

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Celluloid Girls, Tabloid Women: Movie Struck in 1950s America

By

Sela Tran

June 2024

A paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Arts degree in the
Master of Arts Program in Social Sciences

Faculty Advisor: Peggy Heffington
Preceptor: Alexander Hofmann

The camera lights flash and glow against the red carpet. Hordes of paparazzi shout her name: “Marilyn!” “Miss Monroe!” “Over here Marilyn!” Stepping out in a glimmering white dress and a fur coat on her shoulders, Monroe waves to the crowds and smiles for the cameras. Fans rush the barricades outside the theater where the premiere of her newest hit movie, *The Seven Year Itch*, is being held, in hopes of catching a glimpse of the iconic blonde bombshell actress of the decade. Young women screaming in blonde wigs hold up posters in hopes of getting Monroe’s attention. This was how premieres always were for Monroe, and almost every major actor and actress since the birth of Hollywood. Fan culture ignited the birth of the motion picture industry and has kept it alive ever since.

The mass popularity of movies throughout Hollywood history can be largely attributed to female fan culture.¹ This was something Hollywood executives were aware of since the beginning, as they quickly established the celebrity star system, noting who was popular in the box office and keeping them in heavy rotation within the studio.² This was something the United States government was also aware of, as a strict system of censorship was put in place just as Hollywood reached its golden era in the late 1920s and early 1930s. In subsequent decades, the history of the American film industry can be characterized as a continuous battle between the government appointed censors and the studio executives.³ It was a constant debate between what should and should not be shown in the motion pictures. While previous scholarship primarily focuses on how censorship was affected by the World Wars context, the issue of censorship was especially significant throughout the 1950s.⁴ During this period of mass suburbanization, women began leaving their wartime jobs in the factories to become homemakers. With women suddenly

¹ Samantha Barbas, *Movie Crazy*, 3.

² Steven Mintz, Randy Roberts, and David Welky, *Hollywood’s America*, 11.

³ *Ibid*, 18.

⁴ Gregory D. Black, “Hollywood Censored,” 178.

having more leisure time, entertainment becomes increasingly more significant as they form new identities as wives and mothers.⁵

The 1950s was marked by mass suburbanization and an emphasis on domestic culture in order to reestablish American home life and gender roles post World War Two. With male veterans returning home from the war, societal gender norms shifted as men reintegrated back into American society. Women, who previously participated in the wartime labor force, were suddenly ushered back into the home to fulfill their civic duties as the ideal American housewife, mother, and homemaker.⁶ As a result, magazines became detailed guides on how women should style themselves, what they should cook, and how their homes should look. Movies and television inadvertently taught women how to act and what to think. With the rise of the suburbs, families suddenly had more disposable income, which women often used to buy goods advertised to them in catalogs in order to construct the ideal American home.⁷ Thus, while women were largely confined to the home, their power to purchase provided them with a sense of freedom. Furthermore, the mass consumption by women was marketed as a patriotic duty, as women were supposedly building a new and better American lifestyle by participating in the postwar economy.⁸

The significance of female consumer culture in the United States reached its peak in the 1950s, as a result of mass suburbanization and dominant patriotic ideologies. In many ways, the construction of the female identity for young American women was largely based on the movies they watched, the magazines they read, the music they listened to, and the clothes they bought as a result. I investigate the collective effort of magazine and motion picture industries in instilling

⁵ Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*, 23.

⁶ Annegret S. Ogden, *The Great American Housewife: From Helpmate to Wage Earner, 1776-1986*, 171.

⁷ Gordon B. Arnold, *Projecting the End of the American Dream*, 6.

⁸ *Ibid*, 171.

a new form of femininity that arose during this decade: femininity based on patriotism and domesticity, facilitated by mass consumption. Female empowerment during this time was defined by a woman's power to purchase while her identity was constructed by the media she consumed. Thus, I will be analyzing popular movies of the time, specifically from the romantic comedy genre, in order to examine themes of gender roles and relationships as portrayed by Hollywood. I will also be utilizing women's home magazines, entertainment magazines, and movie fan magazines to determine the role of print culture in promoting domesticity and femininity. In doing so, I draw connections between the movie and magazine industries, and how the two collaboratively promoted a new form of female agency through mass consumption. Thus, it is through the collective efforts of both Hollywood, publishing firms, and government agencies that a monolithic culture of domesticity is established in the 1950s, in which domesticity is linked to both a woman's femininity and patriotic allegiance. In doing so, media consumption, and the resulting female fan culture crafted by the motion picture and magazine industries, successfully promoted material consumption to American women as a way to fulfill their suburban roles as homemakers, wives, and mothers.

Scholars have credited the domestic culture of the 1950s with sparking the second wave feminist movement in the 1960s, largely citing Betty Friedan, author of *The Feminine Mystique*, as the foundational work.^{9 10} Friedan interviews housewives during the 1950s on their perceptions of individuality and fulfillment. She provides analysis of current psychology, education systems, and most importantly, magazines to determine how the female identity was constructed within American society during the 1950s. I am building on current scholarship by examining home magazines as well as entertainment magazines. In doing so, I explore the

⁹ Joanne Meyerowitz, "Beyond the Feminine Mystique," 1455.

¹⁰ Linda K. Kerber "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History." *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 1 (1988): 9-39.

historical significance of movie fan magazines for women throughout Hollywood history. Recent scholarship examining the sphere of women has begun to take a more literal approach, analyzing the physical spaces that women occupied.¹¹ I build on this scholarship by examining how women's moviegoing habits have informed the motion picture industry since its inception, as it provided them with a sense of empowerment and autonomy. Women have been historically large consumers of film historically and female fan culture has served as a driving force in the industry, inspiring the beginning of the long established star system within the studios.¹² However, with the rise in popularity of television during this time, little scholarship exists on the female fan culture of the 1950s.¹³ Furthermore, an examination of the movie industry during this time may provide greater insight into the cultural and economic contributions women made during the 1950s.

Scholarship on feminist film theory and film criticism is largely based on *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* by Laura Mulvey.¹⁴ Mulvey's 1975 work explores the psychological and social implications of female representations on screen as well as the female experience of viewership. Most notably, Mulvey introduced and popularized the concept of the male gaze into film criticism and built on Freudian voyeuristic and psychoanalytic theories to argue that many films aim to objectify and sexualize women and the female body.¹⁵ Mulvey's work mainly centers around the drama and horror genre of films. Recent scholarship has begun to explore how Mulvey's work can be applied to other genres, as well as how it affects the idolization of specific celebrities.¹⁶ In addition, analysis of relationships, especially marriage and divorce, as well as the portrayal of stereotypical gender roles have only recently been explored in film theory

¹¹ Kerber "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History." 9-39.

¹² Gerald Mast, *The Movies in Our Midst*, 103.

¹³ Celine Morin and Regan Kramer, "Women in American TV Series (1950s to 2000)," 251-270.

¹⁴ Judith Mayne, "Feminist Film Theory and Women at the Movies," 14-19.

¹⁵ Noel Carroll, "The Image of Women in Film," 350.

¹⁶ Mayne, "Feminist Film Theory and Women at the Movies," 14-19.

scholarship. I specifically explore the ways in which marriage and love are portrayed in romantic comedies, a consistently popular genre among women throughout Hollywood history that is not well discussed in scholarly literature.

The depiction of women and their on-screen characters has been a topic of contention in Hollywood since its inception. During the 1920s and 1930s, female actresses in leading roles dressed promiscuously and recited dialogue full of sexual innuendos.¹⁷ The Production Code Administration, along with other censorship boards across the nation, feared these risky portrayals of women would encourage moral decay and often came into conflict with Hollywood as a result.¹⁸ While film content was compromised under the Hays Code, female-led movies overall still aimed to portray women in an empowering way, as authoritative and autonomous figures.

With the onset of the Cold War, anti-Communist sentiment was pervasive throughout American society. Hollywood in particular was under attack during this time, with many left-wing actors, directors, and producers brought under federal investigation before being blacklisted from the industry.¹⁹ As a result, film censorship became increasingly restrictive during this time, as it was essential for all American citizens to be explicit in their allegiance to the United States. In the case of women, the expectations of being the ideal American housewife were highly tied to patriotism. Female tropes in film became increasingly concerned with promoting patriotism in order to establish a dominant ideology aligned with 1950s America.²⁰

The 1950s is a particularly significant period of study for feminist studies, as it is often credited with sparking the second wave feminist movement.²¹ This movement during the 1960s

¹⁷ Black, "Hollywood Censored," 178.

¹⁸ Mast, *The Movies in Our Midst*, 318.

¹⁹ John Sbardellati, *J. Edgar Hoover Goes to the Movies*, 131.

²⁰ Jessica Freame, "Female Film Stars and the Dominant Ideologies of 1950s America."

²¹ Lydia Martens, "Feminism and the Critique of Consumer Culture, 1950-1970," 33.

was considered a reaction to mass suburbanization and subsequent domestic duties that seemingly restricted women's lives. The 1950s is also an overlooked period of Hollywood history, as the Code begins to lose its authority and the studio system slowly disintegrates.²² However, intense government intervention in the industry during this time resulted in a shift towards the modern model of Hollywood as we know it today. My research seeks to combine the basis of feminist theory with film theory in order to enhance our understanding of the motion picture industry's significance during the 1950s, specifically in the construction of the patriotic, domestic female identity. Thus, the media produced and consumed by American women during this time is especially significant, as the United States depended on American women to be models of modernity and patriotism.

Advertisements are one of the main conduits of popular culture. With women being the primary consumer for the home throughout history, advertisements for almost any product in any industry has evolved with the female consumer in mind. Roland Marchand examines 1920s and 1930s advertising and its ability to promote cultural optimism and modernity. With the rise of new technologies and industries throughout the early twentieth century, advertisers were the ones who reported these discoveries to the public.²³ Everyday people found out about the latest car models and the newest scientific inventions through advertisements. Thus, advertisements became inextricably linked to modernity during this time. In *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America*, T. J. Jackson Lears details the history and significance of various forms of advertising in America. Corporate-sponsored advertising blurred the lines between public and private lives, establishing an intimate relationship with consumers in order to promote capitalism in the early twentieth century. Lears posits that advertisers and their

²² Ronald Davis, "Hollywood's Enduring Mystique," in *Celluloid Mirrors: Hollywood and American Society since 1945*, 218.

²³ Roland Marchand. *Advertising the American Dream: Making way for Modernity 1920–1940*, 2.

companies also served as “governing institutions of the modern world.”²⁴ Magazines helped to facilitate transitioning gender roles throughout history, from the turn of the twentieth century to the 1950s and beyond.²⁵ Lizabeth Cohen notes the rising trend toward mass consumerism during the 1950s as a patriotic campaign. For women specifically, the power to purchase was a personal liberty. It was their civic duty to buy anything and everything to create the ideal home.²⁶ Cohen describes the evolution of shopping centers as family friendly locations, as the physical space is planned with the female consumer in mind.²⁷

Scholarship on the integration of domestic and patriotic ideologies into 1950s American suburbia heavily relies on the analysis of various forms of media and print culture that were consumed by women during this time period. Jessamyn Neuhaus analyzes the integration of domestic ideologies through an analysis of cookbooks popular in the 1950s. New, creative recipes encouraged women to enjoy the craft of cooking, while the introduction of highly processed convenience foods also functioned to acknowledge the busy lifestyles of homemakers balancing work and family.²⁸ Michelle Nickerson notes the importance of bookstores as a place of community and consumption for 1950s housewives. The rise of patriotic bookstores was a reaction to Cold War anxieties. They became a place in which women came together during the day in between chores to educate themselves on anti-Communism and preserving Conservative, Christian values.²⁹ With the rising popularity of television during this decade, the majority of scholarship covering the 1950s media was focused on the societal values instilled and reflected by the emerging sitcoms and shows. Stephanie Coontz and Annessa Ann Babic cite shows such as “Leave it to Beaver” as well as “Ozzie and Harriet” as examples of the many new television

²⁴ T.J. Jackson Lears, *Fables Of Abundance*, 139.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 183.

²⁶ Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 112.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 254.

²⁸ Jessamyn Neuhaus, “The Way to a Man’s Heart,” 532.

