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ARTICLE

Consumption and Citizenship during the Second World War

Product advertising in women's magazines

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Abstract. Most research on advertising and consumption during the Second World War focusses on rationing and deferred spending, suggesting that consumers curtailed spending and focussed on saving for postwar purchases. In fact, spending increased steadily during the war and non-rationed goods 'were gobbled up' by consumers eager to spend the money earned through war production. The following study seeks to provide a more complete understanding of consumption during the Second World War. This research combines an exploration of archived data from the advertising industry and government bureau reports on advertising and the wartime economy with an examination of advertisements in women's magazines during the war period. Archival data suggest that the advertising industry not only weathered the wartime crisis, but also profited from government campaigns to sell the war and business campaigns to sell products. Data from a content analysis indicate that American women received a consistent message of unrestricted consumption during the war that overshadowed messages about rationing and deferred spending. The types of advertising campaigns used during the war period reflect the divergent needs of producers and consumers during the crisis and reveal the continued capitalistic ideology of consumption in spite of established restrictions on spending.

Key words
gender • gender roles • home front • *Ladies' Home Journal*

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INTRODUCTION

The Second World War came at the end of a decade-long depression in the United States that had halted the spending and consumption of the 1920s. Couples who had postponed the purchase of new appliances and conveniences to focus instead on necessities such as food and shelter were now asked to further postpone these purchases due to shortages from war production. Existing research on advertising and consumption patterns during the Second World War has focussed on these types of messages (Blum, 1976; Campbell, 1984; Goodman, 1946; Honey, 1984; Winkler, 1986; Witkowski, 1998). Most researchers of consumer behavior during this period have focussed on advertising campaigns urging citizens to buy war bonds, salvage scrap metal, save waste fats and avoid unnecessary trips: 'People were bombarded with messages asking them to be frugal, to recycle, and to produce at home more of what they consumed' (Witkowski, 1998: 568).

Within these messages about frugality and rationing during wartime, advertisers redirected the urge to spend towards postwar purchasing, according to Blum (1976) and Fox (1975). Wartime advertising focussed on the future purchase, with consumers no longer needing to put off the acquisition of modern conveniences and the prosperity that not only peace, but these products would stand for (Fox, 1975: 32). Selling peacetime was also about selling the products of peacetime, preparing Americans for products employing new technologies developed during the war and suggesting how they could be used in their homes. This postwar view was a world of consumption unhindered by the 'unAmerican' values that the war was fighting against. Postwar freedom was partially the freedom to spend, the freedom to consume.

While there is evidence of advertising that focussed on limiting consumption and planning for postwar spending, studies emphasizing these elements have not produced a complete account of advertising campaigns during the Second World War. During the war period, spending increased as wages increased. Civilian consumption increased steadily during the war. Some studies show that consumers were spending their money on any goods available. A wartime diary, published weekly in *Advertising Age*, a leading trade publication for the advertising industry, provides two references to this spending frenzy. The diary was written by prominent advertising executive of the day James Webb Young:

> Tuesday, May 11 (1943). Lunched with an executive of one of our big department stores. He said the demand for merchandise continued to be insatiable, and that so far they had been able to

> keep supply somewhere near it only by all sorts of buying ingenuity. (pp. 155–6)
>
> Tuesday, June 8 (1943). Talked with the one banker and several of the retail merchants [of a small town]. The money is giving the retail merchants the best business they ever had, in spite of consumer shortages. Even the deadest of inventory items is moving. (p. 169)

High-level wages for both men and women in munitions work allowed working-class families to purchase items that they could not afford during the long years of the Depression:

> At every level of society, men and women, even children, had money to spend, for luxuries if they were rich, for amenities long denied them if they were of moderate means, for small conveniences, decent food, and some recreation if they were workers. (Blum, 1976: 92)

How do we reconcile these seemingly contradictory portrayals of a home front economy focussed on rationing, on the one hand, and high levels of spending, on the other hand? A more thorough understanding of consumption patterns during the period of the Second World War emerges when the full range of wartime advertising is examined. This article will examine several interrelated issues: why the advertising industry created the messages it did; why consumption continued to be an important message during wartime; and how these messages came to define women's roles as citizens and consumers during the Second World War. This study analyzes advertising appeals present during the war period in the *Ladies' Home Journal* in order to uncover the source and reasoning behind the conflicting messages provided to wartime consumers.

It is not sufficient, however, to look merely at advertisements. While ads act as the nexus between producer and consumer, they are not themselves indicators of consumption. In order to provide a more complete assessment of wartime advertising, this research will examine the underlying economic and political forces that played a role in the production of these ads as well as the product itself (i.e. the ads). The advertisements represent the end product of an industry responding to both internal pressures to maintain profitability and external pressures to 'prove' its wartime value to the public, government and business sectors. Therefore, this research will examine two additional elements to more fully explain how seemingly contradictory messages about consumption and rationing are linked to the

broader messages that women received about their roles as citizens and consumers during the Second World War. An examination of archived data from the War Advertising Council and editions of the two leading advertising trade journals, *Advertising Age* and *Printer's Ink*, provide an overview of the motives and techniques of an advertising industry that entered the war fearing its own annihilation and came out of the war with record profits. Statistical data from the US Department of Commerce provide information on wartime consumption as well as the state of the advertising industry throughout the war.

The goal of this article is to provide an explanation for the seemingly contradictory assessments of dominant messages regarding consumption and rationing found during the Second World War. The research focusses on messages aimed at women during the period. As the primary consumers in the household and the core of the American home front population, women represented the central targets of commercial and governmental messages about their responsibilities as citizens and consumers in wartime. The following sections will provide the theoretical and historical background essential to the understanding of women's role as consumer citizens during the Second World War as constructed by advertisements in women's magazines.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONSUMER CITIZENS

The intention of advertising extends far beyond simply selling goods and services to consumers. Advertising provides important cues about a society's dominant values and culture (Fox, 1975; Lasch, 1979; Meijer, 1998; Qualter, 1991). Ads provide information about what is valued in a society and how to obtain status through consumption. While the advertising industry in the US began as little more than an intermediary between business owners and newspapers (Fox, 1997), it has come to play a vital role in reflecting and defining what it means to be an American. Modern societies have come to be defined in part by their patterns of consumption, and corporate logos and labels have become as identifying as national flags. In late industrial and postindustrial societies, it is consumption rather than production that characterizes the economic order (Baldamus, 1971; Baudrillard, 1998; Corrigan, 1997). The interconnections between corporations and governments in highly industrialized nations have turned consuming goods and services into an essential activity for their citizens. In the mass society, being a consumer may be the most important role that a citizen plays, since mass production requires a concomitant mass consumption of the products manufactured. This requirement for mass

consumption produces what Baldamus has termed the 'consumption imperative' (1971: 6).

