayed in her house. The text opens with "being simple" described as being fun: "In Hollywood they're having fun being simple and folksy. The lifted eyebrow – literally and figuratively – is out of style. They are dyeing their dresses but not their hair."

The item is written as a series of confidential suggestions. We are informed that these celebrities work as a nurse's aide, at a canteen, or do their own dishwashing, and that "they dislike a stagy makeup in private life." They take care of their own hair and makeup, and that their ideal hair is long and smooth: "few wear it short, and those because a picture requires a boyish look." Short hair is defined as "boyish" and, as we can see from the rest of the article, the aim is not just giving suggestions in times of resources' shortages, but also make women appear as feminine as possible, therefore short hair is somehow not feminine enough. The introduction closes with: "...when you ask what type of girl is most likely to succeed in Hollywood, they say, "the kind of girl everyone wants for a daughter." The text introdu-

ces very early the use of a deictic 'you' to create a more informal relationship between the text producer and the text interpreter, although the text producer does not make any reference to, or give any information on herself. In the text we find: "Maureen O'Hara says that back home in Ireland they always use rainwater for hair and skin because it is so soft. Her own wild rose skin is washed daily with mild soap..."

Expressions like "back home in Ireland" give a sense of familiarity to the person who's being described, O'Hara, but the description of the celebrities' physical appearance ("her own wild-rose skin" and later for Veronica lake: "her glorious Sheen") keep them at a certain 'distance', because they've been chosen here as a model for inspiration. All the products being recommended here are very simple, such as soap and water, lemon, butter... in this case, if we have to believe O'Hara, rainwater. Lakoff's words signalling the 'women's speech' are very evident in this text ("wild-rose skin", "so soft", ...). In another part of the text, we read:

> The picture at the left shows Alexis Smith, when as a 19-year-old college student, she was tapped for the screen. "The first thing they did to me was to make me look smooth. Because I wanted to look feminine, I had always run to fluff and curls, and the sleek hairdo did wonders for me. I learned to carry my height proudly. A tall girl can wear clothes unusually well."

"Tapped" (instead of chosen) gives the text a more informal style, it imitates more the spoken language than the written one. Indeed, then the article gives directly space to the quoted words of the actress speaking in first person. Smith informs us that she wanted to look "feminine" and that her best hairdo is the sleek one. Her height has to be carried ("carry my height") as if it were a burden, "proudly", and she found a silver lining: the way clothes look on her. This choice of lexicon inevitably implies that being tall is one of those characteristics that doesn't constitute what is canonically "feminine". The article follows with: "to look alive and interesting, there is nothing like having a deep interest in some outside pursuit, says Alexis. She is thrilled by music and ballet dancing [...] but if you want to cook, by all means cook."

We undoubtedly find a gendered language when we see that the text producer instead of writing something like "she likes" would rather write an Intensifier ("she is thrilled"). Veronica Lake is obviously invited to talk about her hair: "My pet treatment is out for the duration" she says, "I've been

using salted butter instead of the oils generally used for the scalp and hair." [...] For that glorious sheen she uses lemons. [...] Veronica always brushes, never combs her hair, because a comb leaves marks, and she likes her mop sleek and shiny."

All the sentences in an active form provide a decisive tone to Lake, and that ironic "mop" instead of 'hair' seems directed to the younger readers. We find the 'women's speech' again ("pet treatment"; "glorious sheen"). It is clear that this article does not propose a commercial product, not directly at least. A magazine's content can sometimes be dictated by advertisers, but here what is being proposed is an entire way of being. When we identify the Ideal Reader, we realise that the Text Producer has created a meticulous Gender Identity Construction, and more specifically a Femininity Construction, according to the staff's standards. From this text we extrapolate everything that is 'feminine': simple, dyeing their dresses, long/sleek hair, the kind of girl everyone wants for a daughter, wild-rose skin, looking alive and interesting, interest in some outside pursuit, cook, [even] when she is in a hurry she [has a method to apply her lipstick] and get perfect results, look wholesome and unaffected, work at a canteen, work as a nurse's aide, do your own dishwashing. We also find the apparently non-feminine (or inappropriate at this time) characteristics: dyeing their hair, stagy make up, short hair, height / tall girl, athlete muscles. All the interviewees speak with what we may call a feminine language, benefiting the intents of the article. Veronica Lake in particular had a distinctive hairdo (long, sleek hair, covering one eye), imitated by many American girls. Some factory workers wore their hair down in the factories, peekaboo style. Reportedly, their drooping locks began to present a safety issue. The U.S. government asked Lake not to wear her hair down for the duration of the War and she obliged. Lake illustrated the danger of loose hair for female factory workers, with her hair entangled in machinery, for LIFE magazine (Fig. 6), then she appeared in a public service announcement video, "Safety Styles", in which she urged women to follow her example. At the end of the video, the announcer says that, with her new updo, Veronica Lake's "hair is out of the way and combed in a simple and becoming fashion." When we examine the texts of *Good Housekeeping* in the 1940s, we still find linguistic strategies used to attempt a Gender Identity Construction. Furthermore, we find that the reader is subjected to several linguistic strategies (National Identity Construction, Gender Identity Construction, an Identity Construction instrumental to advertising) at the same time, even in the same article.