²⁹ Michelle Nickerson, “Women, Domesticity, and Postwar Conservatism,” 19.

shows that attempted to promote familial values.³⁰ Through watching likable characters in maternal and paternal roles, men and women “were encouraged to root their identity and self-image in familial and parental roles.”³¹ Thus, through the media, women consumed during this time, they felt societal pressure to carry out the tasks and behaviors detailed to them in magazines, books, and television shows.

Through media consumption, women were given guides on how they were expected to behave and carry out their duties as wives and mothers. Judith Butler’s *Performative Acts and Gender Constitution* proposes the concept of gender performance, in which individuals conduct their lives and behaviors around certain gendered expectations. In the case of the female identity, women are often inclined or pressured to fulfill societal expectations associated with womanhood and femininity.³² This includes being a wife, mother, and homemaker. Butler draws from French scholar Simone de Beauvoir’s seminal work, *The Second Sex*, in which she claims “one is not born, but, rather, *becomes* a woman.”³³ Butler posits that participating in gendered systems such as heterosexual marriage, kinship, and sexual reproduction functions to reaffirm one’s sexuality and gender identity.³⁴ In the case of the 1950s, femininity was highly tied to these ideals of marriage, family, and domesticity. Women became homemakers and housewives as a way to not only affirm their patriotism but also to reaffirm their own femininity as part of the social contract. Thus, gender is determined and expressed through an individual’s actions. In the case of 1950s housewives, this meant cooking and cleaning as well as caring for the family in order to reaffirm their femininity.

³⁰ Annessa Ann Babic, *America’s Changing Icons*, 107.

³¹ Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 27.

³² Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory,” 392.

³³ *Ibid*, 392.

³⁴ *Ibid*, 397.

Theories of female film spectatorship are largely based on Laura Mulvey's psychoanalytic theories about gaze and pleasure.³⁵ Scholar Judith Mayne defines spectatorship not just as the action of watching films but also the ways in which an individual derives pleasure through watching films.³⁶ It is often through this pleasure that ideologies shown in film become internalized within the spectator, which in turn can become integrated into the personal identity for the viewer.³⁷ As a result, the women occupying the theaters look toward the women on screen as role models. Molly Haskell expands on this by discussing the use of tropes in film to promote varying ideas about power, love, and sexuality throughout Hollywood history. Actresses of the 1930s such as Jean Harlow and Mae West were labeled as the sex goddesses of Hollywood.³⁸ Their characters were promiscuous, witty, and powerful. They were in control of their relationships with multiple men and were aware of their sensuality. Because this was during the Great Depression, women found these gold digging female characters both entertaining and aspirational.³⁹ Women on screen were thus manipulated and manufactured by the industry in order to promote its agenda. Jessica Freame, among many other scholars, have examined the female character tropes and how they promote the dominant patriotic ideologies of the decade. Most notably, Freame highlights the dichotomy between the sex icons and the girl next doors in the context of Cold War paranoia. Sex icons such as Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russell played characters that were innocent, vulnerable, and in need of protection. On the other hand, actresses such as Debbie Reynolds and Doris Day exemplified a more wholesome brand of femininity linked to marriage and domesticity.⁴⁰

³⁵ Carroll, "The Image of Women in Film," 350.

³⁶ Judith Mayne, *Cinema and Spectatorship*, 1.

³⁷ *Ibid*, 26.

³⁸ Molly Haskell, *From Reverence to Rape*, 109.

³⁹ Thomas Patrick Doherty. *Pre-Code Hollywood: Sex, Immorality, and Insurrection in American Cinema*, 132.

⁴⁰ Jessica Freame, "Female Film Stars and the Dominant Ideologies of 1950s America."

It was not until the 1970s that feminist history and film theory finally intersected within scholarship. This includes the participation by women in all stages of the industry, from writing and directing to distribution and exhibition.⁴¹ Research analyzing industry magazines and archived studio files note the prevalence of women working in the industry, yet their history is often overlooked or forgotten. Current scholarship is now highlighting the long established prevalence of women in the industry as well as attempting to explain why this history was once lost.⁴² My research seeks to reconcile feminist history and feminist film theory in the 1950s, a period that is overlooked in both fields, through analysis of both film and magazine culture. In situating female fan culture within the postwar context, I seek to explain the significance of women's roles in both the motion picture industry as well as in the national market economy. By examining female representations in film and print culture, patterns of female media and material consumption, and constructions of female scholarship, this reveals the significant roles of women as historical actors during the 1950s in promoting patriotic ideologies and establishing a dominant culture revolving around domesticity.

Hollywood's Promise to the United States Government

The power of the media, and the information it provides, is especially apparent and significant in times of war as well as the postwar recovery period. Since Hollywood was not yet well established at the time of World War One, the motion picture industry gained extra significance by the second World War and continued to be instrumental in the postwar period.

⁴¹ Jane M. Gaines, "Film History and the Two Presents of Feminist Film Theory," 113.

⁴² Ibid, 113.

During World War Two, the Office of War Information was established under executive order in 1942, six months after the United States entered the war officially. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who recognized the political influence of radio, press, and film, sought to utilize these industries in order to bolster the war effort.⁴³ In doing so, President Roosevelt hoped to instill nationalistic pride while simultaneously villainizing the Axis Powers through media. By this time, Hollywood had an established international reputation, and was thus extremely influential in the portrayal of the war. The Office of War Information sought to control Hollywood's portrayal of both the home front and its enemies, promoting anti-fascism and anti-Communism as well as American exceptionalism.⁴⁴

The Truman Doctrine, announced on March 12, 1947 by President Truman, set the stage for America's rhetoric regarding foreign policy throughout the 1950s.⁴⁵ Following the second World War, fear of the spread of Communism ran rampant throughout the United States and other Western nations. The Truman Doctrine outlined the next steps of the United States in its mission to preserve democracy, which it regards as the ideal and only acceptable form of government for a nation.⁴⁶ Future steps include providing aid to countries such as Greece to establish a democratic system of government and defend itself against other nations that could possibly threaten Western democracy. The doctrine asserts that the only form of government that provides its citizens with personal freedoms and liberties was Western democracy, and that all other forms of government were corrupt and immoral.⁴⁷ Thus, the protection of democracy was the priority of the United States during this time, especially as relations with Russia and its allies grew to be more tense, ramping up to the eventual Cold War.

⁴³ Clayton R. Koppes and Gregory D. Black, "What to Show the World," 87.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 87.

⁴⁵ Gordon B. Arnold, *Projecting the End of the American Dream*, 43.

⁴⁶ Harry S. Truman, *Truman Doctrine (1947)*, National Archives.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

The Truman Doctrine outlines important safety measures in order to handle potential domestic threats to American citizens and democracy. This was especially pertinent to all forms of media, specifically radio and film, which could potentially be spreading anti-American and pro-Communist rhetoric to the American public.⁴⁸ Thus, a highly controlled motion picture industry was necessary during this time. Only months after the announcement of the Truman Doctrine, the House of Un-American Activities Committee launched a full scale investigation to seek out potential Communist sympathizers within the Hollywood studios. The House Committee on Un-American Activities was established in 1938 by the House of Representatives to combat any threat of Communism in the nation.⁴⁹ The HUAC cracked down on Hollywood in 1947 and again in 1951, putting hundreds of radical screenwriters, producers, and witnesses on trial regardless of party affiliation. On November 25, 1947, the first Hollywood blacklist was established and enforced, as a group of ten actors and directors refused to testify before the Committee.⁵⁰ J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI labeled these Hollywood professionals as Communists. Between 1947 and 1957, approximately 250 actors, directors, and writers were blacklisted by the HUAC.⁵¹

The Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals, established in 1944, was composed of conservative Hollywood executives who sought to ensure that the industry was dedicated to promoting American exceptionalism and patriotism. Its members were dedicated to protecting the American way of life and personal liberties of free speech, believing that Communism and all forms of radicalism impeded on these rights. Following the 1947 HUAC trials, the Alliance released the Waldorf Statement, which expressed its dedication to ridding the

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Steven Mintz, Randy Roberts, and David Welky, *Hollywood's America*, 22.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 22.

⁵¹ Ibid, 23.

industry of all Communist threats. “We will not knowingly employ a Communist or a member of any party or group which advocates the overthrow of the government of the United States by force or by any illegal or unconstitutional methods.”⁵² The Alliance recognized its political responsibility to the United States government in protecting and upholding the patriotic values of American democracy as well as in educating the American public on the dangers of Communism.⁵³ In doing so, Hollywood asserted its conservative stance against Communism before World War Two ended, and this continued on well into the 1950s.

There is a common misconception that Hollywood often functioned independently of the United States government. While this may have been true during the Hays Code era, in which directors and studio executives continuously fought back against the federal censorship boards throughout the 1930s and 1940s, this was not always the case. With the onset of World War Two and the establishment of the Office of War Information, collaborative efforts between Hollywood and federal agencies became more and more common from that point on. The motion picture industry felt it had a social and political responsibility to educate its viewers, especially during wartime. In his 1946 Annual Report, which outlines the industry’s main goals and principles for the upcoming business year, President Eric Johnston of the Motion Picture Association of America, the governing body of Hollywood, makes his mission clear: “What is true of the nation is true of this industry.”⁵⁴ This goal remains firmly held onto throughout the postwar period and the 1950s, as Hollywood and its executives continuously push nationalist ideologies. Thus, the postwar era represents a significant turning point for Hollywood, as it became increasingly invested in politics during this time.

⁵² Eric Johnston, *Waldorf Statement*, From *Projecting the End of the American Dream*, 52.

⁵³ Arnold, *Projecting the End of the American Dream*, 52.

⁵⁴ Eric Johnston, *The Motion Picture on the Threshold of a Decisive Decade*, From Margaret Herrick Library Digital Collections, *Motion Picture Association of America: Production Code Administration Records, MPAA Annual Reports (1932-1967)*.

The History of Female Fan Culture in the Motion Picture Industry

The business practices of the motion picture industry have always been shaped by the preferences of the female consumer since the invention of filmmaking. From the casting of popular actors to the publication of film reviews, the female fan has informed the way in which motion pictures are produced and distributed.⁵⁵ The presence of women in movie theaters significantly changed the landscape of the entire motion picture industry, specifically the business of exhibition. The evolution of cinemas conformed to the needs of middle and upper class women, as they learned and grew to accommodate all of their possible demands and needs. While nickelodeons were initially constructed to appeal to working class men, an explosion in popularity among women helped to catapult the activity of moviegoing into a commonplace, leisure activity for all classes of people in American society. As early as 1913, the prominence of women in the theaters was noted by Hollywood.⁵⁶

The advertising of movies by theaters always kept female spectatorship in mind, and often specifically catered to female audiences, since the 1910s.⁵⁷ Invitations and coupons promoting movies were delivered directly home to women in addition to pamphlets and posters on display along the streets surrounding the picture houses. The introduction of matinee screenings, prize giveaways, and promotional deals also helped to encourage women to be patrons.⁵⁸ With reasonable ticket prices for ornately decorated theaters with excellent service and accommodations, the early efforts of cinemas successfully promoted filmgoing as a form of high

⁵⁵ Samantha Barbas, *Movie Crazy*, 35.

⁵⁶ Shelley Stamp, *Movie-Struck Girls*, 3.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 10.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 12.

class culture that was still accessible to all walks of life. As a result, moviegoing quickly became associated with a sophisticated, well cultured lifestyle among women everywhere, as dressing up to go to the cinema became an extravagant yet commonplace affair.⁵⁹ In doing so, “the picture of relaxed, refined filmgoing promoted to middle-class women likely embraced other women of diverse economic backgrounds as well, particularly single wage-earners and women from working class and immigrant families eager to fantasize their own upward mobility through leisure. The genteel movie culture fashioned in these promotions, while designed to cater primarily to highbrow tastes, surely also tailed the expectations of patrons from many social strata, men and women alike, who still formed cinema’s core audience.”⁶⁰

Even the physical space of the cinema had evolved to accommodate the needs of women. In order to gain more traction, picture houses were strategically placed within or near shopping centers, offering a break to women during shopping trips.⁶¹ Cinemas began to have parcel checking services, which provided a place for women to safely put their shopping bags and other belongings while they were in viewing rooms. Specific spaces for baby carriages and nursing mothers quickly followed. Retiring rooms offering face powder, hair pins, and more gave women the opportunity to freshen up both before and after watching a movie. Theaters even offered promotional deals with the neighboring grocery and department stores.⁶² Movie theaters made it a point for women to feel as safe and comfortable as possible when going to the movies, optimizing convenience and accessibility in any way possible.

