

“The Market that Just Grew Up”

How Eaton’s fashioned the teenaged consumer
in mid-twentieth-century Canada

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ABSTRACT

“The Market that Just Grew Up”:
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This thesis focuses on the emergence of the teenaged consumer as a market segment in Canada during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. It challenges the notion that teenagers were of little interest to retailers until economics and demographics shaped the more numerous and prosperous post-war teenagers of the Baby Boom generation. Using evidence from corporate records and analysis of mail order catalogues, the study examines how department store retailer, the T. Eaton Company, Limited, began to cultivate a distinct and lucrative teenaged consumer in the 1930s, and thereby began shaping the teenaged consumer.

The thesis contextualizes the case study of Eaton’s by exploring the varied expectations that adults had of young people at the time. Analysis of census records demonstrates that census questions and age categories framed childhood in relation to education, employment, and economic dependency. This in turn shaped concerns by government and social agencies that young people were not transitioning to responsible adult roles quickly enough. A close reading of consumer magazines *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Home Journal*, and *Mayfair* also found concerns about young people’s transition to adulthood. Magazines asserted that consumer products and participation in the marketplace were necessary to help teenaged girls, in particular, become successful white, middle-class women. Magazines portrayed young women as college co-eds and –

increasingly – as teenagers who embraced commercial fashion and beauty but still required the guidance of older women and magazine advice to become wise shoppers.

In this changing context, Eaton's made a concerted and sustained effort to attract teenager customers to its catalogue and stores. Analysis of its semi-annual catalogue highlights the emergence of specialized clothing size ranges and styles, revealing that Eaton's increasingly viewed the teenaged years as an important in-between life stage. Eaton's also instituted teenage councils to both glean market trends and provide a venue for what it considered education for novice consumers. Eaton's presented consumption as a way to prepare young people for adult roles, legitimizing teenaged participation in the consumer marketplace and contributing to wider debates about when and how teenaged Canadians should reach maturity.

Taken together, the chapters of this thesis reconsider the origins of the teenager's prominent position as a sought-after consumer market. The result contributes to a better understanding of the influence of the retail industry on cultural understandings of childhood and growing up in twentieth century Canada.

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INTRODUCTION

In September 1957, *Maclean's Magazine* reported that a new, authoritative, and wealthy group of consumers were on the prowl – teenagers. They were keen clothes shoppers and avid cosmetics buyers who could even influence the type and colour of their parents' next car. In an article entitled "The scramble for the teen-aged dollar," author John Clare explained that the economic impact of young people in their teen years amounted to "\$100 million a year – or more" in purchases. Retailers were targeting these younger customers with advertising campaigns, special products, contests, and fan clubs. Clare noted that "young people are loaded" and claimed that "today's teenagers are spending their new wealth in a way that makes them important customers." Businesses – from typewriter manufacturers to cosmetic companies – were now paying attention to teenagers, tailoring their advertising to appeal to younger shoppers. And teenagers were buying – spending their wages, their allowances, and their parents' money on clothing, beauty products, and entertainment. What consequences would this rash of spending have on family life, parental authority, and the well being of Canada's next generation of adults? Clare associated consumer status with adulthood, noting that the time to become "serious shoppers" had "come ahead of schedule" for many young people. He concluded that teenagers were "coming to economic maturity a few years younger than they ever did before," as retailers and advertisers were "out-hustling each other to cash in on the market that just grew up."¹

1 John Clare, "The scramble for the teen-aged dollar," *Maclean's Magazine* (14

Clare's article reflected how the retail marketplace was both shaping, and being shaped by, cultural notions of age and growing up in mid-twentieth-century Canada. As part of a complex and changing relationship between consumer culture and coming of age, teenagers' spending habits were seen to illustrate that they were maturing faster, as if being a consumer was a rite of passage to adulthood. What expectations did adults have about teenagers' participation in the marketplace? For merchants, was the teenaged consumer really a "discovery," or a retail invention? Who was the teenaged consumer that retailers were scrambling to secure? And what can the rise of the teenaged market segment tell us about how childhood and the process of growing up was understood in the middle decades of the twentieth century? As part of a growing scholarly interest in the relationship between childhoods and consumer culture, this thesis explores these questions, using corporate records, mail order catalogues, and consumer magazines to examine how retailers represented teenagers as a distinct and influential group of consumers in Canada in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.

When and how did Canadian young people become the target of retailers? Most histories of teenagers have focused on the decades following the Second World War as the period when the cultural phenomenon of the teenager appeared.² Historian Doug Owram presents the 1950s and 1960s as the years when the teenager became a market

September 1957), 18, 19, 112.

2 Most of the existing literature is American. See, for example, Joseph Kett, *Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America, 1790 to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1977); Grace Palladino, *Teenagers: An American History* (New York: Basic Books, 1996); Kelly Massoni, *Fashioning Teenagers: a cultural history of Seventeen magazine* (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2010). Jon Savage's examination of European youth cultures in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries is an important exception. Jon Savage, *Teenage: The Creation of Youth, 1875-1945* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2007).

force in Canada. That is when the large cohort of post-war babies began to reach their teen years and change the structure and meaning of adolescence in the same way they had transformed many aspects of early childhood.³ The word teenager first appeared in print in a 1941 issue of the American magazine *Popular Science Monthly*.⁴ However, the adjective teenage was used to describe young people and their activities as early as 1921. The Oxford English Dictionary notes that “teen age,” designating someone in their teens, first appeared in the *Daily Colonist* in Victoria, British Columbia, inviting young people to a mass meeting.⁵ In print both the noun and the adjective were hyphenated and often appeared in quotation marks, denoting their colloquial status. Sometimes an apostrophe was included before the word teen, to acknowledge that it was technically an abbreviation of any of the numbers between twelve and twenty. Various spellings were frequently used in print before the late 1950s, when the now-familiar compound word “teenager” began to appear.⁶

The belief that the teenager as a cultural phenomenon lacked any real traction in Canada until the late 1950s is reinforced by developments in the popular media of the time.⁷ *Chatelaine* magazine did not start publishing its teen-focused *Miss Chatelaine*

3 Doug Oram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 136-158.

4 “teenager, n.” OED Online. December 2011. Oxford University Press, <http://www.oed.com.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/view/Entry/198559>.

5 “teenage, adj., and n.2”. OED Online. December 2011. Oxford University Press, <http://www.oed.com.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/view/Entry/198558>.

6 On the pages that follow, the current spelling is used except when quoting sources. Furthermore, although the terms teenager and adolescent can be synonymous, I have refrained from using them interchangeably. While businesses applied words such as “youth,” “teenagers,” “students,” and other terms to young consumers, “adolescent” was rarely employed in this way.

7 Indeed, several British historians have also traced the teenager to the late 1950s. British historian Joel Springhall cites the release of the marketing report *The*

until the mid-1960s, and magazines such as *Maclean's* published far more articles about young people – and referred to them more often as teenagers – between 1955 and 1960 than ever before. Headlines such as “Going Steady: Is it ruining our teen-agers?” and “Is ‘car craziness’ a menace to our teenagers?” suggest that the teenager was the focus of adult concern.⁸ Would the practice of “going steady” in high school lead to sexual promiscuity? Did teenagers’ “current infatuation” with cars adversely affect their health, grades, and morals?

Certainly, these kinds of articles – framing teenage behaviour as problematic and potentially dangerous to the larger society – suggest that the idea of the teenager was only becoming more widely understood in Canada in the later 1950s. However, these articles also assumed that magazine readers were already familiar with their teenaged subjects. *Maclean's* did not have to explain that the teenager was a high school student with enough disposable income to go on dates and buy their own automobiles, or at least to buy gasoline for the family car. Teenagers were already understood as a distinct segment of the consumer marketplace, with their own purchasing power and spending habits. While a large group of young, wealthy, and demanding consumers did change retailing and marketing practices in the 1960s, evidence points to earlier attempts to

Teenaged Consumer in 1959 as first drawing attention to the size and spending power of British teenagers. Historian David Fowler also concurs that the teenager as a cultural phenomenon can be traced to the 1950s in the United Kingdom. See Joel Springhall, *Coming of Age: Adolescence in Britain 1860-1960* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd, 1986), 216-217; Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain, c. 1920-1970* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

⁸ Sidney Katz, “Going Steady: Is it ruining our teen-agers?” *Maclean's* (January 3, 1959), 9; Eric Hutton, “Is “car craziness” a menace to our teenagers?” *Maclean's* (June 6, 1959), 13.

define and cater to the teenaged consumer.⁹

This thesis complements studies of teenaged consumer clout in sales figures and cohort sizes by analyzing the words and actions of one retailer – the T. Eaton Company, Limited – in the changing context of official and popular attitudes towards childhood and growing up. Sources such as mail order catalogues and corporate records reveal the changing role that major commercial interests wanted consumption to play in the process of growing up. Eaton’s diverse attempts to define and target a teenaged audience did not happen overnight, nor did they progress in a straight line. The examination begins in 1930, as growth in the ready-to-wear clothing industry began to influence the quantity and quality of garments available by mail order, and ends in 1960, just as the initial baby boomers – those born in the immediate post-war years – were reaching their thirteenth birthdays. By this time, the image of the teenager in popular culture was widely recognized, and retailers and advertisers had been anticipating the economic effects of young boomers’ consumer activities for several years.

While retailers were intent on making consumption the basis of a teenaged lifestyle, Canadian society was already paying closer attention to young people in the first decades of the twentieth century. The idea that the teenaged years of life constituted a distinct stage of development and experience is most often attributed to American psychologist and child studies expert G. Stanley Hall. At the turn of the twentieth century Hall published his multi-volume study of adolescence, which claimed to describe the physical and social changes inherent to this newly “discovered” stage of life. Hall

9 Thomas Frank explores the influence of the 1960s counterculture on advertising, and the effect of advertising on the counterculture, in *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

believed in an essential adolescent period of life, a natural biological process experienced by young people regardless of culture, economics, or geography.¹⁰ Adolescence was a period of “storm and stress,” in Hall’s words, when children experienced unusually rapid physical and mental growth – a “new birth” when children’s bodies and minds were more plastic than they would be as adults.¹¹ As a result, adolescence was a crucial period of character formation. Children were supposed to abandon the selfish and inward focus of their early years and adopt an altruistic frame of mind. In Hall’s words: “Before youth must be served; now it must serve.”¹² To become full persons, or adults, adolescents were supposed to cultivate thoughts and emotions – such as love, religious fervour, and appreciation of nature and art – beyond what Hall believed children were capable.

While Hall was not without his critics, his description of adolescence as a crucial period of identity formation and a time of personal trial exemplifies the shift in thinking about childhood and adolescence taking place at the turn of the twentieth century. This was a period during which assumptions about what childhood was – and what children were ideally supposed to be doing – changed drastically. As historian Neil Sutherland notes, beginning in the 1890s middle-class reformers advanced the notion that children

10 Several historians have explored Hall’s ideas and their consequences. See, for example, John Demos, “The Rise and Fall of Adolescence,” *Past, Present, and Personal: The Family and the Life Course in American History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 92-113; Kent Baxter, *The Modern Age: Turn-of-the-Century American Culture and the Invention of Adolescence* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 2008); Cynthia Comacchio, *Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920-1950* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2006).

11 G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education* (New York: Appleton, 1904), i: 128, quoted in Baxter, *The Modern Age*, 49-50.

12 *Ibid*, 51.

needed to be nurtured, that their environment shaped their adult character, and that children needed to be both sheltered from – and prepared for – the influence of the world outside the home.¹³ As attitudes toward childhood and child rearing changed (particularly among those with influence), laws were passed setting age restrictions for employment, school leaving, and marriage.¹⁴ New institutions – from juvenile courts to the Canadian Council of Child Welfare – regulated the process of growing up and believed that allowing children to engage in activities that might compromise their presumed innocence was dangerous, not only for the children, but for Canadian society generally. As Sutherland argues, concerns about child welfare greatly influenced the development of Canadian social policy as a whole.¹⁵ School grades, sports teams, service groups, and summer camps also became more peer-based throughout the twentieth century, reflecting a growing belief that children developed best alongside other children of the same age.¹⁶

13 Neil Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 13-36.

14 On employment, see Lorna F. Hurl, “Restricting Child Labour in Late-Nineteenth-Century Ontario Factories,” *Labour/Le Travail* 21 (Spring 1988): 87-121; on school-leaving regulations, see Comacchio, *Dominion of Youth*, 100; on restricting the age of marriage see James G. Snell and Cynthia Comacchio Abeele, “Restricting Access to Marriage in Early Twentieth-Century English-Speaking Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review* 59:4 (1988): 466-489.

15 For example, Sutherland discusses how reformers wanted to change labour laws related to women to help ensure “healthy mothers” for Canadian children. Some also promoted town planning regulations to improve the amount of sunlight and fresh air children received in their homes. Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society*, 227-241.

16 Robert Gidney and W.J. Millar discussed age grading in Canadian schools in “Pre-Modern High: Secondary Education in English Canada, 1920-1950,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, Montreal, Québec, May 2010. Gidney and Millar note that the co-relation between age and school grade became stronger after 1940. On the increased number of peer-based summer camps, see Sharon Wall, *The Nurture of Nature: Childhood, Antimodernism, and Ontario*

Modern childhoods have been characterized by the creation of specialized spaces and material objects intended only for children. Marta Gutman and Ning de Coninck-Smith argue that this “islanding” of childhood from adulthood is part of the ongoing process – driven by medical science, socio-economic conditions, and cultural practices – to define a “good childhood,” safe from the potentially corrupting influence of activities and responsibilities deemed too mature for children to handle.¹⁷ This process separates the lifespan into distinct periods with different expectations and experiences. However, it also creates distinctions between different periods of childhood, so that parents and caregivers today refer to their children as toddlers, kids, tweens, and teens.¹⁸ Each phase has its own set of developmental goals, activities, and social expectations. Children’s lives did not – and still do not – always fit into these prescribed moulds. Children’s experiences depend greatly on factors as varied as: their parents’ incomes and skills; their gender and sexuality; their ethnic or racialized identities; their health; their access to schooling, and their geographic location, among other factors.¹⁹ Nevertheless, debates about how and why childhood should be “islanded” have set standards against which

Summer Camps, 1920-1955 (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009).

17 See “Introduction: Good to Think With – History, Space, and Modern Childhood,” in Gutman and de Coninck-Smith, eds., *Designing Modern Childhoods: History, Space, and the Material Culture of Children* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2008), 4-5.

18 Sociologist Daniel Cook argues that “Toddler” was a term coined by clothing manufacturers and retailers in the 1930s. Marketers use “kids” to refer to children roughly aged four to twelve. “Tween” is a much more recent category that originated in the advertising industry and has been adopted by educators, parents and health practitioners to refer to children roughly aged nine to thirteen years. Daniel Thomas Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood: The Children’s Clothing Industry and the Rise of the Child Consumer* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2004), ch.3.

19 For a succinct examination of children and debates about childhood in a global context, see Peter H. Stearns, *Childhood in World History* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

societies measure expectations and treatment of children.

The retail market has contributed to the “islanding” of childhood, and has also benefited from it. Recent historical scholarship suggests that young people have been the target of retailers and advertisers since the beginnings of mass marketing at the turn of the twentieth century. Toy retailers were among the first to adopt specific strategies to appeal to children.²⁰ Clothing manufacturers employed images of busy mothers and active boys to sell garments made to meet the requirements of babies and young children.²¹ However, it was not until the 1930s that the retail industry and its marketers began to address children based on their age as well as their gender. Retailers began to describe those in their teenage years – teenagers – as a group with distinct needs that could only be met through the purchase of particular consumer goods.

Child advocates and contemporary scholars have reacted in two distinct ways to attempts to market to children. On the one hand, they argue that advertising manipulates children into wanting and buying products. Children are presumed to be more vulnerable and more innocent than adults, and thus are more easily “corrupted” by influential advertising messages.²² Sociologist Daniel Cook notes that “perhaps nothing in our culture today garners the kind of guarded hypermoral intensity as when children and

20 See, for example: Gary Cross, *Kids' Stuff: Toys and the Changing World of American Childhood* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); E. Seiter, *Sold Separately: Parents and Children in Consumer Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1993).

21 See J.M. McCutcheon, “Clothing Children in English Canada, 1870-1930” (PhD Thesis: University of Ottawa, 2002); Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood*, ch.3.

22 See, for example, Julie Schor, *Born to Buy* (New York: Scribner, 2004); Susan Linn, *Consuming Kids: protecting our children from the onslaught of marketing and advertising* (New York: Anchor Books, 2005).

childhood are at issue.”²³ It is common to hear concerns that the marketplace is exposing children to harmful violence or sexuality. The media frequently fuel such fears with stories about companies selling revealing clothing or cosmetics to young girls or appealing to “pester power” to promote toys, clothing, food – even cars.²⁴ Such concerns are not new; since the nineteenth century adults have worried that young people’s morality was threatened by the temptation to indulge in consumer desires and to spend money recklessly.²⁵ Historian Viviana Zelizer suggests that concerns about market values destroying the sanctity of childhood increased as children were more and more removed from adult workplaces.²⁶ In 1955, Canadian historian and social critic Arthur Lower blamed commercial culture for unduly prolonging adolescence by promoting patterns of leisure and consumption at odds with adult values. The teenager was too soft,

23 Daniel Cook, Introduction: Beyond Either/or,” *Journal of Consumer Culture* 4:2 (2004): 148.

24 Pester power is the ability of children to pressurize parents into buying them things. ”pester power, n.”. OED Online. December 2011. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/view/Entry/261094?redirectedFrom=pester%20power> (accessed February 03, 2012). For articles expressing concern about advertising to children, see, for example, Lianne George, “Why Are We Dressing Our Daughters Like This?” *Maclean’s* (1 January 2007); Jennifer Saranow, “Car makers direct more ads to kids,” *The Wall Street Journal* (9 November 2006), Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood. <http://commercialfreechildhood.org/news/carmakers.htm>.

25 A Protestant work ethic focused on thrift and self-denial permeated much of nineteenth-century children’s literature and influenced both popular thought and school curricula, according to Daniel T. Rodgers. “Socializing Middle-Class Children: Institutions, Fables, and Work Values in Nineteenth-Century America,” in N. Ray Hiner and Joseph M. Hawes, eds., *Growing Up in America: Children in Historical Perspective* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985), 119-132. Cynthia Comacchio notes that many adults were concerned that commercialized leisure led to immoral behaviour in young people. Comacchio, *Dominion of Youth*, chapter 4.

26 Viviana Zelizer (1985), *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

and easily duped by retailers and advertisers, Lower believed.²⁷ Scholars, parents, and other child advocates often assume that children are “incomplete” people – potential adults – that are not intelligent or experienced enough to assert themselves in the marketplace.

On the other hand, some scholars and child advocates argue that the marketplace does not manipulate children, but liberates them to discover and express their individuality. Sociologists and anthropologists in particular have argued that children do not simply absorb advertising, but make their own, often creative meanings from messages and consumer goods. These approaches emphasize that children are “agentive social actors in the here and now,” not merely potential adults.²⁸ They are beings who know and choose, whose individuality is affirmed by participating in the marketplace.

Several histories of teenaged consumer culture have adopted this approach, and frame teenaged participation in the consumer marketplace as a liberating experience for many young people. In her history of American teenagers, historian Grace Palladino claims that post-war teenagers voted with their wallets and, from the mid-1950s onwards, persuaded the consumer market to meet their demands for faster cars and leather jackets. Consumer goods allowed working-class and African American teenagers to participate in the same culture as their middle-class and white peers, thus contributing to claims for African American equality during the Civil Rights Movement.²⁹ From this

27 Arthur Lower, “Our Elderly Adolescents,” *Saturday Night* (May 28, 1955), quoted in Michael Gauvreau, “The Protracted Birth of the Canadian ‘Teenager’: Work, Citizenship, and the Canadian Youth Commission, 1943-1955.” in Gauvreau and Nancy Christie, eds., *Cultures of Citizenship in Postwar Canada, 1940-1955* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press): 201-202.

28 Cook, “Introduction: Beyond Either/or,” 148.

29 Palladino, *Teenagers: An American History*, xvi-xviii.

perspective, manufacturers, retailers, and advertisers followed young people's lead instead of trying to shape teenaged desires. Teenagers were active participants in the marketplace, and consumer goods helped them find a sense of self.

Other studies attribute the "rise" of a distinct teenaged consumer culture to demographic changes. These histories assume that the greater numbers of post-war adolescents attracted marketers' attention. The argument is that a growing cohort of high school students with disposable income commanded retailers' attention; teenaged culture changed the marketplace. For example, Doug Owsram argues that in the 1940s low population numbers, combined with the number of young people serving in the armed forces and working in war factories, meant that "adolescents were unable to exert much cultural presence." Not until the more numerous wartime babies reached adolescence in the mid-1950s did a teenaged market exist.³⁰ American historian Kelly Schrum posits the beginning of this transformation somewhat earlier, tracing the origins of a "unique teenage culture" to an increase in high school attendance among female adolescents in the United States in the 1920s and 1930s. Her study emphasizes the power of teenaged girls, pointing to students' distinct clothing fads, and manufacturers' attempts to duplicate and predict their trends, as evidence that female high school students were driving the formation of a teenaged market segment.³¹ In both contexts historians argue teenagers demanded recognition as consumers.

Viewing consumer culture as either manipulating or liberating creates a

30 Doug Owsram, *Born At the Right Time*, 140-141, 145.

31 See, for example, Schrum's discussion of "The New Teenage Look," Kelly Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox: The Emergence of Teenage Girls' Culture, 1920-1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 51-58. Other examples from the American literature include Kett, *Rites of Passage*; and Palladino, *Teenagers: An American History*.

dichotomy that limits the scope of historical enquiry because it presumes that consumer culture is static. Perhaps a more interesting way to approach the history of teenaged consumer culture is to assume that the marketplace can be both manipulating and liberating simultaneously. For example, recent research suggests that the strong bond between a mother and daughter may unconsciously encourage middle-aged women to mimic their daughter's styles, purchasing clothing they believe their daughters would wear.³² Are retailers manipulating women if they use this information to increase sales and profits? Or liberating women to "have fun with their own personal style," as the study's author suggests? No doubt some of the teenagers in Schrum's study found their after-school shopping trips to the mall exciting and formative, but does that mean retailers were not trying to convince them to purchase particular goods? Scholars need to be able to recognize an individual's ability to make decisions while still investigating and scrutinizing marketers' often persuasive and pervasive practices, both today and in the past. Advertisers have incorporated the supposed liberating and individualizing power of material goods into their sales messages since the 1920s.³³ Sociologist Daniel Cook found that American retailers of children's clothing frequently relied on the image of an agentive child, one who chose consumer products and used them to express individuality, in their marketing campaigns.³⁴

32 Amy Coombs, "Like Daughter, like mother? The unexpected answer to who sets the style," *The Globe and Mail* (August, 2011), A2.

33 Simone Weil Davis. *Living Up to the Ads: Gender Fictions of the 1920s* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000); T.J. Jackson Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization: Advertising and the Therapeutic Roots of Consumer Culture, 1880-1930," in Richard Wightman Fox and T.J. Jackson Lears, eds., *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983), 1-38.

34 Daniel Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood*.

This study moves beyond the manipulation/liberation dichotomy to explore how the marketplace has shaped notions of age in changing historical contexts. It does so by embracing and exploring Daniel Cook's idea of commercial personae. Cook defines commercial personae as "assemblages of characteristics – known or conjectured, "real" or imagined – constructed by and traded among interested parties in the service of their industry."³⁵ The consumer persona of the teenager was an idealized image, as opposed to an actual person. Many people in their teenaged years were already avid consumers by the 1930s, and there is ample evidence to show that young people in early-twentieth-century industrialized countries often contributed to the family income, purchased their own clothing, and spent money on commercial leisure pursuits.³⁶ What changed in the 1930s was that retailers began to view these customers as a cohesive group called teenagers. In the late 1930s Eaton's claimed to have found a new category of consumer, one whose clothing desires and needs were best met by the consumer marketplace. This consumer was represented as being both "old enough" to be addressed directly as a consumer, and yet "young enough" to require different garments than those sold to adults, and inexperienced enough to necessitate the guidance of retail experts. By representing teenagers in certain ways, by using specific words and images to describe them, by associating them with specific activities, retailers gave meaning to the term

35 Ibid, 19. Specifically, Cook examines "the mother," "the infant" and "the toddler" as commercial personae.

36 See, for example: Katrina Srigley, "Clothing Stories: Consumption, Identity, and Desire in Depression-Era Toronto," *Journal of Women's History* 19:1 (Spring 2007): 82-104; Craig Heron, "The High School and the Household Economy in Working-Class Hamilton, 1890-1940," *Historical Studies in Education/Revue d'histoire de l'éducation* 7:2 (1995): 217-259; Comacchio, *Dominion of Youth*. In the British context, see David Fowler, *The First Teenagers: The Lifestyle of Young Wage-earners in Interwar Britain* (London: Woburn Press, 1995).

“teenager,” promoting the idea that the teenaged years were a distinct phase of life defined by consumer goods.³⁷

Eaton’s attempts to both fashion and woo the teenaged consumer occurred at the same time as Canadians were becoming increasingly conscious of their ages and of an age-graded life course. As historian Howard Chudacoff notes for the United States, “a strong current of age norms now guided people’s behaviour and expectations, admonishing each individual to ‘act your age’” by the 1920s.³⁸ Chapter one explores the changing expectations of when and how young people grew up in Canada during the first half of the twentieth century, employing the records of the decennial censuses. Routinely-generated census documents – including instructions to census enumerators, census schedules, and published census reports – provide a rich window into the ways that official age categories were being constructed and employed to analyse the daily activities of Canadians. Census officials were increasingly interested in using age as a social indicator, and an analysis of their intentions and actions illuminates official understandings of the purpose and meaning of the teenaged years of life.

In order to situate Eaton’s teenaged advertising and promotions, chapter two examines the changing and conflicting ways that women in their teenaged years were portrayed in three Canadian monthly consumer magazines: *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Home*

37 Stuart Hall argues that representation – producing shared meanings – is one of the key practices which produces culture: “we give things meaning by how we *represent* them – the words we use about them, the stories we tell about them, the images of them we produce, the emotions we associate with them, the ways we classify and conceptualize them, the values we place on them.” Stuart Hall, “Introduction,” in Stuart Hall, ed. *Representation: cultural representation and signifying practices* (London: Sage/The Open University, 1977), 3.