Fig. 6

8. *The Factory: Representation and Reality*

Looking at Government-backed media content like the video and photoshoot featuring Veronica Lake, one has the impression that women working in factories were risking their lives because of their vanity, and that tying up their hair was all that was needed to be safe. The Government itself seemed preoccupied with 'femininity'. Since December 1941, when the United States entered the War, more workers were needed in essential factories:

> Public pronouncements about the war exhorted women to do their duty to defeat Hitler, to be the "soldierettes" of the home front by doing the work needed to build war materiel, regardless of its potential danger or its "unfemininess." In contrast to earlier efforts to keep women away from adverse working conditions, employment managers during World War II clearly expected more from women. "Women should be told what to expect," declared a Tennessee supervisor, and should not be allowed to quit or be absent due to dirty, noisy, wet, dusty, or poorly ventilated conditions. The War Manpower Commission de-emphasized the physical differences between men and women and pointed to European women, particularly Germans, who successfully performed "an almost limitless number of jobs, many of which require [d] considerable physical exertion (Hepler 1998, 693).

Legislation on hiring, recruiting, and health and safety, was revised several times during this period. for both men and women, the factories of the 1940s simply weren't safe workplaces, and there was no Victory Roll that could help:

> The temporary easing of restrictions did not coincide with the elimination of workplace hazards. On the contrary, the expansion of production increased the likelihood of injury or illness. The introduction of new materials and processes, a larger proportion of unskilled workers, and greater exposure to existing chemical hazards because of increased hours all made the workplace more dangerous (Hepler 1998, 695).

Still, the government and many employers maintained a discourse, supported by anecdotes or by nothing at all, implying that the reason for skyrocketing accidents in the factories was due to 'femininity', for both men and women:

> Insurance executives predicted that accident rates would be higher because these women lacked experience, not because they were women. However, the training of women workers often followed traditional gender assumptions by suggesting that women's concern with femininity risked the safety of male workers: employers wanted "gals" to look like "guys." Women received training that firmly reminded them to hide their bodies. Accompanying new female hires on a plant tour, a manager at a West Coast aircraft company reportedly pointed out a man working on a drill press who had lost three fingers when he became "distracted" by one woman's inappropriately feminine work "costume." Whether or not this story is true, the fact is that many managers remained unconvinced that men and women could safely work in the same space and believed that only the "defeminization" of women workers would make the workplace safe for everyone." The National Safety Council sent messages about the danger of "loose flowing hair", while Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins warned women claimed she was more concerned about reports of accidents wearing high-heeled shoes. Other employers believed women responded well to safety regulations and that they had "natural cautiousness" (Ibid. 695).

So far, it is evident that these are narratives created by the Government, media, and employers. If we get nearer the workers' perspective, the discourse is slightly different: Juanita Loveless, a welder at Vega Aircraft in California, recalled that many of her female co-workers had no problem cutting their hair short (Gluck 1988, n. 12, 136); at the Todd Shipyards women rejected the more feminine working shoes they had been given, because they had no steel toe or shank, declaring: "We want steel toes like the men" (Herrick 1943, n. 24 33). Drawing on women's own attitudes toward equality, managers said

they wanted women who were "loath to complain, to act the cry baby, or to do anything that would bring discredit to their sex" (Varney, 1944, 13: 122-124). These references to equality did not work as deterrents when women workers started requesting safer working conditions which included poisonous vapours. "At a Bath Iron Works prefabricating plant in Brunswick, Maine, women used asbestos to wrap pipes; they also sewed "tea-cozy"-like asbestos pads to fit over valves" (Occupational Analysis, Bath Iron Works, n. 41, qtd. in Hepler 1998). reports that by 1940 the connection between asbestos and lung cancer had attracted the attention of the Public Health Service, but asbestos manufacturers largely controlled the epidemiological data, which they did not generally make available to workers, male or female. Finally, physicians and industrial physicians had innumerable and contradicting points of view on the wave of female workforce and their physical abilities. What is certain is that many American women lost their newfound jobs at the end of the war. Hepler claims that women "began to lose defence-related jobs even before the war ended."