The promotion of family life was also highly facilitated by theaters through the use of baby shows.⁶³ Families would submit photographs of their babies to the cinema to be projected

⁵⁹ Ibid, 30.

⁶⁰ Ibid, 10.

⁶¹ Ibid, 17.

⁶² Ibid, 19.

⁶³ Ibid, 22.

on the screens. Patrons would submit their vote for their favorite child upon purchasing a movie ticket. The winning family would be given prizes by the picture house. In doing so, the movie theater became more integrated into a community, serving as a literal family photo album for the surrounding neighborhood. It promoted active participation on a personal level, encouraging people to know their neighbors as well as the theater.⁶⁴ Thus, throughout the 1910s, movie theaters quickly became welcoming spaces for families, especially women and their children, to spend their leisure time.

While these picture houses appealed to women of all social classes and backgrounds, they simultaneously attempted to create a monolithic culture that was elevated yet largely domestic. Promotional materials in the newspaper and magazines quickly integrated the popularity of film culture into their advertisements. Theaters also offered promotional items linked to household work. For example, “Spoons embossed with the likeness of picture players were popular keepsakes in the teens...Such gimmicks insisted, rather forcefully, on the compatibility of domestic life and film culture in an attempt to leave the more sensational world of urban amusement culture far behind, as home and cinema became spheres linked through activities of the female consumer. Care for her household, specifically envisioned as the acquisition of upmarket accessories like matching sets of china, became a model for female filmgoing.”⁶⁵ Middle class women in particular, with regular and predictable consumer habits, became the primary targets of theater owners and advertisement companies, who began to establish brand loyalty for household products by capitalizing on the newfound fame of motion picture actors. “With her allegiance, her bargain-hunter’s instinct, and her domestic mandate, the female consumer proved an enticing prospect.”⁶⁶ Thus, the link between moviegoing and material

⁶⁴ Ibid, 23.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 22.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 22.

consumption, specifically among female audiences, was long established since the nascent years of cinema and carried onto the postwar period.

The evolution of moviegoing practices continued to evolve according to women's social lives well into the 1950s with the rise of drive-in theaters during this decade. Drive-ins had two main target demographics: families and young couples.⁶⁷ Since prices were not per person but rather per vehicle, this offered a slightly cheaper option for family movie nights. The private space of the car also encouraged increased family bonding time. While it was rude to talk in the theater, the privacy of vehicles allowed for movie watchers to talk, eat, and smoke freely in the comfort of their cars. As a result, this also appealed to young couples looking for new date activities.⁶⁸ Thus, much like traditional picture houses, drive-in theaters promoted ideals of the nuclear family and marriage. The notion of moviegoing as a family activity as well as a romantic excursion thus carried on into the 1950s.

The collaboration between the market economy and the motion picture industry to promote greater female consumption of both industries was not accomplished through motion picture houses alone. Major motion picture studios such as Paramount often collaborated and published interviews as well as articles in women's magazines.⁶⁹ With the notion of moviegoing now linked to sophistication, motion picture actors and actresses were idolized and regarded as the height of elegance and modernity. Stars became the ideal standards for beauty, personality, and lifestyle.⁷⁰ Hollywood urged fan audiences, especially young women, that consumption became the optimal form of participation in the entertainment industry. Purchasing the clothing and cosmetics endorsed by their favorite actor would bring fans closer to them on a personal

⁶⁷ Mary Morley Cohen, "Forgotten Audiences in the Passion Pits," 479.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 479.

⁶⁹ Stamp, *Movie-Struck Girls*, 23.

⁷⁰ Barbas, *Movie Crazy*, 36.

level, and widen the possibility of becoming a successful star themselves. As a result, “a passion for the movies drew Americans not only into the fan culture but also into a rapidly expanding consumer culture and into a burgeoning celebrity culture centered around the exploits and personalities of the most popular actors.”⁷¹ Thus, a dedicated film fan was not only expected to be a regular patron at the theaters, but also to engage in print culture by reading film reviews and staying up to date on celebrity gossip.

The first ever movie fan magazine, *Motion Picture Story Magazine*, debuted in February of 1911.⁷² On a singular page, readers could find a well-tailored combination of celebrity coverage, fictional short stories, advertisements for script writing classes, and coupons for face creams and automobiles. Technical and educational information on filmmaking was included as a way to promote the industry job market, providing an illusion that anyone could make it big in the film industry. Self help and advice columns that often interviewed the most popular celebrities of the time allowed audiences to feel as though they knew their favorite actors on a personal level. Beauty advertisements made promises of guaranteeing fans they could look just like their favorite stars just from using their products.⁷³ In doing so, magazines helped to facilitate the development of celebrity culture for the motion picture industry, as fans could read about actors on a personal level, from finding out what lotions and creams they use to how they got married and then divorced. By the 1930s, there were over a dozen movie magazines for fans to choose from.⁷⁴

Hollywood promoted silent-film actress Mary Pickford as one of the first celebrities to attract a dedicated following. Adored for her charming personality, she quickly became one of

⁷¹ Samantha Barbas, *Movie Crazy*, 5.

⁷² *Ibid*, 24.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 36.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 57.

the richest and most famous people in America in the 1910s and beyond.⁷⁵ She became known for her iconic look of golden, curly hair. As early as 1914, fans began to make scrapbooks dedicated to Pickford. In these fan scrapbooks, fans would clip any and all pieces of newspaper and magazine coverage on Pickford to keep. A 1919 scrapbook contains clippings from a *Ladies' Home Journal* article detailing a step by step tutorial on how Pickford achieves and maintains her famous golden curls.⁷⁶ Another scrapbook from 1925 is comprised of coverage on both Pickford and her husband and fellow actor Douglas Fairbanks.⁷⁷ The scrapbook follows the speculation of their possible relationship starting in 1918, to their marriage in 1920, to their rise to fame as the king and queen of Hollywood of the 1920s. Later scrapbooks chronicle their eventual divorce in 1936, along with all other personal information magazines and newspapers had to offer to fans.⁷⁸ Women took it upon themselves to construct scrapbooks for their favorite celebrities.

With the rising popularity of fan magazines, scrapbooks quickly followed and became a common trend among film fans for many subsequent decades. Thus, print culture became an essential aspect of movie celebrity culture, as fans quickly took it upon themselves to not only read the magazines and newspapers, but to compose their own scrapbooks and diaries dedicated to their favorite stars for them to treasure.

One of the most significant and long standing fan movie magazines of the twentieth century is *Photoplay*. Founded in 1911, it was among one of the first magazines solely dedicated to film fans, and often set publication trends for magazines that followed. Much like the

⁷⁵ Ibid, 39.

⁷⁶ "Mary Pickford Scrapbook #72." Scrapbook. From Margaret Herrick Library Digital Collections, *Mary Pickford Papers*.

⁷⁷ "Mary Pickford Scrapbook #21, 1923-1928." Scrapbook. From Margaret Herrick Library Digital Collections, *Mary Pickford Papers*.

⁷⁸ "Mary Pickford Scrapbook #31 1928-1930." Scrapbook. From Margaret Herrick Library Digital Collections, *Mary Pickford Papers*.

celebrities themselves, the magazines that facilitated celebrity fan culture were regarded as a beacon of modernity for its female readers. During its first two decades, *Photoplay* was seen as a relatively progressive magazine for its promotion of female employment.⁷⁹ Its writers and editors, despite being a male-founded magazine, encouraged women of all ages to pursue careers regardless of marital status. This concerned many conservative critics, who feared the increasing number of women entering the workforce would eventually destroy family values as well as the institution of marriage as a whole. As early as 1915, *Photoplay* included advertisements for screenwriting classes, encouraging young movie-struck women across the nation to move to Hollywood and become famous.⁸⁰ At the same time, *Photoplay* also made it a point to remind its female readers that looking like a movie star was “one of the most important goals of a woman’s life.”⁸¹ This could be accomplished through the various cosmetic products endorsed by the most popular celebrities of the day. In doing so, *Photoplay* served as a comprehensive guide on how to most closely attain the movie star lifestyle, which included wearing the latest fashion trends, having a successful career, and a fulfilling home life. In the eyes of its readers, actresses manufactured in the magazines were the ultimate modern woman. This was true not just for *Photoplay*, but for virtually every magazine throughout the 1950s.

Magazines: The Issue with all of the Issues

With women increasingly confined to the home throughout the 1950s, domestic print culture, specifically magazines, gained greater significance as a source of information. They served as guides for everything women needed to know that was considered most important in

⁷⁹ Ibid, 70.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 70.

⁸¹ Ibid, 79.

their lives, from how to cook the best recipes to the best way to prevent wrinkles. Women had the freedom to choose which magazines they were subscribed to, giving them the illusion of consumer independence. However, all major magazines of this time were seemingly interchangeable. Whether it was *Vogue*, *Hollywood Reporter*, or the *Ladies' Home Journal*, all magazines throughout the 1950s essentially promoted the same message: American women's femininity was linked to their patriotic duty of domesticity. Furthermore, the advertisements of these magazines serve to establish the idea that American suburban women had a duty to their nation to maintain the home front and nuclear family, and look good while doing it.

The *Ladies' Home Journal*, established in 1883, was one of the leading women's publications throughout the twentieth century in the United States.⁸² The magazine contained any and all information a woman could possibly need to become the ideal homemaker, with countless recipes and advice columns. During World War II, the magazine was primarily focused on what women should do in order to maintain the home front. The most patriotic women during this time were those who contributed to the war effort through buying war bonds, according to the journal. Wartime recipes suggested various ways to conserve and ration food supplies. The ideal wartime homemaker and housewife made nutritious meals for their families with what they had. The more resourceful and economically efficient, the more successful a woman was at her patriotic duty to the war effort.⁸³

However, with the war and the rise of suburban America, women's domesticity was redefined, and the recipes followed. Cooking was no longer for utility, but to reaffirm a woman's traditional role in the home. Food was no longer considered to be scarce. In fact, recipes in the home journal began to introduce new types of foods women could incorporate into their grocery

⁸² Newell Convers Wyeth, *The Ladies' Home Journal*, 1950s, <http://archive.org/details/ladieshomejourna67janwyet>. From James A. Cannavino Library.

⁸³ Neuhaus, "The Way to a Man's Heart," 532.

lists.⁸⁴ After years of a limited diet, Americans suddenly reverted back to traditional and hearty comfort foods, such as casseroles and meatloafs. At the same time, there was also a new fascination with processed foods as well as convenience goods.⁸⁵ In doing so, magazines also ensured that women understood the importance of cooking. The editors of *Seventeen Cookbook*, and many others alike, emphasized the idea that men found cooking to be one of the most attractive things a woman can do, and the most popular girls in school already knew how to cook and bake.⁸⁶

In addition to recipes, the *Ladies' Home Journal* included advertisements for brand new home appliances, such as vacuum cleaners and electric food mixers that made the lives of housewives easier. Cleaning products also made up a large portion of the advertisements in the journal as well. Advice columns provided women with insight on how to navigate their marriages, how to best raise their children, and how they should aspire to live their newly found domestic lives. Whether it was an advertisement for cake mix or the newest lotion, the *Ladies' Home Journal* and other adjacent home magazines simply functioned to promote a particular brand of domestic femininity to women that reaffirmed their patriotism. The advertisements of home magazines promote the ideal of women's power to purchase, as if mass consumerism was a personal liberty granted to women across America. It was their duty to their nation to buy any and all products necessary to build a perfect suburban home and keep their families satisfied.⁸⁷

Women's fashion and culture magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue* also served to promote femininity that was linked to patriotism, but through the promotion of the arts and culture. For many decades, *Vogue* has had a well established reputation for its elegance and

⁸⁴ Ibid, 532.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 532.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 542.

⁸⁷ Wyeth, *The Ladies' Home Journal*.

promotion of highbrow culture. While it was marketed to be read by every type of woman, there was an assumption that the readers of *Vogue* were sophisticated, high class women. In doing so, everyday American women who read *Vogue* saw its content as aspirational. This is also the case for *Cosmopolitan*. As a result, women who read these magazines viewed them as lifestyle guides for how they should dress and live.