Within modern capitalism, consumption comes to be as important as production. In fact, Qualter goes so far as to assert that, in advanced capitalist societies, 'members of the public are described as consumers as often as they are called citizens' (1991: 37). American citizens, in particular, are bombarded with images of what they should buy and messages that buying is part of the American way (Qualter, 1991). Advertising is used as a tool to promote consumption as a way of life (Lasch, 1979). Qualter further asserts that capitalism uses the mass media to define citizenship and democracy (1991). Being a good citizen is at least partly about consuming. Consumption is a way of showing your confidence in the existing political and economic order.

Consumption may have an even more important part to play during wartime. Even in war, advanced capitalism requires an artificially high level of consumption. The civilian economy drives war production by supplying tax revenue, supplementing war-related production income, and maintaining a base level of production necessary for postwar economic reconversion. Profit is important for businesses during wartime in order to help supplement wartime production and government contracts for military goods (Blum, 1976). During the Second World War, the maintenance of consumption patterns was especially important. For the first time since the Depression, most Americans had the ability to purchase goods and services as rising wages extended many Americans' purchasing power. This power was not only advantageous for businesses in the sense of selling their goods, but was also beneficial for the war effort more generally. Renewed buying power reinforced the idea that capitalism was the preferred mode of production and that it should be preserved. Advertising lies at the center of the consumption imperative by providing guidelines for consumers about how, what and at what levels to consume.

THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY BEFORE PEARL HARBOR

With the prospect of war, there was both hope and fear for the future of advertising. The advertising industry was faced with the prospect of being defined as 'non-essential' to the war effort. Based on early discussions between executives and industry leaders, advertising realized that its future relied on convincing the government that it had a role to play in the war. At the founding of the War Advertising Council in 1941, James Webb Young said of this dilemma, 'We have a demand to justify advertising now as a social force. What a nuisance. If we do not meet it, we will be

damaged. If we do not work together, we will not meet it' (cited in Fox, 1997: 299).

The advertising industry had many reasons to be concerned. The Depression years had not been kind and advertising found itself in a precarious position as the war began. Many companies limited or completely abandoned promotional campaigns. Advertising agencies experienced a severe decline in both employees and profits during the 1930s. Companies and advertisers were also worried that the government would eliminate cost deductions for advertising spending during the Second World War (Witkowski, 1998: 570). In the early days of 1942, with the country mobilizing itself for war, 'advertising was among those enterprises which, because they were unable to rush physically into war production, found themselves confronted not by boom or chaos but idleness' (Fox, 1975: 25). Finally, the consumerist movement that began in the 1920s gained fervor in the 1930s and threatened the industry with legislation regulating the form and content of advertising (Qualter, 1991). Consumer groups pushed for responsible advertising and sought to limit the freedom of advertisers to make unsubstantiated product claims. A number of satirical and sensationalist accounts about the excesses of the advertising industry appeared during this period, critiquing the methods used by advertisers to manipulate and deceive consumers (Fox, 1997). Attempts at legislative control, such as the 1933 Tugwell Bill to prevent false advertising and provide labeling requirements, would ultimately fail (Wood, 1958). Although these efforts precipitated internal reforms, the consumerist movement signaled a loss in faith in advertising by the general public. Given the precarious position of advertising, the industry was concerned about the impending war.

FIGHTING FOR THE AMERICAN WAY: SELLING THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY AS A 'WARTIME TOOL'

The early predictions of the end of advertising did not come to pass; in fact, the Second World War period represents one of the most profitable periods for advertising up to that time. One way to understand better why advertising took its wartime form is to examine how the industry defined itself to business and government. The leading marketing and advertising publications of the period published numerous articles during the early part of 1942 explaining to business as well as the government the role that advertising could play in the war effort. While several writers and ad executives called for all-out participation in the war effort, most articles emphasized the importance of continued 'selling copy' for the wartime economy.

The following section discusses the central theme dominating materials disseminated by the advertising industry during the early days of the Second World War. A content analysis was conducted on articles published during 1942 in the two most widely distributed advertising and marketing trade periodicals of the period, *Advertising Age* and *Printer's Ink*, to assess how the industry formulated its wartime plan.

In the first year of the war, a single theme dominated the discussion of advertising's role in wartime: fighting for the American way. For advertisers, the war was being fought in defense of America's system of free enterprise. Advertising was touted as a tool to 'drive home the accomplishment of our free enterprise system' (Held, 1942: 30). The US economic system was described as 'one of the principal things we are now fighting for' (1942: 30). Magazines claimed that the war was being fought 'between our democratic way of advertising and selling and the regimented way – between compulsion and persuasion' (Fuller, 1942: 60). In the view of the printing industry, 'winning the war means winning an American victory – a victory for what we choose to call "the American Way of Life"' (Weir, 1942a: 13). *Printer's Ink* insisted that the 'real mission' of advertising was to 'preserve the American incentive system against all unjust attack' (McFee, 1942: 65). For advertisers, the war was not being fought to preserve individual freedoms, but to preserve capitalism. This could be accomplished through 'selling the war' to the American people, according to W.J. Weir (1942b), copy director at Lord & Thomas, one of the largest advertising agencies at the time.

The Advertising Federation of America (AFA) released a list of wartime tasks that could be fulfilled through advertising, which was reprinted in both *Printer's Ink* and *Advertising Age* ('Advertising Gets 39 Wartime Tasks in AFA Compilation', *Advertising Age*, 23 March 1942: 10). According to the AFA, wartime goals for advertising focussed, first, on the maintenance of consumption and continued corporate expenditures for advertising and, second, on conveying war-related information to the American public. The first eight tasks listed illustrate this emphasis:

> Continue all normal distribution functions that do not impede war efforts; Maintain channels and trade contacts for future needs of industry; Preserve customer good will; Keep brand names alive; Prepare to build markets for post-war output of enlarged capacities; Keep enterprises alive and capable of resuming full employment; Preserve desire for eventual higher living standards; Discourage lowering of present living conditions beyond necessary restrictions of war. (23 March 1942: 10)

Goals 10 and 11 focus more specifically on wartime consumption, arguing that advertising has an important role to play in guiding the 'buying of consumers with newly increased purchasing power' and stimulating the 'use of products that can be supplied in plenty' (23 March 1942: 10).