38 Howard Chudacoff, *How Old Are You? Age Consciousness in American Culture* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), 118.

Journal, and *Mayfair*. While historians have used consumer magazines such as *Chatelaine* to explore gendered middle-class consumer culture and portrayals of women, representations of female teenagers in these publications have not been explored to date.³⁹ These magazines represent a key venue for advice and discussions about age-appropriate appearance and behaviour. Texts and images from these magazines provided idealized identities constructed around the selection and purchase of clothing and other consumer goods. Content from *Canadian Home Journal*, *Mayfair*, and *Chatelaine* offers rich insights into the shifting and often conflicting ways that adults viewed the teenager.

Chapters three, four, and five focus on retail practices that targeted teenaged consumers. As one of Canada's largest retailers in the middle decades of the twentieth century, Eaton's was in a unique position to influence a teenaged identity defined by particular material objects and activities. Eaton's was Canada's iconic retailer; no other retail company matched its commercial or cultural reach. Eaton's had stores in several major Canadian cities by 1940, and a thriving mail order business. Families patronized Eaton's from all corners of the country. Its founders were sometimes treaty like royalty, and were equally famous for their philanthropic work and infamous for their paternalist employment policies.⁴⁰ In many minds Eaton's was much more than a retail store – it was a public institution, a sign of Canadian greatness, and a symbol of national

39 See, for example, Valerie Korinek, *Roughing It In The Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006); Heather Ann Molyneaux, "The Representation of women in "Chatelaine" Magazine advertisements: 1928-1970" (MA thesis, University of New Brunswick, 2002); Erin Spencer, *Lipstick and High Heels: War, Gender, and Popular Culture* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007).

40 Donica Belisle, *Retail Nation: Department Stores and the Making of Modern Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 82-107.

identity.⁴¹ While Eaton's was by no means the only Canadian department store advertising to teenagers, it was arguably the most influential. The mail order catalogues and corporate records of the T. Eaton Company, Limited, have been used to explore several questions in socio-cultural history.⁴² However, the extensive records have yet to be employed to examine the company's youth-related promotions.

In order to analyze how Eaton's conceived of and appealed to the teenaged consumer, chapters three and four examine the changing ways that the company advertised its clothing in the biannual mail order catalogue that brought its sales messages into thousands of Canadian homes. A systematic analysis of women's and men's clothing of all sizes sold in the catalogue between 1930 and 1960 shows how the company began to target teenagers as a distinct market segment, distinguishing teenaged garments from children's and adults' clothing.

41 Ibid, 81. Donica Belisle demonstrates how department stores advertised themselves as agents of national progress in the early twentieth century, and provides evidence that some Canadians viewed Eaton's advertising as a depiction of Canadian life. Rod McQueen also discusses Eaton's cultural importance in more detail in *The Eaton's: The Rise and Fall of Canada's Royal Family* (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co., Limited, 1999), 2-5.

42 Eaton's mail order catalogues have been the subject of several histories, including: McCutcheon, "Clothing Children in English Canada, 1870-1930," and Katharine B. Brett et al., *A Shopper's View of Canada's Past: pages from Eaton's catalogues, 1886-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969). The company's extensive records have been used to write several corporate histories, including: Russ Gourluck, *A Store Like No Other: Eaton's of Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: Great Plains Publications, 2004); Patricia Phenix, *Eatonians: The Story of the Family behind the Family* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2002); Joy Santink, *Timothy Eaton and the Rise of his Department Store* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), and Mary-Etta MacPherson, *Shopkeepers to a Nation: The Eaton's* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963). More recently, Steve Penfold has used the records to examine the history of Eaton's Santa Claus Parade in his article, "The Eaton's Santa Claus Parade and the Making of a Metropolitan Spectacle, 1905-1982," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 44:87 (August 2011): 1-28. Donica Belisle also examines how department stores contributed to Canada's growing consumer culture in the first half of the twentieth century in *Retail Nation*.

Chapter five uses Eaton's corporate records to move beyond its mail order business and examine the company's in-store retailing strategies. Eaton's made extensive efforts in the 1940s and 1950s to establish a relationship with urban high school students through its stores.⁴³ Beginning in 1939, Eaton's formed Junior Councils and Junior Executives in several Canadian cities. These were groups of high school girls and boys recruited from local high schools to represent "typical" teenaged consumers. Eaton's wanted them to help the company understand what teenagers wanted, and to promote Eaton's merchandise in area schools. The minutes from the council meetings, as well as a selection of application forms, focus attention on the programme's objectives and activities. What kind of teenager was Eaton's trying to recruit for the councils? And what role did these young people play in the company's marketing and public relations strategies?

Exploring the changing and intersecting cultures of consumption and youth is a key part of understanding Canada's transformation into a modern society in the twentieth century. Retailers such as Eaton's were helping shape a powerful and exclusive age-based identity, motivated in part by the belief that growing numbers of young people were delaying their entrance into the workforce and spending more time in school.⁴⁴ In the context of economic depression and global conflict, parents, educators, and government officials, along with youth, religious, and community leaders, all debated when and how young Canadians should reach maturity. By trying to sell to teenagers,

43 Evidence of the company's youth promotional activities was found in the T. Eaton Co. fonds at the Archives of Ontario in Toronto.

44 Cynthia Comacchio cites figures that show Ontario's high school population quadrupled between 1918 and 1938, and continued to rise well into the 1950s. Comacchio, *Dominion of Youth*, 101-102.

and ultimately helping to shape the cultural phenomenon of the teenager, commercial entities also contributed to these discussions. Specifically, by advertising directly to teenagers and offering them clothing styles and sizes made for them, Canadian retailers and consumer magazines were determining at what age children could be expected to make their own consumer choices and achieve a measure of economic autonomy. Taken together, Eaton's catalogue and in-store youth promotions provide an important case study of one company's efforts to both construct and attract "the market that just grew up."

CHAPTER ONE

Age consciousness and youth dependency in Canada's decennial censuses, 1911-1951

Tavi Gevinson is not a typical teenager. The fifteen-year-old Chicago high school student edits an online magazine and, since she gained notoriety for her fashion blog at the age of thirteen, has regularly been asked to comment on the runway shows of established fashion designers. In 2009 designers Kate and Laura Mulleavy used Tavi as their inspiration for a clothing line sold in Target stores in the United States, and the teenager has been profiled in *Teen Vogue* and *The New York Times*.¹ Tavi has attracted media attention mostly because her daily activities and authority lend her an adult air. She is newsworthy because she defies society's expectations of what teenagers are supposed to be doing. In other words, she is not really acting her age.

Tavi's fame is a reflection of the extreme age consciousness of North American culture today. We measure our chronological age (the time that has passed since birth), our functional age (a measure of our capabilities at specific points of the life course), and our social age (which reflects shifting beliefs about the social roles people should and do perform at different ages).² While all three concepts of age are evident in

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- 1 Evonne Gambrell, "Tavi Gevinson defines rodarte for target, says designers Kate and Laura Mulleavy," *Teen Vogue* (16 November 2009), <http://www.teenvogue.com/style/blogs/fashion/2009/11/tavi-gevinson-in-rodarte-for-target.html#ixzz1qYLfzaLr>; Amanda Fortini, "Sassy, Too," *The New York Times Magazine* (31 August 2011): 36-37.
 - 2 Judith Treas, "Age in Standards and Standards for Age," in Martha Lampland and Susan Leigh Starr, eds., *Standards and their Stories: How Quantifying, Classifying, and Formalizing Practices Shape Everyday Life* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2009), 66-67. Examples of social age in practice include the

contemporary society, chronological age has the most impact on our daily lives and on our expectations of others. As Howard Chudacoff notes, “How old are you?” is one of the most frequently asked questions in contemporary western culture; we use chronological age to measure our goals and accomplishments and to compare ourselves to others.³ Judith Treas notes that chronological age has become comparable to functional age – we now take for granted that people at specific ages are capable of certain tasks, or qualify for specific social programs.⁴ An evolving web of shared social, economic, and biological meanings are attached to specific ages and periods of the life course.⁵ And when individuals – such as Tavi Gevinson – do not perform according to these age-based assumptions, they elicit criticism or praise – and even wonder.

One hundred years ago, a working fifteen-year-old did not attract much attention. People in their teenaged years regularly earned wages to support themselves and their families. A minority of teenagers received more than an elementary education. Now specific laws proscribe the age at which individuals may assume different privileges, and high school graduation and university attendance is expected. How did age consciousness and adults’ expectations of young people change during the twentieth century? Several historians have offered explanations for these changes, focusing on the actions of social reformers, on large-scale economic transformations, or on more subtle

sentencing of teenagers convicted of serious crimes to longer sentences because the justice system believes they have acted in an adult fashion, and should be punished as adults, and the belief that teenagers are too young to become parents even though they are physically capable of conceiving and birthing a child after they reach puberty.

3 Howard Chudacoff, *How Old Are You? Age Consciousness in American Culture* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), 3.

4 Treas, “Age in Standards and Standards for Age,” 71. Age is used on a daily basis to define and measure both ability and disability.

5 Chudacoff, *How Old Are You?* 3-4.

shifts in cultural attitudes to explain how expectations of a more sheltered childhood focused on schooling slowly replaced the idea that people reached adulthood when they were capable of doing adult work, not when they achieved a specific age.⁶ These studies have shed light on changing expectations, and shown that concerns about young people often lay at the heart of socio-cultural change.

The census can also shed light on the question of adults' changing expectations of children and youth. Early social historians saw the census as a window into the behaviour of the historically anonymous – the majority of people whose lives were not documented in official archives. These scholars looked to the census for empirical data about young people – their education levels, language, ethnicity, religion, and occupations – in order to illustrate larger arguments about social change and continuity.⁷ However, several scholars also assert that nominal censuses do not so much reflect the “true” state of the population as much as they construct the population itself, allowing governments to classify individuals and naturalize and privilege certain groups. Michel Foucault argued that censuses and other forms of demographic measurement were among the “numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies

6 See, for example: Neil Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1976); Joseph F. Kett, *Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America 1790 to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, 1977); Viviana Zelizer, *Pricing the Priceless Child: The Changing Social Value of Children* (New York: Basic Books, 1985).

7 See, for example, Michael Katz, *The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth Century City* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1975); Chad Gaffield, *Language, Schooling, and Cultural Conflict: the Origins of the French Language Controversy in Ontario* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987); Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1993); Lynne Sorrel Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

and the control of populations.”⁸ Censuses produce knowledge used in day-to-day governance, but the knowledge produced is a reflection of socio-cultural values and of power dynamics, these scholars argue. Benedict Anderson offered the example of the British colonial censuses in India, where officials created racial categories and hierarchies that served colonial ends and did not reflect any observable Indian social structure.⁹

More recently, historians such as Eric Sager, Peter Baskerville, Chad Gaffield, and Lisa Dillon, among others, have demonstrated that census documents and data can shed light on both the daily lives of Canadians and the priorities and values of their political institutions.¹⁰ By viewing the census as a project that is both “linguistically constructed and materially based,” census documents can shed light on several questions related to age consciousness and age categories in twentieth-century Canada.¹¹ How did census officials categorize the population based on age? What role did age play in their analyses? How did Canadians respond to questions related to their age? And how did age-based definitions shape adult and institutional expectations about childhood and the transition to adulthood? The kinds of questions census officials asked, and the categories

8 Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980), 140.

9 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 165-166.

10 See, for example, Peter Baskerville and Eric Sager, *Unwilling Idlers: The Urban Unemployed and Their Families in Late Victorian Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998); Chad Gaffield, “Linearity, Non-Linearity, and the Competing Constructions of Social Hierarchy in Early Twentieth-Century Canada: The Question of Language in 1901,” *Historical Methods* 33:4 (Fall 2000): 255-260; Lisa Dillon, *The Shady Side of Fifty: Age and Old Age in Late Victorian Canada and the United States* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2008).

11 Chad Gaffield, “Conceptualizing and Constructing the Canadian Century Research Infrastructure,” *Historical Methods* 40:2 (Spring 2007), 56.

they used, helped to frame government attention to young people during the first half of the twentieth century. Exploring these categories and questions provides context for the developments that led to retailer's portrayals of the teenager as a consummate consumer.

Canada's nominal censuses are a rich historical source. In addition to the published tables of census data and reports issued by census officials, this analysis examines the illuminating enumerator instructions, which were printed manuals given to those hired by the census bureau to ask questions door-to-door. This study also employs the contextual database of Canadian Century Research Infrastructure (CCRI), an indexed collection of newspaper articles related to the collection and dissemination of census data. This database includes articles from nearly 170 periodicals from across Canada that shed light on discussions about age and the census.

Changing treatment of age in the preparation, execution, and publication of the census reflected a growing age consciousness among Canadians and their institutions. In the first half of the twentieth century, census officials showed a growing interest in recording Canadians' chronological ages accurately, and in using this data to draw attention to age-related population characteristics and trends that may have been useful or important to policy makers and politicians. However, evidence from archival newspapers suggest that Canadians – particularly female Canadians – did not always enjoy divulging their age to census officials. In public discourse, the age question came to epitomize the discomfort some felt about supplying personal information to enumerators.

Canadians were asked for their age or date of birth on every decennial census beginning in 1851. Initially, officials used the information gathered to keep track of the

size of certain age-specific populations: those of voting age; those considered to be in their productive or working years; and those women able to reproduce. Because these were broad age categories, little precision was required. The enumerator instructions demonstrate that census officials began to take greater interest in ensuring that the age question was answered accurately starting with the 1911 census. In earlier instances, enumerators received little written instruction about how to record Canadians' age and date of birth. In 1861 the Census of the Provinces of Canada stated that the question of age, along with questions about sex and marital status, "need no explanation."¹² The instructions in 1871, 1881, 1891, and 1901 were no more precise.¹³ While enumerators were expected to employ "common sense" when recording age-related data, the census form did require them to ask for both the date of birth and the age (at last birthday) of each person, beginning in 1901. Census officials were then able to verify respondents' age by comparing the two columns on the form. This suggests that – despite the lack of precise instruction – an accurate age was important to census officials.

Although the census included two questions to establish age, enumerators in the nineteenth century sometimes left the age and birth date columns blank.¹⁴ Some people had only a vague sense of their age; exact birth years were sometimes unknown, and celebrations to mark birthdays were not common.¹⁵ While the enumerator instructions explained why some of the other questions, such as those related to occupation, required close attention, enumerators were not told in written instructions why the reporting of

12 David Gagan, "Enumerator's Instructions for the Census of Canada, 1852 and 1861," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 7:14 (1974): 364.

13 Lisa Dillon, *The Shady Side of Fifty*, 42.

14 Bruce Curtis, *The Politics of Population: State formation, Statistics, and the Census of Canada, 1840-1875* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 204-205.

15 Howard Chudacoff, *How Old Are You?* 118.

age was important. As a result, some may have simply found it easier to leave the column blank instead of pressing respondents for more detailed or accurate answers.

From 1911 onwards, the instructions to enumerators explained more precisely how to record ages and dates of birth. The census bureau specified that enumerators should record “the age in complete years at the last birthday prior to June 1 1911.”¹⁶ This was supposed to ensure that respondents gave their age as of census day, not the age they would be in a month’s time, nor the age they had been only a few weeks before. Enumerators also had to record each person’s month and year of birth, but not the exact date. With the year and month recorded, census officials could calculate a respondent’s age themselves (unless the respondent’s birthday was in the same month as the enumeration), verifying that the age listed on the return was correct. These changes marked a great deal more precision than officials had previously taken in recording Canadians’ ages.¹⁷

The 1931 census tried to increase the precision of respondent’s answers by telling enumerators how to handle individuals who gave their age in round numbers. Under the title “Age in round numbers,” it read:

In many cases persons will report the age in round numbers, like 30 or 45, “or about 30” or “about 45” when that is not the exact age. Therefore when an age ending in “0” or “5” is reported, the enumerator should inquire whether it is the exact age. If, however, it is impossible to get the exact age, enter the approximate age rather than return the age as **unknown**.¹⁸

16 Canada, Fifth Census of Canada, 1911. *Instructions to Commissioners and Enumerators* (Ottawa, 1911), 27.

17 The enumerator instructions for the 1921 and 1931 census were identical to the 1911 instructions regarding respondents’ age at last birthday, but the Dominion Bureau of Statistics did not include questions about the year and month of birth.

18 Canada, Seventh Census of Canada, 1931. *Instructions to Commissioners and Enumerators* (Ottawa, 1931), 25-26.

The Dominion Bureau of Statistics, which administered the census, wanted to inform enumerators about people's tendency to round their ages, but still preferred seeing a potentially-rounded number rather than a blank space in the age column. The same warning and instruction about rounding appeared in the 1941 instructions.¹⁹

In 1951, the census form was transformed into a computer-readable format. Instead of recording answers in writing, enumerators coloured in small circles, each representing one of several expected responses. Age was recorded in two columns; when a respondent stated he or she was twenty-nine, the enumerator would colour in the bubble marked "2" in the first column, and the bubble marked "9" in the second column. Children less than a year old were recorded with two zeros, and people more than one hundred years old were recorded with two nines. Enumerator instructions implied that this change had removed any confusion or ambiguity surrounding the age question, stating quite simply, "Ask for the *exact* age at last birthday."²⁰

The enumerator instructions were characteristically even more specific about recording the ages of very young children. Beginning in 1911, enumerators were required to enter the age of persons aged less than one year in completed months "expressed as twelfths of a year." If a child were not yet a month old, age was to be written in days. Enumerators were cautioned that "In the case of young children it is

19 Lisa Dillon attributes age rounding by census respondents to three different situations: either the "respondent was unsure of his or her own age, and reported an approximate;" the respondent was answering on behalf of all household members and could only guess the age of someone else living in the house, or a "respondent deliberately rounded up or down his or her own age in an effort to seem older or younger." In the censuses she examined, young women were the most likely to round their ages (twenty being the most common age given). See Dillon, *The Shady Side of Fifty*, 88-94.

20 Canada, Ninth Census of Canada, 1951. *Enumeration Manual* (Ottawa, 1951), 14.

very important that the enumerator should obtain the information and carefully record it.”²¹ In 1941 census officials also included a detailed table, outlining how many months old infants born in the twelve months preceding the census would be, depending on their date of birth. Enumerators were told to ask for the date of birth only, and to calculate the age in months themselves, instead of asking the parent or guardian to tell them the age. Even though respondents older than one year were only asked their age at last birthday, children under one year of age received special attention until 1951, when the census moved to computer-readable forms and enumerators were instructed to mark persons aged less than one year with a zero.

The requirement to report infants’ ages so precisely illustrates how census questions were adapted to concerns about a particular segment of the population. Census officials wanted to record infant ages accurately in order to assist public health workers, doctors, and child welfare reformers in their attempts to lower the rate of infant mortality.²² Vital statistics agencies were at first ill equipped to accurately measure infant mortality rates. By recording the precise ages of the very young, census officials could provide data to help keep track of the number, geographic distribution, and family circumstances of those under one year of age.²³ By 1951, not only had the reporting of

21 Canada, Fifth Census of Canada, 1911. *Instructions to Commissioners and Enumerators*, 27.

22 Neil Sutherland estimates that at the turn of the twentieth century, one in five to seven Canadian children died before reaching their first or second birthdays. He notes that exact figures are difficult to calculate because public records did not always record infant deaths thoroughly – an indication that people saw infant death as an inevitable family tragedy more than a social problem. Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), 57.

23 Public health advocates such as Dr. Helen MacMurchy used such data to compile reports on infant and child health. As historian Cynthia Comacchio notes, these

infant births and deaths become much more complete and routine, but the infant mortality rate had fallen from more than 100 deaths per 1,000 births in 1926 to roughly 40 deaths per 1,000 births in 1950.²⁴ It was no longer as necessary to record the age of infants in months, and so the census question, and the enumerator instructions, changed.

Enumerator instructions shed light on census officials' priorities prior to census day, but newspaper articles, editorials, and cartoons published before and during each census demonstrate how Canadians reacted to being asked about their age. Newspapers often contained heated debates about the content and consequences of census questions and data. Census questions were usually printed in the newspapers prior to the enumeration, alongside explanations of particular questions, and discussions about their merit and import. Newspapers also reported on how the enumerations were proceeding, and printed the results as they became available. The age question did not receive as much attention as questions related to Canadians' "racial origin," "nationality," and "language commonly spoken"; nevertheless, the age question was often used as an example of the personal nature of census questions – especially for women – and to remind readers to co-operate when supplying information.²⁵

Most references to the age question that appeared in newspapers were related to

reports were widely read by social reformers and policy makers, helping to shape the belief that widespread state-sponsored change was needed to curb high incidences of infant mortality. See Comacchio, *Nations are Built of Babies: Saving Ontario's Mothers and Children, 1900-1940* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 56.

24 Statistics Canada, *Canadian Demographics at a Glance* (catalogue number 91-003-XWE), (Ottawa: 2007), <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/91-003-x/2007001/figures/4129861-eng.htm>.

25 For further exploration of the debates surrounding these and other census questions in 1911, see Gordon Darroch, ed., *The Dawn of Canada's Century: Hidden Histories* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill Queen's University Press, forthcoming).

the “delicate question” of asking someone’s age. “The most objectionable question the census enumerators will get “sass” over is: ‘How old are you?’” the *Daily Mail* told readers on the second day of census taking in June, 1911.²⁶ Generally, women were assumed to be insulted when enumerators asked their ages. In 1911, the *Red Deer Advocate* claimed that a woman’s age was “always a touchy point.”²⁷ In 1921, *The Globe* reported that “nearly every enumerator had trouble over the question “How old is Ann?”²⁸ The *Winnipeg Free Press* informed readers during the 1931 enumeration that census-takers were “finding that asking a woman’s age is no joke.”²⁹

The number of women who actually objected to stating their ages – or refused outright – was not high (see discussion below), but the few reported cases of female reticence carried great currency in Canadian daily newspapers. Some stories were reprinted repeatedly. For example, the case of several female servants in Montreal who “had all forgotten their ages” appeared in *The Vancouver World*, the *Lethbridge Herald*, and the *Nanaimo Free Press* during the first four days of the 1911 enumeration.³⁰ Several reports suggested that enumerators needed special training to ask a woman her age. In 1911, *The Winnipeg Telegram* reported that enumerators asked for advice about what to do if a woman refused to state her age. Census Commissioner Stuart Laidlaw, who was answering their questions, cautioned them to use trickery: “If the lady’s age seems to be one ranging between thirty and forty, say to her, “I must give some age so

26 *Daily News* (2 June 1911), 4.

27 “A Census Enumerator’s Experiences,” *Red Deer Advocate* (11 August 1911), 6.

28 “Vain Attempts to Secure Women’s Particular Secret,” *The Globe* (2 June, 1921), 8.

29 “Women’s Age Snag for Census Takers: Members of Fair Sex Persist that Government Wants to Know Too Much,” *Winnipeg Free Press*, (9 June 1931), 3.

30 “Humors of Census in Montreal City,” *The Vancouver World* (3 June 1911), 5; “Women Don’t Know Their Ages,” *Lethbridge Herald* (2 June 1911), 11; “Humors of the Census,” *Nanaimo Free Press* (5 June 1911), 2.

I'll just put yours down as forty-five," and she in her haste to correct you will announce her proper age."³¹ In 1921, a report on enumerator training claimed that census takers were receiving "Special Education To Make Some Women Tell Their Ages." The accompanying article did not elaborate on exactly how enumerators were being taught to extract information from the unwilling.³²

Several articles and editorial cartoons focused on the potential anger and violence enumerators faced when encountering women on the doorsteps. During the 1931 enumeration the *Winnipeg Free Press* told the story of a woman who slammed the door on an enumerator who asked for her age:

The enumerator, not to be put off lightly, opened the door again and indicated that it was his duty to read the law which he proceeded to do. "My age is such and such, if you must know," replied the indignant lady, and slammed the door harder than before.³³

The anecdote implied that enumerators might have to use threats to obtain the information they needed. Two cartoons published in *La Presse* depicted women as not only reticent, but dangerous. In 1911 and 1921, the Montreal newspaper included cartoons of women brandishing brooms and pokers at escaping enumerators who have just finished enquiring: "Quel age avez-vous, mademoiselle?"³⁴ The "miss" that the

31 "Census Takers Go To School to Get Facts," *The Winnipeg Telegram* (20 May 1911), 3.

32 "Census Man Needs Special Education to Make Some Women Tell Their Ages," *The Vancouver World* (29 May 1921), 16.

33 "Women's Age Snag for Census Takers: Members of Fair Sex Persist that Government Wants to Know Too Much," *Winnipeg Free Press* (9 June 1931), 3.

34 "Quel age avez-vous mademoiselle?" *La Presse* (9 June 1911), 2. It was part of a series of cartoon images, one appearing each day, which depicted enumerators on door-steps asking various questions. For example, one of the other cartoons had an enumerator asking a woman surrounded by children if she had any children. Generally, the cartoons seemed to poke fun of the inanity of particular questions, or suggest humorous responses. However, the cartoon related to age was the only one

enumerator was addressing was a thin and stooped elderly woman, with a hissing black cat at her side. The enumerator was depicted as a young man, shocked and scared after facing what *La Presse* described in the 1921 cartoon as “Les Dangers du Recensement.”³⁵ Both the 1911 and 1921 cartoons portray women who refused to answer the age question as older single women who would threaten violence rather than reveal their “particular secret.”³⁶ Whether these anecdotes and images were intended purely for amusement, or reflected more seriously the trials of census-taking, they highlight the gendered and uncomplimentary depiction of women who were reticent to give their ages to census-takers.

Commentators also noted that, even if respondents offered their ages willingly, there was no way to verify the accuracy of their replies. In 1921, census officials removed the year and month of birth questions from the census form, so the accuracy of an individual’s age depended on respondents’ willingness to be honest. A census commissioner in Vancouver told the *Vancouver Sun* prior to the 1921 enumeration that “people, as a matter of course, or perhaps consciously, give their ages other than they really are.” He believed that “younger people are inclined to wish to appear older than they are, middle aged people wish to appear younger than they are, and the elderly people, as a matter of pride, like to state that they have acquired a ripe old age with a youthful appearance.” While the commissioner believed a tendency to misreport one’s age affected people of all ages, no other references to young people stating an older age appeared in newspapers. Most focused solely on older women trying to appear younger

in which it appeared that someone was refusing to answer a census question.