9. *Rosie: Imitation, Iconography and Misconception*

Imitation is a widespread linguistic strategy in mass media: a text producer writes imitating the speech or perceived speech of the potential reader. In the 1940s however, a working woman, and a potential reader of *Good Housekeeping*, is subjected to imitation strategy by both the Government, via War Propaganda, and private companies. Popular culture content is imitated, linguistically and visually, by propaganda content. And, in turn, propaganda content might become popular culture again. Emblematic is the Rosie the Riveter poster. Private companies created propaganda posters very similar to the ones created by the US Government's War Production Board, and this poster is one of them. "Rosie" is not just a linguistic imitation strategy, but also an imitation of iconographic content, which was lifted from popular culture, re-elaborated by a private company and then again re-appropriated by popular culture. Rosie the Riveter and her slogan "We Can Do It!" will forever personify World War II working women, and many still today think she actually existed. The truth is the first "Rosie" is an imaginary girl mentioned in a very popular 1942 song by Redd Evans

and John Jacob Loebb, "Rosie the Riveter": "All day long / whether rain or shine / she's part of the assembly line / she's making history / working for victory / Rosie the Riveter..." American painter and illustrator Norman Rockwell was inspired by the popularity of the song for his 1943 cover of the Saturday Evening Post, in which Rockwell gives Rosie a face, and portrays her with many patriotic details: on that cover Rosie is an imitation of the pose of the prophet Isaiah (God's strong right arm) as he is represented in the Sistine Chapel. She is resting her arms on a lunchbox; her blue overalls are adorned with badges and buttons: a Red Cross blood donor button, a white "V for Victory" button, a Blue Star Mothers pin, an Army-Navy E Service production award pin, two bronze civilian service awards, and her personal identity badge, and she has a copy of Adolf Hitler's Mein Kampf under her feet. The woman who posed for the image was a 19-years-old phone operator, Mary Doyle Keefe (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7

During the same year, J. Howard Miller created the "We Can Do It!" poster for Westinghouse Electric, a private factory, to lift female workers' morale (Fig. 8).

Fig. 8

The poster did not circulate outside that workplace during the war: it was strictly internal to Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company, which displayed it in factories from February 15 to 28, 1943:

> [Miller's] image during the war years was nearly unknown beyond the Westinghouse factories, where wartime security ensured that its audience was limited to workers and management. Only since the mid-1980s has Miller's image gained worldwide fame. [...] The earliest reproduction [of the poster] that we have found in the post war years is in a 1982 Washington Post Magazine article that discussed poster reproductions then available from the National Archives. The poster recurred in a 1985 U.S. News and World Report article by Stuart Powell (Kimble and Olson 2006, 536).

In the following decades innumerable misconceptions and urban legends emerged about the poster, and several women claimed to have posed for the portrait. Miller's depiction of Rosie has mistakenly become an empowering symbol for women. Miller has created a series of similar posters, many of them featuring that Inclusive "We", and each of these prints sends a non-realistic image of women's beauty, with some of Miller's female depictions showing similarities with the voluptuous characters of the artist Alberto Vargas and his

so-called "Vargas Girls." Especially considering the dirty and dangerous conditions of the ammunition factories, Miller's posters convey a fictitious perspective on women and their relationship to family and workplace. Kimble and Olson also extensively dispute the poster as a message of emancipation not just for women but for all the workers:

> Widespread misconceptions concerning the "We Can Do It!" poster obfuscate the complex, mixed messages its original audience in all likelihood received during the war. The misconceptions also disguise the multifaceted and sometimes entwined motivations of women already working at the Westinghouse factories in 1943. But simply put, it is easy to look back more than 60 years later and see empowering qualities in Miller's poster. However, the poster's original audiences [both men and women] would not have received Rosie's empowerment in such an unequivocal fashion. [...] Moreover, [...] factory workers would have been familiar with the social functions of the ingroup ritualistic gesture displayed in the poster since it was already a commonplace performance at the East Pittsburgh factory with idiomatic community building qualities. [...] Rosie's "we" was constitutive in that it addressed specific time- and place-bound audiences, constructing them as a team with a distinctive company identification and mission in the war effort – and rhetorically differentiating them from other potential groups such as non-workers and workers for other organizations. Moreover, by addressing workers as "we" the pronoun obfuscated and sharp controversies within labor over communism, red-baiting, discrimination and other heartfelt sources of divisiveness" (Kimble and Olson 2006, 449-550).