Tasks related to the war effort are found lower on the list: 'Educate consumers on conservation, care, and repair of articles in use' was twelfth, while 'Help sell Government bonds and stamps' (goal 26), 'Assist in recruitment of specialists for armed forces' (goal 29) and 'Aid in promoting reallocation of skilled labor in war industries' (goal 30) were found towards the bottom of the list. The final task reiterates the priority for advertisers, who should, 'At all times, do everything possible to help preserve our American system of free competitive enterprise' (23 March 1942: 10). For advertising, war meant a new set of copy themes and peace meant endless opportunities for business. Preparing the American people for postwar consumption possibilities was as important as informing them about war bond campaigns and salvage drives.

The success of this and similar campaigns is impossible to assess, but government officials quickly came to support advertising. In April 1942, the US Department of Commerce prepared an article entitled 'Keeping Brand Names Alive through Informative Advertising' for its *Domestic Commerce* publication. The publication asserted that the important role of advertising during the war would require an increase in overall space for advertising ('Dept. of Commerce Cites Wartime Role of Advertising', *Advertising Age*, 27 April 1942: 30). In a letter to the AFA in June, President Roosevelt wrote that, if the industry continued to 'assist in the war program and continue the splendid spirit of cooperation which they have shown during the past year, advertising will have a worthwhile and patriotic place in the nation's total war effort' ('Need Advertising to Help Win War, Says Roosevelt', *Advertising Age*, 29 June 1942: 2). In December, *Advertising Age* ran an article, 'Government Officials Value Advertising as War Tool' (21 December 1942: 64–6), listing a year's accumulation of comments from a variety of government officials. Gardner Cowles, Office of War Information domestic operations director, gave perhaps the highest praise to advertising, cementing earlier connections made in the industry's own attempts to establish its role in the war. Cowles reportedly said:

> My own conviction is that a free enterprise system is the bone structure of a free political and social system and that advertising – of the right sort and properly used – is absolutely essential to a

> continuance of free enterprise in the United States. (21 December 1942: 65)

Based on these comments, it is clear that, by the end of 1942, advertising's place in the war had been firmly established and accepted by government officials.

The advertising industry also needed to sell itself to businesses, many of which were now engaged in military production and had no products to sell. A number of articles were published in 1942 outlining for business why it should continue to promote its companies in wartime regardless of their wartime production circumstances. *Advertising Age* summarized a recent publication from the ANPA Bureau of Advertising 'for those who can sell' ('Wartime Ad Copy Performs Functions Vital to Public', 6 July 1942: 8). For corporations not actively engaged in war production, war advertising could be used to 'maintain and increase sales of available merchandise' and 'take advantage of new sales opportunities when competitors reduce their advertising' (6 July 1942: 8). Companies engaged in part or entirely in military production also had an interest in continued advertising in order to 'Sell Tomorrow Today!' (Bohen, 1942: 13). In addition to maintaining brand recognition, maintaining advertising budgets during the war would mean that, when they resumed civilian production after the war, their customers would be there to buy their products.

Scare tactics were common devices used to convince businesses not to abandon advertising during the war. The AFA published a pamphlet 'Guide to Wartime Advertising Policies' with the warning that 'companies which temporarily neglect or abandon their distribution mechanisms seldom are able to rebuild them' (National Archives, b). The Philadelphia chapter of the National Industrial Advertisers Association created a book for businesses entitled *Proof* (McFee, 1942: 20). The book provided a series of cautionary tales from the First World War of the consequences of limiting or eliminating promotional campaigns during wartime. One story tells about 'Company A', which abandoned its advertising during the First World War and closed its doors not long afterwards because competitors who continued to advertise quickly took over their share of the market. This publication was intended to 'bring up short any executive or board of directors who may be contemplating a "temporary" separation from advertising' because of the war (1942: 20).

Coinciding with the promotion of advertising as a wartime tool for both business and government, a series of windfalls eliminated the industry's fears and secured an important position for the advertising industry in the

war economy. First, the Treasury Department established an excess profit tax of 90 percent in 1942. The tax was 'the single greatest temptation (to individual advertisers) and the single greatest danger (to advertising as a whole)' (Fox, 1975: 40). The Treasury decided in March not to include advertising in its new tax regulations ('Advertising Tax Absent from New Treasury Bill', *Advertising Age*, 9 March 1942: 4). Later that year, the Treasury decided to allow excess profits to be channeled into normal advertising expenses. In August 1942, the Treasury provided reassurance that 'institutional advertising in reasonable amounts or goodwill advertising calculated to influence the buying habits of the public' would be considered not only acceptable, but deductible expenditures for business ('Wartime Uses of Advertising Acknowledged by Treasury', *Advertising Age*, 31 August 1942: 1–2). These decisions meant that advertising agencies could continue to produce campaigns for corporations with few impediments.

The second windfall occurred in early 1943, when the entire writing staff of the domestic bureau of the Office of War Information (OWI) resigned after fighting against altering a brochure on food production levels. The resignations followed increasing tensions between the writing staff and their supervisors. A change in organizational structure eliminated much of the autonomy the writers had previously enjoyed (Winkler, 1978). The new director Gardner Cowles not only limited writers' control over the production and distribution of war messages, but also hired former broadcasting and advertising executives. Cowles's directorship represented a significant change in the department's philosophical approach to OWI campaigns. On 14 April 1943, several members of the writing staff released a statement to the press justifying their decision to resign:

> We are leaving because of our conviction that it is impossible for us, under those who now control our output, to tell the full truth. No one denies that promotional techniques have a proper and powerful function in telling the story of the war. But as we see it, the activities of the OWI on the home front are dominated by high-pressure promoters who prefer slick salesmanship to honest information. . . . They are turning this Office of War Information into an Office of War Bally-hoo. (cited in Winkler, 1978: 65)

This statement illustrates not only a change in the approach of the OWI in how it presented the war to the home front, but also the incursion of advertising's influence on war messages.

A third windfall would prove the most advantageous to the advertising

industry. Critical of material being produced by the OWI as little more than pro-Roosevelt propaganda meant to prepare the public for an upcoming fourth term election campaign, the 1943 Republican-controlled Senate Appropriations Committee allotted only $3m for the OWI's domestic bureau budget (Winkler, 1978). The appropriation was approximately one-tenth of the amount that director Elmer Davis had requested, crippling the bureau's ability to finance large-scale campaigns (Blum, 1976). Government officials looked towards private advertising as the answer to their war campaign needs (Blum, 1976; Winkler, 1978). Government budget cutbacks for public information campaigns in 1942 led to intense cooperation between the War Advertising Council and the OWI. Remaining monies for war-related advertising were channeled into private advertising. The Council donated over $350m in advertising space and man hours to the production and publication of advertising containing war themes between March 1943 and March 1944 (National Archives, 1944).