Vogue and *Cosmopolitan* most notably included sections on travel, the arts, and health. Like home magazines, a good portion of the advertisements and columns were heavily related to domestic duties such as cooking and cleaning as well as women's roles as homemakers, wives, and mothers. However, *Vogue* and *Cosmopolitan* also attempted to elevate women's lives culturally by discussing the latest fashion trends and health diets. With middle class families having some disposable incomes for vacations, magazines also advertised the best places for a woman's next vacation. *Vogue* had specific sections called "People and Ideas" and "People Are Talking About" which promoted that month's hottest and most interesting individuals in the arts and current issues considered pertinent to women such as international fashion trends.⁸⁸ The February 1950 *Vogue* issue included an article on the influence of American styles in European fashion.⁸⁹ *Cosmopolitan* had a "Picture of the Month" section and celebrity news columns.⁹⁰ The magazines also usually included sections on poetry and fictional short stories in which women could submit their work. Thus, the aspirational modern American woman was stylish, well traveled, and knowledgeable about popular culture. This was all achievable simply by looking through the Shopper section of these magazines, which advertised the latest fashion trends and cosmetic products that promised women a better, more elevated lifestyle.⁹¹ In doing so,

⁸⁸ Vogue | The Complete Archive. "The Complete Vogue Archive." <https://archive.vogue.com/issues/1950>.

⁸⁹ Vogue | The Complete Archive. "Vogue — February 1 1950." Accessed April 25, 2024. <https://archive.vogue.com/issue/19500201>.

⁹⁰ *Cosmopolitan*. Hearst Magazines, a Division of Hearst Communications, Inc., 1950. http://archive.org/details/sim_cosmopolitan_1950-12_129_6.

⁹¹ Ibid.

magazines such as *Vogue* and *Cosmopolitan* have made this new brand of American femininity seemingly attainable. By the mid 1950s, women's femininity could be purchased and reaffirmed through mass consumerism as facilitated by these magazines.

It is also important to note that celebrity culture and gossip was often interwoven into magazines like *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue*. In discussions of the most suitable hairstyles for women, the biggest actresses of the time would serve as the models. Lifestyle columns would provide insider information on how female movie stars juggle between their acting career, home life, and marriage. In doing so, these magazines seem to imply the actress as the ideal American woman that all other women should aspire to be. Female movie stars live a luxurious life of high class culture; they are effortlessly stylish and beautiful. Most importantly, they are able to balance multiple roles, in both the literal and figurative sense, as an actress, wife, mother, and homemaker. Furthermore, with articles on celebrity life interwoven with beauty product advertisements and recipe pages within a single pamphlet, the aspirational female celebrity lifestyle is seemingly attainable. In promoting specific products to women that promise them the Bridgette Bardot hairstyle or the Joan Crawford lifestyle, magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue* provide American women with specific instructions on how they should look and act to be as close as possible to the modern woman: the female movie star.⁹²

While the movie star had always served as the model citizen for fans across the nation, celebrity culture gained greater significance during the 1950s. With the onset of the Cold War, the repercussions of the Hollywood blacklist were felt throughout the industry and its fanbases. Advised by the House of Un-American Activities Committee, government officials and studio executives took special care to weed out any potential individuals in Hollywood that could be

⁹² Ibid.

seen as a threat to American democracy.⁹³ In doing so, the federal and state censorship boards of the motion picture industry ensured that the films being exhibited were staunchly anti-Communist and very clearly in support of American patriotism. Hollywood executives made sure all of their employees at all levels of the studio as well as their stars proclaimed their allegiance to the United States. For female stars specifically, industry executives made it a point to create a new brand of all-American, patriotic women to be shown on the silver screen throughout the 1950s.⁹⁴

The marketing of female movie stars was most notably facilitated by entertainment and fan movie magazines such as *Photoplay* and *Hollywood Reporter*. While cultural magazines provided coverage on celebrity culture, entertainment magazines included exclusive photographs and gossip. The majority of writers and editors for these magazines were women.⁹⁵ As a result, this encouraged a strong sense of community between female fans, editors and writers, and movie stars. Magazines such as *Photoplay* and *Screenland* included film reviews and critiques written by women with the intention of other women across the country to go watch certain films and specific celebrities. In doing so, fan magazines strongly influenced the artistic palette of suburban women everywhere, as female critics told women why specific movies were good and which ones were not. The writers of the magazines, who often worked under the studio executives, thus determined which movie stars became the most popular among women. In addition, these women also wrote gossip columns and conducted exclusive interviews with these celebrities. They reported who was married to whom, how one breaks into the industry, and what stars were actually like in their private lives. In doing so, female fans felt as though they knew their favorite movie stars personally, beyond the screen and page. Furthermore, these magazines

⁹³ Peter Roffman and Jim Purdy, "The Red Scare in Hollywood: HUAC and the End of an Era," 211.

⁹⁴ Arnold, *Projecting the End of the American Dream*, 17.

⁹⁵ Anthony Slide, *Inside the Hollywood Fan Magazine*, 5.

contained advertisements for an actress' favorite mascara or shoes. They included guides on how to obtain their favorite star's haircut and what brands they wore. *Photoplay* even included a series called the Hollywood Record, which charted which stars were married and which were divorced. It appeared as though a star's entire life could be found on the pages of *Variety*, *Hollywood Reporter*, *Modern Screen*, *Screenland*, and *Photoplay*.^{96 97 98 99 100}

In my analysis of these magazines throughout the 1950s, their content all bled into one another. Each issue of each magazine included gossip columns, film reviews, and advertisements for cosmetic products. In doing so, the entertainment magazines of the time served to promote celebrity culture and provided female fans an outlet for which to participate in the motion picture industry through consumption of their advertised products and films. As a result, all home, lifestyle, fashion, culture, entertainment, and industry magazines of the 1950s all served to uphold a monolithic culture that ultimately promoted domesticity and patriotism, with the female movie star as the aspirational spokesperson and model for modernity. It was a woman's responsibility to purchase kitchen appliances and cosmetics not just because it brought them closer to looking like their favorite actress, but also because it was their civic duty to their nation by maintaining the home front and participating in capitalism.

Parsons and Hopper: The Mouthpieces of Hollywood

Female fan culture in the 1950s was not just limited to actresses, but also female gossip columnists and writers. The two most prolific and important female columnists of Hollywood

⁹⁶ *Variety* (New York, N.Y.). 1905. New York: [Variety Pub. Co.].

⁹⁷ *Hollywood Reporter* (1950). 1950. Hollywood, Calif: [Wilkerson Daily Corp.].

⁹⁸ "Modern Screen [Dec 1949 - Dec 1959] | Media History Digital Library."

⁹⁹ "Screenland [Nov 1949-Oct 1951] | Media History Digital Library."

¹⁰⁰ "Photoplay [Jul 1950 - Jan 1960] | Media History Digital Library."

history are Louella Parsons and Hedda Hopper. While they were considered fierce rivals, both women were equally instrumental in the pervasiveness of fan magazines in the motion picture industry. Both Parsons and Hopper gained a cult following of women across America, who looked forward to their articles in every major industry magazine. They personally knew all the biggest celebrities, every studio and publication executive, and even major politicians.¹⁰¹

Through their spheres of influence, Parsons and Hopper both expertly crafted columns that would educate female movie fans everywhere. As the faces of celebrity gossip and entertainment news, Parsons and Hopper served to reinforce the link between women's femininity, patriotism, and female fan culture. In many ways, Parsons and Hopper were likely seen as a more reliable source of politics compared to actresses; both women were both politically active in addition to being influential in Hollywood and thus gained a lot of credibility for both gossip and political views.

Nicknamed the First Lady of Hollywood, Louella Parsons began her career in 1915 writing columns for the *Chicago Herald*. She wrote Sunday columns promoting female employment in Hollywood, with her columns "How to Become a Movie Actress" and "How to Write for the Movies."¹⁰² Since the beginning of her career, she wrote articles championing women in Hollywood who she considered to be successful career women, starting with Mary Pickford.¹⁰³ Eventually, as she became increasingly plugged into the industry, she increasingly wrote about the latest celebrity gossip. Her articles promoted the idea of female actresses being able to achieve it all: a successful career and a loving marriage.

Hedda Hopper, born in 1885, originally began her career as an actress and Broadway chorus girl. She gained her claim to fame with an exclusive story on James Roosevelt, who was

¹⁰¹ Jennifer Frost, *Hedda Hopper's Hollywood*, 114.

¹⁰² Samantha Barbas, *The First Lady of Hollywood*, 51.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, 69.

an executive at Samuel Goldwyn studios as well as the eldest son of the sitting president, Franklin D. Roosevelt. The interview covered his divorce and appeared on the front page of the *Los Angeles Times* in 1939, thus solidifying her career in covering both entertainment and politics.¹⁰⁴ It was not long before she began writing for all of the nation's major newspapers, from the *Chicago Tribune* to *New York Daily News*, and eventually every major magazine in Hollywood.¹⁰⁵

Hedda Hopper, like Parsons, utilized her connections within the industry for gossip columns and news articles across all major publications of the time. She was also a huge proponent of the successful career woman, as long as she was able to balance it with marriage. As the host of radio and television shows as well as being a prolific journalist and author, Hopper had a deep connection with her extremely loyal fans.¹⁰⁶ She utilized this to her advantage in promoting her own personal politics and establishing a community of female conservatism. Even before the 1950s, Hopper was heavily involved in politics. She was a prominent member of the Republican Party and promoted what she called "Americanism."¹⁰⁷ She was staunchly patriotic and often had anti-Communist leaders as guests on her shows. Hopper was personally friends with J. Edgar Hoover and utilized her personal connections within Hollywood to launch the investigation by the HUAC during the Blacklist era. In fact, Hopper had launched her own previous campaigns years prior to the HUAC trials in attempts to rid Hollywood of possible Communists and sympathizers.¹⁰⁸ Within her publications, she spoke highly of any films that promoted American patriotism. She saw her readers not simply as fans, but as fellow citizens, and felt she had a responsibility to promote her own politics within her works.

¹⁰⁴ Frost, *Hedda Hopper's Hollywood*, 17.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 18.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 92.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 93

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 118.

Both Parsons and Hopper infamously utilized their personal connections within Hollywood in order to aid in Hoover's efforts to rid Hollywood of any potential Communists during the Blacklist trials, ultimately demonstrating the strength of their influence and authority over the industry. Prior to the HUAC, both writers utilized their private connections to publicize the lives and politics of anyone they chose.¹⁰⁹ As a result, part of their appeal to female audiences was providing them with political guidance. Many of their female fans looked toward Parsons and Hopper not just for their opinions on the latest movies but also on how they should view current politics. Their fans, who shared the same ideals of conservative patriotism and anti-Communist sentiment, would send letters reaffirming Parsons and Hopper.¹¹⁰ In doing so, this created a strong, tight-knit community of female writers and loyal readers who shared not only the same opinions in the entertainment world but also in the social and political sphere.

Due to the fact that Hopper and Parsons were personal friends with every major celebrity and studio executive in Hollywood, this made it very easy for the industry to fabricate and plant stories within the magazines. They utilized both women's loyal fan base to promote up and coming celebrities and films, and having their names attached to these articles helped with popularity. With Hopper and Parsons functioning as figureheads, suburban women reading these magazines felt like their personal friend and fellow patriotic woman was giving them a sneak peek into the industry and its latest "gossip." Hopper and Parsons' careers were significant not just for their pioneering of celebrity gossip columns but also their promotion of American conservatism and patriotic politics. Suburban women across America may not be as interested in listening to the politicians in the White House, but they made sure to read Hopper and Parsons in the columns every week. In doing so, Hopper and Parsons served as aspirational models of

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 119.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 45.

modernity for all suburban women, and the stories and politics they fed to the magazines were read by women everywhere across the country.