35 “Les Dangers du Recensement – Quel age avez-vous?” *La Presse* (11 June 1921), 31.

36 “Vain Attempts to Secure Women’s Particular Secret,” *The Globe* (2 June, 1921), 8.

than they were. The commissioner did not seem overly concerned about the tendency of respondents to misreport their age. The only age cohort he singled out was infants, where “particular care in this census” was needed for “checking up the infant mortality of Canada correctly.”³⁷ The exact ages of the very young were foremost on the minds of census officials, and if grown women wanted to under-estimate their age by a few years, “the chances are that nobody would know but the woman herself and the angels.”³⁸ After the enumeration began, the *Halifax Herald* claimed that getting an answer to the age question was not that difficult – “easy to get some answer, whether it is correct or not.”³⁹

In newspaper reports there is anecdotal evidence that enumerators occasionally made their own judgments about a respondent’s age. During the 1911 enumeration, an Alberta enumerator reported that he questioned a twice-married woman about her age. He estimated her at “the mature age of, to be generous, say 45,” but reported that the woman had “answered without a quaver in her voice, 23!”⁴⁰ Prior to the 1931 enumeration, the editor of the *Toronto Daily Star* jokingly advised census-takers that they could learn something about tact from a 1921 enumerator: “Tact indeed! When a spinster-like-looking woman told him she was twenty-three, he always tact on a few years.”⁴¹

In contrast, it was personal income – not age – that some men were reluctant to tell enumerators, particularly during the 1931 enumeration. That year the census commissioner for West Calgary, G.T.C. Robinson, reported to the *Calgary Herald* that

37 “Census Man Finds Folk Coy About their Ages,” *Vancouver Sun* (21 May 1921), 3.

38 “Census Man Needs Special Education to Make Some Women Tell Their Ages,” *The Vancouver Sun* (29 May 1921), 16.

39 “Census, Cents, and Senses being Mixed,” *Halifax Herald* (2 June 1921), 14.

40 “A Census Enumerator’s Experiences,” *Red Deer Advocate* (11 August 1911), 6.

41 “Note,” *Toronto Daily Star* (14 May 1931), 6.

“an occasional person ... appears rather unwilling to divulge details of his income.”⁴² Similarly, the *Winnipeg Free Press* reported the same year that “some of the men earning fairly large salaries are apparently as shy about stating the full extent of their income as ladies, here and there, are about stating their age.”⁴³ During the Depression some men may have been ashamed to state their income, especially if they were newly unemployed, or if they feared that the information would be used to levy taxes. Men were assumed to be more self-conscious about their income than their age, perhaps because they viewed their salary or wages as a measure of their worth, while women’s self-worth was tied increasingly to their appearance – how young they looked.

Commentators who found census questions intrusive often used age as an example. The *Halifax Herald* reported that “householders are reluctant to answer some of the questions on the form either because they are not sure of their knowledge or because they regard them as somewhat personal.”⁴⁴ Prior to the 1951 enumeration, newspapers reported that the census “would be considerably more searching than its predecessors,” and some questioned the necessity and use of asking for such personal information.⁴⁵ During the enumeration of the same year, the *Toronto Daily Star* noted that “such questions as whether a person is divorced or separated, his or her age, racial origin and even religion have aroused protests” from respondents. “Many people do not like the government prying into their personal affairs, including ages,” the *Star* quipped, and continued with a pun: “The census man incenses men – and particularly women.”⁴⁶

42 “Census Taking May End June 15,” *Calgary Herald* (6 June 1931), 1.

43 “Census in Winnipeg Almost Complete,” *Winnipeg Free Press* (10 June 1931), 15.

44 “Census Takers Run into Trouble,” *Halifax Herald* (12 June 1941), 8.

45 “The Census,” *The Winnipeg Free Press* (16 May 1951), 25.

46 “Note,” *Toronto Daily Star* (9 June 1951), 6.

On several occasions the newspapers used women's reluctance to answer the age question as an opportunity to remind Canadians about their duty to reply to the census queries, and to explain to them that all information collected was confidential. The *Vancouver Sun* warned readers that "If you refuse to tell your age then they can put you in jail."⁴⁷ Women should not be concerned about telling enumerators their ages, commentators stressed, because by law the enumerator could not share the information with anyone. *The Globe* reported in 1921 that enumerators were advised to "drive home the fact that the information would not get beyond the eyes of Government officials, to whom the age of any particular woman has little interest."⁴⁸ In 1931, "The Home Forum," a women's column in *The Globe* informed readers there was nothing to dread from the census-taker's visit. The author admitted that age was one of the "hard questions," but reminded readers that answering all questions was a duty, regardless. The author presumed women were more likely than their husbands to be answering enumerators' questions on the doorsteps, and argued that this was a way for women to show their patriotism.⁴⁹ During the 1951 enumeration, Dr. O.A. Lemieux, director of the census division of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, reassured people that enumerators were sworn to secrecy and could be prosecuted for sharing information. While the age question was occasionally used to draw attention to privacy concerns, most of the discussion about the age question was related to the presumed reluctance of women to disclose their age to census enumerators.

In the months following the enumeration, officials sorted and tabulated data into

47 "Census Man Needs Special Education to Make Some Women Tell Their Ages," *The Vancouver World* (29 May 1921), 16.

48 "Vain Attempts to Secure Women's Particular Secret," *The Globe* (2 June, 1921), 8.

49 "The Home Forum: Pity the Poor Enumerator," *The Globe* (17 June, 1931), 17.

tables, publishing their findings in newspapers and in published volumes. The published tables and census bulletins that resulted from this work reflected the particular policy priorities of civil servants and government members at the time. These documents also provide evidence of the statistical agency's increasing interest in age as a category of analysis.

The published census reveals that very few people actually refused to give enumerators their age. Age under-reporting and misreporting was less of a problem than the enumerator instructions and newspaper reports suggested. In 1901, of a total Canadian population of 5,371,000, the age of 29,766 men and 19,311 women was classified as "Not Given" in the published data tables. This meant roughly nine of every 1,000 respondents did not answer the question.⁵⁰ In 1921, the numbers had decreased by half; only 21,277 people were listed as being of "unspecified ages" of the total population of 8,767,206 people. Again, men were more likely to have an unspecified age than women.⁵¹ The numbers dropped even further in the 1931 enumeration. The published tables for 1931 show 3,771 people did not give their ages, twice as many of them male as female.⁵² Census officials attributed the higher percentage of unstated ages for men to the "greater likelihood of males being absent from home when the enumerator called and the inability to secure the answer to this part of the census inquiry

50 9.137 per 1,000 persons were classified at "Not Given" in 1901. Canada, *Fourth Census of Canada, Bulletin X: Census of Ages* (Ottawa, 1902), 3.

51 11,601 men and 9,676 women were classified as "Unspecified Ages" in the 1921 published census. *Sixth Census of Canada, Volume II* (Ottawa, 1925).

52 When the number of "Age not given" is divided into the total population for each sex, the percentage of males is still greater than the percentage of females classified as "Age Not Given." *Seventh Census of Canada, Volume III: Ages of the People* (Ottawa: 1935), 66.

from another party.”⁵³ In general, the decreasing number of unspecified ages suggests that Canadians were becoming more likely to know their own age and to be aware of the ages of those they lived with. However, more specifically, the declining trend of female non-compliance to the age question suggests that newspapers were fostering and reinforcing a myth – that women were more likely than men to refuse to give their ages during the enumeration.

While the number of unstated ages had decreased significantly since the beginning of the century, census officials still felt that unstated ages were “troublesome in analytical work.”⁵⁴ So in 1941 they did not list any unspecified ages; instead, census officials assigned ages to the 5,606 people who did not have ages listed on the enumeration forms. Using other information on the schedule, as well as information from others censuses, officials placed each ageless person in one of its five-year age groupings. For example, they created a table showing the likely age of children in specific grades, and then assigned respondents an age based on the number of years they had attended school. They also used a table adopted from the United States census to determine the most common age difference between husbands and wives when one part of a married couple was missing an age. In cases where other information proved fruitless, census officials assigned respondents to two general categories – one for persons less than fifteen years old and one for persons older than fifteen – and distributed these cases evenly across the five-year groups in these broad categories.⁵⁵

53 Eighth Census of Canada, *Volume I: General Review* (Ottawa: 1950), 120.

54 Ibid, 121.

55 Ibid, 121-122. This division was likely based on the average age of school leaving, which differed by province but generally was between fourteen and sixteen years of age.

While census officials recognized that “many of these assignments, when considered individually, are inaccurate,” in the aggregate they had little effect on the overall totals.⁵⁶ Census officials were ultimately interested in the age characteristics of specific groups, not of individuals.

As unspecified ages became less of a problem for census officials, the published census volumes made increasing reference to age between 1911 and 1951 (see Table 1.1). In 1911 age was a relatively insignificant category of analysis. Only eight of the sixty-seven published tables cross-referenced age with another variable. Three of the tables listed occupations by birthplace and age, while the other five concerned the age, marital status, birthplace, and occupation of those the census labelled blind, deaf and dumb, idiotic, insane, and infirm. In 1921 the number of tables that cross-tabulated age more than doubled, to fifty-two of a total of 180. Census officials now compared age by sex, birthplace, marital status, racial origin, illiteracy, and school attendance, using chronological age to categorize and compare most of the population. The trend continued in 1931, when fifty-eight per cent of the published tables included age; nearly one third of the tables cross-tabulated age with other variables, and more than one third included an age threshold. The extensive analysis of employment data, collected in response to the dire economic conditions of the Great Depression, help to explain why the published volumes of the 1931 census were so numerous.⁵⁷ Census officials produced fewer tables following the 1941 enumeration; however, an increased proportion of the tables included age as a variable. While the published volumes of the

⁵⁶ Ibid, 123.

⁵⁷ Census officials were particularly concerned about the employment of young men in the 1930s. These concerns will be discussed in more detail below.

1951 census included fewer tables concerning the age of the population than previous censuses, tables cross-tabulating age with other variables still made up nearly one-fifth of the total number of population tables. Age had become an integral part of the way that census officials studied other characteristics of the population.

Table 1.1: Comparison of the treatment of age in published census tables, by census, 1911 to 1951.

Census year	Total published population tables	Tables including age	Tables with age thresholds	Tables cross-tabulating age
1911	67	22	17	8
1921	180	114	62	52
1931	621	359	262	192
1941	270	109	29	105
1951	335	117	78	62

The enumerator instructions, newspapers, and published census volumes all suggest that, by the middle of the twentieth century, age was central to official understandings of Canadian society. Census officials attached increasing importance to age, asserting that most characteristics of a society meant little outside of the context of age. “Age, after sex, is probably the most fundamental attribute of a population,” Murdoch MacLean wrote in his 1940 census bulletin:

It permeates almost all the other attributes. The rate of birth, death, marriage, earnings; the differential rates of these attributes among races, birthplaces and geographic areas, etc; the movement of population; a good many of the financial and social problems of population, such as dependency, illiteracy, crime and institutional care; the inter-comparison of the component parts of the population in other respects than those mentioned; all are either impracticable or incapable of interpretation

without making due allowance for age.⁵⁸

By the 1950s, census officials interpreted and reported on the state of society according to the activities of individuals at specific points in their lives. Vital aspects of governance depended on reliable age data. Age was an increasing part of statistical analyses.

While census officials were generally concerned with determining the overall age of the population, census documents suggest they were particularly interested in younger people, and tailored some of their questions and analyses to ascertain what activities dependent children were engaged in. Specifically, questions related to education and occupation applied only to persons between or over specific ages. Age thresholds and age ranges are significant because they suggest which populations census officials wanted to study. As Lisa Dillon notes, “prescribing age limits for particular questions entails the recognition that the national population is indeed divided into different age groups, and that posing certain questions to the whole population necessitates needless labour on the part of enumerators.”⁵⁹

While census officials may have acted for practical reasons of administrative capacity when imposing age limits on certain questions, the age thresholds and ranges found in the enumerator instructions from the 1911 to 1951 censuses also point to changing practices at Canada’s statistical bureau. For example, the number of questions linked to specific age thresholds or ranges decreased over the first half of the twentieth century (see Table 1.2). In 1911 seven separate questions had four distinct age

58 Murdoch C. MacLean, Census Monograph No. 2: *The Age Distribution of the Canadian People* (Ottawa, 1940), 15.

59 Dillon, *Shady Side of Fifty*, 43.

thresholds; by 1941 there was only one question from which people of a certain age were omitted. Despite a decrease in the total number of questions over the same time period, the percentage of questions with age thresholds and ranges dropped off. This suggests that census officials may have found it easier to require answers from all respondents – it meant the enumerator was less likely to make mistakes trying to keep track of who should answer what particular question. Answers that did not seem to “fit” with a respondent’s age could be “corrected” when the data was tabulated. However, it could also indicate that census officials increasingly believed they would collect more accurate data if they did not impose age-specific boundaries.

Table 1.2: Census questions with age thresholds and age ranges, for each census, 1911 to 1951.

Census	# Questions on Schedule	Question	Threshold Age	Age Range
1911	41	Year of Naturalization	21	
		Chief Occupation or Trade	10	
		Months in School 1910	5	
		Can Read	5	
		Can Write	5	
		Language Commonly Spoken	5	
		Cost of Education	16	
1921	35	Months at school since September 1, 1920	5	5 to 20
		Occupation	10	
1931	40	Can Read and Write	5	
		Months at school since September 1, 1930	5	5 to 20
		Occupation	10	
1941	39	Occupational Trend	25	
		Occupation	14	14 to 24
1951	30	Activity During Week Ending June 2, 1951	14	

While age ranges and thresholds could make the logistics of enumeration easier, they also shed light on the way census officials defined and characterized childhood and youth in the first half of the twentieth century. The census questions and age boundaries placed children on a path from dependency to independence, a trajectory from school to work that, historians have argued, did not reflect many young people's lived experiences.⁶⁰ A closer examination of age-related education and occupation questions illuminates some of the census officials' expectations about the process of growing up.

The age threshold imposed on the education questions in the 1911, 1921, and 1931 censuses, for example, reflected census officials' assumptions about when young people could be expected to be literate.⁶¹ Questions related to reading, writing, and months in school were limited to respondents between the ages of five and twenty years. Before the 1911 enumeration, census-takers were told not to complete questions about ability to read and write for children under the age of five years. Since children usually did not attend school before this age, few were able – or expected – to be able to read

60 Craig Heron, "The High School and the Household Economy in Working-Class Hamilton, 1890-1940," *Historical Studies in Education* 7:2 (1995): 217-259.

Rebecca Priegert Coulter, "The Working Young of Edmonton, 1921-1931," in Joy Parr, ed., *Childhood and Family in Canadian History* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1982), 143-159; John Bullen, "Child Labour and the Family Economy in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Ontario," *Labour/Le Travail* 18(1986): 163-187.

61 The five year old age limit also applied to the question about Language Commonly Spoken in the 1911 census, which raises some interesting questions about the way concerns about the number of English and French speakers, and a desire to avoid the difficulties of the "mother tongue" issue encountered in the 1901 census, shaped the language question in 1911. In all subsequent censuses, there was no age requirement on the language question. For more discussion of the framing of the language question in the 1911 census, see Chad Gaffield, Byron Moldofsky, and Katharine Rollwagen, "'Do not use for comparison with other censuses': Identity, Politics and Languages Commonly Spoken in 1911 Canada," Gordon Darroch, ed., *The Dawn of Canada's Century: Hidden Histories* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill Queen's University Press, forthcoming).

and write. It was presumably easier for those tabulating the census if they did not have to count all the negative responses that would appear in these columns in the cases of younger children.⁶²

Questions related to the amount of time spent in school also used the five-year-old threshold in the 1911, 1921, and 1931 censuses, suggesting census officials' believed this was the normal age at which children began their schooling. The census asked each person five years or older how many months he or she had spent in school for a specified period preceding the census. In 1911 a separate question about the costs of education was asked only of those sixteen years or older attending any form of secondary school, college, or university.⁶³ Census officials did not include this question on any of the following censuses. The 1921 and 1931 censuses also put an upper age limit of twenty years on the question about the number of months a respondent attended school.

This upper age limit of twenty years appears strange considering that relatively few Canadians remained in school at the age of twenty.⁶⁴ It is possible that census officials were keen to include young adults who were still in the process of obtaining

62 This age restriction was removed in 1921, and reinstated in the 1931 enumerator instructions. The Can Read and Write question was not asked in the 1941 or 1951 censuses.

63 This question applied only to persons actually receiving an education, not to persons over sixteen years of age who may have been paying for someone else's education, such as parents, grandparents, or other benefactors. Furthermore, the instructions did not indicate whether "cost of education" referred only to tuition, or also to wider costs, such as room and board, books, etc., sustained by students.

64 As Cynthia Comacchio notes, in 1931 nearly half of those aged sixteen years were in school, but only a small proportion of seventeen year olds remained in school. See Cynthia Comacchio, *Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920-1950* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2006), 101. Less than three per cent of those aged twenty to twenty-four attended college or university, according to the 1931 Census. Cited in Paul Axelrod, *Making a Middle Class: Student Life in English Canada during the Thirties* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 22.

elementary or secondary education. Small and rural one-room school houses were still common in parts of Canada in the 1930s and 1940s, and people of different ages sometimes occupied the same classroom. Young people also did not necessarily progress from grade to grade each year as they do now. In order to more fully measure school attendance, census officials needed to set a higher upper age limit, to capture older students still obtaining basic education. At the same time, limiting responses to those under twenty years of age also suggests that census officials did not expect young adults over that age to be attending school regularly. The 1941 and 1951 censuses did not include an age threshold or range for education questions, partly because the phrasing of the question changed drastically. In 1941 and 1951, census officials asked respondents for the total number of years of schooling they had received – a question that applied to all, intended to measure the overall educational achievement of the population instead of the attendance rates of the school-aged. In 1941, respondents who had attended school since 1 September 1940 would have a circle drawn around their answer to indicate that they were currently enrolled. In 1951, respondents simply answered yes or no to the question of whether or not they attended school in the nine months prior to the census. That census officials were no longer interested in the exact number of months that a respondent had attended school suggests that children's regular school attendance was no longer as sporadic – and thus as problematic to educators and policy makers – as it had been in the opening decades of the century.

Questions related to occupations also included age thresholds in the censuses from 1911 to 1951. This was a new practice in 1911; the 1901 census had asked for “the

profession, occupation, trade or means of living of each person” regardless of age.⁶⁵ In 1911 the enumerator instructions stated that the question of “chief occupation or trade” should be asked only of respondents ten years of age or older. This remained the practice for the 1921 and 1931 censuses as well. The threshold was likely implemented as a result of campaigns against the employment of very young children. While many rural children worked on family farms, the growth of industry – particularly mining and manufacturing – actually increased employment opportunities for teenaged children in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.⁶⁶ But as adolescents found work in textile mills and mines, social reformers, labour unionists, and child welfare advocates were campaigning to restrict children’s waged work. All the provinces passed legislation between 1890 and 1930 that made it more difficult for people under the age of fifteen or sixteen to find full-time waged work. While some laws prohibited the employment of young people in mines and factories, provinces also began to raise the minimum school leaving age. By the 1940s three provinces required children to remain in school until age fourteen, two provinces mandated school attendance until age fifteen, and four provinces had raised the age in urban areas to sixteen years (see Table 1.3). In 1941 the census changed its minimum age threshold for the occupation question to fourteen years of age.⁶⁷

65 Canada, Fourth Census of Canada, *Instructions to Officers* (Ottawa, 1901), xix.

66 In 1931, the percentage of urban children over the age of fifteen years gainfully employed exceeded that of rural children of the same age by roughly ten per cent. J.E. Robbins, *Census Monograph No. 9: Dependency of Youth* (Ottawa, 1937), 45 (Table XIII).

67 In 1961, it was raised again, to fifteen years of age. In 1971, when the Dominion Bureau of Statistics administered the first census completed by respondents instead of by enumerators, the schedule given to Canadians did not include any questions related to occupation.

Table 1.3: Regulations mandating the minimum age of school leaving in each province. Taken from Philip Oreopoulos, *Canadian Compulsory School Laws and Their Impact on Educational Attainment and Future Earnings* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Family and Labour Studies Division, 2005), 8-11.

Province	Year regulation introduced	Age of School leaving
Ontario	1891	14
	1921	16 in urban areas; 14 in rural areas
	1954	16
British Columbia	1873	14
	1921	15
Prince Edward Island	1877	13
	1938	15
Nova Scotia	1933	16 in urban areas; 14 in rural areas
New Brunswick	1905	14 in urban areas; 12 in rural areas
	1946	16 in urban areas; 14 in rural areas
Saskatchewan	1917	14
	1922	16
Alberta	1910	14
Manitoba	1916	14
Quebec	1943	14
Newfoundland	1942	14
	1951	15

Between the minimum occupation age of ten or fourteen and the maximum school attendance age of twenty (or twenty-four, as it became in 1921) census officials defined a time of life when young people might be learning or earning. However, the census questions were designed in such a way that they could not officially be doing

both. As historian Rebecca Coulter notes, the census made no attempt to record part-time or occasional work, nor did it track household labour performed by family members.⁶⁸ As the 1921 enumerator instructions asserted: “Children working at home merely on general household work, or chores, or at odd times on other work are not to be entered as gainfully employed.”⁶⁹ The 1931 instructions also clarified that “Children of ten years of age or over who work for their parents at home at general household work, or on the farm, or at any other work or chores, when attending school, should not be recorded as having an occupation.”⁷⁰ In 1941, the instructions required enumerators to write “student” in the occupation column for every person of fourteen years or older who was “regularly” attending school: “Even if earning small sums of money after school or on Saturdays as messenger, newsboy, etc., he or she shall be enumerated as a student.”⁷¹ Census officials gave no measure of “regular” school attendance, and since the schedule did not record months in school, as it did previously, we cannot know how enumerators and respondents interpreted “regular” school attendance. More critically, the census disregarded part-time, occasional, and house work (even if paid), potentially inflating the number of young people considered to be students and presenting a rather simplified image of a smooth transition from school to work; on paper, teenagers were either in school or at work.

When the economy collapsed and unemployment levels soared in the early

68 Priegert Coulter, “The Working Young of Edmonton, 1921-1931,” 146.

69 Canada, Sixth Census of Canada, *Instructions to Commissioners and Enumerators* (Ottawa, 1921), 35.

70 Canada, Seventh Census of Canada, *Instructions to Commissioners and Enumerators* (Ottawa, 1931), 37.

71 Canada, Eighth Census of Canada, *Instructions to Commissioners and Enumerators* (Ottawa, 1941), 48.

1930s, the consequences of the census bureau's approach to measuring occupation became clear. *Census Bulletin 11: Unemployment* dedicated an entire chapter to "The Age Factor in Unemployment" and concluded that young people were more likely to be unemployed than middle-aged Canadians.⁷² However, the report actually underestimated the number of young people that were unemployed. Young people who had previously worked part-time, either to support themselves or to contribute to the family income, were not recorded among those who had lost work because, according to the census, they had never worked. Similarly, teenagers looking for work for the first time were also not included in measures of unemployment. Many children responded to the lack of work by staying in school longer than they otherwise would have.⁷³ Since the census asked about loss of employment, it could not tell officials about the state of the job market as a whole, nor inform them about the daily whereabouts and future prospects of teenaged children.

Concerned about the increased rate of unemployment among young people and its consequences for society as a whole, the census bureau conducted a more in-depth analysis of changing patterns of school attendance and employment among those aged fifteen to twenty-four years. Published in 1937, *Dependency of Youth* found that teenaged boys and girls were leaving school and starting work at an older age than they had in 1921. Moreover, the gap was widening between the age when students finished

72 See Chart 9 "Comparison of P.C. Losing Any Time, P.C. Not At Work June 1, Average Weeks Lost During Year and Average and Modal Weeks Lost per Wage-Earner Losing Time, By Age, Canada," Canada, *Census Bulletin 11: Unemployment* (Ottawa, 1938), 210.

73 Rebecca Priegert Coulter notes that high school inspectors at the time commented on the "direct relationship between economic stagnation and sudden substantial increases in secondary school enrolments." See Priegert Coulter, "The Working Young of Edmonton, 1921-1931," 146.

their education and the age at which young people were able to support themselves financially. The report's author, J.E. Robbins, estimated that, based on the data from 1931, eight per cent of fifteen year olds, ten per cent of sixteen and seventeen year olds, and nearly eight percent of eighteen and nineteen year olds would be neither at school nor gainfully employed in 1936.⁷⁴ He calculated that in 1911 the average boy or girl had earned as much money by their twentieth birthday as the average man earned in two years. By 1931, the figure was much less – young people had on average earned the equivalent of less than one year's wages for an adult male.⁷⁵ Children, it seemed, were not growing up as fast as they used to.

The inability of young people to support themselves was believed to have grave consequences for Canada's development into a modern and industrial economy. The fact that an increasing number of people in their late-teenaged years were "idle" meant that the economy was failing to absorb the supply of workers. A smaller number of adults were supporting a greater number of children – not because more children were being born, but because older adolescents were failing to support themselves. Robbins also linked falling marriage rates and increasing incidences of illegitimate births to the failure of young people – particularly young men – to gain financial independence. He argued that "delayed independence creates problems in the home, in the community, and in the lives of the individual boys and girls, that are only incidentally economic."⁷⁶ The solution was less schooling, Robbins believed, arguing that even technical education, lauded as practical preparation for employment, contributed to the problem by keeping

74 J.E. Robbins, Census Monograph No. 9: *Dependency of Youth* (Ottawa, 1937), 25.

75 Robbins, *Dependency of Youth*, 18.

76 Ibid, 54.

boys and girls in schools instead of out looking for work. Robbins noted in his conclusion that:

as the age of leaving school becomes higher and higher it represents a more and more serious problem. We have seen that independence is not now reached until young people are well on in their nineteenth year, and if the tendency of the last generation continues, they will in comparatively few years still be dependent on parents when reaching their twenties.⁷⁷

Robbins' concerns certainly reflected the poor economic conditions of the time – during the Great Depression many young people could not find work. His conclusion that prolonging the age of school leaving was harming young people was also surprising given the emphasis that educators and policy makers were placing on training during the Depression.⁷⁸ And yet his analysis was based on the 1931 data that provided little insight into part-time work and was designed to categorize people in their teens as students unless they had full-time waged employment. Teenagers were expected to be either in school or at work, and to make a smooth transition from the former to the latter.