Finding its 'essential' war role, the advertising industry was reborn during this period and many agencies reported record profits during the war years (Fox, 1975; Winkler, 1986; Young, 1944). By 1948,[1] the ad industry had soared in both size and profits over figures from the Depression era. That year, there were nearly 6000 agencies employing nearly 73,000 workers. The receipts for 1948 were $652m (US Department of Commerce, 1954: 883).

These insights into the early negotiations of advertising's role in the war provide an important preface to any discussion of wartime advertising content. The early fears on the part of the industry about the prospects of war were quickly alleviated as organizations like the AFA and War Advertising Council promoted advertising as an essential element in the successful dissemination of war-related information for both business and government. For government, the advertising industry provided millions of dollars worth of advertising space and priceless expertise in influencing the public to participate in wartime programs and initiatives. For business, advertising provided companies with assurances that there would still be a demand for their products once the war ended. In the process, advertising overcame criticism to experience record profits during the war, regaining the approval of the American people in the process (Fox, 1975).

The process discussed in the previous section provides important data on the motivations of the advertising industry in creating government and business campaigns during the Second World War. In order to assess the 'output' or product of these factors on the advertising industry, this study examined ads published in the *Ladies' Home Journal* during the war period.

Ads in women's magazines were chosen for analysis because of the well-established role of women as consumers for the household (Scanlon, 1995).

METHODOLOGY

A 50 percent sample of issues of the *Ladies' Home Journal* from July 1942 to June 1945 constituted the data for analysis.[2] Issues were assigned a two-digit number and were selected using a random number table. Because war mobilization took several months to coordinate following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, early 1942 issues were excluded from this study of wartime advertising. In addition, while the War Advertising Council formed in November 1941, it did not begin to work extensively with the OWI until mid-1942, when budget cuts increased government dependence on corporate and free advertising for war campaigns.

I analyzed all full and half-page ads in the sampled editions of the *Ladies' Home Journal* to assess the types and content of product advertisements during the war period. Advertisements were analyzed based on the product being sold and the advertising appeal used. Since the purpose of the research was exploratory, coding categories were not defined in advance. Instead, a randomly selected issue was used to develop coding criteria for analysis.

Three main categories of consumption appeals were identified during the war period: unrestricted consumption ads, rationing ads and deferred purchase ads. Ads coded for unrestricted consumption contained no messages regarding limited supplies due to military use or restrictions on production. Ads coded as rationing included messages regarding the limited supply of goods available for civilian consumption. Ads in this category contained messages about distribution or transportation restrictions, limited availability of materials used in production and statements about the use of products by military personnel. Deferred purchase advertising consisted of copy urging the consumer to be patient during the war as production lines were converted for military contracts or inventory was being consumed by military operations. Most of these ads contained messages about the current limited supply of goods due to factory conversion for war production and the future availability of goods in the postwar period.

Ads were also coded based on product category, corporation and other messages contained in the advertisement. Since corporations producing different goods had very different needs to fulfill by their promotional campaigns, it is important to examine any patterns in advertising appeals used with respect to the particular types of goods produced. For example,

ads for products not currently available due to wartime restrictions were expected to use deferred consumption appeals. In addition, the context of the appeal was taken into account. Another important element considered was whether the ad contained references to the war. Unrestricted consumption ads were expected to contain fewer war references.

RESULTS

The sample included 1847 full and half-page ads from 18 issues of the *Ladies' Home Journal*. Over three-quarters of these ads contained messages for unrestricted consumption. Deferred spending ads accounted for 11.5 percent of advertising messages. Only 8.6 percent of ads contained messages about the limited supply of goods or services due to wartime production. Miscellaneous appeals accounted for slightly more than 2 percent of all ads. These consisted largely of public service announcements encouraging women to take war jobs or offering free pamphlets on health issues such as tuberculosis and pneumonia.

Unlimited consumption

The majority of ads in the sample contained no messages about limiting consumption due to rationing or limited supplies. Ads continued to promote the purchase of products available in unrestricted quantities. Few ads referenced any limitations on spending (8.6 percent). While many products, including durable goods such as large and small appliances, automobiles and clothing made from silk and other fabrics, were unavailable because of war production, other companies continued to produce items

Table 1: Advertising appeal by year (frequencies and percentages)

	Year				
Appeal	1942	1943	1944	1945	Total
Unrestricted consumption	126	549	549	186	1410
	90.0%	79.5%	71.0%	76.5%	76.3%
Deferred spending	7	59	112	28	206
	5.0%	8.5%	14.5%	11.5%	11.2%
Rationed supplies	4	65	87	17	173
	2.9%	9.4%	11.3%	7.0%	9.4%
Other appeal	3	18	25	12	58
	2.1%	2.6%	3.2%	4.9%	3.1%
Total	140	691	773	243	1847
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

unaffected by wartime limitations. Recognizing that many goods were no longer available or were available in limited supplies, these companies advertised their products with few references to the war. The makers of Bigelow rugs were among the most blatant in their appeals for unrestricted purchasing during wartime. One ad, appearing in the May 1943 issue of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, exclaimed: 'Chances are you have more money and there's less to buy' (p. 89). This heading appeared above an image of a crossed-out automobile, indicating that it was not currently available for consumers to purchase. A large photo of a flowered carpet was shown below the automobile, with the text: 'But chances are you can still make home beautiful with a Bigelow Beauvais rug' (p. 89). The message to the consumer was to divert the desire to consume unavailable products into purchasing products that were available in ample supply. The ad also indicated that, although the company was also 'producing blankets and duck for the armed forces', they were still making products for the civilian market (p. 89).

Deferred purchasing

The prevalence of deferred advertising appeals changed during the war. In 1942, only 5.8 percent of ads asked customers to wait until peace to purchase their products. This figure rose to 8.2 percent in 1943 and jumped again to 15.4 percent in 1944. By 1945, some corporations were being released from government contracts and strategic materials were once again available for use in civilian goods (Witkowski, 1998: 570). White Star gas ranges was able to resume producing stoves for civilian consumption in limited quantities, as illustrated by an ad published in the June 1945 issue of the *Ladies' Home Journal* (p. 134). Nevertheless, 11.8 percent of ads in 1945 contained deferred purchasing appeals, as most companies were forced to wait until late 1945 or early 1946 to resume civilian production.