Confidential Magazine: The Magazine to end all other Magazines

Magazines catered towards women throughout the 1950s all perpetuated a monolithic culture of domesticity and patriotism. They all promoted the same household products and told the same stories of actresses successfully balancing their careers and marriages. Industry magazines specifically, served to reinforce the idea of movie stars as perfect individuals meant to be idolized by the public. However, one magazine managed to dissolve the facade all other magazines have built over the decade. *Confidential* was a brand new magazine publication that forever changed the landscape of movie and entertainment magazines and publicity. It broke away from the mold of conservative and sophisticated magazines to pioneer a new type of risqué, tabloid magazine that had not yet been seen before in the 1950s.

Founder Robert Harrison established *Confidential* after watching the 1951 Kefauver hearings on television.¹¹¹ The Kefauver trials exposed decades of secret, illicit affairs conducted by the Mafia in almost every major city across the country. Regular Americans closely followed the coverage of the trials, as the mob bosses were exposed for their illegal businesses. The scandalous stories of violence and organized crime captivated audiences across the nation, quickly becoming a major media phenomenon of the time. Harrison saw the popularity the hearings garnered and developed the idea for a new expose magazine for Hollywood.¹¹² During a decade when patriotic conservatism was at an all time high, news of possible corruption in the

¹¹¹ Samantha Barbas, *Confidential Confidential*, 43.

¹¹² *Ibid*, 45.

United States government was extremely shocking and fascinating to the public. Thus, Harrison saw the decade as the perfect time to launch a magazine that demystified the motion picture industry.

While entertainment magazines well established before *Confidential* had gossip columns, these stories were actually heavily patrolled and censored by the motion picture industry. Hollywood employed the same select few columnists for every story, usually Hopper or Parsons, and distributed that same story to every magazine. In doing so, this gave the illusion of different content coming from each magazine, when the reality was that the same story by the same columnists was published across all magazines. As a result, Hollywood provided a narrow scope of what it allowed the public to actually know about its celebrities.

When the Hays Code censorship laws were enacted in Hollywood during the 1930s, its principles were not just limited to the films themselves but also all related published materials.¹¹³ Industry journalists had to be approved by the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, the governing body of the film industry. They were considered to be given the Hays card when they were approved. Even so, interviews with stars were heavily monitored, as studio executives and public relations representatives had to always be present. In the articles themselves, writers had to rely on innuendos in order to discuss taboo topics such as sex and drugs, if they ever did at all.¹¹⁴ Thus, the gossip columns and seemingly exclusive stories provided by entertainment and fan magazines were in actuality highly calculated and manufactured by the studios in order to maintain the pristine reputation of celebrities.

However, *Confidential* magazine changed everything. In 1953, the same year *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* made Marilyn Monroe an overnight sensation, *Confidential* released an article

¹¹³ Ibid, 103.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 109.

titled “Why Joe DiMaggio is Striking Out with Marilyn Monroe!” The magazine had gained some traction prior, but this article doubled its following to eight hundred thousand readers.¹¹⁵ While other magazines had speculated their breakup to be amicable, *Confidential* reveals the truth and blames Joe Schenck, the co-founder of 20th Century Fox Studios.¹¹⁶ Schenck was extremely powerful within the industry and virtually controlled Monroe’s entire career. The article exposes Schenck as a womanizer and implies that Monroe and Schenck’s relationship is less professional and more sexual than previously thought.¹¹⁷ The article insinuates that Monroe’s success can be attributed to her sexual ties to Schenck, and that this is not an uncommon phenomenon in Hollywood. In doing so, Harrison sought to expose the scandalous lifestyles of Hollywood executives and the ways in which they manipulated its stars.

In 1955, *Confidential* released an article titled “Does Desi really love Lucy?” which exposed the hidden truths behind the marriage of rising television stars Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz.¹¹⁸ This expose was significant not only for its explicit discussion of infidelity and prostitution, which were both taboo topics, but also for shattering the reputations of these new celebrities. During the 1950s, television began to gain popularity and the majority of the shows that first premiered were considered highly conservative, even in comparison to film. As a result, television stars were considered to be more wholesome and traditional than movie stars. The popular television show “I Love Lucy” promoted ideals of marriage and domesticity based on the couple’s real life marriage. Thus, the story of America's new favorite sweethearts Lucy and Desi shattered this facade and left Americans shocked. In attempts to cover up the truth, *Screenland* magazine immediately published a counter article, “Lucille Finds Grace Key to

¹¹⁵ Ibid 118.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 119.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 120.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, 1.

Lasting Marriage.”¹¹⁹ The article crafts the narrative that Lucille Ball relies on her religious faith to keep and save her marriage together. However, these counter articles did not age well after the divorce between Ball and Arnaz. *Confidential* continues to challenge traditional ideals of marriage by exposing many other celebrities and their affairs, most notably Marilyn Monroe and Clark Gable. Industry magazines attempted to defend celebrities’ reputations by publishing cover stories and articles blaming the harsh and demanding careers in show business as the eventual downfall of celebrity marriages.

One of the major efforts of traditional industry magazines was to ensure that the off-screen personas of actors and actresses matched their on-screen personas.¹²⁰ This often involved fabricated stories and biographies on how celebrities lived their lives. Stars were portrayed as honest, hard working people.¹²¹ There was never mention of drug use, sex scandals, or anything considered immoral. Thus, *Confidential* became monumental for being the first to expose the true lives of celebrities.

In the 1950s, all non-traditional forms of sexuality and relationships were considered deviant and inherently anti-Communist.¹²² Homosexuality, specifically, was relatively unknown by most Americans during this time. It was considered a result of postwar trauma and moral decay. In 1949, the State Department dismissed employees for homosexuality, considering them to be security risks that were susceptible to blackmail from Communists.¹²³ Thus, homosexuality was seen as a dangerous epidemic that threatened the nation. As a result, Hollywood devoted extra effort to portray gay actors as heterosexual. They orchestrated fake marriages and planted

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 184.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 101.

¹²¹ Ibid, 102.

¹²² Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 33.

¹²³ Barbas, *Confidential Confidential*, 52.

stories of gay male actors being womanizers.¹²⁴ Homosexuality threatened the ideals of the nuclear family and domestic lifestyles, thus making it a dangerous and taboo topic to publish.

Thus, *Confidential* also gained notoriety by publicly outing gay actors and actresses. The first actor outed by *Confidential* was Dan Dailey in 1954.¹²⁵ In response, *Modern Screen*, a well established studio magazine during this time, published a sympathetic article explaining that Dailey's demanding career prevented him from maintaining any of his previous marriages to women.¹²⁶ During this time, any actors suspected of homosexuality were forced into "lavender marriages" by studio executives in order to preserve their reputations. However, *Confidential* was still able to out numerous celebrities during this time. The stigma against the queer community during this decade was especially prevalent and the industry feared the celebrities would lose fame if the truth ever came out. In addition, homosexuality was considered a major threat to the sacred ideals of traditional gender roles and the nuclear family.¹²⁷ In the case of female actresses being outed, this undermined their femininity and reputation of sensuality manufactured by the studios. Thus, *Confidential* was seen as a danger to the industry as well as the nation at large, as it served to expose the hypocrisy of Hollywood in claiming to tell accurate stories of its celebrities.

It only took a couple years before actors and actresses mustered up the courage to fight back against *Confidential*. In 1957, prominent actors across the industry gathered to launch an attack on *Confidential* and sue the publication for libel. The Senate Interim Committee on Collection Agencies, known as the Kraft Committee, launched investigations and the magazine was indicted on federal criminal charges within a week of the hearings.¹²⁸ In 1958, the magazine

¹²⁴ Ibid, 105.

¹²⁵ Ibid, 126.

¹²⁶ Ibid, 127.

¹²⁷ Ibid, 90.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 349.

attempted to rebrand, but was not able to, especially after gaining such infamy in a short period of time.¹²⁹ *Confidential* eventually faded away, as the hearings resulted in the magazine being banned from publishing exposés ever again.¹³⁰

Magazines during this decade inherently promoted traditional gender norms, such as heterosexual relationships and happy marriages. Columnists employed by the studios wrote articles about the happy marriages of celebrity couples who were able to balance both fame and a family. Divorce was typically accounted for through a sympathetic story. *Confidential*, however, managed to forever tarnish the previously pristine reputation of Hollywood and its stars within a couple years of publishing. Hopper herself claimed that *Confidential* was “doing our stars more harm than anything that’s ever happened to them.”¹³¹

Confidential yanked back the curtain on Hollywood and pioneered a new type of journalism through its star exposés. “It precipitated a historic shift in American life, fostering the jadedness, skepticism, and loss of innocence that would increasingly define the world in the 1960s and beyond.”¹³² In fact, magazines such as *Variety*, *Ladies’ Home Journal*, *Life*, and *Saturday Evening Post* began to utilize *Confidential*’s exposé style starting in 1958, the same year of the magazine’s decline.¹³³ By the 1960s and 1970s, the American public gained a thirst for celebrity gossip. Magazines such as *Playboy*, *Enquirer*, and *People* rose to prominence during these decades as a result.¹³⁴ All tabloid and gossip publications following *Confidential* utilized its methods of employing networks of well-paid tipsters and exposé writers. Even modern day publications such as TMZ replicated *Confidential*’s style, giving rise to the Tabloid

¹²⁹ Ibid, 431.

¹³⁰ Ibid, 429.

¹³¹ Frost, *Hedda Hopper’s Hollywood*, 198.

¹³² Barbas, *Confidential Confidential*, 430.

¹³³ Ibid, 440.

¹³⁴ Ibid, 446.

Age in the 1990s and early 2000s.¹³⁵ Thus, *Confidential* forever changed the landscape of industry journalism and celebrity culture through its stories of sex, drugs, and violence. Furthermore, the publication's notoriety, and the fear it struck throughout the industry, are a testament to the sanitized style of journalism and celebrity culture that was established during the 1950s.

The Marilyn Monroe/Audrey Hepburn Dichotomy

Actresses during the 1950s served as aspirational models for beauty standards, lifestyle choices, and political ideologies.¹³⁶ Two of the biggest female stars of the 1950s were Marilyn Monroe and Audrey Hepburn. Monroe began her career as a pinup model in the 1940s before taking on smaller roles at the motion picture studios. Her hair was bleached platinum blonde and her look was modeled after older stars of classic Hollywood, such as Rita Hayworth.¹³⁷ Hepburn also began as a model as well as an aspiring dancer. She quickly built a brand based on her charm and elegance.¹³⁸ Monroe, in real life and in her movies, could be seen dressed in tight clothes that accentuated her figure. Hepburn is often captured in her signature black turtleneck. While Monroe and Hepburn had contrasting personas, their characters both promoted a specific brand of femininity linked to patriotism.

In many ways, the 1930s and 1950s women's film are very similar. During the 1930s, films began to rely on the trope of women as gold diggers, as a way to provide humor and hope during the Great Depression and impending second World War.¹³⁹ Actresses such as Mae West

¹³⁵ Ibid, 452.

¹³⁶ Jessica Freame, "Female Film Stars and the Dominant Ideologies of 1950s America."

¹³⁷ Donald Spoto, *Marilyn Monroe*, 93.

¹³⁸ Aubrey Malone, *Hollywood's Second Sex*, 84.

¹³⁹ Maury Klein, "Depression America and Its Films," 84.

and Jean Harlow famously played ruthless, sexually dominant women who took command of their own lives and often had multiple men begging for their affection before ultimately marrying and swindling the richest man they knew. These movies were filled with sexual innuendos and explicit dancing, raising concern from the Production Code Administration that demanded scenes of women being promiscuous be censored.¹⁴⁰ The trope eventually became diluted as a result of censorship, as the studios and PCA were in constant conflict. The 1940s relied more on other tropes, such as the femme fatale, in hopes of portraying women as fearless and independent during war time.¹⁴¹ However, in 1950s postwar America, the gold digger trope returns in a new format through Marilyn Monroe's films. *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and *How to Marry a Millionaire* are notable examples of this. Rather than being bold and raunchy, the 1950s gold digger was much more coy and naive. In both films, Monroe's character is an innocent and wide eyed woman who hopes to marry rich, knowing how to use her looks to her advantage and her ditziness is translated as charm. Monroe's constructed persona is reminiscent of old Hollywood's blonde bombshells, but seemingly more naive and dependent on male characters.