Perhaps in response to the limits and lack of youth unemployment data in 1931, the 1941 census included a separate question for people aged fourteen to twenty-four years. Enumerators were to ask “young persons” in this age bracket “who have never had a gainful occupation and are not at present attending school” if they were “actually seeking employment” or not. Enumerators were to add the words “yes” or “no” in brackets to the column (alongside the “None” that indicated their lack of occupation)

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ For example, the federal government instituted the Dominion-Provincial Youth Training Programme in 1937. It provided funds to provinces to create youth training schemes for people between the ages of sixteen and thirty years. Canadian Youth Commission, *Youth and Jobs in Canada* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1945), 124-125.

depending on the respondent's answer.⁷⁹ Now census officials could get a sense of how many teenagers and young adults were trying to find work, even if they had not worked full-time before. This question also gave officials an idea of workforce potential at a time when labour resources were being carefully catalogued for the war effort. Knowing how many young men and women were looking for work could be useful to those looking to fill positions in factories producing munitions and other war materiel.

In 1951 census officials changed the occupation questions, creating a much more nuanced picture of Canadians' employment patterns. The questions still applied to persons fourteen years of age or older, but instead of asking respondents to list their occupation first, enumerators were instructed to ask people what activity they had been engaged in mostly during the week just prior to the census. There was a list of acceptable responses to this question: Worked; With a job but not at work; Looked for work; Keeping house; Going to school; Retired or voluntarily idle; Other; and Permanently unable to work. Those who answered that they had worked, or had a job but had not been at work, or were looking for work, were then asked what their specific occupation was during that time. Respondents were also asked, regardless of whether they had worked the previous week or not, whether they had done any kind of work for pay or profit. If they had, they were also asked what occupation they had been engaged in. Now students with part-time or occasional jobs could list their activity as "Going to school" and still report that they had worked for wages and have their paid occupation officially recorded.⁸⁰

79 Canada, Eighth Census of Canada, *Instructions to Commissioners and Enumerators* (Ottawa, 1941), 49.

80 The responses to these questions likely offer many insights into the kinds of work

The age categories used in census analyses and published documents further highlight census officials' particular interest in young people. When data about education and occupation were cross-tabulated with age, census officials often aggregated some of the responses, grouping certain ages together. These categories focused attention on younger respondents. For example, in 1921, published tables showing the occupations of the population by age and sex had separate columns for ages: ten to thirteen years; fourteen and fifteen years; sixteen and seventeen years; eighteen and nineteen years; and twenty to twenty-four years. Respondents over the age of twenty-five were grouped into ten-year age ranges, and all respondents over the age of sixty-five were also grouped together.⁸¹ Census officials wanted to pay close attention to teenagers to see at what age they began to join the workforce, and what kind of work they found.

The most common age groups that census officials used were those that divided the population into five-year cohorts beginning at the age of ten years. Many of the published tables on immigration, racial origin, birthplace, religion, language, as well as other variables, grouped young people into the following age cohorts: ten to fourteen years; fifteen to nineteen years, and twenty to twenty-four years. These categories were probably initially based, consciously or not, on stages of life; children aged ten to fourteen were more likely to be in school, while fifteen to nineteen year olds were

that teenagers were doing in the early 1950s. The Canadian Century Research Infrastructure has made a sample of this data available for study, providing the opportunity to explore research questions about the way young people actually transitioned from school to work. Because this study focuses on official definitions and expectations of youth, rather than young people's experiences, these questions are not explored here.

⁸¹ Canada, Sixth Census of Canada, *Volume 4: Occupations* (Ottawa: 1929), Table V. The 1931 published census tables used the same age ranges.

transitioning to work. However, people's activities at different ages changed over time, while the census' age ranges did not. For the sake of statistical continuity – in order to be able to compare data across censuses – the categories remained the same.

Furthermore, these age ranges were adopted by other organizations interested in youth, such as the Canadian Youth Commission (CYC). Established during the Second World War to study the post-war prospects and attitudes of young people, the CYC was organized by a coalition of government, educational, business and religious leaders concerned that the Depression of the 1930s had left young people ill-equipped to meet their adult duties as workers and citizens. The CYC elected to study people aged fifteen to twenty-four years. In the context of post-war planning, the commission feared these youth would be most adversely affected at the end of the war. Historian Michael Gauvreau has argued that the fact that the CYC defined “youth” so broadly is evidence that the teenager was not a widely-understood concept in Canada in the 1940s. The CYC studied fifteen to twenty-four year olds, in Gauvreau's words, “effectively denying the existence of teenagers.”⁸² However, the CYC did not believe that those aged fifteen to twenty-four represented a cohesive group. In fact, they often split their subjects into two age groups – those fifteen to nineteen years of age, and those twenty to twenty-four years of age – and noted that members of these two groups were often at different stages of maturity.⁸³ Their age categories matched those of the census – and not by coincidence.

82 Michael Gauvreau, “The Protracted Birth of the Canadian ‘Teenager’: Work, Citizenship, and the Canadian Youth Commission, 1943-1955.” in Gauvreau and Nancy Christie, eds., *Cultures of Citizenship in Postwar Canada, 1940-1955* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press), 202.

83 Linda McGuire Ambrose, “The Canadian Youth Commission: Planning for Youth and Social Welfare in the Postwar Era,” (PhD Thesis, University of Waterloo, 1992), 21.

By adopting the fifteen to twenty-four age category to define “youth”, the CYC could make use of a wealth of valuable statistical information. The CYC’s choice illuminates the often-unintended consequences of categorization.

In the first half of the twentieth century, the decennial census paid increasing attention to Canadians’ chronological age, and showed particular concern about the progress of young people from school to productive paid employment. Census documents reflect a growing awareness of age and more rigid boundaries around what kinds of activities were expected of people at different stages of their lives. Age thresholds and age ranges attached to specific census questions marked out the changing expectations of young people: that they begin school by the age of five; that they remain in school until at least their mid-teens; and that they not work full-time before their mid-teens. As Peter Baskerville and Eric Sager have noted, “the census was more than a count of population: it was a means by which the state codified and sanctioned certain values.”⁸⁴ In this case, age-based expectations were embedded in the census schedule and into census analysis. These expectations rendered teenagers’ part-time and occasional waged work invisible until 1951, and filtered into the thinking of bodies such as the CYC – and into historical thinking about young people. According to census officials, children were dependents in the process of becoming independent. This independence brought with it age-based expectations of work, and increasingly – as chapter two will describe – expectations of consumption. Just as census data and media accounts of the enumerations reflected greater age consciousness and increasing study of, and shaping of, the stages of youth, marketers and retailers too began to turn their

84 Peter Baskerville and Eric Sager, “Finding the Work Force in the 1901 Census of Canada,” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 28:56 (1995): 526.

attention to young people in an effort to both benefit from, and influence, their growing consumer clout.

CHAPTER TWO

Growing Up and Getting Dressed: The college co-ed and the teenager in Canadian consumer magazines

“Three years ago, I never thought of wearing lipstick,” confessed a teenaged girl in the April 1946 issue of the consumer magazine *Canadian Home Journal*. “I was determined not to wear it, but... I looked too young. ...So I started wearing lipstick.” In an article entitled “We ’Teen-Agers,” Corinne Langston noted some of the changes she had made in her personal appearance since reaching her teenage years, making a direct link between her decision to buy lipstick and her desires to look older, fit in with her peers, and “make a hit with the boys.” Corinne’s outward appearance marked her as a teenager: “With my hair parted in the middle and hanging straight at my sides, with the frames of my personality glasses painted “Pink Lightening” to match my lips and finger nails, I was “hep.” To anyone over twenty, I was a mess.”¹ Corinne’s confession-style piece suggested that there were expectations about the way her appearance should reflect her age, and connected both her maturation and her self-expression to the purchase of consumer goods. Corinne was experimenting with her appearance, trying new products in order to convey a specific image, trying to fit in. All were portrayed as typical teenaged behaviour.

Corinne tried to both explain and excuse the fashion trends and purchases of a group that some of her elders might have found strange. After all, the teenager she described only began to appear with any regularity on the pages of Canadian consumer

1 Corinne Langston, “We ’Teen-Agers,” *Canadian Home Journal* (April 1946): 62.

magazines in the early 1940s. In 1935, readers of the *Canadian Home Journal* might not have been familiar with the teenager, but by 1945 several Canadian consumer magazines published special issues filled with content for and about teenaged readers. Content from three Canadian consumer magazines – *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Home Journal*, and *Mayfair* – illuminates the ways that these periodicals portrayed teenagers, and offers a glimpse into the multiple and sometimes-conflicting ways in which consumption shaped adult expectations of what it meant to be teenaged in mid-twentieth-century Canada. While the Eaton’s mail order catalogue and corporate records examined in subsequent chapters illuminate the actions of one specific retailer to define and reach the teenaged market, this chapter explores the characteristics of the commercial teenaged culture targeted at increasingly younger girls in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.

Researchers have established a clear relationship between consumer culture and mass-market magazines. Several historians have argued that American and Canadian periodicals were encouraging women, in particular, to fashion their identities from a widening number of consumer products in the early decades of the twentieth century.² Historian Christopher Wilson calls these mass market magazines “a crucible of modern consumer culture”; monthly publications were the media for national advertising campaigns, market research, and advice from a growing number of “experts” in

2 See for example: Simone Weil Davis, *Living Up to the Ads: Gender Fictions of the 1920s* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000); Nancy A. Walker, *Shaping Our Mothers' World: American Women's Magazines* (Jackson, Miss: University Press of Mississippi, 2000); Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the turn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); Kathy Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: the Making of America's Beauty Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998); Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (Routledge: New York, 1995).

household management, psychology, and child rearing.³ The link between women's magazines and advertising was strong; indeed, in the 1920s the publishers of *Mayfair*, *Canadian Home Journal*, and *Chatelaine* were first and foremost producers of trade journals.⁴ The same companies that advertised goods to readers in consumer magazines also sold readers' sales potential to advertisers in trade publications. The magazine and advertising industries grew alongside each other in the early decades of the twentieth century, each relying on the other to reach a national audience of consumers – presumed to be white, middle-class women.⁵ Publishers and editors wanted female readers to use their magazines to guide them in their consumer purchases, positioning themselves as “honest brokers” who tested and recommended clothing fabrics and styles, cosmetics, household cleaners, cookware, and appliances.⁶

3 Christopher Wilson, “The Rhetoric of Consumption: Mass-Market Magazines and the demise of the Gentle Reader, 1880-1920,” in T.J. Jackson Lears and Richard Wightman, eds., *The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980* (New York: Pantheon, 1983), 42. Also on the cultural influence of mass images, see Stuart Ewen and Elizabeth Ewen, *Channels of Desire: Mass Images and the Shaping of American Consciousness*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1982).

4 Both *Chatelaine* and *Mayfair* were published by J. B. Maclean who, prior to founding these two consumer magazines, founded several of Canada's earliest and most widely-read trade papers, including *Canadian Grocer* and the *Dry Goods Review*. *Canadian Home Journal* was founded by publisher James Acton, who owned several trade magazines including a shoe and leather goods journal. The fact that advertisements for footwear featured prominently in the first issues of *Canadian Home Journal* attests to the close relationship between trade magazines and consumer magazines. *Canadian Home Journal* was purchased in 1912 by Consolidated Press, a publisher that also produced trade magazines. See Fraser Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic: A History of Canadian Magazines, 1789-1989* (Markham, Ontario: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1989), 131, 156.

5 Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings*, 9-10.

6 Sharon Zukin discusses our contemporary reliance on “honest brokers,” and its origins in magazines such as *The Ladies' Home Journal*, in her sociology of shopping, *Point of Purchase: How Shopping Changed American Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2004). See especially Chapter 7, “Consumer guides and the invention of lifestyle,” 169-196.

Sociologists posit that magazines also act as “guides” for younger, unmarried women, mapping out the physical, social, and psychological dimensions of growing up. Angela McRobbie found that British girls in the 1970s used *Jackie* magazine in this way; the magazine was “outlining [adolescence’s] landmarks and characteristics in detail and stressing the problematic features as well as fun.”⁷ Through articles, fashion spreads, and advice columns, readers made sense of what it meant to be a teenager. McRobbie argues that *Jackie* constituted “preparatory literature” for a romantic and feminine adulthood. In the same way, Canadian periodicals in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s constituted preparatory literature for a life of feminine consumption.⁸ In twentieth-century Canada being a teenager was increasingly linked to maintaining one’s image using consumer purchases, an association which, given contemporary concerns about sexualized girlhood, and studies about the poor self-image of many young women, deserves closer historical attention.⁹

The portrayal of younger women – teenaged girls – in consumer magazines has

7 Angela McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture: From Jackie to Just Seventeen* (London: Macmillan, 1991), quoted in Anoop Nayak and Mary Jane Kehily, *Gender, Youth and Culture: Young Masculinities and Femininities* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 135.

8 Anoop Nayak and Mary Jane Kehily, *Gender, Youth and Culture: Young Masculinities and Femininities* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 135.

9 In her influential study of girls’ evolving relationship with their bodies in twentieth-century America, Joan Jacobs Brumberg explores the many “body projects” that teenaged girls adopt in order to make their skin, hair, and body shape conform to social standards. She argues that the body has become “the ultimate expression of self,” resulting in greater anxiety and physical and mental strain among teenaged girls trying to make their bodies conform to the standards of a profit-driven beauty industry. See Brumberg, *The Body Project: An Intimate History of American Girls* (New York: Random House, 1997), 97. For more recent concerns about the sexualized and commercialized nature of girlhood culture, see Lianne George, “Why Are We Dressing Our Daughters Like This?” *Macleans* (1 January 2007): 36-40.

received much less scholarly attention than other groups of women. Several historians have demonstrated how the publication of teen-focused magazines such as *Calling All Girls* and *Seventeen* in the 1940s accelerated direct marketing to girls, and have explored middle-class consumer culture and portrayals of women generally in *Chatelaine*.¹⁰ Yet we still know little about how more general interest magazines discussed and portrayed teenagers. Furthermore, historians have largely ignored *Mayfair* and *Canadian Home Journal* in their analyses of twentieth-century Canadian society.¹¹ *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Home Journal*, and *Mayfair* offer a crucial and overlooked window into the emergence of the teenager as a market segment and social category.

Consumer magazines recognized that girls in their late teens and early twenties were a key part of their target audience, and writers and editors filled their pages with images women would aspire to imitate. These images and descriptions idealized certain kinds of women, creating personae, or caricatures, that did not fit the realities of most

10 On teenaged magazines, see: Kelly Massoni, *Fashioning Teenagers: a cultural history of Seventeen magazine* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2010), and Samantha Yates Francois, "Girls With Influence: Selling Consumerism to Teenage Girls, 1940-1960" (PhD thesis, University of California (Davis), 2003). Penny Tinkler examines publications targeted at adolescent girls, such as *Girls' Own Paper* and *Schoolgirl*, in inter-war Britain. See Tinkler, *Constructing Girlhood: Popular Magazines for Girls Growing Up in England 1920-1950* (London: Taylor & Francis, 1995). On studies of *Chatelaine*, see: Erin Spencer, *Lipstick and High Heels: War, Gender, and Popular Culture* (Kingston: Canadian Defence Academy Press, 2007); Valerie Korinek, *Roughing It in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000); Heather Molyneaux, "The Representation of Women in *Chatelaine* Magazine Advertisements: 1928-1970" (MA thesis, University of New Brunswick, 2002).

11 Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic*, 114. These magazines, like the more-studied *Chatelaine*, were targeted to a large audience of middle-class women working both inside and outside the home. They were some of the most widely-circulated consumer magazines in Canada in the first half of the twentieth century. Many Canadian women also read American magazines. *Ladies Home Journal* and *McCall's Magazine* were among the most popular magazines in Canada in the 1920s, selling more than half a million copies each per issue.

Canadian women. In the 1930s, the most common persona of teenaged girls was that of the college co-ed – the university or college student living in a dormitory, a full participant in college tradition and social life. By the close of the decade, the college co-ed was sharing the page with a new persona – the teenager – who shared some of the same characteristics but also differed in several respects. The following analysis compares and contrasts these personae in order to demonstrate how Canadian magazines placed increasing emphasis on the central role of consumption in teenaged identity.

Unlike teenaged magazines focused exclusively on young readers, general interest consumer magazines shed light on how teenagers were talked *about*, not just *to*. Their contents reflect the assumptions and priorities of their adult writers, editors, advertisers, and publishers as much as, or more so, than the opinions and desires of their young readers. This adult-centered perspective on the teenager is crucial to understanding the increasingly close relationship between consumer culture and youth culture because magazines were key cultural producers, shaping and disseminating the characteristics of an idealized teenager and college co-ed for young readers to embrace or reject. As sociologist Stuart Hall has argued, mass media plays an important cultural role in modern societies; consumer magazines produce “social knowledge, or social imagery, through which we perceive the ‘worlds,’ the ‘lived realities’ of others.”¹² Portrayals of teenagers in Canadian periodicals both shaped and reflected Canadians’ beliefs about and expectations of young people and the process of growing up.

The *Canadian Home Journal* (hereafter the *Journal*) first appeared in 1905, and

12 Stuart Hall, “Culture, the Media, and the ‘Ideological Effect’,” in James Curran, Michael Gurevitch, and Janet Wollacott, eds., *Mass Communication and Society* (London: Edward Arnold Ltd, 1977), 340-341.

by 1925 had a circulation of approximately 68,000.¹³ The *Journal* was published monthly, and featured mostly fiction and advice about housekeeping, cooking, sewing, parenting, and personal hygiene. Feature articles focused primarily on women's roles as wives and mothers.¹⁴ Beginning in 1936, a regular column entitled "Teens and Twenties" featured career advice and fashion tips for young unmarried women assumed to be either attending college or working outside the home. In the 1950s, poetry and gardening columns became regular features in the magazine as well. Current events and politics were rarely topics of discussion or investigation. The *Journal* was intended for a mass female audience that was either part of, or aspired to, the middle-class.

Mayfair, on the other hand, aspired to a more elite readership. Its first issue appeared on newsstands in May 1927 with a stated mission to "interpret the life and interests of Canadians in their most gracious moods."¹⁵ The magazine's focus on Paris fashions, country houses, and sports such as polo and golf suggests that *Mayfair* targeted a wealthier – and thus smaller – market than other women's magazines; in thirty-four years of publication its circulation peaked at twenty thousand, much less than either the *Journal* or *Chatelaine*.¹⁶ The magazine had several columnists who reported monthly on teas, Junior League charity events, balls, and other such events of the "social season" in Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, and occasionally, Vancouver. Under new ownership and editorial staff after 1955, the magazine focused increasingly on travel writing and the

13 Fraser Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic: A History of Canadian Magazines* (Markham, ON: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1989), 156.

14 Examples of such articles include: Norma Phillips Muir, "A Wife's Job is a Partnership," *Canadian Home Journal* (April 1932): 8; Elizabeth G. Colyer, "We Take the Kids Along," *Canadian Home Journal* (May 1954): 54.

15 Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic*, 157.

16 *Ibid*, 248.

arts. *Mayfair* ceased publication in 1961.¹⁷

Chatelaine magazine targeted a much larger middle-class audience, and in its first two years of publication (1928-1930), the magazine's circulation had nearly matched that of the *Journal*, the most read Canadian women's magazine at the time.¹⁸ The two publications continued to garner a roughly-equal share of readers until the *Journal* ceased publication in 1958. *Journal* publisher Consolidated Press sold the magazine's subscription list to *Chatelaine* publisher Maclean-Hunter. The merger increased *Chatelaine*'s circulation from approximately 400,000 to 746,000. By 1962 it was reported that nearly one-quarter of Canada's adult population read *Chatelaine*.¹⁹

From its inception, the executives at Maclean-Hunter wanted *Chatelaine* to appeal to housewives. But they also wanted to profile Canadian women "who have won prominence in various fields of endeavour such as politics, business, law, medicine, missions, domestic science, teaching, organizing, handling institutions and so on."²⁰ *Chatelaine* editors addressed contemporary issues that they believed were pertinent to women, such as common-law relationships, the state of public education, and religious tolerance, among others. These articles and editorials sparked debate among readers, and helped to make *Chatelaine* a commercial success in the 1950s and 1960s, when many mass-market magazines were beginning to lose advertising revenues to television.²¹

17 Ibid. Maclean-Hunter sold *Mayfair* to publisher David B. Crombie.

18 Ibid, 160. In 1930 *Chatelaine*'s circulation was 122,000 and *Canadian Home Journal*'s circulation was 132,000.

19 Ibid, 249, 254.

20 Maclean Hunter Vice President and managing director in 1928, H.V. Tyrell, quoted in Valerie Korinek, *Roughing It In the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 33-34.

21 Ibid, 4. Korinek's analysis is based on a survey of *Chatelaine* during the 1950s and 1960s. See especially chapters 7 and 8 for discussion of editorials and articles

One way to assess how these magazines represented the characteristics of the idealized teenager and college co-ed is to undertake a content analysis of each magazine issue published between 1930 and 1960. The first step was to examine each table of contents for keywords that pointed to content related to young people generally.²² The second step was to examine each item to determine its focus and narrow the search results. Some articles appeared to be about children or youth generally, but also discussed teenagers or college students. However, material about babies and young children – cohorts outside the scope of this study – was not included. This search method resulted in a collection of nearly 400 feature articles, editorials, and service department material (monthly prescriptive advice on topics such as food, fashion, beauty, sewing, and parenting).²³

Between 1930 and 1960, little direct advertising to teenagers appeared in these magazines. Teenagers were sometimes the topic of feature articles, such as “How Much Freedom Should a Teen-Ager Have?” and “Don’t let your Child be a High School Casualty.”²⁴ More often, teenaged girls were addressed in beauty advice and how-to columns. Most commonly, young women were represented in fashion spreads. Table 2.1 gives the total number of items found in each magazine by decade, and Table 2.2 shows the number of college- and teen-related items found in each magazine and decade.²⁵ The

published during these decades.

22 Keywords used: teenager; youth; college; high school; student; collegiate; age; childhood; growing up; adolescence, and adolescent.

23 The term “service department materials” is Korinek’s. See *Roughing It In the Suburbs*, 178.

24 Dorothy Sangster, “How Much Freedom should a Teen-Ager Have?” *Chatelaine* (December 1951); Mary Jukes, “Don’t let your Child be a High School Casualty,” *Chatelaine* (November 1950).

25 While my search yielded 392 items in total, only 284 items were specifically related

college co-ed and the teenager were idealized representations of young women, character types endorsed by advertisers and intended to encourage consumption. The young women portrayed in the pages of Canada’s consumer magazines represented a very particular cohort of young people – those who were white, female, and middle-class.

Table 2.1: Number of items in the three magazines studied, total and by decade.

Magazine	Total items	1930-1939	1940-1949	1950-1960 ²⁶
<i>Mayfair</i>	57	7	49	1
<i>Canadian Home Journal</i>	131	27	47	55
<i>Chatelaine</i>	204	24	51	72
Total	392	58	147	128

Table 2.2: Number of items pertaining to the college co-ed and the teenager, by magazine and decade.

	1930-1939		1940-1949		1950-1960	
	College co-ed	Teen	College Co-ed	Teen	College Co-ed	Teen
<i>Mayfair</i>	7	0	31	14	0	0
<i>Canadian Home Journal</i>	9	4	9	28	5	45
<i>Chatelaine</i>	3	2	8	20	1	98
Total	19	6	48	62	6	143

Young people of colour were conspicuous in their absence from the pages of the magazines examined here; consciously or unconsciously, magazine publishers, editors,

to female college students and teenagers. The remaining 108 items discussed “youth” or “children” more generally, or referred to “Junior” fashions or trends.

²⁶ *Mayfair* ceased publication in 1955 and *Canadian Home Journal* ceased publication in 1958; only *Chatelaine* was analyzed for the full period of 1950-1959.

and photographers alike racialized the teenager as a white-skinned European girl. Magazine items that focused on teenagers rarely mentioned ethnicity; however, they occasionally mentioned models' complexions, alluding to skin color. For example, in a fashion spread entitled "Our Canadian Co-eds Pick the Clothes They Like," the *Journal* described one model as "Dark suave Diana," referring to her black hair and olive skin.²⁷ Also, profiles of individual teenagers – such as those in *Canadian Home Journal's* series of Cover Girl issues between 1943 and 1949 – occasionally mentioned model's ethnicity or family origin. For example, the September 1946 issue of the *Journal* noted that Cover Girl Joy Hardy was born in Toronto to Scottish parents, while the September 1944 issue attributed Cover Girl Lenore Johannesson's ash-blond hair and slim good looks to her parents' Icelandic heritage.²⁸ In both cases the girls' positive characteristics were in part associated with their white, European heritage. Most of the time, however, magazines did not comment on teenagers' skin colour or ethnicity; these were "typical Canadian girls," as the *Journal* noted of its Cover Girl models – meaning, without explicitly saying so, that they were white.

Not surprisingly, consumer magazines focused almost exclusively on young women – not young men – in their portrayal of the college co-ed or teenager. While high school and college girls modeled clothing, experimented with cosmetics, or engaged in various social activities in the pages of *Chatelaine*, *Mayfair*, and *Canadian Home*

27 "Our Canadian Co-eds Pick the Clothes They Like," *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1951): 18-19.

28 Kathryn Adams, "Cover Girl at Home," *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1946): 65; Rita McLean Farquharson, "Cover Girl's Mother," *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1945): 2.

Journal, boys were designated as admirers and escorts.²⁹ In photographs, they formed part of the background. For example, a 1945 *Chatelaine* fashion story about college clothes included several photographs of teenaged girls and boys walking to morning classes and watching a football match. The women's clothes were described in detail, while nothing was said about the male students' attire.³⁰ Similarly, on the September 1946 cover of the *Canadian Home Journal*, Chuck Downer, a student at Malvern Collegiate in Toronto, posed behind and below Cover Girl Joy Hardy, and looked admirably up at her as she gazed out beyond the camera (see Figure 2.1). While Hardy modeled a suit from the T. Eaton Company, Downer wore a football uniform and helmet, and held a football in the crook of his right arm. Downer's presence seemed to be for the benefit of young female readers who would see the admiration bestowed upon Hardy.