Many ads using deferred appeals also included messages about war bond purchasing. One example of this was an ad campaign by Hotpoint electric kitchens: 'We're on the *bond wagon now*!' (*Ladies' Home Journal*, May 1943: 105; emphasis in original). The ad portrays a husband and wife in a military jeep holding up handfuls of war bonds:

> We're rolling down that good old victory road – full speed ahead! We figure the sooner we put every last cent we can in War Bonds, the quicker this war will be over – and we'll be able to have that new Hotpoint Electric Kitchen we want! (p. 105)

Below the couple is a drawing of the new kitchen designs that were to become available when the war was over. Surrounding the photos of

women engaged in household chores using postwar appliances are messages about war bond purchasing: 'Buy war bonds today – an electric kitchen tomorrow!', offers one banner (p. 105); 'Tomorrow is worth saving for', reads another (p. 105). The ad reminds readers that, although these appliances are not currently available, earmarking war bonds today for postwar purchasing will be rewarded later on. This ad campaign was so influential that both *Printer's Ink* and *Advertising Age* praised its theme in articles discussing the campaign's larger implications for other companies in similar circumstances ('Bonds for Future Purchases Theme of Hotpoint Drive', *Advertising Age*, 17 August 1942: 6; Smith, 1942).

Rationed goods

Other ads emphasized the limited availability of goods and services. Manufacturers of essential war materials such as towels, linens, silverware, aluminum cookware and food producers were likely to use this type of appeal. Ads for Cannon towels, for example, frequently included a statement about military production and limited quantities for civilian consumption. An example from September 1944 provides a 'Room with a view . . . to tomorrow' and includes a promise that, once the war is over, Cannon will 'provide loveliness in wide profusion' for your bathroom (inside front cover).

Some companies used the limited availability of other products as a selling point for their product as a substitute. The makers of Certo canning liquid advertised the product's ability to reduce the sugar required to can preserves. Cream of Wheat offered itself as a substitute for meat, since it was high in protein. One ad in the *Ladies' Home Journal* from January 1944 plays on civilian frustrations about meat shortages using the characters from Al Capp's 'Li'l Abner' comic strip (p. 63). Vitamins were sold as supplements to rationed diets, and products like Postum were offered as alternatives to coffee.

Other appeals

Other appeals include ads with multiple messages. Ads for Kleenex, for example, lamented their limited quantities, but encouraged consumers to purchase all that was available. A number of companies also purchased ad space to carry war-related messages. Many of these ads were 'formula ads' – preformatted ads created by the War Advertising Council and OWI on a variety of war-related issues. Each formula ad contained a small box at the bottom for corporations to identify their contribution by purchasing the advertising space in the magazine. This allowed businesses to illustrate their support of the war effort without designing their own war ads. Chas

Table 2: Appeal by product type (frequencies and percentages)

	Product type														
Appeal	Cosmetics	Personal hygiene	Household/ cleaning	Baby	Food	Small appliances	Large appliances	Clothes/ shoes/ fabrics	Cigarettes	Towels/ linens	Mattresses	Silverware	Home décor	Miscellaneous	Total
Unrestricted	219	254	173	65	439	1	1	99	45	13	14	0	45	42	1410
consumption	99.5%	93.0%	86.1%	95.6%	81.3%	6.7%	1.4%	81.8%	100%	31.0%	63.6%	0.0%	59.2%	35.6%	76.3%
Deferred	0	1	9	0	11	11	55	4	0	9	5	32	24	45	206
spending	0.0%	0.4%	4.5%	0.0%	2.0%	73.3%	76.4%	3.3%	0.0%	21.4%	22.7%	94.1%	31.6%	38.4%	11.2%
Rationed	0	14	15	2	82	2	9	17	0	18	3	2	4	5	173
supplies	0.0%	5.1%	7.5%	2.9%	15.2%	13.3%	12.5%	14.0%	0.0%	42.9%	13.6%	5.9%	5.3%	4.2%	9.4%
Other	1	4	4	1	8	1	7	1	0	2	0	0	3	26	58
appeals	0.5%	1.5%	2.0%	1.5%	1.5%	6.7%	9.7%	0.8%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	22.0%	3.1%
Total	220	273	201	68	540	15	72	121	45	42	22	34	76	118	1847
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

H. Fletcher, makers of Castoria, sponsored a full page ad for war bonds (March 1943: 65). Other companies purchased ad space to discuss their wartime contributions. Chevrolet placed an ad praising the Pratt & Whitney engines they were producing for US bombers (July 1943: 11) and Philco Corporation dramatized their role in a January 1943 ad featuring a cartoon by Ross A. Lewis (p. 13). Readers could receive a copy of the image of the battleship 'All-out American War Production' barreling down onto a small sailboat representing Axis war production, holding Hitler, Mussolini and Tojo.

The number of ads containing rationing messages also changed during the war period. In 1942, only 2.9 percent of ads mentioned limited supplies or rationed goods. In both 1943 and 1944, the numbers were 9.4 percent and 11.3 percent of all ad appeals. It wasn't until early 1943 that the government implemented its point rationing program, and it is after this time that there is a rise in ads containing rationing messages (Witkowski, 1998: 570).

Product type and advertising appeals

Appeals used in promotional campaigns were determined largely by product type. Cosmetics, household and cleaning items and cigarettes dominated products promoted for unrestricted consumption. Cigarette production increased steadily throughout the war, with less than half of production earmarked for military and overseas consumption (Wootten, 1945). Other items, such as appliances and silverware, were the most likely to contain messages for deferred spending. Ads for food, towels and bed linens often contained rationing messages, but were likely to also contain messages to purchase what was available even though supplies were limited.

Some items were advertised more or less as the war progressed. Cigarettes, which made up 3.6 percent of ads in 1942, made up only 1.6 percent of ads in 1945. Appliances, although mostly unavailable during the war, made the largest jump in prevalence of advertising during the period of study, growing from only 2 percent of all ads in 1942 to 6.5 percent by 1945.

Nearly 18 percent of ads promoted the purchase of war savings bonds and stamps. Over half of all war bond messages were found in ads using unrestricted consumption appeals. Small 'drop-ins' or prepared logos and messages were simple to insert into existing advertising layouts. Ads for deferred spending accounted for 25 percent of war bond messages. As is to be expected, unrestricted consumption ads were the least likely to contain these messages.