The 1953 film *How to Marry a Millionaire* explores how far women will go to be married and how expectations of marriage change as a result of true love. Three women, played by Lauren Bacall, Betty Grable, and Marilyn Monroe, move into a nice apartment in New York City in search of marrying a rich man. They go to parties in hopes of finding wealthy bachelors and divorcees. Lauren Bacall's character, Schatze Page, says marriage is the biggest thing anyone can do in their life, even after her first marriage was a failure. Betty Grable's character, Loco Dempsey, states her dream since childhood was to marry a "zillionaire." Monroe as Pola Debevoise hopes to marry a Rockefeller or a Vanderbilt. They blow off any man that is not well

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 85.

¹⁴¹ Jeanine Basinger, "The Woman's Film: When Women Wept," 184.

dressed, assuming he is not rich. At a dinner party, the three women entertain prospective men. Loco goes out with the “most married man on the planet.” Monroe, whose character has myopia, does not wear glasses on her date in fear that she will appear unattractive. In doing so, this also implies that she does not know what her date looks like and only cares if he is rich, as she bumps into walls and doors throughout the night while asking him about his job. Schatze entertains an older, rich man she finds relatively uninteresting. Loco goes on a trip with her date, Brewster, to the mountains thinking that he owns a lodge. After realizing he doesn’t, Loco becomes sick and instead falls in love with Eben Salem, a park ranger who Loco believes owns the land. She later finds out that he is not a wealthy landowner but decides she wants to marry him anyway. Monroe’s character, Pola, accidentally gets on the wrong plane to go visit her date due to her nearsightedness. She ends up sitting next to Freddie Denmark, who is not rich but tells Pola she is beautiful with and without her glasses. By the end of the plane ride, she has fallen in love with him and decides to marry him. When Loco and Pola return from their trips, it is Schatze’s wedding day. However, she is convinced by her two friends that she cannot go through with her marriage to the wealthy J.D. Hanley. She admits that she is in love with Tom Brookman, their neighbor in the building who they assumed was poor due to his lack of style. Later, the three couples eat dinner happily at a diner together, where it is revealed that Brookman was a multimillionaire all along. The film ends with the three women fainting and falling out of their seats as the men toast to their new wives, who married them not for money but for love. Thus, while the three women had expected to go through with a loveless marriage to a millionaire, they unexpectedly ended up marrying for love and it still worked out anyway.¹⁴²

¹⁴² *How to Marry a Millionaire*, directed by Jean Negulesco (20th Century Fox, 1953), <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x80zd2y>.

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes is one of Monroe's most iconic films, and is often credited with solidifying her iconic persona as Hollywood's hottest new blonde bombshell. Her character Lorelei is set to marry a rich man named Gus. Gus' father hires a spy to watch over Lorelei and Gus on the ship to Europe where they are planning to be married. Mr. Esmund does not believe that a woman as beautiful as Lorelei could be loyal to his son and thinks she is just marrying him for his wealth. When Lorelei is caught flirting with a rich and married older man, she is expected to attend a trial when the ship lands. Lorelei's best friend Dorothy pretends to be Lorelei in court and attempts to seduce the judge. In a blonde wig, she pretends to be ditzy and hopes the judge gives her special treatment. She even performs Monroe's famous hit song "Diamonds are a Girl's Best Friend" in the middle of the trial.¹⁴³ Because the spy prosecuting Lorelei is in love with Dorothy, Lorelei is not found guilty. Later, Lorelei convinces Gus' father to let her marry his son. She makes the point that if he had a daughter, he would want her to marry rich, so Lorelei should be allowed to marry her son. While she does truly love Gus as himself, there should still be no shame in her taking his wealth into consideration for their marriage.¹⁴⁴ Thus, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and *How to Marry a Millionaire* provide young people, especially women, with a hopeful and optimistic view on marriage. Both films imply that one should marry for love, and that sometimes you are lucky enough to marry for both love and money. Either way, love and marriage are framed as the most important aspects of a person's life, and audiences should be prioritizing both.

With both *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and *How to Marry a Millionaire* being released in 1953, Monroe was able to solidify her star status early within the decade. By 1955, her movie *The Seven Year Itch* reaffirmed her status as a sex icon, as it provides commentary on her real life

¹⁴³ *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, directed by Howard Hawks (20th Century Fox, 1953), <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x80ot2m>, 1:21:15 to 1:22:25.

¹⁴⁴ *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, directed by Howard Hawks (20th Century Fox, 1953).

persona and influence as a prominent actress. Monroe's character who remains intentionally nameless throughout the film is likely based on her in real life, as a former model and current actress. Her character is a young television actress living in Manhattan for the summer, who befriends a publisher named Richard Sherman. Sherman's wife and son are away on vacation while he remains in the city to work during the summer. The two spark a friendship.

Throughout *The Seven Year Itch*, Monroe is aware of her sexuality but does not use it to take advantage of Sherman and ruin his marriage. She befriends him in order to use his air conditioning. Monroe is secure in her friendship with Sherman. Playing as a young television actress, she is fully aware of her effect on men and intentionally chooses not to seduce Sherman. In fact, she claims to prefer friendships with married men, as it is less complicated. Men always inevitably fall in love with her, she explains to him. However, the majority of the film is centered around Sherman's own internal turmoil in which he tries to resist the urge to cheat on his wife with Monroe's unnamed character. Sherman suffers from dreams in which he imagines being unfaithful to his wife. He falls asleep imagining what would happen if his secretary, his wife's bridesmaid, and a nurse found him irresistible before waking up in a cold sweat. He suffers from what a psychiatrist calls the seven year itch, a condition in which men consider having affairs during the seventh year of their marriage. He grows increasingly distraught, as his dreams become more intense and he spends more time with Monroe's character.

While Monroe taunts him in his imagination, Sherman never actually cheats on his wife. He promises his wife that he won't smoke and drink while she is away. A man's imagination cannot be contained, but he is still expected to respect his marriage. Sherman initially jokes to himself about his empty house and how he enjoys some peaceful quiet time to himself. While Sherman initially enjoys his first day without his wife and son, he quickly begins to feel lonely.

The film insinuates that women are an essential fixture to men's lives, and without them, they are driven to insanity. As soon as he invites Monroe's character over for a drink the first night, he grows anxious and begins smoking again. He immediately has fantasies about her and lies to her about living alone. His wife, Helen, calls both before and after Monroe comes over for a drink. Sherman is under the impression that he can have any woman he wants, and that all the past women he interacts with were in love with him. He grows increasingly anxious throughout the film, worries that his wife is going to find out about his new friendship and suspect him of seducing her.¹⁴⁵

In doing so, the movie seems to break the fourth wall and provide commentary on Monroe's real life persona as an actress and sex icon. The film depicts the effect Monroe has on innocent men that drive men to insanity to the point they consider cheating on their wives. Monroe's character remains nameless throughout. When a friend of his wife comes to check up on him, Sherman assumes that he is going to say Helen wants a divorce. He becomes angry and says he can explain the blonde woman in his kitchen, "Maybe it's Marilyn Monroe!"¹⁴⁶ This moment blurs the line between real life and fiction. *The Seven Year Itch* is also notable for producing the iconic image of Monroe in a white, flowing dress standing over a subway grate. She appears coy, trying to push the skirt down, but the image itself has solidified her status as the sex icon of the decade and has become an emblem in popular culture. The actual scene itself is very tame and performed casually, but the image itself has grown to become more provocative. Thus, we see the construction of Monroe's reputation during this time, as the film explores her effect on men and male audiences at large.

¹⁴⁵ *The Seven Year Itch*, directed by Billy Wilder (20th Century Fox, 1955, <https://tubity.com/movies/100006011/the-seven-year-itch>.

¹⁴⁶ *The Seven Year Itch*, 1:40:20 to 1:40:35.

While Marilyn Monroe is the all-American blonde bombshell and sex icon, Audrey Hepburn is constructed by Hollywood as the elegant and charming girl next door. Her appeal draws from a more reserved and sophisticated persona compared to Monroe's more sexually charged reputation. In many of her films, Hepburn is portrayed as a shy and bookish young woman who is completely unaware of her beauty: the complete opposite of Monroe's character. She is seemingly more concerned with brains over beauty. In many of her movies during this decade, she is whisked away to Europe in search of love or knowledge before being swept off her feet by an American man to live happily ever after.

In the 1953 film *Roman Holiday*, Hepburn plays a princess who yearns for freedom. She is frustrated by her lack of privacy and individualism as she is expected to devote all her time to being a princess, growing bored and tired of her duties. One night, as her caretaker goes over her schedule for the next day, she throws a tantrum. The doctor gives her medicine to make her drowsy but she runs away when everyone is asleep. Having never been on her own, she wanders the city before becoming sleepy from the drugs and getting help from Joe Bradley, who offers her a place to sleep, not knowing who she is. The next day, news comes out that the princess is missing. Bradley comes into work and offers to provide his boss with an exclusive interview with the princess. He offers to show Princess Ann around Rome, taking her anywhere she wants to. One of the first things she does with her newfound freedom is cut her long hair. In doing so, she commits herself to doing whatever she wants and not being limited by her royal court. She also becomes less recognizable to the public as she explores the city with Bradley. They go to sidewalk cafes, ride vespas, and visit tourist attractions such as the Colosseum. Bradley invites his photographer friend Irving along to take pictures for the paper. Hepburn's character is naive and takes Bradley's generosity for kindness. They soon fall in love before she returns to the

castle. In the end, Bradley ultimately decides he will not sell the story of Princess Ann to his boss and keeps her secret. At her press conference, he hints to this fact, as they share long, wistful stares in front of everybody. The film ends with Bradley walking down the hall alone into the princess' quarters. It is left ambiguously to leave the audience wondering about the state of their relationship.¹⁴⁷

Roman Holiday was Hepburn's breakout role, and soon began a trend of subsequent characters she plays. Hepburn's characters serve to tie femininity to patriotism in a broader, global context. Her characters, despite having the reserved elegance associated with European beauty, ultimately desire an American savior in her male character counterparts. In *Funny Face* and *Roman Holiday*, Hepburn is charmed by the adventurous Dick Avery and Joe Bradley, respectively. In doing so, these films serve to provide a seemingly more romantic view of relationships compared to Monroe's films. Monroe and her gold digger characters are upfront about not marrying for love but instead for money. The lack of romance in her films are supplemented by comedic one liners, in which Monroe is ditzy but charming. Monroe and Hepburn thus provide two contrasting models for the ideal relationship, but both are equally patriotic. In both cases, neither of them prioritize their careers and find romantic partners who provide for them. This also serves to imply a relationship between American masculinity and the ability to provide. This is especially significant in the context of the postwar period, as male veterans are returning to the workforce and women are deciding between their careers and becoming homemakers.

In *Funny Face*, Hepburn plays an unassuming, intellectual bookstore keeper named Jo. She is considered plain looking by the magazine executives and Jo herself claims that she is not

¹⁴⁷ *Roman Holiday*, directed by William Wyler (Paramount Pictures, 1953), <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3rp5md>.

focused on her looks but rather her intelligence. She detests magazines and modeling for their superficiality. When the Quality magazine editor Maggie Prescott looks for a new model, the photographer Dick Avery, played by Fred Astaire, suggests Jo as a new up and coming model. The model is supposed to epitomize the “quality woman” and have “grace, elegance, and pizzazz.” However, Prescott describes Jo as having a face that is “perfectly funny.” Avery argues that she possesses “character, spirit, and intelligence.” Prescott decides to take a chance on Jo, in hopes of inventing a new type of model woman for the magazine’s upcoming collection. Avery manages to convince Jo to travel to Paris for the photoshoot as a means to an end for finally meeting her favorite French philosopher, Professor Flostre. They visit extravagant sites for the photoshoot and soon Mr. Avery and Jo fall in love. Later, when the French professor comes onto her, Jo realizes her responsibility to the magazine and Mr. Avery. Professor Flostre only cared for Jo’s looks and not her intelligence while Avery, despite his occupation as a photographer, cared for Jo’s character. In doing so, the film seeks to plot American and European men against each other, portraying American men as ultimately more masculine and righteous. It also serves to imply that young, unassuming American women simply have to wait for their future husband to show them their full potential. It is not until a young woman falls in love that everything in her life makes sense and she becomes truly aware of her own identity and personhood. The film ends with Jo chasing after Avery’s plane back to America.¹⁴⁸

In the 1954 film *Sabrina*, Linus Larrabee, played by Humphrey Bogart, is the son of a wealthy business family who provides for Hepburn as the titular character. The movie begins with the Larrabee family having a party with all of their elite, upper class friends. Sabrina watches through the window as she has done her entire life, specifically looking over the

¹⁴⁸ *Funny Face*, directed by Stanley Donen (Paramount Pictures, 1957), <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x83ekz7>.