The issue's photo shoot also featured several boys either posed in the background or admiring the female models. While the boys' names were included in some of the captions, they often remained anonymous. In a fashion spread entitled "The New Look is Gay and Neat and Bright – and All the Boys Approve!" girls of the "teen set" were photographed in various social settings in which boys gazed on in approval. "Obviously the boys like to bowl with Audrey Ross," the magazine noted, because Audrey "scores a strike" in her wool skirt. In the adjacent photograph, Audrey is pictured in the stands at a football game, with several boys sitting behind her, thinking,

29 Boys were occasionally referred to as teenagers in articles that focused on the challenges of parenting teenaged children. See, for example, Dorothy Sangster, "How Much Freedom Should a Teen-Ager Have?" *Chatelaine* (December 1951): 12-13, 61-63; Frank Trumpane, "The Cruel World vs. Teen-agers," *Chatelaine* (May 1950): 4-5, 98-99.

30 Lotta Dempsey, "Campus Week-End," *Chatelaine* (September 1945): 12-13.

according to the caption, that “a pretty girl like Audrey is one of the reasons for going to a football match.”³¹

31 Wilma Tait, “The New Look is Gay and Neat and Bright – And all the Boys Approve!” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1945).



Source: Library and Archives Canada/Bibliothèque et Archives Canada
Reference no/No de référence: 132883

Figure 2.1: Cover of the *Canadian Home Journal*, September 1946.

Only once – in the 1949 Cover Girl issue of the *Journal* – did boys model clothes. In “Campus Collection,” a group of male high school students posed wearing suits and coats. The accompanying text insisted that boys were “as fussy as *femmes* when it comes to fooling round with colors that match... you know, the right tie, and stuff like that.” However, the opening line – “Your turn to whistle, girls!” – not only reinforced the notion that the boys were deviating from their usual roles as admirers, but also suggested that the intended reader was female, not male.³² Aimed at a female readership, magazines made few efforts to depict boys as teenaged consumers, preferring to put them in the background.

The college co-ed and teenager idealized in the magazines’ pages were decidedly affluent. The targeted female students were presumed to have money – or access to money – despite the difficult economic climate. In the 1930s, Canada was deep in a financial depression; unemployment made daily life more difficult for millions of Canadians. The country did not begin to emerge from the Depression until the beginning of the Second World War, which brought jobs provided by industries serving the war effort. However, the same war effort diverted resources and limited the availability of many consumer goods, and Canadians of all ages were encouraged to economize, buy war bonds, and sacrifice material comforts.³³

While Canadian consumer magazines did not ignore these events and conditions,

32 “Campus Collection,” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1949): 78-79. Emphasis in original.

33 Joy Parr documents the limited stock of household appliances during the war. See Parr, *Domestic Goods: The Material, the Moral, and the Economic in the Postwar Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1999), 21-30. Doug Owrarn notes that during the war, “shopping became a matter, not of what you could afford, as it had been in the Depression, but of what you could find.” Owrarn, *Born at the Right Time*, 10.

evidence from their pages suggests that they presumed the targeted teenagers and college students would have money to spend each year on new clothing. For example, one column from *Canadian Home Journal* in 1938 encouraged readers to spend their “birthday cheque” on dancing lessons so they could impress their male college peers. The same column claimed girls should “acknowledge the limits of an allowance” and “appreciate that father is doing his best.”³⁴ While encouraging thrift, it also assumed girls received a regular sum from their parents. Again in 1941, *Mayfair* writer Gertrude Stayner posed as a college student writing a letter to a friend that discussed a back-to-school shopping trip made at her father’s expense. “Poor Daddy,” she sighed after describing her decision to purchase two different suit jackets to accommodate different skirt styles, “I guess I’ll have to have a heart to heart talk with him about the advantages and disadvantages of hips before he gets the bill.”³⁵ *Mayfair* writer Ellen Mackie also described the college co-ed as the fortunate beneficiary of “money and clothes from dad and mother,” suggesting that even if she was selecting her own garments, the college co-ed was not assumed to pay for her wardrobe.³⁶ Whether from special occasions or regular allowances from parents, the assumption was that the teenager and the college co-ed had money, and that they were not necessarily earning it themselves.

The designer fashions and fur coats featured in *Mayfair* also reinforced the image of a wealthy young student-consumer. “She’s off to lectures in a smart Viyella jumper suit by Schiaparelli,” *Mayfair* announced in a fashion story entitled “Off to

34 Grace Garner, “Course in Social Studies (’Teens and Twenties),” *Canadian Home Journal* (October 1938): 18.

35 Gertrude Stayner, “Gertrude Stayner Says Do Your College Shopping Early,” *Mayfair* (August 1941): 26.

36 Ellen Mackie, “Don’t Bring Sloppy Joe!” *Mayfair* (August 1946): 72.

College in Knits and Tartans” in September 1938.³⁷ Schiaparelli was a contemporary French designer, and while *Mayfair* did not include the jumper’s price in its description, Schiaparelli’s garments were considered avant-garde, were imported, and were thus more expensive than other clothing. In its September 1937 College issue, *Mayfair* promoted a coat made of grey squirrel that was “good for those all-important rushing teas and rugby week-ends.”³⁸ *Mayfair* also promoted what it called “budget furs” such as squirrel and raccoon, claiming that these materials “make some of the most dashing young styles.”³⁹ However, these coats still cost considerably more than wool coats; an Eaton’s advertisement from *Mayfair*’s September 1940 issue offered a wool coat for fifty dollars and a raccoon fur coat for nearly two-hundred dollars.⁴⁰ Given that average annual tuition at Canadian universities at the time was 125 dollars, and residence cost an additional 240 dollars per year, it seems unlikely that many college girls had fur coats in their dorm closets.⁴¹ Nevertheless, by promoting such items as part of the image of the college co-ed, magazines like *Mayfair* presumed that the idealized young female consumer was upper- or middle-class.

Beginning in the late 1930s, consumer magazines also began to portray the teenager specifically as a high school student. In the September 1938 edition of her monthly *Journal* column, Grace Garner “welcomed” new high school students to her readership of young women. “You are *Miss* ’Teens and Twenties now – an individual –

37 “Off to College in Knits and Tartans,” *Mayfair* (September 1938): 38.

38 “College Careers,” *Mayfair* (September 1937): 39.

39 “Campus Cutey,” *Mayfair* (September 1940): 23.

40 Eaton’s “College Toggery” advertisements, *Mayfair* (September 1940). The wool coat advertised was \$49.75 and the fur coat was \$195.00.

41 Paul Axelrod, *Making a Middle Class: Student Life in English Canada during the Thirties* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens’ University Press, 1990), 27. 125 dollars was the average annual tuition for an Arts course in 1938.

not just Mrs. So-and-So's little girl," she argued, linking a young reader's first days of high school to her new status as a teenager.⁴² While some magazine pieces focused on guiding young women through the transition from school to work (with all the "necessary" wardrobe and grooming advice) the teenager was either attending – or had recently graduated from – secondary school.

Magazine content related to both the college co-ed and the teenager was clustered around the beginning of each scholastic year, reinforcing the association between these social categories and school attendance. Nearly half of the *Chatelaine* items found in this study were published in either August or September issues. Similarly, more than three-quarters of the college and teenage items found in *Canadian Home Journal* appeared in those months, and *Mayfair* only published college- and teen-focused articles in its August and September issues.⁴³ The concentration of content at the beginning of the autumn school term suggests magazines saw high school and college students as more than subject matter – they, and their parents, were potential customers for the magazines' advertisers. Fashion stories and advertisements in magazines helped to foster the link between shopping and school that has become so lucrative for today's clothing retailers.⁴⁴

42 Grace Garner, "You're A Big Girl Now! ('Teens and Twenties)." *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1938): 16.

43 In *Chatelaine*, 35 of the 77 items (excluding the Teen Tempo column) were published in August or September (45.5 per cent); in *Canadian Home Journal* 129 of the 147 items (excluding the regular Teen-agers' Datebook and Teen Session items) appeared in August or September issues (87.7 per cent); in *Mayfair* all 57 items were published in August or September.

44 According to the Statistics Canada's *Quarterly Retail Commodity Survey*, in the third quarter of 2008 (July to September) Canadians spent 236.8 million dollars on girls' clothing and accessories, and 221 million dollars on boys' clothing and accessories. Clothing expenditures were higher in the third quarter of the year than in the first or

To cultivate the association between shopping and the new school year, magazines frequently linked female students' academic success to their appearance. "When you look right you feel right... when you feel right you have fun... when you're having a bit of fun you work hard," *Chatelaine* fashion editor Evelyn Kelly explained when suggesting students purchase a selection of back-to-school clothes.⁴⁵ *Chatelaine* also encouraged the female college student to "Go Back a Smarter Girl," not by brushing up on her studies, but by using the beginning of term to reassess her wardrobe and purchase new clothes.⁴⁶ Another article in the *Journal* asked young women to take a "Prep Course in College Fashions."⁴⁷ Fashion advertorials in *Mayfair* magazine used headlines such as "Majoring in Classics" and "Extra Credits in a College Wardrobe" to underscore the value of a female college student's clothing; the "classics" they were supposed to be studying were plaid skirts, not Latin, and extra credit, in this case, was for choosing a dress that could be worn both to classes and to afternoon tea parties.⁴⁸

Magazines used what they presumed to be "typical" student experiences to sell clothing. For example, a fashion spread in *Mayfair* featured housecoats and casual trousers that had been "drafted for Room Service," alluding to the atmosphere of the student residence. The accompanying photographs showed models studying and

second quarters. Statistics Canada, "Back to school...by the numbers,"

http://www42.statcan.gc.ca/smr08/smr08_131-eng.htm. (Accessed August 20, 2011).

45 Evelyn Kelly, "Their Styles are Young and Gay," *Chatelaine* (September 1948): 96-97.

46 Lotta Dempsey, "Go Back a Smarter Girl," *Chatelaine* (September 1944): 12-13, 64.

47 Margaret Thornton, "Prep Course in College Fashions." *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1951): 17.

48 "Majoring in Classics," *Mayfair* (September 1940), 29; "Extra Credits in a College Wardrobe," *Mayfair* (August 1943): 36.

relaxing in college dorm rooms decorated with sports banners and college crests.⁴⁹ Occasionally the models were themselves university students, demonstrating how particular garments fit seamlessly into the college experience. The above-mentioned fashion spread used just such “first-hand” testimony:

“The minute I’m back from lectures I like to get into slacks,” says Jean Wright, U.C. [University College, University of Toronto] ’46, shown here curled up on the floor of the Pi Beta Phi living room. Slacks are a natural for Jean who is specializing in Physical Education. But girls in other courses like them too.⁵⁰

Many of *Mayfair’s* headlines had similar double meanings. Labels such as “Upper Class” could refer to both the quality of the garments being displayed and the notion that young women who wore these clothes would look like smart upperclassmen, as senior students were called.⁵¹ The teenager was similarly pictured outside school buildings, sitting in the stands next to an athletic field, or attending a school dance.⁵² The words and images used in these magazines associated the personae of the teenager and college co-ed with a distinct student lifestyle oriented around the university or high school campus.

Chatelaine further highlighted the importance of high school to the ideal teenager when it decided to form groups of young people to help the magazine produce teen-focused content. These “Teen-Age Councils” were groups of teenaged girls

49 “Housecoats and Slacks drafted for Room Service,” *Mayfair* (August 1943): 34. See also, for example, the advertisement for Bard’s, a sportswear manufacturer that sold housecoats and printed day dresses in models labelled “Coed” and “Dream Girl.” *Mayfair* (August 1943): 37. Again in 1947, Bard’s advertised a housecoat called “Varsity Velvet” that situated the model within a college dorm room complete with book-strewn desk and school pennants on the walls. *Mayfair* (August 1947).

50 “Housecoats and Slacks drafted for Room Service,” *Mayfair* (August 1943): 34.

51 “Upper Class,” *Mayfair* (September 1940): 22.

52 Kathryn Adams, “Hi-Timing,” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1946).

recruited from high schools in different cities and towns in Canada. Little is known about the councils except for what was printed in the magazines themselves.⁵³ Adjacent to a piece called “How Do You Rate With Your Crowd?” *Chatelaine* printed two pictures of the Hamilton Teen-Age Council that helped Lotta Dempsey with the article. According to the captions, the girls were all high school students in Hamilton’s public and private schools and ranged in age from fifteen to nineteen. *Chatelaine* claimed they were recruited from “Hamilton families of war industry workers, business and professional men.” Most, the magazine claimed, “have regular Saturday jobs, at home or outside” and all were “keen teen-agers, take part in sports, dances, and enjoy life in Hamilton.”⁵⁴ *Chatelaine* chose more middle-class high school students – as opposed to teenagers working full-time – to represent typical teenagers.

The teenager was a subject of growing interest in consumer magazines after 1940. Both *Chatelaine* and *Canadian Home Journal* dedicated an increasing amount of space to teenaged-related content in the 1940s, featuring high school students and their pastimes, etiquette advice for teenagers, and photo spreads of teenaged fashions. Both also ran monthly columns for teenagers during the mid- and late-1950s, which included fashion, beauty, and etiquette advice and occasionally featured Canadian teenagers and

53 A search of the Maclean Hunter Limited fonds, Magazine Division Records (1938-1971) at the Archives of Ontario found no mention of the *Chatelaine* Teen-Age Councils.

54 Lotta Dempsey, “How Do You Rate with Your Crowd?” *Chatelaine* (April 1945): 64. Despite the fact that *Chatelaine* told readers “You’ll be hearing more of what they – and *Chatelaine*’s other enthusiastic ‘Teen-Age Councils in other Canadian cities – think about themselves, their work, their elders and their world,” each ‘Teen-Age Special featured a Council in a different city, and no one council appeared in *Chatelaine* more than once.

their activities.⁵⁵ Table 2.2 demonstrates that the total number of items related to the college co-ed decreased by more than three-quarters in magazines published in the 1950s, while the total number of items related to the teenager more than doubled in the same period. This shift suggests magazines saw teenaged readers as an increasingly lucrative market, and focused more attention on the teenager in their pages as a result.

While the quantity of teen-related content increased over time, the intended audience of the content also changed, from articles and advice directed at mothers of teenaged girls in the late 1930s to columns intended specifically for teenagers in the 1950s. Several articles published in *Chatelaine* in 1939 offered advice to female readers about dressing and shopping with their teenaged children. In “Growing Up!,” fashion editor Carolyn Damon argued it was crucial for mothers to guide their daughters in forming their “final and lasting clothes sense.”⁵⁶ In another article the following September, Damon entreated readers to “Be Your Age,” offering dressing advice for women of different age groups. The article included tips for girls “Up to Sixteen,” and “Sixteen to Twenty,” and made no mention of teenagers specifically, instead focusing

55 *Mayfair*, on the other hand, contained no items that fit the search criteria after September 1950. This is because a new editorial staff decided to dedicate *Mayfair* more exclusively to travel and high-end merchandising in the 1950s.

56 Carolyn Damon, “Growing Up!” *Chatelaine* (March 1939): 23-25. “Carolyn Damon” was a pseudonym – Damon was actually Lotta Dempsey, assistant editor at *Chatelaine* magazine in the late 1930s and early 1940s. In her autobiography Dempsey notes that *Chatelaine* was short-staffed when she started as assistant editor in 1935. As a result, she wrote under four different names – Lotta Dempsey, Carolyn Damon (Fashion), Annabel Lee (Beauty) and John Alexander (Features). Lotta Dempsey, *No Life For a Lady* (Don Mills, ON: Musson Book Company, 1976), 46. Dempsey wrote 316 articles for *Chatelaine* between 1935 and 1950. In 1952 she was interim editor of *Chatelaine* for eight months, after which she became a columnist for the *Globe and Mail* newspaper. See Fraser Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic: A History of Canadian Magazines* (Markham, ON: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1989), 244.

more attention on married women, or “young matrons.”⁵⁷ Again in the March 1940 issue Damon focused on age-specific fashion advice in an article called “From Six to Sixteen” that was clearly directed at mothers purchasing clothes for their children. “It’s a good idea to start thinking about your daughter’s looks early,” Damon encouraged readers, arguing that it was a mother’s job to “make a crying little red-face into a charming young lady.”⁵⁸ While all three articles discussed what teenaged girls should wear, mothers were the intended audience.

By 1942 an increasing number of magazine articles focused specifically on teenagers. Fashion spreads entitled “Teens’ Routines” and “Teen-Agers Love These” appeared in *Chatelaine*, while articles about teenagers’ past-times, such as “Teen-Agers’ Club,” and beauty advice pieces such as “Teen-Agers take note!” were featured in the *Journal* and *Mayfair*.⁵⁹ These titles implied that teenagers had strong opinions about their clothing and appearance. “They Know What They Want,” a fashion spread in *Chatelaine* proclaimed in February 1945, while the following September a how-to article about bedroom decor was titled “The Teens Get Ideas.”⁶⁰

Chatelaine published a series of ‘Teen-Age Specials in 1945 and 1946 – feature articles about a variety of topics including etiquette, career counselling, and clothing. *Mayfair* and *Canadian Home Journal* also published special issues that featured content related to teenagers. Every August from 1942 to 1950, *Canadian Home Journal*’s “toast-

57 Carolyn Damon, “Be Your Age,” *Chatelaine* (September 1939): 19.

58 Carolyn Damon, “From Six to Sixteen,” *Chatelaine* (March 1940): 25.

59 “Teens’ Routines,” *Chatelaine* (September 1943): 33; “Teen-Agers Love These,” *Chatelaine* (September 1946): 34, 38; “Teen-Agers Club,” *Mayfair* (August 1945): 93-97; Eva Nagel Wolf, “Teen-Agers Take Note,” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1946): 76.

60 Lotta Dempsey, “They Know What They Want,” *Chatelaine* (February 1945): 26-27; “The Teens Get Ideas,” *Chatelaine* (September 1945): 64.

to-the-teens issue” featured the winner of the Cover Girl contest – a girl deemed a “worthy representative of the collegiate crowd, coast to coast” – alongside articles featuring teenaged fashions, surveys of high schoolers’ favourite movies and music, as well as etiquette advice, decorating suggestions, and beauty tips – all tailored to teenaged readers. *Mayfair* changed the name of its annual College Issue to the Junior Issue in August 1945, and dedicated it to “The ‘Teenagers! ... Those modern young lads and lassies who are the essence of today’s youth.”⁶¹ The August 1946 and 1947 issues also focused on teenaged fashions and activities.

While teen-focused content was increasing, it was also increasingly addressed directly to teenagers rather than their parents. For example, *Chatelaine* asked readers “How do you rate with your crowd?” and *Mayfair* claimed “Your Elders Don’t Really Understand.”⁶² Several *Chatelaine* articles in 1944 and 1945 used the first-person plural pronoun – “we” – to establish a connection with teenaged readers. These articles were written by magazine staff, but often claimed to include input from teenaged girls. For example, “We wish our parents wouldn’t” was a brief list of children’s beefs about their parents’ behaviour that appeared in *Chatelaine* in September 1944 and was based, according to author Nancy McKenzie, on a “recent collegiate survey.”⁶³ Similarly, a feature entitled “We Pick ‘Em for Cool Comfort” presented summer fashions for “the Hi crowd” chosen by members of the *Chatelaine* Teen-Age Council. It is impossible to know how involved council members were in selecting the clothes they wore, or in

61 *Mayfair* (August 1945): 33.

62 Lotta Dempsey, “How Do You Rate with Your Crowd?” *Chatelaine* (April 1945): 12-13, 64; James Bannerman, “Your Elders Don’t Really Understand,” *Mayfair* (August 1946): 67.

63 Nancy McKenzie, “We Wish Our Parents Wouldn’t,” *Chatelaine* (September 1944): 9.

writing the article; however, the first-person pronouns, along with the images of teenaged girls modeling the clothing, successfully blurred the line between editorial authority and young readers' input. The article was written from the girls' perspective: "We have too many things to do and too much territory to cover to be muffled in clothes that can't take it!"⁶⁴ *Chatelaine* appeared to be giving teenaged girls a voice by involving them in the production of magazine content intended for teenaged consumption.

Chatelaine's teenaged-focused features typically included these same inclusive "we" and "our" pronouns, and also addressed readers in a candid and conversational tone. "How Do You Rate with Your Crowd" was an article about conduct – at home, in public, and with one's friends. The writer(s) addressed readers directly, claiming that "one of our biggest problems is the way our parents treat our friends, without realizing it. You too? Well, try to get it over gently."⁶⁵ Similarly, the article "Looking Ahead to Your Job" began by describing how adults often assumed high school students were carefree. "But we know different, don't we?" the author asked: "We've got a *lot* of things to think about, these last years of high school. And believe us, we're thinking."⁶⁶ Dempsey (who wrote all of the 'Teen-Age Specials) tried to make the reader feel included – part of a special group of teenagers.

While the language and tone of these articles targeted teenaged readers, in several instances the same articles seemed to be explaining the characteristics of the idealized teenager to an adult readership. The addition of "And believe us, we're

64 Lotta Dempsey, "We Pick 'Em For Cool Comfort," *Chatelaine* (July 1945): 39.

65 Lotta Dempsey, "How Do You Rate with Your Crowd?" *Chatelaine* (April 1945): 64.

66 Lotta Dempsey, "Looking Ahead to Your Job," *Chatelaine* (May 1945): 12.

Emphasis in original.

thinking” to Dempsey’s article on teenagers’ job prospects spoke to adult readers who might doubt young people’s understanding of their futures. Another example comes from an article from the Edmonton Teen-Age Council examining the causes of juvenile delinquency. On the topic of adult chaperones, the author informed readers: “We don’t like to be dictated to or sat on ... but neither do grownups. We are eager for help from people who know how to give it, and have something to give.” A few sentences later the article encouraged adults to volunteer for youth organizations in their communities.⁶⁷

Most articles did not address adults this directly. Instead, they presented the teenager as being contrary to grownup stereotypes. References to the “olders” appeared in several of the articles, and were usually followed by a rebuke of grownups and claims that young people were different than their elders assumed. “Sometimes ‘olders’ think we haven’t any rules,” Dempsey’s article on etiquette claimed: “But how wrong they are!”⁶⁸ Several of the *Chatelaine* articles gave the impression that adults commonly misunderstood the teenager.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s teenaged-specific content increased again when *Chatelaine* and the *Journal* began publishing columns whose content encouraged teenagers to see themselves as a cohesive group and reinforced the image of a teenaged student consumer. In September 1949 *Chatelaine* began a short-lived feature called Teen Page, an advice column focused on etiquette issues for high school students. The end of each column was signed “Jay n’ Jill,” in cursive writing, as if the young reader was receiving advice from her peers – a fellow male and female student. The likely fictional

67 Lotta Dempsey, “What Are the Causes of Juvenile Delinquency?” *Chatelaine* (June 1946): 54.

68 Dempsey, “How Do You Rate with Your Crowd?” 12.

authors dedicated the page “to you... the teen-year old,” and claimed they were “staking this space for *Chatelaine’s* teen-age news each month.” *Chatelaine* gave the impression that teenagers were taking “their” share of the magazine, perhaps signalling their importance to an otherwise indifferent adult readership. The “news” that the column purported to offer was not current affairs, but assistance with “all sorts of things – your manners, your looks, your clothes, your dates, your future,” so that its teenaged reader could be a “bright-eyed, bright-thinking young person, ready to take a vital part in tomorrow’s world.”⁶⁹ Preparing for the future, in this case, clearly meant looking to one’s appearance and possessions. Teen Page appeared only a few times; in 1956 *Chatelaine* began a more regular column called Teen Tempo, which will be discussed in detail below.

The *Canadian Home Journal* also published two columns that increased the focus on teenagers and proscribed a central role for consumption in teenaged lives. “Teenagers’ Datebook” appeared a dozen times between October 1954 and March 1956, and “Teen Session” was a monthly feature between May 1956 and May 1958, when the *Journal* ceased publication. The “Datebook” column addressed “various teen problems” such as talking to boys, and what to do when “you can’t compete with your RIVAL’S clothes, her clever “little things” (like a collection of \$3.00 belts, an assortment of cashmere cardigans)!”⁷⁰ Subsequent columns covered “smart shopping” and earning extra spending money, purchasing Christmas gifts for “steady” boyfriends, and selecting the best dress for a “first formal.”⁷¹ The topics covered situated the teenaged girl in a

69 “Teen Page: New Term, New Time” *Chatelaine* (October 1949).

70 Eve Lester, “Teenagers’ Datebook,” *Canadian Home Journal* (October 1954): 4.

71 Eve Lester, “How are you fixed for money? Teenagers’ Datebook,” *Canadian Home*

series of social situations that required the purchase of consumer goods.

The “Teen Session” column differed in that it presented teenagers’ own opinions on selected issues, asking a panel of “typical teen-age boys and girls,” as the magazine called them, to discuss the issue on tape. The transcriptions of these conversations formed the column’s contents. Like *Chatelaine*’s use of the “Teen-Age Councils,” the *Journal* hoped that a column “for, and by, teenagers (in which parents may eavesdrop!)” would add the weight of peer authority to the issues discussed. As the magazine stated in the first column, “Nobody knows more about teen-age problems than the teen-agers themselves.”⁷² Despite appearing to give teenagers the last word, the column often included other “experts” discussing issues such as school discipline, dating, and etiquette.⁷³ While the magazine encouraged teenaged readers to submit their issues and always included photographs of the “typical” teenagers involved, the inclusion of expert advice subtly undermined the magazine’s attempts to emphasize teenaged authority. Nevertheless, the columns’ regular appearance between 1954 and 1958 reflected a growing interest in teenaged issues.

While magazine content represented typical teenaged Canadians as white, female, middle-class students, a fundamental characteristic of both the college co-ed and teenager personae found on magazine pages was their penchant to consume. Writers

Journal (November 1954): 4; Eve Lester, “How’s Your Christmas Spirit? Teenagers’ Datebook,” *Canadian Home Journal* (December 1954): 4; Eve Lester, “Very First Formal! Teenagers’ Datebook,” *Canadian Home Journal* (October 1955): 4.

72 “Canadian Home Journal’s Teen Session,” *Canadian Home Journal* (May 1956): 82.