Table 3: Product type by year (frequencies and percentages)

Product type	Year 1942	1943	1944	1945	Total
Cosmetics	14	91	92	23	220
	10.0%	13.2%	11.9%	9.5%	11.9%
Personal hygiene	27	107	102	37	273
	19.3%	15.5%	13.2%	15.2%	14.8%
Household/cleaning	10	56	92	43	201
	7.1%	8.1%	11.9%	17.7%	10.9%
Baby	7	23	28	10	68
	5.0%	3.3%	3.6%	4.1%	3.7%
Food	43	214	227	56	540
	30.7%	31.0%	29.4%	23.0%	29.2%
Small appliances	2	3	6	4	15
	1.4%	0.4%	0.8%	1.6%	0.8%
Large appliances	1	27	32	12	72
	0.7%	3.9%	4.1%	4.9%	3.9%
Clothes/shoes/fabrics	9	56	46	10	121
	6.4%	8.1%	6.0%	4.1%	6.6%
Cigarettes	5	18	18	4	45
	3.6%	2.6%	2.3%	1.6%	2.4%
Towels/linens	3	15	18	6	42
	2.1%	2.2%	2.3%	2.5%	2.3%
Mattresses	2	8	9	3	22
	1.4%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
Silverware	1	14	16	3	34
	0.7%	2.0%	2.1%	1.2%	1.8%
Home décor	6	27	32	11	76
	4.3%	3.9%	4.1%	4.5%	4.1%
Miscellaneous	10	32	55	21	118
	7.1%	4.6%	7.1%	8.6%	6.4%
Total	140	691	773	243	1847
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

During the war period, the proportion of pages in the *Ladies' Home Journal* devoted to advertising also grew. In 1942, just over half of the magazine's pages contained full or half-page ads. By 1945, this figure had grown to 71 percent. Some companies that purchased smaller ads in the prewar period now expanded their advertising expenditures during the war. For example, the Kleenex Company published no half-page or full page ads in the *Ladies' Home Journal* until May 1944. Before this, their ads were restricted to quarter-page size or smaller. This increase corresponds to a declining supply of Kleenex tissues for civilian consumption due to military contracts and paper shortages.

Table 4: Bonds by advertising appeal

War bond message	Advertising appeal: Unrestricted consumption	Deferred spending	Rationed supplies	Other appeal	Total
Present	189	83	40	11	323
	13.4%	40.3%	23.1%	19.0%	17.5%
Absent	1221	123	133	47	1524
	86.6%	59.7%	76.9%	81.0%	82.5%
Total	1410	206	173	58	1847
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100.0%

Table 5: Description of issues in sample

Month	Year: 1942	1943	1944	1945
January		52	62	
		(111)	(123)	
		46.85%	50.41%	
March		98		
		(151)		
		64.90%		
April			135	131
			(191)	(181)
			70.68%	72.38%
May		120	128	
		(169)	(183)	
		71.01%	69.95%	
June			121	112
			(169)	(161)
			71.60%	69.57%
July	55	70	71	
	(115)	(123)	(133)	
	47.83%	56.91%	53.38%	
September	85	108	121	
	(141)	(159)	(169)	
	60.03%	67.92%	71.60%	
October		124	135	
		(181)	(187)	
		68.51%	72.19%	
November		119		
		(171)		
		69.60%		
Total	140	691	773	243
	(256)	(1065)	(1155)	(342)
	54.69%	64.88%	66.93%	71.05%
Mean	70	98.71	110.43	121.50
	(128)	(152.14)	(165)	(171)
	54.69%	63.67%	65.69%	70.97%

Note: Number of pages per issue in parentheses. Percentage represents proportion of pages containing half and full page advertisements. No issues were selected for February or December during the period of study.

In addition, the size of the *Ladies' Home Journal* itself increased. In 1942, the average issue was 128 pages in length. By 1945, that figure had reached 171 pages. The magazine decreased its circulation during the war, urging subscribers to share their issues in light of production cutbacks and diminishing paper supplies, but the size of the magazine grew steadily. While the increasing number of full and half-page ads may help to account for this growth, it does not fully explain the *Journal*'s wartime expansion.

DISCUSSION

While it is not possible to infer from these data that an increase in advertising messages translated directly into increased consumption, they do show a continued pressure to consume during wartime in spite of limited supplies and production restrictions. Given the emphasis discussed above on continued rather than reduced or even deferred consumption found in the *Ladies' Home Journal* during the war years, we can begin to understand the importance of high levels of consumption to the wartime economy.

There are clear indicators that consumer spending did increase during the war. Using 1936 as a base, data from the board of governors of the Federal Reserve System and Federal Reserve Bank show a steady increase in department store sales during the war years. Spending in 1942 was 50 percent above 1936 figures (US Department of Commerce, 1950: 263). These numbers continued to increase during the war to more than double 1936 spending by 1945 (1950: 263).

Personal consumption expenditures for non-durable goods and services also increased steadily during the war. Expenditures for non-durable goods showed an increase of almost 60 percent from $43.9bn in 1941 to nearly $74.9bn in 1945 (US Department of Commerce, 1950: 262). The service industry saw the greatest increase. Between 1941 and 1945, expenditures for services increased by 71.8 percent (1950: 262). Expenditures for durable goods dipped between 1941 and 1943 (from $9.8bn to $6.8bn), but rose between 1943 and 1945 (to $8.5bn), approaching prewar levels (1950: 262). By 1944, many corporations had been released from their government contracts and were returning to consumer production of durable goods such as refrigerators, stoves and washing machines (1950: 262).

Even after accounting for increases in the cost of living due to inflation, consumer expenditures continued to rise throughout the war period. Consumer expenditures for 1943 were estimated at over $90bn – a 10 percent increase over figures for the previous year (US Department of Commerce, 1943). With a 7 percent average rise in the cost of living estimated by the Department of Commerce from 1942–43, it appears that

'consumer expenditures [rose] faster than the cost of living' (1943: 5). While expenditures for durable goods remained flat throughout 1942, services and non-durable goods saw considerable increases in consumption (1943: 5). An examination of Department of Commerce records reveals that the purchase of particular items was affected most directly by war. Purchases of automobiles, for example, declined by nearly 80 percent between 1941–42 and remained at these low levels until 1945 (US Department of Commerce, 1950: 263).

Corporate profits after taxes also increased during the war years (1950: 442). In 1942, profits after taxes were $9.4bn. That number was steady in 1942, but jumped to $10.6bn in 1943 and $10.8bn in 1944. Profits in 1945 were down slightly at $8.2bn. The pretax figures show an even stronger increase in profits during the war years, since tax rates were increased significantly during the war. The peak year was 1943, with $25.1bn in pretax profits.

Some of this profit was assigned to advertising. *Advertising Age* published annual reports on corporations providing top revenues for ad agencies. These figures show that advertising expenditures increased dramatically during the war. In 1941, 339 companies spent over $100,000 on magazine advertising (2 February 1942: 20, 22–3). That number dipped slightly in 1942, when 336 companies had magazine advertising expenditures over $100,000 (1 February 1943: 35–7). But, heartened by decisions about advertising, corporations began to channel large amounts of money into advertising during 1943. In 1943, 420 companies spent over $100,000 on magazine advertising and 481 companies spent at least that amount in 1944 (7 February 1944: 34, 36–8; 5 March 1945: 38–41).