Larrabee's eldest son David played by William Holden. She is sent away to culinary school in Paris to learn how to become a modern woman, by her father's demands. Sabrina struggles in culinary school because she is so distracted thinking about David back in America. She sends her father letters asking about him and dreams about him all the time. When she returns, David offers her a ride and does not recognize her. Her two years in Paris have transformed her into a brand new, sophisticated woman. David believes he is offering a ride to an attractive woman he has never seen before and soon becomes shocked when he finds out Sabrina lives on his family's estate as the chauffeur's daughter. Infatuated with the new Sabrina, David invites her to his family's party. However, David is already engaged to a woman named Elizabeth Tyson as part of a merger between their two family's businesses. David's younger brother Linus, who is dependent on the business merger, becomes upset and involves David in a minor accident that leaves him bedridden for a couple days. In the meantime, Sabrina falls in love with Linus, who convinces her to sail back to Paris with him in order to save David's upcoming marriage as well as the company merger. Linus woos her and unknowingly falls in love with her. When David recovers, Linus attempts to send him off with Sabrina instead. David refuses, and insists that he marry Elizabeth for the sake of the business deal. During their argument, David also makes Linus aware of the fact that he has been in love with Sabrina this whole time. The two argue about who should go with Sabrina and what would be best for their family's company. During a board meeting, David bursts in to tell Linus that Sabrina's boat has already sailed away and convinces him to run after her. The film ends with Linus and Sabrina meeting on the boat.¹⁴⁹

In *Sabrina*, we see the same tropes as portrayed in *Funny Face* and *Roman Holiday* but on American soil. Hepburn as the titular character is not considered a modern woman until she learns to cook and has traveled to Europe. Upon returning to America, she is immediately

¹⁴⁹ *Sabrina*, directed by Billy Wilder (Paramount Pictures, 1954), <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x8gle31>.

viewed as a brand new woman. While Hepburn's character development remains relatively static throughout the entire film, the fact she went away to Europe for culinary school caused the film's other characters to view her as suddenly more mature and sophisticated, and even more beautiful. For both David and Linus Larrabee, they serve to represent an ideal of masculine American men who want to provide for their family and future wives. They have a strong moral compass and feel a responsibility to put others' needs before their own. Sabrina would have been happy to marry either of them.

For both Monroe and Hepburn, their films contain a happy ending for their characters in which they ultimately marry for love and do not have to worry about careers. While the 1950s was marked by a strong promotion of the nuclear family and traditional female roles as housewives and mothers, Hollywood chose to emphasize the importance of love and marriage, as this provides a strong foundation for families and homemaking in the near future. In doing so, Hollywood played a significant role in promoting a new form of femininity based in domesticity and patriotism that was prominent during this decade. With Monroe as the all-American blonde bombshell and Hepburn as the elegant girl next door, romantic comedy films during this time emphasized the importance of traditional American gender roles. These films implied that these tropes would lead to the ideal marriage and true love. Thus, while Monroe and Hepburn had contrasting personalities established by Hollywood's star system, they ultimately promoted a brand of American femininity that sought marriage and true love with a man as patriotic as them.

Expanding On Mulvey and Friedan

Laura Mulvey's *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* and Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* serve as foundational pieces for feminist film theory and feminist history, respectively. In addition, both are a reaction to the constricting domestic culture of the 1950's. *Visual Pleasures* applies theories of psychoanalysis in order to enhance our understanding of classical Hollywood films in which gender roles are very distinct and rigid. Filmmaking during this time intentionally appealed to sexual, subconscious desires. In doing so, Mulvey discusses the impact films have on the construction of identity. Similarly, Friedan discusses various aspects of 1950s domestic culture that contribute to women's illusion of agency. Most notably, she discusses the rise of domestic print culture, specifically magazines, and how they provide women with the illusion of choice and free will while they are restricted to their domestic roles. Thus, both Mulvey and Friedan explore the connections between media, consumption, femininity, and identity.

Mulvey begins her essay *Visual Pleasure* by discussing how the classical Hollywood style during the golden age, which lasted throughout the 1930s, 40s, and 50s, was its own large, capitalist system that had the power to establish dominant ideologies. "Unchallenged, mainstream film coded the erotic into the language of the dominant patriarchal order."¹⁵⁰ Hollywood has always prioritized visual pleasure, and the image and portrayal of women lies at the center of this. Celebrity culture is largely based on theories of visual pleasure, as fans often choose which films to watch based on their sexual preference of actors, even if unintentionally and subconsciously. Movies were filmed with specific angles and lighting techniques that made stars appear powerful, sultry, and appealing.¹⁵¹ Female fans purchase magazines of male stars in order to read about their personal lives and fulfill subconscious desires and fantasies. Thus,

¹⁵⁰ Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" 1975, 3.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 11.

Hollywood's golden age and its utilization of the star system is based on theories of visual pleasure.

Mulvey draws upon Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory of scopophilia, or the pleasure in looking.¹⁵² In viewing another person as an object, an individual can derive sexual pleasure or stimulation simply through sight. Mulvey applies this theory to the screen, in which male audiences are able to derive pleasure from viewing women on screen and female audiences derive pleasure from viewing male characters on the screen. Mulvey also builds on the theories of Jacques Lacan and his ideas of self identification as well as the formation of ego.¹⁵³ Lacan posits that the moment a child is able to identify themselves in the mirror, the construction of the ego begins. Mulvey applies this concept of self identification to the silver screen, in which a female spectator may begin to form her identity and ego after seeing a female character on screen.¹⁵⁴ Characters on screen serve as catalysts for viewers to gain consciousness of the self. Thus, through watching films, young Americans construct their identities around the personalities they view on screen. This is especially true and significant during the 1950s.

Mulvey goes on to emphasize the dichotomies in visual pleasure, which are split as active/male and passive/female.¹⁵⁵ This situates the male as the active viewer and the female as a passive spectator, in which women are simultaneously looked at and constantly subject to display for the purpose of serving as a sexual object for male visual pleasure. The female character on screen is passive and relies on the male counterpart for action within the films themselves. She serves a dual role as a sexual object for the male characters on screen as well as the male viewers in the theaters. On the other hand, the male character is the active driving force behind the film's

¹⁵² Ibid, 4.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 5.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 6.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 7.

plot. A male character's ideal qualities are not subject to sexualization but rather ideation, in which male viewers strive to be as virtuous as the characters. He commands the plot in the way real life male spectators hope to command the home. The male spectator actively constructs an identity around heroic male characters he sees while simultaneously deriving pleasure from the objectified female characters.¹⁵⁶ Mulvey utilizes examples of film noir and dramatic films in which men are portrayed as crime fighting heroes and women are passive subjects to be saved.¹⁵⁷

Mulvey's theories of male ideation and construction of the ego can also be applied to the romantic comedy genre. As seen in the films previously analyzed, the male characters represent an ideal man and husband, as they are portrayed as independent, caring, and virtuous. While the characters of Humphrey Bogart and Clark Gable serve as role models for male viewers, I believe that these characters are subject to idolization by female viewers as well. As women of the 1950s become increasingly more eager to marry younger and younger, it is extremely likely that the male characters they see on screen serve as a baseline for their expectations of male partners in real life. The cult following of male celebrities and mass consumption of fan magazines by young female fans serve as a testament to this. Male viewers were not purchasing magazines. Magazine companies were aware of this, and constructed their issues to satisfy female fans' fantasies. Thus, in some ways, male characters were subject to some form of objectification and ideation by female viewers, who utilized their power to purchase to solidify themselves as active participants in the film and magazine industry.

Furthermore, while female characters tend to be stagnant in genres like film noir, the romantic comedy genre exhibits more active female characters. Driven by their desire for marriage and love, female characters often serve as a driving force of the plot in the romantic

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, 7.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, 11.

comedy genre, and if they are not the main protagonist, they are more vocal than female characters in other genres. In the case of Monroe and Hepburn, the plots of their films are largely based on their real life personas. Monroe makes it known that she is set on marrying millionaires while Hepburn announces to the audience she cares more about intelligence than physical attractiveness. Thus, with such prominent female personalities on screen, female viewers are more likely to subject themselves to self ideation and construction of the ego when watching the romantic comedy genre. Young women who are eager to look and act like their favorite female stars identify themselves with their characters displayed on screen. While the female characters' motives are largely based on their interactions with their male counterparts, they are still portrayed to have more agency than female characters of other genres. As a result, female viewers are able to self identify with the characters of Monroe and Hepburn, especially with the romantic comedy genre being largely dominated by female fans. In doing so, actresses such as Monroe and Hepburn serve as models of femininity for women of the 1950s.

In the beginning chapters of the *Feminine Mystique*, Friedan argues that the power to purchase has misled suburban women into thinking they had agency. To women of the 1950s, true feminine fulfillment came in the form of being the ideal housewife and mother. "She was free to choose automobiles, clothes, appliances, supermarkets; she had everything that women ever dreamed of."¹⁵⁸ This was the core of the feminine mystique, a false sense of fulfillment for women that did not ultimately serve their own personal benefit but the benefit of suburban America.¹⁵⁹ They could exist at peace in their restricted roles as homemakers, and had complete control over their domestic domain. Femininity was inextricably linked to domestic duties and traditional, patriotic values of the nuclear family and heterosexual marriage.

¹⁵⁸ Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, 18.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 43.

The basis of Friedan's argument is analysis of women's home magazines from the 1950s. These magazines were centered around how women can best decorate their homes, improve their marriage, and raise children who would become model citizens of the future United States. Friedan points out that the women in these magazines are never portrayed to have a career outside the home or any other interest outside of their traditional roles.¹⁶⁰ The only career woman mentioned in the magazines Friedan discusses is the actress. However, she asserts that even "her image also underwent a remarkable change: from a complex individual of fiery temper, inner depth, and a mysterious blend of spirit and sexuality, to a sexual object, a babyface bride, or a housewife."¹⁶¹ Friedan mentions Greta Garbo and Marlene Dietrich, prominent actresses of the 1920s and 1930s, as examples of the former and mentions Marilyn Monroe and Lucille Ball as examples of the latter.¹⁶² Thus, even the actress was subject to dominant ideologies of domesticity.

I expand on Friedan's analysis of magazines by examining the history of the fan movie magazine and rise of gossip columnists. While Friedan argues that mainstream magazines outside of the industry portray actresses as victims of the patriarchal ideologies, I argue that fan magazines function to glorify the role of female actresses. She asserts that magazines portray actresses as if they do not enjoy their work and are always talked about strictly in the context of their personal relationships. However, fan magazines such as *Photoplay* and *Screenland* reveal that female actresses were portrayed by the industry as beacons of modernity. They were women who had it all: beauty, fame, a career they enjoyed, and a loving marriage. Friedan also makes the observation that magazines are predominantly written by men throughout the 1940s and 1950s. For studio magazines however, writer and editor positions seemed more evenly split. In

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 44.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, 52.

¹⁶² Ibid, 53.

fact, the most prominent film journalists and columnists of the time were women, such as Louella Parsons and Hedda Hopper.

It is true that magazines during the 1950s were overwhelmingly composed of advertisements that promoted homemaking as well as cosmetic products. Women during this time were expected to keep their homes looking pristine, and look good while doing it. The feminine mystique is largely based on mass consumption and is a result of dominant patriotic ideologies. The more women participated in capitalism, the more this fueled anti-Communist sentiment. Female fan culture in the motion picture industry is an overlooked aspect that ultimately contributes to the feminine mystique. Like home magazines, fan magazines facilitate domestic ideology through the promotion of homemaking products. However, the model woman is not the housewife, but the modern female actress.