73 “Canadian Home Journal’s Teen Session: Teens, Parents and Teachers talk about Discipline in School,” *Canadian Home Journal* (January 1957): 18; “Canadian Home Journal’s Teen Session: A Psychiatrist helps us talk about Life and Love,” *Canadian Home Journal* (May 1957): 70; “Canadian Home Journal’s Teen Session: Claire Wallace Tells Us How to Be Well-Mannered,” *Canadian Home Journal* (July 1957): 12-13.

frequently linked school attendance and consumption, while at the same time suggesting the college co-ed and teenager were consumers with their own lifestyle-specific needs distinct from those not in school. In the 1930s and 1940s, magazines made it clear that – in the case of college co-eds, for example – incoming students should be purchasing a wardrobe in step with their new student status. *Mayfair* insisted that the clothing industry was working hard to provide the specific garments required for a successful student experience. In September 1938 the magazine chastised readers: “It is an innocent error on your part to think that the harvest of smart college-going clothes has fallen haphazard into the shops. Designers and stylists, through intensive research, have delved into the very mood of college life, its problems and demands.”⁷⁴ According to magazine writers, the college co-ed needed a variety of versatile garments suited to an active social calendar.

Fashion spreads described the clothes suited to different occasions. In October 1938 the *Journal* set the scene for its readers: “On Saturday afternoon when you shout, “Come on, team!”, be appropriately enthusiastic – and turned out – in this gay plaid wool dress...”⁷⁵ Similarly, *Mayfair* advertised a dress from Eaton’s that “doubles for academic lectures and a rushing tea [at a sorority].”⁷⁶ A skirt and blouse could be worn to class and to casual social events. Dresses – shorter ones for afternoon events such as sorority rushing parties, and teas, and longer more formal ones for fraternity dances – were also “required,” according to the magazines, for anyone who intended to lead a typical college girl lifestyle.

74 “Campus Clothes,” *Mayfair* (September 1938): 39.

75 Grace Garner, “Course in Social Studies,” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1938): 18.

76 “Candidly Collegiate,” *Mayfair* (September 1938): 41.

Articles advising college girls about their clothing repeatedly listed the items considered “essential” to any student wishing to be a typical college co-ed. The “college trousseau” included: a suit; four sweaters or jersey blouses; two skirts; nine dresses (formal and informal); two coats and an evening wrap or cape; five pairs of shoes; six pairs of pyjamas, and a flannel coat – to say nothing of hats, gloves, purses, and other accessories.⁷⁷ This was an extensive list; other observers were more selective in their recommendations.⁷⁸ Indeed, while the cut, colour, and fabric of garments changed over time to reflect changing fashions, casual separates remained popular throughout the 1930s and 1940s, likely because they could be mixed and matched easily. With a few skirts, blouses, and sweaters in different colours, college women could appear to have a larger wardrobe for less money.

Similarly, the teenager was often depicted as having a distinct lifestyle that revolved around secondary school and required the purchase of certain consumer goods. For example, when Grace Garner advised incoming high school students in September 1938, she emphasized that “there’s no more effective or tangible method of acquiring individuality in your appearance than by your selection of accessories.”⁷⁹ While extracurricular activities could make girls “more rounded,” in Garner’s words, hair clips, brooches, and pocketbooks were touted as part of the school-going experience. These items were supposed to meet the specific needs of female students – billfolds to “hold your identification and class cards, athletic membership card, etc,” and pocketbooks for

77 “Campus Clothes,” *Mayfair* (September 1938): 51.

78 See, for example, “Go Back a Smarter You,” *Chatelaine* (September 1944): 12-13, 33.

79 Grace Garner, “You’re a Big Girl Now! ’Teens and Twenties,” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1938): 16.

“carfare, keys, and the week’s allowance.”⁸⁰ *Chatelaine* suggested that teenaged activities required specific kinds of clothes in a fashion spread in its February 1945 issue. The caption under a photograph of two teenaged girls sipping drinks at a soda bar read: “When we meet at the drugstore after four for cokes, we want school clothes that have held their shape and are simple and well-cut but soft.”⁸¹ Hanging out after school required a particular wardrobe.

The names of retailers, designers, and pattern-making companies featured prominently in magazine content aimed at teenagers and college students. Readers of *Mayfair* could easily see that the outfit they were admiring was available at the Robert Simpson Company or Holt Renfrew department stores.⁸² “This ensemble from the T. Eaton Co.” *Mayfair* announced below a description of “Miss Co-Ed 1940.”⁸³ *Mayfair* even included product slogans in clothing descriptions on occasion. The August 1942 issue appealed to readers to “follow the example of Peggy Ross of McGill” – pictured wearing a skirt and blouse – “who wears a shirtwaist, man-tailored by Tooke, because it is her college wartime “uniform.”⁸⁴ Tooke was a shirt manufacturer whose slogan – “Man-tailored by Tooke” – appeared frequently in advertisements in the magazine. Fashion spreads acted as advertisements for clothing brands the magazine wanted to promote to teenaged readers. Features such as *Mayfair*’s August 1945 “Up at Belmont Park,” a double-page spread of pictures of teenagers modeling clothes in an amusement park outside Montreal, incorporated brand names into a narrative about a group of

80 Ibid.

81 Lotta Dempsey, “The Teens Talk Out,” *Chatelaine* (February 1945): 27.

82 On-And-Off The Campus,” *Mayfair* (September 1938): 39; “It’s Plaid Again,” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1939): 43.

83 “Calling Co-Eds!” *Mayfair* (September 1940): 19.

84 *Mayfair* (August 1942): 29.

friends having an afternoon of fun. The clothes included a “Kay Collier dress specially designed for your Junior figure” and “Deajackets,” – lightweight casual coats made by sportswear company Deacon Bros.⁸⁵

While *Mayfair* included brand names and retailers in its fashion spreads, *Chatelaine* and the *Journal* collaborated with several Canadian department stores to produce teenaged content. Lotta Dempsey noted in her 1945 “Campus Week-end” feature that “Simpson’s, Toronto, co-operated with Chatelaine by supplying all the clothes and accessories worn by the girls for the various occasions.”⁸⁶ By acknowledging the store’s role in producing the story, Dempsey also informed readers where they could purchase anything they saw on the page. Another 1945 item entitled “The Teens Talk Out” featured clothing from Simpson’s in Toronto and noted that “similar clothes are on view this month in Simpson’s of Montreal, Halifax, and Regina.”⁸⁷ The *Journal*’s special Cover Girl issues were replete with products from Eaton’s; clothing, beauty products, and bedroom furnishings were all promoted to teenaged readers in its pages. The September 1945 issue, for example, featured the “Cover Girl,” Lenore Johannesson of Winnipeg, Manitoba, wearing a dress designed by another teenager, June Moffat of Owen Sound, Ontario. The dress was manufactured in Montreal and sold, as the magazine noted, in Eaton’s stores across Canada. A how-to article about creating a teenaged recreation room, and another story focused on the “Frilled Femininity” of a teenager’s bedroom, featured furnishing from Eaton’s College Street store in Toronto. An article entitled “Platter Chatter” outlined the records

85 “Up in Belmont Park,” *Mayfair* (August 1945): 56-57.

86 Lotta Dempsey, “Campus Week-End,” *Chatelaine* (September 1945): 12.

87 Lotta Dempsey, “The Teens Talk Out” *Chatelaine* (February 1945): 27.

teenagers were buying. All the clothing in the issue was also supplied by Eaton's.⁸⁸ The magazines and the store collaborated to promote products and shopping to teenagers.

Magazines depicted both the college co-ed and the teenager as young women whose peers influenced their appearance and consumer habits. While women's magazines encouraged all their readers to emulate popular trends, magazine writers were particularly concerned that the college co-ed and teenager imitate the dress and shopping patterns of their classmates. Incoming high school students were informed that they should play "a good game of 'I Spy'," observing other students before deciding what to wear.⁸⁹ "There may be unwritten laws such as never wearing a hat or carrying a purse which are as strict as savage taboos," Grace Garner warned her teenaged readers, implying that the consequence for not paying attention to one's peers could be quite severe.⁹⁰ The metaphor of the student body as a tribe also applied to college girls. *Mayfair* writer Adele White advised incoming college students to "study the laws of your tribe to find out what's done and what's taboo."⁹¹ Similarly, in 1943 writer Gertrude Stayner advised incoming college students to watch the "popular girls" for cues as to how to dress and behave. "They may terrify you a bit at first," Stayner told readers, "because right now 'they've got something' – which you haven't. But after all, they're girls too. They got that something from somewhere – so there's no law against

88 From *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1945), see: "Canada's Own Cover Girl Wears Prize-winning Dress," 5; Collier Stevenson, "Fun Room for 'Teen-Agers," 63; Barbara Calvert, "Frilled Femininity," 66; Allie Rex, "Platter Chatter," Wilma Tait, "The New Look is Gay and Neat and Bright."

89 Grace Garner, "You're a Big Girl Now! 'Teens and Twenties," 16.

90 Ibid.

91 Adele White, "College Girl's Private Primer," *Mayfair* (September 1940): 31.

your getting it from them.”⁹² The implication was that the college co-ed was an identity that could be purchased – from somewhere – after girls had noted what their “popular” classmates were wearing. It was better, magazines stressed, to “travel with the female pack than to be a lone wolf” when it came to appearance.⁹³

The peers that magazines wanted young women to emulate were all following the magazines’ advice, wearing clothes and grooming themselves according to the images found in *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Home Journal*, and *Mayfair*. On several occasions, the magazines used endorsements from other female students to advise college- and high school-aged readers. By asking select university students for their input, magazine writers could lend an air of authenticity to their fashion picks; teenaged readers did not have to believe what adult magazine writers said was popular – they could hear it directly from students themselves. In 1942 *Mayfair* readers were advised to “take a tip from the senior co-eds, before shooting the bundle on your own college wardrobe.” Female students from several universities proceeded to propose the best clothing for the ideal college co-ed:

For Campus wear, Beatrice Grant of Queen’s thinks the sweater and skirt the ideal outfit. Saddle shoes are worn for campus footwear, although Evelyn McGraw, McMaster senior, claims that the “loafer” type of shoe is becoming increasingly popular.⁹⁴

Similarly, the August 1943 issue of *Mayfair* included an article that featured clothing trends supplied by “women editors of college publications” at different universities across Canada.⁹⁵ *Mayfair* circulated a survey to these students, and then reported on the

92 “The ‘College Girl’ Is You,” *Mayfair* (August 1943): 44.

93 Adele White, “College Girl’s Private Primer,” 50.

94 “Changing College Life,” *Mayfair* (August 1942): 22.

95 Gertrude Stayner, “Calling All Coeds... From Coast to Coast,” *Mayfair* (August

most popular styles and colours of dresses, sweaters, and shoes on various campuses.

However, certain trends were more strongly endorsed than others, suggesting that *Mayfair* was not reporting the results of a survey so much as it was selecting the trends that reinforced the image of the college co-ed it wished to promote. After noting that two college editors had commented on the popularity of oversized, or “sloppy,” sweaters, *Mayfair* cautioned that “Your sweater may be longish and loose but “sloppy joes” are definitely on the wane along with pork pies [hats] and saddle shoes.”⁹⁶ The magazine wanted to use actual college students in their fashion promotions, but also wanted to guide readers to make what it considered to be wise clothing purchases.

Magazine readers had to reconcile two seemingly-contradictory characteristics of the college co-ed and teenaged personae. These idealized types were able to both stand out and fit in at the same time, using their clothing and grooming to express their individuality and demonstrate their conformity to their peers’ fashion standards. On the one hand, magazines often referred to the female student wardrobe as a “uniform,” emphasizing the need to conform both with peers and with fashion trends. When *Mayfair* asked female college newspaper editors “Is there a uniform?” in August of 1941, they did not want to know if the school had an official dress code; instead, they wanted to know what was the most common outfit worn by women on campus. Many of the editors responded, in the words of Lorna Brechon of Queen’s, that “saddle shoes and sweater-skirt ensembles could almost be considered a uniform.”⁹⁷

1943): 26-27, 38.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ “College Quiz,” *Mayfair* (August 1941): 24. For another references to the skirt-sweater combination as a “uniform,” see: “Off to College in Knits and Tartans,” *Mayfair* (September 1938), 38.

At the same time, the magazines repeatedly counseled readers – in contrast to messages of conformity – to “Be yourself!” As *Mayfair* writer Adele White noted in 1940:

A garden filled with tulips, all the same size and color, is indeed a thing of beauty, but when it comes to co-eds on the campus, it grows a bit monotonous. Have a little individuality in your style and rely on your female intuition to tell you when you’ve gone far enough.⁹⁸

Mayfair advised readers that “your clothes, your make-up, your hair-do, should be an eloquent expression of you.”⁹⁹ Taken alone, this appeared to be a liberating message – girls should dress as they please. However, the actual message was much more prescriptive. Girls were advised not to “cover up your Personality with curls and paint,” but also told not to neglect their appearance. “Don’t get the idea that because you got a first in History you don’t need any lipstick,” *Mayfair* warned in its August 1942 College issue.¹⁰⁰ Somehow, readers aspiring to adopt the college co-ed or teenaged personae were supposed to use consumer goods to express their own identity without violating any of the prescribed rules set out in the magazines’ pages. Particular colors and prints, as well as accessories such as belts, shoes, and jewelry all supposedly helped girls fit in and stand out at the same time. However, the basic wardrobe – the fashionable and peer-approved “uniform” – was presented as an essential element of the idealized image of the college co-ed and teenager.

Magazines presented conflicting images about the ability of teenaged girls to dress appropriately. According to magazine writers, young women in high schools and universities were often too sloppy or careless about their appearance. No item of

98 Adele White, “College Girls’ Private Primer,” *Mayfair* (September 1940): 43.

99 Gertrude Stayner, “Get the Most out of College,” *Mayfair* (September 1942): 47.

100 Ibid.

clothing symbolized poor clothing choices more than the Sloppy Joe sweater. Oversized knit pullovers, sometimes borrowed from a boyfriend or taken from a brother or father, Sloppy Joes were worn over blouses and paired with skirts and loafers or saddle shoes. In depictions of the college co-ed and the teenager the Sloppy Joe – and “sloppy” appearance in general – played multiple and sometimes contradictory roles. Sloppiness was emblematic of both the exuberance expected of youth, and a lack of experience in selecting appropriate clothes.

Magazines articles portrayed the Sloppy Joe sweater as – for better and worse – a typical part of the high school and college student wardrobe. In her 1944 review of collegiate fads and fashions, the *Journal* writer June Lawford commented that “Edmonton High-Schoolers, like all others across the country, cling to their beloved Sloppy Joes.”¹⁰¹ In 1945, *Chatelaine* fashion editor Lotta Dempsey suggested it was common to presume teenagers dressed too casually. “Some people get the idea that teenagers like to go around... slacked or just plain sloppy,” she claimed.¹⁰² In another article, Dempsey suggested that ideally, college students were mature enough to avoid looking sloppy: “You’re a big girl now, so you’ll tidy up your high-school sloppiness lest you be taken (oh awful thought!) for a child still.”¹⁰³ In both cases, Dempsey used the idea of the messy teenager to encourage readers to accept her advice about what clothes were appropriate and stylish for high school and college students that season.

101 June Lawford, “The Collegiate Crowd Chooses Fads and Fashions,” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1944): 9.

102 Lotta Dempsey, “We Pick ‘Em For Cool Comfort,” *Chatelaine* (July 1945): 39.

103 Lotta Dempsey, “Go Back a Smarter Girl,” *Chatelaine* (September 1944): 33. Again in 1945, Dempsey promoted “simple and smooth sweaters” by arguing that “the slop-flop stuff is juvenile.” See “The Teens Talk Out,” *Chatelaine* (February 1945): 25.

In most cases, magazine writers decried the Sloppy Joe sweater, and discouraged readers from wearing them. As mentioned above, in 1943 *Mayfair* dismissed the reports of two college newspapers editors that “sloppy” sweaters were popular on campus, claiming that “sweaters may be loose and longish, but ‘sloppy joes’ are definitely on the wane.”¹⁰⁴ Despite this prediction, four years later the *Mayfair* beauty editor was again bemoaning “the onslaught of filthy saddle shoes and filthier rain coats; of sloppy joes and baggy skirts and blaring, staring lipstick” that she believed characterized teenaged dress. She claimed (and perhaps hoped) it was a trend that was “fast disappearing.”¹⁰⁵ *Journal* beauty editor Eva Nagel Wolf also claimed the fad for sloppiness had had its day, praising what she called a “splurge of neatness sweeping every [high school] campus” in 1944: “Gone are the days of the unshone, dirty white saddle shoes, the ultra-sloppy sloppy Joe, the unpresseed pleats and frizzed up hair.”¹⁰⁶ Again in 1945, the Sloppy Joe was held up as an example of teenagers’ poor taste in clothing, when *Journal* writer Eleanor Dare answered a fourteen-year-old’s question about why parents make “such a fuss about ‘sloppy Joes’.” Dare replied that “The older generation thinks they look just what they are called – ‘sloppy,’ untidy and unfeminine.” In Dare’s opinion, “the average girl looks better in sweater and skirt than she does in slacks, shorts, or in ‘sloppy Joes’.”¹⁰⁷ In this case, a messy appearance was deemed both too casual and too masculine for teenaged girls. In 1946, *Chatelaine*’s fashion editor Evelyn Kelly reported on clothing likes and dislikes among Vancouver high school students, and claimed that

104 “Calling All Co-Eds,” *Mayfair* (August 1943): 39.

105 “Keep Young And...” *Mayfair* (August 1947): 78.

106 Eva Nagel Wolf, “The Collegiate Crowd Chooses That Cover Girl Look,” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1944): 74.

107 Eleanor Dare, “I’d Like to Know!” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1945): 55.

the popularity of wide belts meant sweaters needed to be tucked in and girls would have to “Send that old Sloppy Joe to the rummage sale.”¹⁰⁸ Fashion editors’ repeated claims that the Sloppy Joe was losing popularity among teenaged girls suggested that their observations reflected wishful thinking more than actual behaviour.

Not all references to teenaged and college-aged sloppiness were completely negative. Some magazine writers commented with a certain amount of nostalgia about the messy appearance of girls in their teen years. Corinne Langston’s confessional in the April 1946 issue of *Canadian Home Journal*, discussed at the beginning of this chapter, is one example. Corinne described how she changed her style of dress: “I draped my slacks and shortened my skirts. I wore plaid shirts and pastel draw-string blouses. I wore my father’s sweaters and my brother’s jackets and I made certain that my moccasins were well scuffed.” Her messy attire drew comments from adults, but she warned them not to judge teenaged girls too harshly, because most grown women had probably also followed trends in their youth that appeared ridiculous in retrospect: “You yourself squeezed into a bone corset and went on a diet of coca-cola and cigarettes. What for? To get yourself a man! And we’re doing it the way it’s done now.”¹⁰⁹ Teenagers’ sloppy clothing was justified in Langston’s view because it was temporary and because it was leading to socially sanctioned heterosexual marriage. As a result, it should be tolerated, not scorned.

In a few instances, adult commentators excused young women’s “sloppiness” as merely the result of growing up in a democratic political system. In 1942, *Mayfair* writer Gertrude Stayner encouraged college students to embrace the quirky fads of their age

108 Evelyn Kelly, “Young Country, Young Fashions,” *Chatelaine* (September 1946): 8.

109 Corinne Langston, “We ’Teen-Agers,” 62.

group. “You’re what we like to think of as the personification of Canadian youth. One of the best products of a free democracy. You’re the girl in the knee-hi socks.”¹¹⁰ In the context of the Second World War, in which propaganda depicted the Allied cause as a fight for democratic values against authoritarian fascist states, Stayner implied that students’ sloppy appearance amounted to an exercise of political will. Sloppy clothes and garish lipstick were also tolerable in the idealized teenager and college co-ed because they were still considered by some magazine writers to be short of full adulthood. “You’re a bit of a scatterbrain yet,” Stayner condescended, “because you’re not quite ready to grow up.”¹¹¹ Knee-high socks and other examples of sloppiness embodied the innocence of both childhood and pre-war times, in Stayner's assessment.

In another instance, a short story published in *Mayfair* portrayed a teenaged boy confronting his father because his mother had criticized the way girls his age dressed. While his mother found Sloppy Joes and scuffed saddle shoes “not prettied up enough for parties,” her son stressed that casual – or ‘messy’ – dress was more egalitarian and democratic:

...girls used to spend hours getting ready for hops. They wore high heels and tight thing-mes around their waists. And silk stockings. It cost their families plenty of cabbage. And if you just didn’t have the old do-me I guess you stayed home. Well, look at now. Every girl in school can wear her old sweater and skirt, or borrow her brother’s. Bobby sox and loafers take care of the pedal division. And she just brushes her hair around her shoulders and never mind the fancy updos.¹¹²

Teenaged girls might be more sloppily dressed in adults’ eyes, the boy argued, but a casual dress code allowed more high school and college students to participate in social

110 Gertrude Stayner, “Get the Most Out of College,” 47.

111 Ibid.

112 Lotta Dempsey, “Pop Should Be Pleased,” *Mayfair* (August 1945): 91.

situations. Scuffed loafers meant girls could ride bicycles, and borrowed sweaters diminished the need to outspend other girls on expensive clothes. “I think maybe we’re democratic,” the boy concluded.

Magazines took particular aim at so-called “sloppy” teenagers and college co-eds in articles about job hunting. Magazine writers argued that while the Sloppy Joe might be typical and, perhaps even tolerable, attire for high school and college campuses, it was inappropriate for the workplace, and symbolized young women’s inability to look their age when entering the workforce. A 1942 advice column in *Mayfair* recommended that college students “forget the saddle shoes and sloppy joes when off the campus.” The magazine preferred “neatly shod feet and a tailored dress plus a hat for street wear,” suggesting that the more casual “sloppy” look acceptable in the school environment was inappropriate for other outings.¹¹³ In 1943 the *Journal* advised senior students to think about the future when planning their wardrobe for their last year of school: “If you are going to be a career girl – Ouch, give up your saddle shoes, your pullover sweaters, your kerchiefs. That’s a terrible blow but somehow, they won’t look right in Big Business.”¹¹⁴ “Don’t Bring Sloppy Joe!” *Mayfair* commanded in an August 1946 article about the transition from college to office. Writer Ellen Mackie noted that college graduates had to “study and understand the requirements of life in a grown-up world,” including how to present a neat appearance.¹¹⁵

Chatelaine’s fashion editor, Carolyn Damon, claimed that girls rarely “looked the part” when they attended job interviews. When researching a 1940 article, Damon took a

113 “It Might Be A Good Idea,” *Mayfair* (August 1942): 18.

114 Margaret Vollmer, “The “Last Year’s” Wardrobe,” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1943): 69.

115 Ellen Mackie, “Don’t Bring Sloppy Joe!” *Mayfair* (August 1946): 72.

photographer to the Selective Service office, where government officials interviewed young people prior to placing them in war service jobs. “Sloppy Joes, saddle shoes, unpressed skirts and frowsy hair were almost the rule rather than the exception,” she asserted.¹¹⁶ *Chatelaine* offered similar advice in December 1945, warning readers that between leaving school and starting work, “you’ve got to Grow Up.”¹¹⁷ The magazine quoted an “important employment executive who works a great deal with job-hunting teen-agers,” who stressed that appearance was paramount to securing a job. “Don’t wear your sloppy joe, ankle socks and loafers,” it advised emphatically, “Please!”¹¹⁸ Teenaged girls and recent college graduates were considered by many magazine writers to be too young and inexperienced to know what was appropriate dress in an office setting.

The Sloppy Joe was both emblematic of youth and proof – to concerned adult onlookers – that teenaged girls lacked age-appropriate fashion sense. The solution, according to magazine writers, was to learn how to shop – how to meet one’s clothing “needs” in a responsible way as a consumer. Becoming a wiser consumer was considered part of becoming a mature and autonomous citizen. As sociologist Sharon Zukin notes in the case of twenty-first-century teenagers, “the steps toward autonomy are measured by exercising a consumer’s choice.”¹¹⁹ Content from *Canadian Home Journal* and *Chatelaine* demonstrate that, in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, magazine writers considered girls’ increased market participation and shopping navigation skills part of the process of growing up. While the ideal college co-ed was assumed to have achieved a level of consumer knowledge, and was depicted shopping alone or with

116 Carolyn Damon, “First Job,” *Chatelaine* (February 1940): 24.

117 Lotta Dempsey, “First Job!” *Chatelaine* (December 1945): 13.

118 Ibid, 40.

119 Zukin, *Point of Purchase*, 54.

peers, the teenager was presumed to require more guidance and gentle “maternal authority.”¹²⁰

The college co-ed made her own purchasing decisions according to the pages of Canada’s consumer magazines. Mothers did not appear in articles about preparing to attend college. When *Mayfair* warned readers that “If you don’t take yourself firmly in hand and know very definitely what you must have in the way of a coat, your inviting a headache, and maybe a heartache, on your off-to-college shopping spree,” the magazine placed the responsibility of choosing the correct coat on the co-ed’s shoulders, not her mother’s.¹²¹ The *Journal* also assumed freshmen students would be sewing some new clothes and “carefully inspecting the ready-mades in the college shops” on their own: “Perhaps for the first time in your young life, you are planning a completely new wardrobe – to take with you on this big adventure,” *Journal* writer Margaret Thornton told readers.¹²² When *Chatelaine* entreated the female college student to “Go Back a Smarter Girl” and avoid making mistakes when purchasing clothing, they did not recommend seeking mother’s counsel, but “sitting down with a pencil and paper and really working out the best ways of snapping up her clothes collection,” likely with a copy of *Chatelaine* by her side.¹²³

In contrast, the magazines from the 1930s and 1940s consistently presented younger teenagers as relying on the guidance of mothers to select and purchase clothing. Without the helping hand of older women (who themselves were advised by fashion

120 Carolyn Damon, “Growing Up!” *Chatelaine* (March 1939).

121 “Upper Class,” *Mayfair* (September 1940): 22.