Misconceptions aside, it is an example of how both private and state propaganda use content that is already popular and imitate it. *Good Housekeeping*, popular magazines and all the advertising agencies make no exception. American women did not exactly see a financial emancipation in jobs that were underpaid or paid less than their male colleagues and those who were mothers were still expected to be homemakers. Most female workers were single women, not women with a family:

> By 1943, San Diego defense plants employed 107,000 people. The need for workers opened job opportunities for women, as in the case of "Rosie the Riveter." However, this experience was not the norm for women during World War II. Homemakers and those who followed a traditional female role also experienced great changes. The expected role of a woman in the 1940s was to create a comfortable home for her husband and properly raise the children. The majority of women upheld these expectations during the Second World War. In 1942, there were 28 million homemakers in the United States. At the war's peak 23% of the labor force consisted of married women. In San Diego, the employment of women

aircraft workers did not exceed 40% of local aircraft employment. This refutes the popular image of "Rosie the Riveter (Hall 1993).

Still, "at the peak of the wartime industrial production, some 2 million women worked in war-related industries." (Randle 2020).

10. *Conclusions*

Discrepancy between Ideal Reader and Real Reader, the former reconstructed using Critical Discourse Analysis of the examined texts, the latter reconstructed by historians, on the pages of *Good Housekeeping* is nothing new. It existed at least since World War I, even though that period is not part of this analysis. However, with the development of a more pervasive propaganda content, and possibly more media content reaching the population (via cinema and TV), the discrepancy appears to be wider. A female U.S. citizen is surrounded by propaganda messages everywhere, on every medium, with *Good Housekeeping* echoing those messages. What should have been practical suggestions and advice on how to navigate the emergencies, the shortages, and how to participate in the War Effort, hides a Gender Construction aimed at building a specific kind of 'femininity', established well before the author starts writing an article, because it is part of his / her values. Applying CDA on the pages of *Good Housekeeping* it appears that the goal of the texts is to make the working women stay 'feminine'. Contradictingly, factory managers and Government offices worry about femininity being a source of potential problems for the workplace's health and safety, and for the production regime. While historians reconstructed objective problems arising from unsafe working conditions, at the time it was suggested that a concurring problem was being more or less woman-like, despite the vagueness of this expression. Corpus Analysis, which might look more objective, being based on data and statistics, signals fewer Lakoff's Words of the 'Women's speech', and therefore a less hyperfeminine or stereotyped standard of writing style, in *Good Housekeeping* texts from the 1940s. And yet, Critical Discourse Analysis, for all the warnings of subjectivity given by Fairclough, allows the linguist to bring to the surface an underlying attempt at Gender Identity Construction, which renders the text no more emancipated than the articles of the previous twenty years. The reader might

think that the Gendered Language becomes less gendered through time, because the stereotyped, almost childish, characteristics of the "women's speech" highlighted by Lakoff, are fewer and fewer as the time passes. However, when we look beyond the surface, and reconstruct the Ideal Reader through the CDA, and what exactly the writer wants from the real reader, that is, the function of the language, we cannot speak of an evident diachronic progressivism. Not only were women's roles in mass society constantly changing, at the time, but conflicting descriptions of being a woman were given by different magazines, as well as other media. According to Nancy Walker "magazines sometimes celebrated a woman's primary role as a homemaker and at other times subverted that ideology" (Walker 2000). Therefore, different women's magazines during one time period may have been targeting different groups of women such as mothers, singles, or career women. This time period, from the 1920s (a decade in which U.S. women were voting in a presidential election for the first time) to Wartime, is generally perceived, and often represented, as a period of social or economic emancipation for American women. However, this perception might be re-evaluated after a linguistic analysis of the material produced by mass media at the time and after setting said material against a realistic historical background.

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