Advertising continued to increase throughout the war and, by 1945, 532 companies spent over $100,000 on advertisements in magazines alone (25 March 1946: 1–14). Among the leaders throughout the war were General Electric, General Motors, Lambert Pharmacal, Schlenley Distillers and Liggett & Myers Tobacco. Several of these were companies with large defense contracts that had few products available for civilian consumption. These companies continued to advertise and, in many cases, increased their advertising budgets during the war. Lever Brothers, producers of household soaps and cleansers, more than tripled their advertising budget between 1941 and 1945. During the war, Lever Brothers held government contracts to produce soap and cleaning supplies for the military. In addition, materials used to produce soap, such as glycerin, were also used in the production of explosives and were further rationed for civilian use. While they continued providing civilian goods during the war, they were available in smaller

Table 6: Twenty-five top magazine advertisers 1941–1945

Corporation	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	Change 1941 to 1945
1 General Motors Corp.	$10,327,808 8.38%*	$9,529,555 19.81%	$7,954,207 99.51%	$3,986,967 –47.50%	$7,593,774 13.05%	36.00%
2 Proctor & Gamble Co.	$4,623,110 –21.15%	$5,863,538 25.40%	$4,676,014 –13.29%	$5,392,611 50.32%	$3,587,524 35.59%	28.87%
3 Lever Bros. Co.	$4,620,355 3.57%	$4,461,203 81.86%	$2,453,087 –16.66%	$2,943,408 100.46%	$1,468,329 –31.24%	214.67%
4 General Electric	$3,990,217 32.09%	$3,020,808 5.75%	$2,856,648 29.32%	$2,208,981 –6.12%	$2,352,901 11.73%	69.59%
5 Distillers Corp – Seagrams, Ltd.	$3,615,008 1.83%	$3,549,891 2.54%	$3,462,040 16.42%	$2,973,851 179.89%	$1,062,522 39.37%	240.23%
6 Schlenley Distillers Corp.	$3,185,802 10.90%	$2,872,637 5.03%	$2,735,137 92.78%	$1,418,786 42.34%	$996,739 –22.70%	219.62%
7 General Foods Corps.	$2,995,340 3.75%	$2,887,131 4.05%	$2,774,843 28.68%	$2,156,380 –1.36%	$2,186,058 35.09%	37.02%
8 Chrysler	$2,860,475 6.52%	$2,685,446 118.77%	$1,227,515 1142.85%	$98,766 –96.75%	$3,042,059 –26.95%	–5.97%
9 Swift & Co.	$2,730,107 –2.54%	$2,801,345 60.97%	$1,740,249 69.91%	$1,024,195 –26.74%	$1,397,949 6.13%	95.29%
10 Colgate-Palmolive-Peet Co.	$2,602,631 –14.84%	$3,056,334 8.96%	$2,805,096 41.34%	$1,984,713 36.19%	$1,457,298 18.90%	78.59%
11 Bristol Myers Company	$2,529,145 –2.47%	$2,593,281 17.66%	$2,204,119 –0.31%	$2,211,017 –10.02%	$2,457,115 24.47%	2.93%
12 Ford Motor Company	$2,493,573 134.24%	$1,064,537 194.52%	$361,442 249.99%	$103,271 –93.94%	$1,703,529 –17.36%	46.38%
13 National Distillers Products Corp.	$2,290,645 5.34%	$2,174,436 18.61%	$1,833,290 40.03%	$1,309,224 56.55%	$836,316 –5.50%	173.90%
14 Andrew Jergens Co.	$2,262,270 19.00%	$1,900,993 1.26%	$1,877,318 43.80%	$1,305,486 0.40%	$1,300,324 25.19%	73.98%
15 Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.	$2,031,827 –10.38%	$2,267,138 15.63%	$1,960,611 49.76%	$1,309,203 24.82%	$1,048,904 29.65%	93.71%
16 Philip Morris & Co., Ltd.	$1,939,393 –5.54%	$2,053,134 37.09%	$1,497,643 10.72%	$1,352,582 64.33%	$823,070 79.32%	135.63%
17 Borden, Co.	$1,847,888 25.53%	$1,472,110 41.82%	$1,038,040 0.34%	$1,034,486 99.74%	$517,908 52.27%	256.80%
18 Lambert Pharmacal Co.	$1,826,620 4.53%	$1,747,479 –0.21%	$1,751,127 10.46%	$1,585,282 –6.42%	$1,694,113 24.98%	7.82%
19 Socony-Vacuum Oil Co., Inc.	$1,728,937 13.23%	$1,526,970 18.09%	$1,293,099 13.30%	$1,141,326 –9.92%	$1,267,002 6.40%	36.46%
20 Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co.	$1,715,500 –9.19%	$1,889,140 3.45%	$1,826,073 15.47%	$1,581,371 2.54%	$1,542,193 –16.72%	11.24%
21 Campbell Soup Co.	$1,662,166 19.60%	$1,389,780 9.33%	$1,271,215 –12.19%	$1,447,663 –14.57%	$1,694,510 11.89%	–1.91%
22 National Dairy Products Corp.	$1,654,450 17.29%	$1,410,565 51.39%	$931,749 125.20%	$413,738 –64.24%	$1,156,896 17.56%	43.01%
23 Standard Brands, Inc.	$1,614,243 45.06%	$1,112,816 47.54%	$754,236 –30.06%	$1,078,334 –45.48%	$1,978,047 15.56%	–18.39%
24 American Telephone & Telegraph Co.	$1,586,010 –10.29%	$1,767,987 35.41%	$1,305,609 16.96%	$1,116,294 –9.52%	$1,233,792 5.32%	28.55%
25 International Cellucotton Products Co.	$1,578,909 1.19%	$1,560,328 29.66%	$1,203,378 13.28%	$1,062,272 –16.01%	$1,264,731 2.32%	24.84%
Average change over previous year (percent)	11.03%	34.18%	81.51%	9.38%	13.37%	

Note: Ranking based on 1945 expenditures.
** Percentage change over previous year.*

supplies. Nevertheless, Lever Brothers continued to increase their advertising output each year. Goodyear Tire and Rubber nearly doubled their advertising expenditures in spite of severe restrictions on civilian rubber production. Goodyear produced almost exclusively for the military during the war, yet continued to advertise to consumers.

The government appears not to have seen this increase in advertising expenditure as problematic or as at odds with the wartime economy. The Department of Commerce's report on the increase in advertising volume over the same period lacks any note of criticism: 'Hence record volume of advertising is now being directed at retail consumer[s], in spite of increasing shortages in consumer goods. Apparently advertising is even more helpful to consumers in periods of scarcity than in periods enjoying a surplus' (US Department of Commerce, 1943: 2).