122 Margaret Thornton “Prep Course in College Fashions,” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1951): 17.

123 Lotta Dempsey, “Go Back a Smarter Girl,” *Chatelaine* (September 1944): 12.

“experts”), the teenager would dress in a way that was either too old or too young for her age. Mother’s role was supposed to begin when her children were young, according to *Chatelaine*’s fashion editor, Carolyn Damon. “It’s a good idea to start thinking about your daughter’s looks early,” she advised in an article in March, 1940: “I’d suggest the memorable moment when someone says in hushed italics ‘It’s a Girl!’”¹²⁴ Cultivating what Damon called a “feminine personality” in a girl was a lifelong project for mothers, and it involved the advice of experts who “devote their time to making little girls into smart women of the future – fashion advisors in children’s departments, beauticians, dramatic and voice teachers, physical culture experts.”¹²⁵ Retailers were listed among those professionals who took an interest in children’s development and well-being. Magazine writers wanted mothers to believe that by purchasing the correct products, their daughters’ would grow into attractive, feminine women.

Consumer magazines emphasized that an interest in clothing and one’s appearance was seen as part of proper sexual maturity for adolescent girls. *Chatelaine* explained to its readers in 1939 that mothers should not worry when “there are family storms and tears over scarlet pumps versus sensible black oxfords, and long party dresses as opposed to short ones” – daughter was simply “turning into a young woman, of course.” The same hormones that were altering a girl’s body and moods also affected her ability to dress herself. No longer her mother’s “carefree, acquiescent baby,” the teenager’s mind was purportedly a confusion of styles and colours, “and what she’s seen in a movie, and what the richest girl at school wears.” While dressing an adolescent girl could try her mother’s patience, Damon insisted young women’s interest in clothing was

124 Carolyn Damon, “From Six to Sixteen,” *Chatelaine* (March 1940): 25.

125 *Ibid*, 25.

a desirable development. A daughter who was “one of the early blossoming kind” was preferable to the “tomboy,” who could become a “dowdy frump” if her interest in her own appearance was not properly “stimulated.”¹²⁶

Using the language and authority of development discourse, Damon insisted that girls were “forming their final and lasting clothing sense” between the ages of twelve and seventeen.¹²⁷ The implication was that mothers who did not exert their influence during this “crucial period” might be damaging their daughter’s ability to dress smartly and appropriately and, consequently, harming their teenager’s chances of social success. However, Damon’s understanding of “mother’s influence” was that mothers would advise their daughters to follow the advice of fashion experts such as herself. “Consider fashion articles in good magazines, and fashion shows by good shops, an essential part of her education,” Damon instructed in 1940.¹²⁸ The retail industry and beauty business would determine what was best for teenaged girls; mothers were charged with ensuring the message was well received.

In magazine articles and advice columns, the process of selecting and purchasing consumer goods shaped mother-daughter relationships. Damon’s 1940 article “From Six to Sixteen” offered several suggestions to mothers about using specific products to mark age-related rites of passage in their daughters’ lives. She recommended allowing thirteen-year-old girls to help create clothing budgets, for example, and suggested mothers give their daughters a lipstick and powder set as a birthday gift when they

126 Damon, “Growing Up.”

127 Ibid.

128 Damon, “From Six to Sixteen,” 29.

turned fourteen or fifteen – “her first date and party years.”¹²⁹

While specific gifts could mark a girl’s transition to adulthood, magazine articles stressed that shopping with mother could improve the mother-daughter relationship and impart valuable purchasing knowledge. Teenagers could learn from their mothers, the *Journal’s* Margaret Thornton implied: “so that you won’t play an aimless game of hide-and-seek through the stores, how about sitting down in a mother-and-daughter huddle and planning your wardrobe beforehand?”¹³⁰ Planning a teenager’s wardrobe was supposed to be a “grand cooperative business,” in Damon’s view; mother would ensure that the line and fit of the garments flattered her daughter’s shape, and daughter would select the “festive little touches so dear to the heart of the teens,” such as scarfs, pins, and skirt widths.¹³¹ With this kind of co-operation, shopping could be “fun for both of you!”¹³² When mothers and daughters disagreed about clothing purchases, teenaged desires were not at fault, in Damon’s view; rather, mother’s inability to channel those desires was to blame.

Between 1953 and 1955, *Chatelaine* magazine ran a series of articles giving dressing advice to teenaged girls. The articles followed Joan Carnegie, “a blue-eyed, fourteen-year-old suburban Toronto high school student,” as she “learned” to shop for clothes and shoes, apply makeup, and sew her own garments. In the first article, “Joan Learns to Shop,” *Chatelaine* Fashion and Beauty Editor Rosemary Boxer explained the “friendly conflict” between Joan and her mother. Joan “had reached the age where she

129 Ibid, 27, 30.

130 “Margaret Thornton, “School Belles for Class ‘n Campus,” *Canadian Home Journal* (September 1952): 20.

131 Damon, “Growing Up.”

132 Ibid.

felt she knew enough about clothes to do her own shopping without mother's help." On the other hand, Mrs. Carnegie, "wasn't sure that her young daughter had the judgment or knowledge of fashion and style required to buy wisely on her own." Boxer noted that this problem was "not unusual between modern daughters and their mothers," and that *Chatelaine* could help by "offering to act as advisor and referee over the good-natured arguments about clothes." On the ensuing shopping trip, Joan selected the clothes she liked, her mother offered her opinion of Joan's choices, and then *Chatelaine* decided "who was right and why."¹³³

Despite the fact that nearly fifteen years had passed since Carolyn Damon advised mothers about the kind of clothes their teenagers needed, Boxer's recommendations for a "well-coordinated wardrobe for an active teen-age schoolgirl" were similar to Damon's, and included skirts, sweaters, and blouses to mix-and-match for school, casual slacks for entertaining at home, and more formal dresses for "dress-up dates" and dances.¹³⁴ While the materials, shapes, and colours of particular garments had changed (and slacks were more common), the basic elements of dressing appropriately for high school were the same in 1953 as they had been in 1939.

However, Boxer's article gave teenagers more credit than Damon had fourteen years earlier. While Damon described girls with hormone-muddled fashion sense, self-appointed referee Boxer sided with Joan against her mother's advice several times during their shopping trip. Joan did pick several items of clothing that her mother and Boxer considered too mature for teenagers, including a white, imitation fur skirt that "a girl of fourteen would have little or no opportunity to wear" and which was "much more

¹³³ Rosemary Boxer, "Joan Learns to Shop," *Chatelaine* (January 1953): 22-23.

¹³⁴ *Ibid*, 23.

suitable for an older, more sophisticated girl.” Joan also liked a pearl-studded velvet halter top with a low v-neckline that all agreed was “much too sophisticated for her,” according to Boxer.¹³⁵ However, when Joan’s mother claimed that a navy crepe dress with a Peter Pan collar was “suitable for a girl Joan’s age,” and Joan protested that it was “babyfied,” Boxer agreed; although practical, the dress “lacked style and was a shade too ‘little girlish.’” The fashion editor found Joan’s preference – an antique taffeta dress with rhinestone trim and a scooped neckline – more appropriate for formal occasions. Boxer made it clear that Mother did not always know best.¹³⁶

While Joan was given more of a voice in Boxer’s article than the nameless school girls in Carolyn Damon’s earlier articles, mother-daughter cooperation on the shop floor remained the ultimate goal. The message was that mother and daughter could learn from each other, with the guidance of *Chatelaine*. After their shopping trip, Boxer reported that Joan and her mother “now plan to do Joan’s shopping together – and perhaps mother’s too.” Joan conceded that she could benefit from her mother’s experience and advice, and Mrs. Carnegie claimed she “hadn’t any idea Joan knew so much about clothes.”¹³⁷ She was ready to give her daughter more credit, but not prepared to let Joan purchase clothing without her approval.

A close reading of *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Home Journal*, and *Mayfair* suggests that between 1930 and 1960 consumer magazine content represented the teenager as a persona with several, sometimes contradictory characteristics: she both indulged in and resisted looking “sloppy;” she prized peer approval, and she relied on mothers’ advice to

135 Ibid, 23, 24.

136 Ibid.

137 Ibid.

select appropriate clothing. This teenage persona was most evident in *Chatelaine*'s Teen Tempo column, which appeared almost monthly from September 1956 until 1963. The one-page column was "packed with ideas and advice on dating, etiquette, clothes, records and the sayings and doings of teen-agers all across Canada."¹³⁸ Both the format and the content of the column presented the teenager as an independent high school consumer, increasingly focused on brand-name fashions.

Chatelaine was eager to demonstrate to readers that it had its finger on the teenaged pulse when it introduced Cynthia Williams, Teen Tempo's first editor. Williams was an appropriate choice, according to editor John Clare, because she was "only seven years removed from being a teen-ager herself." In addition to her young age, Williams was seen as being qualified to edit the teenage page because she had previously written a column for high school students in the *Toronto Telegram* newspaper, and had hosted a national radio programme for teenagers on CBC Radio.¹³⁹ The magazine hoped to emphasize that Williams was someone teenaged readers could trust and relate to because she was "only" twenty-six. To further underline the magazine's authority on teenaged matters, Williams (along with her successors Susan Cooper and Wendy Williams) encouraged readers to write in with their questions. Some of the letters, alongside the editor's reply, were selected to appear in each column. The question-and-answer format appeared to put teenaged readers in control of part of the column's content.

While previous magazine articles and advice columns had pictured mothers and

138 "This month, meet the girl behind our new teen-age page," *Chatelaine* (September 1956).

139 Ibid. Williams was soon replaced by Susan Cooper, a young-looking staffer, who edited the page until 1961. The magazine offered no explanation for the staffing change.

daughters working together to outfit teenaged girls, Teen Tempo made little mention of mothers choosing teenaged clothing. One reader told Susan Cooper that she wanted a black dress, but her mother disapproved. Cooper replied that she could try to compromise by taking her mother shopping and finding dresses that “are mostly black, or have bright touches,” so they could both agree on a suitable outfit.¹⁴⁰ While Cooper often discussed relationships between teenaged girls and their parents, her parental issues advice usually concerned curfews, chores, and introducing parents to boyfriends, not selecting clothing or shopping. The absence of mothers suggested that the magazine saw the teenager as an independent shopper.

While they did not assume their teenaged readers needed mother’s assistance to shop, the “Teen Tempo” editors did present clothing and fashion as an integral and non-threatening part of a teenage lifestyle, a key outlet for girls’ creativity and self-expression. One way they did this was by encouraging readers to make their own, inexpensive versions of fashionable items. From dyeing summer shoes to match a winter formal dress, to sewing striped patches from old pyjamas onto blue jeans, Williams and Cooper were eager to show readers how they could change their appearance with a little money and a lot of creativity.¹⁴¹ For example, the Tyrolean Look of Spring 1957 featured felt circle skirts bedecked with yards of rickrack, embroidery, and appliquéd designs. Williams advised teenaged readers who wanted to imitate the look to “use your own ingenuity (and save tons of money) by designing and sewing different patterns onto your

140 Susan Cooper, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (April 1960): 130.

141 Cynthia Williams, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (November 1956): 84; Susan Cooper, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (July 1957): 20.

own plain felt skirt.”¹⁴² In June 1958 Cooper offered a solution for “dull” shorts – “transform white linen shorts with textile paint in a gay, mad print of your own design.”¹⁴³ Two months later, she asked readers “Have you grown tired of your tapered pants?” The solution was to turn them into militia pants by sewing red and white stripes down each side.¹⁴⁴ Williams’ and Coopers’ home-made re-makes and do-it-yourself fashions sent the message that one’s appearance needed to be constantly maintained and kept up-to-date. Young girls were encouraged to express themselves through creative clothing projects, but the projects themselves were outlined in the column, so little actual creative energy was required on the part of readers.

Teen Tempo also promoted fashion as self-expression by asking readers to tell them what was new and different among their peers. Beginning in October 1957 Teen Tempo asked readers to write in with “any new fads, fashions, sayings or newsworthy achievements among teenagers in your community.” *Chatelaine* promised to pay five dollars for “usable items” it received. Between January 1958 and May 1960, Susan Cooper included forty of these “featured fads” in her columns, usually publishing two or three every month.¹⁴⁵

These featured fads illustrated the supposedly “unique” ways that young readers were creating their own style using their clothes and accessories. Readers wrote in about how young people in their communities were wearing their shoes, hair ribbons, or jewelery in a particular way to send a particular message. In Vancouver, Jean Ferguson and Edie Hedstrom reported, girls at Delbrook High School laced their right shoes

142 Cynthia Williams, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (December 1956): 76.

143 Susan Cooper, “Teen Tempo” *Chatelaine* (June 1958): 28.

144 Susan Cooper, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (August 1958): 26.

145 Susan Cooper, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (October 1957).

upside down to show unrequited love. In Courtenay, British Columbia, girls apparently used sweater colours to broadcast their moods; a pink sweater suggested a secret romance, while a white sweater meant someone was “shy but dangerous.”¹⁴⁶ Fads also involved modifying one’s existing clothing. Girls in Greenwood, Nova Scotia were apparently sticking multi-coloured adhesive bandages to their shoes, while young female Montrealers reported that they liked to sew felt animals on their jeans.¹⁴⁷

By featuring do-it-yourself clothing projects and fads from teenaged readers, *Teen Tempo* appeared to be encouraging non-commercial forms of clothing acquisition. If teenaged girls were sewing patches onto old jeans, or cutting down their fathers’ shirts to make beach cover-ups, they did not need to buy new clothes to do it. Nevertheless, these projects and fads did encourage consumption, because they advocated – and necessitated – changing one’s wardrobe continuously to “keep up” with new trends. If a sweater colour could broadcast a girls’ mood (the fad in Courtenay, British Columbia), girls might feel pressure to buy new sweaters if they did not already own garments of the appropriate colour. Fads were generally short-lived, and a new fad for modifying one’s clothes – even if the modification was inexpensive – meant acquiring different garments or accessories. As historian Kelly Schrum notes, fads helped teenaged readers grow accustomed to the idea that fashions changed regularly and that consumers needed to buy new clothes to keep up with changing trends. Retailers and advertisers were not opposed to fads that used products in unintended ways – they “celebrated all indicators of girls’ active interest” in clothing and commercialized beauty, including homemade

¹⁴⁶ Susan Cooper, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (January 1958): 23; “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (March 1959): 12.

¹⁴⁷ Susan Cooper, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (March 1959): 12. Susan Cooper, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (April 1958): 46.

jewelry and small sewing projects.¹⁴⁸

Teen Tempo also increasingly included clothing brands, prices, shop names, and specific advertisements geared toward a teenaged audience. Between September 1956 and August 1958, the column offered generic fashion advice – while trends were discussed in detail, specific brands of clothing were not included. Typical was Cynthia Williams’ discussion of popular trends in coat styles in her September 1956 issue of Teen Tempo: “For winter, the biggest news is hoods. Some are detachable, are made of jersey and fit securely within the collar and around your ears.”¹⁴⁹ Williams did not tell readers who designed or manufactured such coats, where to shop for them, or how much they cost. However, beginning in 1958 *Chatelaine* occasionally devoted Teen Tempo exclusively to clothes, and fashion editor Vivian Wilcox included the name of the manufacturer and the retail price next to each garment modeled.¹⁵⁰

In May 1960 the format of the column changed to include more branded fashions in every issue. Half of each column was now dedicated to clothing. While previously Teen Tempo had featured generic trends and fads from readers, now every issue included the names of designers and retailers alongside fashion advice, and listed the prices and sizes available as well. Readers in May 1960 learned about gingham dresses popularized by French actress and model Brigitte Bardot. “You’ll see the Brigitte look in many dresses and separates when you go shopping,” editor Susan Cooper told readers, before informing them that the separates pictured in the column were manufactured by Juniorite

148 Kelly Schrum, *Some Wore Bobby Sox: The emergence of teenage girls’ culture, 1920-1945* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 147-149.

149 Cynthia Williams, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (September 1956): 96.

150 See, for example, Vivian Wilcox, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (September 1958): 10; (April 1959): 10; Vivian Wilcox, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (December 1959): 15.

in sizes five to fifteen and could be purchased for less than ten dollars a piece.¹⁵¹ Readers' fads were no longer included in the column, which now focused exclusively on commercial fashion instead of do-it-yourself style.

Advertisements for products tailored to teenaged girls began to appear in *Chatelaine* in 1960. In April of that year, for example, an advertisement for Modess sanitary napkins appeared opposite the column. While the language of the ad was directed towards mothers – “No words can reassure your daughter better than yours...” – the product on offer was a specially-sized “Teen-Age” menstrual pad.¹⁵² Other advertisements were addressed to teenagers themselves: Remington typewriters “proven” to improve students' grades; Clearasil skin cleanser used to remove acne that could “undermine the poise and self-confidence” of teenaged girls; and “Debuteens,” a line of low-heeled shoes manufactured by Savage for teenagers who were “stepping out” at social events.¹⁵³

Some companies went to great lengths to interest teenaged readers in their products. For example, the Canadian Baking Industry, a group advocating for bakers, partnered with a recording company to produce “The Picnic,” a song promoting sandwiches. The record was given away at bakeries across the country. The advertisement appeared adjacent to Teen Tempo and noted that the song was performed by Joyce Hahn, “Star of Cross-Canada Hit Parade,” a music programme popular with teenagers.¹⁵⁴ Advertising campaigns targeted to teenagers, alongside the increased focus on brand-name clothing, fostered a closer association between consumer and teenaged

151 Susan Cooper, “Teen Tempo,” *Chatelaine* (May 1960): 14.

152 *Chatelaine* (April 1960): 131.

153 *Chatelaine* (August 1959), 61, 86, 95.

154 *Ibid*, 64.

culture.

In 1964, a new, teen-focused magazine appeared in Canadian newsstands. *Miss Chatelaine* was published by Maclean Hunter exclusively for teenaged girls. The publisher now believed teenaged girls constituted a large enough market segment to attract significant advertising dollars – enough to warrant a separate publication.¹⁵⁵ *Miss Chatelaine*'s content was essentially an expansion of Teen Tempo, and included age-specific fashion and beauty advice, information about careers and social situations, and fiction written by Canadian high school students.¹⁵⁶ Maclean Hunter hoped *Miss Chatelaine* would be a Canadian alternative to the American teen magazines – such as *Seventeen* and *Young and Modern* – that Canadian teenagers were reading.

However, *Miss Chatelaine* was also explicitly designed as a medium for fashion advertising. Publisher Lloyd Hodgkinson stressed that *Miss Chatelaine* was “basically a fashion magazine designed to give guidance and information on Canadian fashion, and through this service help give definition and growth to the fashion industry.”¹⁵⁷ Teenagers, he believed, would drive this consumer economic growth. However, the foregoing analysis of Canadian consumer magazines demonstrates that *Miss Chatelaine* marked an acceleration -- rather than a beginning -- of the belief that Canadian teenagers constituted a distinct and lucrative consumer market.

155 Korinek, *Roughing It In the Suburbs*, 35-36. Korinek also notes that at the time *Miss Chatelaine* appeared, Maclean Hunter was trying to specialize its product. The company created *Châtelaine: La Revue Moderne*, a French-Canadian “version” of *Chatelaine* with a separate editorial staff and focus on Québec, in 1960, and launched *Hostess*, dedicated exclusively to homemaking, in 1968. In 1979 *Miss Chatelaine* was renamed *Flare*.

156 *Miss Chatelaine* offers an insight into portrayals of the teenager in the 1960s and 1970s that has yet to receive scholarly attention.

157 Korinek, *Roughing It In the Suburbs*, 35-36.

Sociologist Mike Featherstone argues that “images invite comparisons: they are constant reminders of what we are and might with effort yet become.”¹⁵⁸ In Canadian consumer magazines, young women were invited to imagine themselves as college co-eds and teenagers and to adopt the consumption practices that would achieve the “look” of these idealized types. Reading and working through the advice in these magazines was increasingly conceived as part of growing up and getting dressed, part of learning how to regulate and shape one’s appearance in accordance with one’s age and position in life.

Both the college co-ed and the teenager were personae firmly rooted in consumer culture. Feature articles and advice columns presented the college co-ed and teenager as a white, middle-class student whose transition to feminine adulthood depended on selecting and purchasing consumer products. Both were depicted as somewhat inexperienced and “sloppy” in their appearance, susceptible to peer-influence and fads, in need of guidance from magazine “experts” or mothers. While both personae were evident in magazines throughout the period, the teenager appeared with increasing frequency in the 1940s and 1950s, eclipsing references to college co-eds. Targeted promotions and advertisements suggest that the adults in charge of producing teen-focused content expected teenagers to be avid and opinionated consumers who were primarily concerned with their appearance.

The content of the magazines suggests that the association of the teenaged years with consumption was a cultural shift, not the belief of a particular company or industry.

158 Mike Featherstone, “The Body in Consumer Culture,” in Mike Featherstone, Mike Hepworth, and Bryan S. Turner, eds. *The Body: Social Process and Cultural Theory* (London: Sage Publications, 1991), 179.

Before many individual manufacturers were tailoring products or advertising directly to teenagers (either with targeted promotions or advertising in teenaged magazines), consumer magazines were portraying the teenage years as a time of life increasingly defined by consumption. Retailers often collaborated with editors and writers to represent the teenager on magazine pages. This analysis points to occasions when Eaton's sponsored contests for magazine readers and provided clothing and furnishings for fashion spreads, clearly sharing the editors' and writers' perspective that teenagers were important consumers. As one of Canada's largest department stores, Eaton's also conducted its own advertising campaigns, both in its stores and in its mail order catalogues. What images of the teenager did Eaton's employ to sell clothing to teenaged girls and boys? How did Eaton's executives view the company's teenaged customers? And how did the company's promotional efforts help to shape teenaged culture? The following three chapters explore these questions in detail, beginning with the way the Eaton's catalogue represented and targeted teenaged girls.

CHAPTER THREE

In-between Teen:

Selling age-appropriate sophistication to teenaged girls in the Eaton's Catalogue

Teenaged girls today have a staggering number of clothing brands and retail shops dedicated to providing them with teenaged clothing in teenaged sizes. Companies such as dELiA*s, an American retailer created in 1993, adopt marketing strategies tailored to their target teenaged customer. dELiA*s' 115 stores and extensive direct-mail and online portals sell clothing, accessories, shoes, swimwear, makeup, and even teen-specific bedding and bedroom decorating accessories. The company delivers its catalogue to schools, and hires high school and college students to take telephone orders and offer fashion tips to young customers.¹ Online shopping is only one of the ways that many contemporary teenagers engage seamlessly with consumer goods; using portable internet devices and extensive social networks, young people today can virtually and instantly share ideas and products they "like" with their peers. These same activities allow companies to mine their product preferences in an attempt to precisely target teenaged consumers. dELiA*s advertises teen novels and television shows alongside its online merchandise, and many other online platforms also encourage further spending by telling customers about products they "might also like." dELiA*s success, and the success of other mass market teen products and advertising campaigns, are a testament to teenaged consumers' power in the retail industry.

¹ Ellen Neuborne, "We Are Going to Own this Generation," *Business Week Online* (15 February 1999), http://www.businessweek.com/1999/99_07/b3616001.htm.

The teenaged market in Canada – in particular, the teenaged clothing market – reaches back to retailers such as the T. Eaton Company, which began cultivating the teenager as a distinct and lucrative consumer in the 1930s. By transforming size ranges and marketing language, Eaton's identified and shaped what it believed was a new and growing market segment. While consumer magazines both encouraged teenagers to shop and portrayed high school and college-aged girls as avid consumers, Eaton's mail order catalogue depicted the teenaged girl at an in-between stage, growing both physically and in her desire for sophisticated-looking garments. This chapter explores Eaton's changing merchandise and advertising for teenaged girls and discusses the implications of the company's actions for would-be consumers.²

The teenaged girl made her initial appearances in the Eaton's catalogue in 1940. Prior to that year, Eaton's rarely addressed teenagers separately from other girls – girls' clothing was offered in sizes up to fourteen or sixteen years,³ after which girls were expected to begin wearing Junior and Misses' sizes, intended for physically mature women. Throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, Eaton's employed several different rhetorical and visual strategies to both define and appeal to an idealized teenaged girl customer. New size ranges, special promotions, and an emphasis on sophistication and novelty characterized Eaton's efforts. Analysis of the texts and images Eaton's used to sell garments to girls and women over this period demonstrates how Eaton's distinguished teenaged clothing from garments for younger girls and women, creating an

2 Eaton's was also advertising to teenaged boy consumers in this period; boy's clothing is examined in the next chapter.

3 Girls' and boys' clothing was sold in age sizes, meaning that the size was supposed to match the age of the child. The sizing system will be discussed in more detail below.

age-based style hierarchy that positioned the teenager as an in-between figure who was constantly “becoming.” She was becoming a woman, becoming a consumer, becoming more sophisticated, and becoming an object of sexual desire.

Mail order catalogues are one of the more fruitful sources available to systematically explore consumer culture and clothing in twentieth-century Canada. Catalogues distributed by retailers such as Eaton’s, Simpson’s, Woodward’s, and American Sears Roebuck spread ideas about what people should wear across far-flung parts of Canada. The T. Eaton Company began publishing its mail order catalogue from Toronto in 1884. The first few issues of the catalogue were only a few dozen pages of text with few illustrations. By the 1920s the company had mail order offices in Toronto, Winnipeg, Halifax, and Moncton. In 1930 Eaton’s commanded nearly sixty per cent of total department store sales in Canada, and was one of the largest retailers in the world.⁴ Several other Canadian retailers also produced mail order catalogues. However, the Hudson’s Bay Company’s catalogue ceased publication in 1913, while Woodward’s, based in Vancouver, British Columbia, and Dupuis Frères, in Montreal, catered to a more regional clientele and published smaller (albeit still commercially successful) catalogues. The Eaton’s catalogue was the most successful mail order book with a national reach, and furnishes a large and diverse sample of clothing for analysis. It was produced twice a year, providing a consistent and comprehensive window into the way the retailer communicated with customers and advertised its garments.

Catalogues were an important form of advertising for Eaton’s. Each issue reached millions of people and contained “eye-catching combinations of illustrations

4 Donica Belisle, *Retail Nation: Department Stores and the Making of Modern Canada* (Vancouver; UBC Press, 2011), 39.

and text, and all of them offered glowing descriptions of department stores' goods and services."⁵ By the 1920s, almost all items of clothing in the catalogue were illustrated, so the customer could see the garments on offer. Through the text, Eaton's told the reader what the garment was made of, how it was constructed, and its size, as well as highlighting certain features it hoped would attract customers. While some historians have viewed these product descriptions as "plain and simple" information, the words that accompanied these images were well chosen to motivate potential customers to buy.⁶ These garment descriptions, alongside the catalogue images, provide the raw material for the analysis that follows,⁷ and help to address the questions: when and how were teenagers identified as a distinct market segment requiring their own clothing sizes and styles, and how were these garments sold? What distinguished teenaged clothing from clothing intended for younger and older women?