Scholarship on 1950s women's history and film history have not yet considered the intersections of Friedan and Mulvey.¹⁶³ However, I argue that the two are parallels of one another. *Visual Pleasures* and *The Feminine Mystique* seek to explore the consequences of media consumption for women specifically. The concept of women constructing their identities around the media they consume and the ways in which they participate in the market economy as a result is an apparent theme in both works. This phenomenon is especially significant during the 1950s, at a time when Cold War anxieties were at a high, and women across America were desperate to fabricate new identities and roles within the home. Thus, the formula of domesticity, and subsequent mass consumption, affirming one's patriotism and femininity sold by magazines and movies throughout the decade was highly appealing to women during this time period.

¹⁶³ Jane M. Gaines, "Film History and the Two Presents of Feminist Film Theory," 113.

Conclusion

The significance of female consumer culture in the United States reached its peak in the 1950s, as a result of mass suburbanization and dominant patriotic ideologies. Following World War Two, American women suddenly found themselves responsible for taking care of the home as male veterans returned home and suburbs began to bud across the nation as a result. The power to purchase became especially significant and linked to patriotism as the United States recovered from the war. Women bought refrigerators and vacuum cleaners in order to fulfill their duties as the ideal American housewife. Furthermore, with increased leisure time, the entertainment and media women consumed during this time also gained greater significance, especially for movies.

This trend of female fan culture in the 1950s carries on throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. With the lifting of the Hays Code in the late 1960s, the portrayal of female characters suddenly gained greater creative liberty, and female characters became increasingly more complex over time. Second wave feminism and the accompanying sexual revolution of the 1960s and 1970s led to the expansion of female tropes in film as well as a greater interest in the sex lives of these celebrities. Movies, and the magazines that followed, became increasingly risqué. The gap between fan and celebrity began to diminish as mass consumption became increasingly common and widespread beyond the suburbs. Even with the new age of the Internet and a decrease in magazine culture, female fan culture continues to exist today as it predicts and dictates trends of consumption and establishes dominant ideologies.

“So, if you have a little would-be movie actress in your home, and you would save her untold suffering and disappointment in a life of fiercest competition and an overcrowded profession, then make her understand that the best moving picture in which she can play a leading role, is one entitled ‘Home.’” -Woman’s Home Companion 1918, Vol 45

Bibliography

- Arnold, Gordon B. *Projecting the End of the American Dream: Hollywood's Visions of U.S. Decline*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2013.
- Austin, Bruce A. *Immediate Seating: A Look at Movie Audiences*. Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1989.
- Babic, Annessa Ann. *America's Changing Icons: Constructing Patriotic Women from World War I to the Present*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2018.
- Barbas, Samantha. *Movie Crazy: Stars, Fans, and the Cult of Celebrity*. Springer, 2016.
- Barbas, Samantha. *Confidential Confidential: The Inside Story of Hollywood's Notorious Scandal Magazine*. Chicago Review Press, 2018.
- Barbas, Samantha. *The First Lady of Hollywood: A Biography of Louella Parsons*. University of California Press, 2005.
- Basinger, Jeanine. "The Woman's Film: When Women Wept." In *Hollywood's America: Understanding History Through Film*, n.d.
- Black, Gregory D. "Hollywood Censored: The Production Code Administration and the Hollywood Film Industry, 1930-1940." *Film History* 3, no. 3 (1989): 167-89. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3814976>.
- Butler, Judith. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." In *The Feminism and Visual Cultural Reader*. Routledge, 2003.
- Carroll, Noël. "The Image of Women in Film: A Defense of a Paradigm." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 48, no. 4 (1990): 349-60. <https://doi.org/10.2307/431572>.
- Cohen, Lizabeth. *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2008.

- Cohen, Lizabeth. *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2008.
- Cohen, Mary Morley. "Forgotten Audiences in the Passion Pits: Drive-in Theatres and Changing Spectator Practices in Post-War America." *Film History* 6, no. 4 (1994): 470–86. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3815021>.
- Coontz, Stephanie. *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*. Basic Books, 2016.
- Cosmopolitan 1950-12: Vol 129 Iss 6*. Hearst Magazines, a Division of Hearst Communications, Inc., 1950. http://archive.org/details/sim_cosmopolitan_1950-12_129_6.
- Davis, Ronald L. *Celluloid Mirrors: Hollywood and American Society Since 1945*. Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1997.
- Doherty, Thomas Patrick. *Pre-Code Hollywood: Sex, Immorality, and Insurrection in American Cinema*. Columbia University Press, 1999.
- Donen, Stanley, director. *Funny Face*. Paramount Pictures, 1957. 1 hr., 43 min., <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x83ekz7>.
- Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2001.
- Frost, Jennifer. *Hedda Hopper's Hollywood: Celebrity Gossip and American Conservatism*. NYU Press, 2011.
- Gaines, Jane M. "Film History and the Two Presents of Feminist Film Theory." *Cinema Journal* 44, no. 1 (2004): 113–19. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3661177>.
- Goldberg, Michael Lewis. "'Rebel without a Cause': Using Film to Teach about Dating in the 1950s." *OAH Magazine of History* 18, no. 4 (2004): 38–42. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25163701>.

- Grindon, Leger. *The Hollywood Romantic Comedy: Conventions, History, Controversies*. John Wiley & Sons, 2011.
- Grossman, Julie. *Rethinking the Femme Fatale in Film Noir: Ready for Her Close-Up*. Springer, 2009.
- Haskell, Molly. *From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies*. University of Chicago Press, 2016.
- Hawks, Howard, director. *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*. 20th Century Fox, 1953. 1 hr., 31 min., <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x80ot2m>.
- Hollywood Reporter (1950)*. 1950. Hollywood, Calif: [Wilkerson Daily Corp.]. UCLA Entertainment Industry News and Trade Publications Digital Library
- Johnston, Eric. "The Motion Picture on the Threshold of a Decisive Decade." Motion Picture Association of America, 1946. Margaret Herrick Library, *Motion Picture Association of America Annual Reports (1932-1967)*, <https://digitalcollections.oscars.org/digital/collection/p15759coll11/id/11446/rec/20>.
- Johnston, Eric *Waldorf Statement*, 1947, From Projecting the End of the American Dream.
- Jones, Amelia. *The Feminism and Visual Culture Reader*. Psychology Press, 2003.
- Kerber, Linda K. "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History." *The Journal of American History* 75, no. 1 (1988): 9–39. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1889653>.
- Klein, Maury. *Laughing Through Tears: Movies of the Depression Years*. National Historical Society., 1983.
- Koppes, Clayton R., and Gregory D. Black. "What to Show the World: The Office of War Information and Hollywood, 1942-1945." *The Journal of American History* 64, no. 1 (June 1977): 87. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1888275>.
- Lears, Jackson. *Fables Of Abundance: A Cultural History Of Advertising In America*. Basic Books, 1995.

- Malone, Aubrey. *Hollywood's Second Sex: The Treatment of Women in the Film Industry, 1900-1999*. McFarland, 2015.
- Marchand, Roland. *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920-1940*. Univ of California Press, 2023.
- Martens, Lydia. "Feminism and the Critique of Consumer Culture, 1950-1970." In *Feminism, Domesticity, and Popular Culture*. Routledge, 2009.
- "Mary Pickford Scrapbooks." Scrapbook. From Margaret Herrick Library, *Mary Pickford Papers*, <https://digitalcollections.oscars.org/digital/collection/p15759coll10/id/540/rec/5>.
- Mast, Gerald. *The Movies in Our Midst: Documents in the Cultural History of Film in America*. University of Chicago Press, 1982.
- Mayne, Judith. *Cinema and Spectatorship*. Routledge, 1993.
- Mayne, Judith. "Feminist Film Theory and Women at the Movies." *Profession*, 1987, 14–19. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25595398>.
- Mccreadie, Marsha. *Women on Film: The Critical Eye*. Bloomsbury Academic, 1983.
- Meyerowitz, Joanne. "Beyond the Feminine Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture, 1946- 1958." *The Journal of American History* 79, no. 4 (1993): 1455–82. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2080212>.
- Mintz, Steven, Randy W. Roberts, and David Welky. *Hollywood's America: Understanding History Through Film*. John Wiley & Sons, 2016.
- "Modern Screen" [Dec 1949 - Dec 1959]. Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research, *Media History Digital Library*. <https://mediahistoryproject.org/reader.php?id=modernscreen4041unse>
- Montgomery, Sarah. "Women's Women's Films." *Feminist Review*, no. 18 (1984): 38–48. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1394857>.

Morin, Céline, and Regan Kramer. “Women in American TV Series (1950s to 2000): Proto-Feminist Heroines?” *Clio. Women, Gender, History*, no. 48 (2018): 251–70. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26946057>.

Mulvey, Laura. *Laura Mulvey “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” 1975*. Afterall Books, 2016.

Negulesco, Jean, director. *How to Marry a Millionaire*. 20th Century Fox, 1953. 1 hr., 35 min., <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x80zd2y>.

Neuhaus, Jessamyn. “The Way to a Man’s Heart: Gender Roles, Domestic Ideology, and Cookbooks in the 1950s.” *Journal of Social History* 32, no. 3 (1999): 529–55. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3789341>.

Nickerson, Michelle. “Women, Domesticity, and Postwar Conservatism.” *OAH Magazine of History* 17, no. 2 (2003): 17–21. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25163575>.

Ogden, Annegret S. *The Great American Housewife: From Helpmate to Wage Earner, 1776-1986*. Bloomsbury Academic, 1986.

Plantinga, Carl. *Moving Viewers: American Film and the Spectator’s Experience*. University of California Press, 2009.

“Photoplay” [Jan 1950-Dec 1959] | Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research, *Media History Digital Library*. https://mediahistoryproject.org/reader.php?id=photoplayjuldec100macf_8.

Roffman, Peter, and Jim Purdy. “The Red Scare in Hollywood: HUAC and the End of an Era.” In *Hollywood’s America*, n.d.

Sbardellati, John. *J. Edgar Hoover Goes to the Movies: The FBI and the Origins of Hollywood’s Cold War*. Cornell University Press, 2012.

“Screenland” [Nov 1949-Oct 1951] | Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research, *Media History Digital Library*. <https://mediahistoryproject.org/reader.php?id=screenland54unse>.

Slide, Anthony. *Inside the Hollywood Fan Magazine: A History of Star Makers, Fabricators, and Gossip Mongers*. Univ. Press of Mississippi, 2010.

Spoto, Donald. *Marilyn Monroe: The Biography*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2001.

Stamp, Shelley. *Movie-Struck Girls: Women and Motion Picture Culture after the Nickelodeon*. Princeton University Press, 2018.

Straughn, Victoria. “Hollywood ‘Takes’ on Domestic Subversion: The Role of Women in Cold War America.” *OAH Magazine of History* 17, no. 2 (2003): 31–36.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/25163577>.

Truman, Harry S. *Truman Doctrine (1947)*, National Archives.
<https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/truman-doctrine>.

Variety (New York, N.Y.). 1905. New York: [Variety Pub. Co.]. UCLA Entertainment News and Trade Publications Digital Collections.

Vaughn, Stephen. “Morality and Entertainment: The Origins of the Motion Picture Production Code.” *The Journal of American History* 77, no. 1 (1990): 39–65.
<https://doi.org/10.2307/2078638>.

Vogue | The Complete Archive. “The Complete Vogue Archive.”
<https://archive.vogue.com/issues/1950>.

Waller, Gregory A. *Moviegoing in America: A Sourcebook in the History of Film Exhibition*. Wiley, 2001.

Welsch, Janice R. “Feminist Film Theory/Criticism in the United States.” *Journal of Film and Video* 39, no. 2 (1987): 66–82. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20687771>.

Wilder, Billy, director. *Sabrina*. Paramount Pictures, 1954. 1 hr., 53 min.,
<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x8gle31>.

Wilder, Billy, director. *The Seven Year Itch*. 20th Century Fox, 1955. 1 hr., 45 min.,
<https://tubitv.com/movies/100006011/the-seven-year-itch>.

Willis, Susan. *A Primer For Daily Life*. Routledge, 2005.

Witkowski, Terrence H. *A History of American Consumption: Threads of Meaning, Gender, and Resistance*. Routledge, 2017.

Wyeth, N. C. (Newell Convers). *The Ladies' Home Journal*. Philadelphia : [s.n.], 1889.
<http://archive.org/details/ladieshomejourna67janwyet>.

Wyler, William, director. *Roman Holiday*. Paramount Pictures, 1953. 1hr., 58 min.,
<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3rp5md>.