CONCLUSIONS

During the war, advertising adjusted to meet the needs of the war economy, altering its focus on consumption since goods and services were limited or unavailable due to rationing and war production. Advertising sent what might seem, on the surface, a contradictory message to women consumers during the Second World War. Messages suggesting deferring purchasing were positioned alongside other ads encouraging women to buy immediately. These messages were not contradictory; rather, they served a specific purpose. Businesses needed to continue to sell their products in order to maintain the war economy. Government allowed businesses to make a limited profit from civilian production, while taxing excess. Often these corporations channeled additional profits into advertising, a government-endorsed outlet. Corporations converting their factories to munitions or other war-related tasks needed to be sure that, when the war was over, there would still be a place for them in the market. These corporations focussed their advertising on deferred spending; a promise of goods tomorrow for patience during the crisis.

Promising goods tomorrow also meant saving for future spending. Many ads urged consumers to purchase war bonds both to help the war effort and to create a surplus for later use. Towle Sterling asked new brides to 'buy essential pieces' now and promised pattern availability after the war was over (*Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1944: 162). In the meantime, women should purchase bonds, earmarking them to complete their silverware service when civilian production was re-established. Corporations producing appliances and other durable goods in peacetime asked consumers to

hold out a little longer, giving advice on how to make their Hoover or Frigidaire last until new models were available.

Companies that produced rationed goods or goods containing rationed ingredients also used advertising to meet their needs. They wanted to continue selling all they produced to maintain production at profitable levels while simultaneously dealing with government restrictions. Some producers promoted their goods as a substitute for rationed goods unavailable to consumers during wartime. Spry offered their shortening as a substitute for butter, Cream of Wheat was offered as a substitute for meat, and vitamin companies offered their products to supplement rationed diets. These companies highlighted the limited supplies of competitors to sell their own products to wartime consumers. Other companies played up their selling potential in a market with limited goods for purchase. Bigelow offered their rugs as an outlet for the frustrated yearnings of Americans to spend.

While most popular images of Second World War advertising dealt with ration books and victory gardens, there were also pervasive campaigns for consumption. These patterns were not really contradictory for the political and economic systems. They reflected the reality of both the war economy specifically and of capitalism in general. Advertising could not have simply encouraged rationing and buying war bonds for items unavailable due to war production and shortages. In order to maintain the wartime economy, advertising also had to encourage spending; indeed, with the beginning of the war and the end of the Depression, Americans had money they wanted to spend, and advertisers were happy to encourage them within the constraints of the wartime economy.

Obviously, consumption of durable goods was high on the list of desirables for American families that had done without during the Depression. However, a limited supply of some products whose producers had converted to war production meant, in part, that families had to further defer consumption. Many of the messages about deferred purchases illustrated the prevalent theme of 'winning the peace'. A May 1944 ad for Youngstown kitchens contains a drop-in logo of a shield. Inside the shield is the phrase 'Give a man a job – put dollars to work' above an image of a man pushing a dollar sign inside a large cog. Below the shield, the drop-in states 'The *free* American way' (p. 158). Purchasing appliances is linked to American values of freedom and hard work. Buying a Youngstown kitchen is equated with supporting America and the 'free American way' of life.

Winning the peace was typically connected to the broader theme of defending capitalism. Advertising had a duty to 'explain the American way

of life – with its bathtubs and pop-up toasters and electric refrigerators and radios and insulated homes' (Weir, 1942a: 14). Winning the war brought America only halfway to its goal, according to this theme. In order to win the peace, America had to prepare for what could happen after disarmament. It was the responsibility of advertising to 'help the public visualize what improvements in products and services will be available after the war' ('Prophetic of Things to Come', *Printer's Ink*, 21 August 1942: 18). Among the goals of this form of advertising were to presell your future market and to sell free enterprise and American business (Norton, 1942). Once the war was over, winning the peace meant maintaining a high standard of living that ensured postwar economic prosperity. These are the same themes that the advertising industry used to assert its relevance to business and government during its early attempts to justify its place in the wartime economy.

These ads provide fantastic speculations about household appliances being developed through wartime innovation. The ad for Youngstown kitchens emphasizes what peacetime production will mean for daily life. The ad includes a coupon for a booklet '"Get Acquainted with your Kitchen", which shows how to plan for freedom from trudgery in your peacetime kitchen' (May 1944: 158). One General Electric ad promises an electric kitchen where 'Mother'll just push buttons and turn switches and the housework will be finished!' (May 1944: 91). An ad from Westinghouse appearing in October 1944 employs this same theme (p. 182). Westinghouse promises the return of their full line of appliances, referred to as '*twenty-two* different types of electrical servants for your home' (p. 182; emphasis in original). Postwar society appears as science fiction, where women are freed from household chores by gas and electric appliances that magically clean themselves, cook in less time and require no maintenance.

Continued consumption was vital to the maintenance of the wartime economy and the preparation for postwar economic expansion. The necessity of upholding the economy during total war production required heavy purchasing of non-rationed goods and consistent purchasing of the rationed goods that were available. Even with attempts to place limits on consumption through taxation, rationing and war bond sales, consumption was key to winning the war. Consumption was associated with what it meant to be a good citizen; it came to be linked to social progress and was equated with the American way of life. This equation of consumption with citizenship is evident in the ads created during the war. For example, Armour & Co. ran a series of ads extolling the benefits of America's free enterprise system, selling the American way of life (*Ladies' Home Journal*, September 1944: 51; October 1944: 14; April 1945: 43). Campaigns

asserted that purchasing goods and services when available was vital to victory. Advertising played a role in the maintenance of capitalism even without the bold messages of the Armour & Co. ads and the exaggerated statements made by the advertising industry as it tried to sell itself to the government as an essential war tool.

The connection between citizenship and consumption may have even more important implications for women. Traditionally excluded from other forms of political and economic participation in society, women have acted as the primary consumers of goods and services for the family since the 19th century. While men were employed outside of the home as producers, the complementary role of consumer was assigned to women. During the war, women were given the responsibility of managing America's home front. More often than not, the messages they received were of unrestricted consumption. Purchasing was an act of patriotism, a way of maintaining the capitalist way of life – the same way of life Americans were fighting for.

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Notes

1. No data were collected by the Department of Commerce during the Second World War. 1948 represents the first year following the war that data are available from the US Census of Business.
2. The issues selected for analysis were: July and September 1942; January, March, May, July, September, October and November 1943; January, April, May, June, July, September and October 1944; April and June 1945.

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