In addition to shedding light on how one retailer approached the teenaged clothing market, Eaton's mail order catalogue provides a wealth of detail about clothing sizes, illustrating some of the assumptions and values that shaped sizing standards in the burgeoning ready-to-wear industry. Factory-made clothing needed to be produced to certain specifications in order to satisfy customers' desire for garments that fit properly. However, manufacturers seeking to maximize profits did not want to meet the precise sizing requirements of individual customers. The diverse dimensions of human bodies

5 Ibid, 48.

6 See, for example, John Willis' distinction between the "strong statement ... made with powerful, graphic imagery" on the covers of mail order catalogues and the supposedly "straightforward" product depictions found between the covers. "The Mail Order Catalogue: An Achievement in Mass Distribution and Labour," in *Les Territoires de l'entreprise/The Territories of Business*, eds. Claude Bellavance and Pierre Lanthier (Sainte-Foy, PQ: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 2004), 183.

7 Please see the appendix for a description of the methodology used for this analysis.

make it difficult to establish sizes that fit large numbers of people. For example, in the 1950s the Canadian Government Specifications Board reported that fifty standard sizes would be necessary to adequately fit Canadian boys. This was far more than any manufacturer could economically produce.⁸ While the development of a standard system of sizes and size ranges (creating separate categories for “regular” and “larger” women, for example) may appear as no more than a necessary part of a modernizing industry, sizing standards (or lack thereof) also work in often-overlooked ways to shape the consumer marketplace.

Although sizing standards were presented as an objective number based on precise body measurements, they also classified customers in a manner that made it easier to define and market to specific types of people. Just as Eaton’s chose specific words to advertise its clothing, its size ranges were meant to appeal to different kinds of customers.⁹ Standard sizes were supposed to make purchasing ready-made clothing by mail easy and accurate. At the same time, however, they also changed Eaton’s customer relations.

For example, buying clothes in standard sizes required knowledge about how the sizing system worked, and how measurements should be taken. Because mail order customers were purchasing garments without trying them on in advance, the Eaton’s catalogue contained advice about measuring and choosing the correct size. The catalogue included detailed measuring instructions, size charts, and frequent reminders

8 Robert F. Legget, *Standards in Canada* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1971), 96.

9 By their definition, standards reduce diversity based on any number of set values and assumptions. See Susan Leigh Star and Martha Lampland, “Reckoning with Standards,” in Susan Leigh Star and Martha Lampland, eds., *Standards and Their Stories: How Quantifying, Classifying, and Formalizing Practices Shape Everyday Life* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2009), 3-24.

both to “Measure and Be Sure of Your Size” and to “state size on your order.”¹⁰ Eaton’s instructions seemed to assume that women might not report their measurements accurately, that they might not know how to take measurements properly, or might assume that they knew their size from memory. Women were told how to use the measuring tape – to “DRAW TAPE SNUG BUT NOT TIGHT,” to measure around the largest part of their bust or hips, and to “HAVE SOMEONE TAKE THESE MEASUREMENTS FOR YOU.”¹¹ Eaton’s explained that it was very difficult to take accurate measurements yourself because it required bending and twisting in ways that distorted the results. Customers were asked to “give your ACTUAL measurements” at the bust, waist, and hips, and to take their measurements every time they ordered. They were asked to “ALSO BE SURE TO STATE HEIGHT AND WEIGHT.” Eaton’s implored them not to “allow extra inches for fullness, as we have already made this allowance.” By emphasizing the word actual – meaning current and empirical as opposed to potential or estimated – Eaton’s again reminded customers to adopt the company’s system of measurements, while also underlining the difference between a woman’s current body measurements and the size she might think – or hope – she was. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 illustrate that Eaton’s explicit directions to customers persisted in the catalogue in the 1940s and 1950s. Eaton’s wanted customers to take a scientific approach to ordering their clothing by applying systematic empirical measurements to

10 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1937 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1937), 18. Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1929/1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 209. These two refrains were printed on nearly every page of every catalogue examined here.

11 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), between 388 and 389.

their bodies.¹²

12 In an increasingly visual and body-conscious culture, standard sizes quickly became markers of slimness and, thus, of beauty. Consider, for example, the practice of “vanity sizing.” Clothing manufacturers label their garments with smaller numbers in order to make customers feel good about themselves. This practice and its cultural consequences has received little historical attention. For a recent article on this phenomenon, see “Stephanie Clifford, “One Size Fits Nobody: Seeking a Steady 4 or a 10,” *The New York Times* (24 April 2011).
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/25/business/25sizing.html?_r=1.

MEASURE AND BE SURE



It's Better TO HAVE SOMEONE ELSE MEASURE YOU

CAUTION!

- Be sure tape is lying smoothly and is not looped.
- Be sure tape is even all around and does not sag in back.
- Be sure to keep tape snug, but not too tight or too loose.



HIPS

Place the tape measure around the body over the fullest part of hips, making sure that it passes around the fullest part at back. Stand naturally and do not pull tape too tightly.

BUST

Place tape measure over shoulder blades, then bring down around the fullest part of the bust. Do not take this measurement too tightly and do not allow tape measure to slip down in back.

WAIST

Stand relaxed with your weight equally distributed and place tape measure around your natural waistline. Remember, it's better to have someone else take your measurements for you.

DRESS LENGTH

Stand erect—and measure from the neckbone in the back to the bottom hem. Allow the tape measure to follow the natural curves of the dress.

SKIRT LENGTH

Stand evenly on both feet and measure from natural waistline in front to bottom of hem. If you have an odd skirt that fits you measure from bottom of waistband to bottom of hem.

IMPORTANT! SELECT YOUR GARMENT ACCORDING TO YOUR TYPE SIZE. MAKE SURE YOU CHECK YOUR TYPE SIZE ON THE CHART BELOW BECAUSE GARMENTS OF APPROXIMATELY THE SAME SIZE DO NOT NECESSARILY FIT THE SAME FIGURE.



JUNIORS
Youthful figure, 5 ft. 3 ins. and under in height and proportionately shorter in waist, sleeve and total length than Misses' but approximately the same bust, waist and hip measurements as Misses' sizes. Catalogued in odd sizes 13 to 15.

MISSES
Youthful figure 5 ft. 4 ins. to 5 ft. 8 ins. in height, smaller in waist, arms and bust measurements than Regular Women but the same height and total length. The same proportions as Junior but longer in the waist and total height. Catalogued in even sizes 14 to 24.

LITTLE WOMEN
The well-developed short figure 5 ft. 3 ins. and under in height. Same proportions as Regular Women but shorter in waist and total height. Same height as Junior but of greater proportions. Catalogued in even sizes of 24½ to 44½.

REGULAR WOMEN
The normal average figure 5 ft. 4 ins. to 5 ft. 8 ins. in height. Same proportions as Little Women but taller and longer in the waist, sleeves and total length. Same height as Misses but greater proportions. Catalogued in even sizes of 34 to 52.

SHORT FULL FIGURE
The generous proportioned short figure, 5 ft. 3 ins. and under in height. Full bust, larger hips and arms than Regular or Little Women. Same height as Little Women, but shorter than Regular Women. Catalogued in odd sizes of 39½ to 53½.

FULL FIGURE
Large erect full bust figure 5 ft. 4 ins. to 5 ft. 8 ins. in height. Larger waists and arms than Regular Women but the same height and total length. Same proportions as Short Full Figure but taller. Catalogued in odd sizes of 30 to 53.

MAKE SURE THAT THE GARMENT YOU ARE ORDERING COMES IN THE SIZE YOU WANT AND FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE WE LIST BELOW THE VARIOUS PAGES WHERE MEASURING INSTRUCTIONS OR SIZE-CHARTS ARE TO BE FOUND

FOR MEN AND BOYS

Men's Suits—measure chest, waist, sleeve and leg and give height and weight. See page 131.

Men's Trousers—measure waist and leg. See page 132.

Boys' Suits—state age and size. See page 120.

Boys' Trousers—state age and size. See page 118.

Men's and Boys' Underwear—for combinations and undershirts give chest measurements. For drawers, waist measurements. See men's page 143 and boys' page 146.

Men's and Boys' Hats—give head measurement. See page 149.

Men's Shirts—give neck sizes. See page 138.

Hosiery measuring—see page 61.

Millinery measuring—see page 42.

Glove measuring—see page 56.

Shoe measuring—see page 101.

FOR CHILDREN 1 to 7 years

Order by age-size—not by actual age, as children of the same age vary in size. Measure quickly. Compare your boy's or girl's chest measurement and length for coats and dresses with the age-size chart shown on page 89 and child's measurements. Measure carefully and make no extra allowances.

For Chest—Have your boy or girl stand naturally and place tape measure around body over shirt or dress close up under the arms, and over the shoulder blades in back.

Children's Dress and Coat Lengths—Have your boy or girl stand erect and measure from the neckbone in the back to the bottom hem. Allow this tape measure to follow the natural curves of the dress.

Children's age-size chart—see page 89.

Children's Table of hosiery sizes, see page 61.

Children's Gloves—state age only.

For How-to-Measure
Little Boys' Hats—see page 149.
Little Girls' Hats—see page 42.
Children's Shoes—see page 101.

FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

Women's Coats—give bust measurement, see above.

Women's Suits—give bust, waist and hip measurement. See above.

Women's Dresses—measure fullest part of bust and hips. See above.

Corsets and Foundation Garments—see measuring instructions of page 75.

Women's Blouses and Sweaters—give bust measurements. See above.

Women's Skirts—give waist measurements. See above.

Women's Gowns, Slips, Pyjamas—give size from bust measurement. See above and page 70.

Women's Underwear—give size from bust measurement. See above.

Girls 8 to 14X order by age-size not by actual age. For girls' dresses, skirts, coat and top, age-size chart see page 28. For girls' underwear, slip and pyjama age-size chart see page 89.

Don't guess . . . Measure accurately and state your actual body measurements. Make no extra allowances in your measurements, as all EATON garments are properly cut and made to fit the sizes specified in the Catalogue.

Make sure that the garment you are ordering comes in the size you want.

page 206

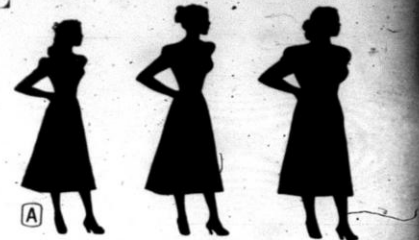
(15)

Figure 3.1: Measuring instructions from Eaton's Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue.

THESE CHARTS SPECIFY YOUR SIZE

measure correctly as shown

Your measurements, not your age, determine whether you take a Junior, Misses' or Women's Size. So, for proper fitting, first know your type (see diagram A at right). Then measure your proportions. It is better to have someone else take your measurements to avoid errors (consult diagrams B to F, and read information below each). Now study the charts (1 to 8) and order that size which most nearly approximates your proportions. **NOTE:** If you order a size, as shown on the top line of each chart, garments of that size come to fit the body measurements listed in the vertical columns directly underneath. For dresses, measure bust, waist, hip and length. For two-piece dresses, measure bust, waist, hip and skirt length. For coats, measure bust and length. For suits, measure bust, waist, skirt length. For skirts, measure waist and skirt length. For sweaters and blouses, measure bust. For slacks, measure waist. **Malestny** fashions are adjustable, so order your normal size. Be sure the garment you order comes in the size you want.



JUNIOR FIGURE—no matter what age, is getting shorter, more slender and youthful, with narrow shoulders, higher bust, shorter waistline than a Misses'.

MISSES' FIGURE is of average height, slim, no matter what age, with a longer distance from shoulder to waist and broader shoulders than the Junior figure.

REGULAR WOMEN'S FIGURE is of average height, more mature than Misses'; Junior figures are more breadth through the waist.

CHART No. 1
JUNIOR SIZES FOR DRESSES, SUITS, COATS AND SKIRTS

You wear size	11	13	15	17	19
If Bust is	29	31	33	35	37 ins.
If Waist is	24	25	26	28	30 ins.
If Hip is	31	33	35	37	39 ins.
Dress length about	44	45	45	46	46 ins.
*Coat length about	44	45	45	46	46 ins.
Skirt length about	29	29	30	31	31 ins.

* FITTED COATS ARE MADE 1 INCH LONGER.

CHART No. 5
LARGER WOMEN (AVERAGED) SIZES FOR DRESSES, SUITS AND COATS

You wear size	39	41	43	45	47	49	51	53
If Bust is	39	41	43	45	47	49	51	53 ins.
If Waist is	34	36	38	40	42	44	46	48 ins.
If Hip is	42	44	46	48	50	52	54	56 ins.
Dress length, abt.	47	47	48	48	48	48	48	48 ins.
Coat length, abt.	47	47	48	48	48	48	48	48 ins.
Skirt length, abt.	31	31	32	32	32	33	33	33 ins.

CHART No. 2
MISSIES SIZES FOR DRESSES, SUITS, COATS AND SKIRTS

You wear size	12	14	16	18	20	22
If Bust is	30	32	34	36	38	40 ins.
If Waist is	24	25	27	29	31	33 ins.
If Hip is	32	34	36	38	40	42 ins.
Dress length about	45	46	46	47	47	47 ins.
*Coat length about	45	46	46	47	47	47 ins.
Skirt length about	29	29	30	31	31	31 ins.

* FITTED COATS ARE MADE 1 INCH LONGER.

CHART No. 6
LARGER WOMEN (SHORT) SIZES FOR DRESSES, SUITS AND COATS

You wear size	30½	41½	43½	45½	47½	49½	51½	53½
If Bust is	40	42	44	46	48	50	52	54 ins.
If Waist is	35	37	39	41	43	45	47	49 ins.
If Hip is	43	45	47	49	51	53	55	57 ins.
Dress length, abt.	45	45	46	46	46	46	46	46 ins.
Coat length, abt.	45	45	46	46	46	46	46	46 ins.
Skirt length, abt.	29	29	30	30	30	31	31	31 ins.

CHART No. 3
REGULAR WOMEN (AVERAGED) SIZES FOR DRESSES, SUITS, COATS AND SKIRTS

You wear size	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44
If Bust is	30	32	34	36	38	40	42	44 ins.
If Waist is	24	25	26	28	30	32	34	36 ins.
If Hip is	32	34	36	38	40	42	44	46 ins.
Dress length, abt.	45	46	46	47	47	47	48	48 ins.
*Coat length, abt.	45	46	46	47	47	47	48	48 ins.
Skirt length, abt.	29	29	30	31	31	32	32	32 ins.

* FITTED COATS ARE MADE 1 INCH LONGER.

CHART No. 7
SIZE CHART FOR BLOUSES, SWEATERS AND JACKETS

You wear Misses' size	12	14	16	18	20	22
If Bust is	30	32	34	36	38	40 ins.

You wear Women's size	32	34	36	38	40	42	44
If Bust is	32	34	36	38	40	42	44 ins.

CHART No. 4
REGULAR WOMEN (OVAL) SIZES FOR DRESSES, SUITS AND COATS

For women 5 ft. 3 ins. and under in height

You wear size	12½	14½	16½	18½	20½	22½	24½	26½
If Bust is	31	33	35	37	39	41	43	45 ins.
If Waist is	25	27	29	31	33	35	37	39 ins.
If Hip is	33	35	37	39	41	43	45	47 ins.
Dress length, abt.	43	44	44	45	45	45	46	46 ins.
*Coat length, abt.	43	44	44	45	45	45	46	46 ins.
Skirt length, abt.	27	27	28	29	29	29	30	30 ins.

* FITTED COATS ARE MADE 1 INCH LONGER.

CHART No. 8
SIZE CHART FOR SLACKS

You wear Waist size	24	25	27	29	31	33
If Waist is	24 <td>25 <td>27 <td>29 <td>31</td> <td>33 ins.</td> </td></td></td>	25 <td>27 <td>29 <td>31</td> <td>33 ins.</td> </td></td>	27 <td>29 <td>31</td> <td>33 ins.</td> </td>	29 <td>31</td> <td>33 ins.</td>	31	33 ins.

For all skirt lengths in the above charts measure from the bottom of the waist-band to bottom of skirt.



BUST—Place tape measure around body over shoulder blades in back, then bring down around fullest part of bust. Please measure carefully and recheck for accuracy.



WAIST—Place tape measure around your body (over your dress) at your natural waist-line (the smallest part). When measuring be sure to pull tape snugly, but not too tightly. Have someone else measure you.



HIPS—Stand naturally, balanced on both feet. Have someone place tape measure around fullest part of hips (approximately 9 inches down from waistline), keeping it straight and level all around. When measuring, hold tape firmly without pulling tight.



SKIRT LENGTH—Stand naturally and measure from waistline (the smallest part) in front to bottom hem. If you have an old skirt that fits you, measure from bottom of waist-band to bottom of hem.



DRESS OR COAT LENGTH—Stand naturally with weight equally distributed on both feet. Have someone else take your measurement from neckline in back to bottom hem. Allow tape to follow natural curves of garment.

Figure 3.2: Measuring instructions from the Eaton's Spring and Summer 1951 Catalogue.

Eaton's made it clear that the onus was on the customer to order the correct size. Garments that did not fit would have to be returned, and even if the customer was paying the shipping charges to send ill-fitting clothing back to the store, the company disliked the extra work this created for the mail order department, not to mention the extra wear on inventory. "Getting what you want – correct size, etc., – in the great majority of cases is a matter of care," the company claimed in the Spring and Summer 1932 catalogue: "Avoidable exchanges are an inconvenience to you and an expense to us. You can help yourself to better values in helping us keep down this expense, by taking just a little extra care when ordering."¹³ Ordering a dress that "fit" was a mere matter of following a process designed to ensure women purchased the correct size for their bodies.

The problem was that in reality getting a dress that fit was not just a matter of taking careful measurements. There were no consistent size standards in place in the 1930s, and the actual size of ready-made dresses did not always match the stated size on the label.¹⁴ Consumer dissatisfaction with the fit of ready-made clothing was widespread enough that it prompted more than one American researcher to compare women's

13 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), p. A.

14 In the United States, the Department of Agriculture (USDA) was charged with setting standard sizes for ready-made clothing and commercial patterns. In 1929, following a conference of manufacturers and home economists, the USDA adopted a commercial standard for dress patterns. However, this standard was not strictly enforced, and was not based on a large sample of anthropomorphic data. See Louise Beatrice La Fleur, "A Comparative Study of Body Measurements of a Selected Group of College Women, with Certain Commercial Patterns," (MSc Thesis, Department of Textiles and Clothing, Kansas State College of Agriculture and Applied Science, 1931), 9-10. There were no Canadian standards for clothing sizes until 1969, when the Canadian Government Specifications Board published a set of standards for children's clothing at the request of the Consumers' Association of Canada. The seventy-five published standards cover all kinds of children's garments, but are purely voluntary for manufacturers. See Robert F. Legget, *Standards in Canada* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1971), 94-96.

body measurements with the dimensions of dresses that were supposed fit them.¹⁵ Louise La Fleur, a graduate student at the Kansas State College of Agriculture and Applied Science, conducted one such study of fifty female college students with thirty-two- and thirty-four-inch bust sizes. She compared their body mass distribution to the measurements of four size 32 and size 34 dress patterns. She discovered that all four patterns would require alterations of one form or another to fit the women in her sample. While the women's bust measurements all fell between thirty-two and thirty-four inches, their hip and waist measurements varied by as much as four inches. The patterns were either too large in the waist or too small in the armseye (where the sleeve meets the bodice). La Fleur recommended that ready-made clothing sizes be based on the averages of more than fifty different body measurements taken of one thousand people of the same bust size, height, and weight. La Fleur measured more than fifty different parts of her subjects' bodies; Eaton's customers were only expected to take six measurements. It is likely that many mail order customers had to alter or exchange their garments to get the correct fit.

Similarly, girls' ready-made garments did not always fit well. In her 1938 study of six- to fourteen-year-old girls, home economics student Martha Jane Ulrich noted that, while the practice of equating a child's size with his or her age was widespread, there was no written standard for children's sizes in the retail industry. She quoted a

15 Between 1928 and 1937, eight theses were completed at the Kansas State College of Agriculture and Applied Science and the University of Minnesota alone, comparing body measurements of women of different ages with commercial patterns and dress measurements. See Martha Jane Ulrich, "A Comparison of the Body Measurements of Girls From 6 to 14 with the Measurements of Dresses of Corresponding Size," (MSc Thesis, Department of Textiles and Clothing, Kansas State College of Agriculture and Applied Science, 1938), 75-76.

study done by the United States Department of Commerce in 1934 that found that nearly half of ready-made garments that were returned to the retailer after purchase were returned because of the “lack of uniformity in measurements and proportions of similar products produced by different manufacturers.”¹⁶ Without standard measurements by which to construct garments, individual manufacturers and retailers were left to determine the size specifications of their children’s clothes on their own. They often relied on body measurement data collected by public health agencies, which, Ulrich pointed out, commonly reflected a smaller, less healthy size of child, and was therefore less useful as a guide to clothe an “average” child.¹⁷

Ulrich’s own research confirmed the lack of sizing standards. Her study compared the measurements of nine hundred girls – one hundred in each age-size – to the dimensions of thirty-six manufactured dresses (four different styles in each size). Ulrich found that in many cases the dresses did not get uniformly larger as they increased in size. For example, the size 12 of one dress had a larger chest width and waist girth than size 14 of the same dress.¹⁸ Dresses of the same size by different manufacturers varied greatly by length.¹⁹ When compared to girls’ actual measurements, Ulrich found that the dresses were consistently too large in the hips (in one instance nearly two and a half inches larger than the average hip girth) and too small in the shoulder length (between the collar and the top of the sleeve) and the armseye.²⁰ Girls’ dresses were likely to fit awkwardly around the shoulders and hips, and few could

16 Ibid, 2.

17 Ibid, 3.

18 Ibid, 61.

19 Ibid, 67.

20 Ibid, 67-68.

expect to order a dress that fit in the size that corresponded to their age. As a result, Ulrich noted, “mothers stressed the dread of shopping because of difficulty in obtaining correctly sized garments for their children.”²¹

Between 1930 and 1960 Eaton’s offered clothing in an increasing number of sizes and size ranges. In the 1930s there were five different size ranges for female garments (including girls’ sizes) and three for male garments (including boys’ sizes).²² In the 1930s, clothing for grown women was sold in four different size ranges: Junior; Misses’; Women’s; and Larger Women’s.²³ Junior dresses were available in sizes 13, 15, 17, and 19. Misses’ dresses were available in sizes 14, 16, 18, 20, and, occasionally, 22. Just as Junior sizes were odd numbers, the measurements for these sizes were also odd, beginning with a thirty-one-inch bust at size 13 and increasing by two inches each size. Similarly, Misses’ sizes had even bust measurements, beginning at thirty-two inches (size 14) and increasing to thirty-eight inches (size 20).²⁴ Women’s and Larger Women’s sizes were available in sizes 32 to 53. These numbers directly corresponded with the bust measurements; a size 53 dress was supposed to fit a woman with a fifty-three-inch bust. Girls’ sizes were linked to age, beginning at size 6 years (with a twenty-five-inch

21 Ibid, 2.

22 This total does not include the Infants size range, intended for babies up to age two, and the Children’s size range, for young children from ages two to five or six.

23 The Larger Women’s sizes were sometimes also referred to as “Stout” sizes or “Women’s Extra” sizes. For the sake of simplification, here I use only the term “Larger Women” to refer to the larger size range. The evolution of clothing for larger women – and the changing definition of what constituted a larger size – is a subject worthy of further historical investigation. My research suggests that, over time, the size range for larger women expanded to include more sizes previously advertised as “regular” or “average” women’s sizes. Men’s and Boys’ sizing will be discussed in chapter four.

24 For ease of reading, and to better reflect the way the catalogue referred to sizes, numerals are used for sizes throughout this chapter.

chest circumference) and increasing to 14 years (with a thirty-two-inch chest circumference). In the mid-1940s, the company also began selling Women's Half Sizes, which mirrored the proportions of regular sizes but for shorter women. Eaton's also added a Teen size range, a development that will be discussed further below.

Eaton's dress sizes were not described in much detail. The catalogue only listed bust size and dress length in its size charts for women's and girls' clothes, making it difficult for mail order customers to judge the actual dimensions of a garment. Sizes also overlapped quite a bit. For example, the only difference between a dress in size 16 (Misses') and a dress in size 34 (Women's) was the length of the skirt – some styles of Misses' dresses were available in shorter lengths of thirty-seven to forty inches (measured from the neckline), while the shortest Women's dress was five inches longer (forty-two to forty-five inches). Both dresses had a thirty-four-inch bust. If these dresses had different hip, waist, or shoulder measurements, these differences were not described in the 1930s issues of the catalogue.

Beginning in 1940 waist and hip measurements were also included in sizing charts. Eaton's also created six figure types, and asked female customers to use these types to decide what size they required. This meant that, while the Misses' size 16 and the Women's size 34 had the same bust size, the Misses' dress was intended for the "youthful figure" with the smaller waist, while the Women's dress was for a woman of the same height, but with "greater proportions" – meaning larger in the waist, hips, and arms.²⁵ These figure types allowed Eaton's to categorize customers and ultimately, to

25 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Co., Limited, 1940), 206.

market to different sized women in different ways.²⁶

Although Eaton's did not have a specific size range for teenaged girls until 1945, the catalogue did use size ranges to distinguish between clothing for younger and older women by tailoring Junior- and Misses'-sized items to younger women. Junior and Misses' customers were not assumed to be in their teen years; rather, the catalogue often addressed women wearing these sizes as young working women and newly-married wives. Nevertheless, the Junior and Misses' labels certainly implied a link between a woman's age and the size of garment she should buy; Junior commonly designates something smaller or intended for young people, while "Miss" is a title given to unmarried women, who are generally assumed to be younger.²⁷ The fact that these Junior and Misses' dresses were shorter in length than women's dresses also suggests they were intended for younger wearers, as longer skirts were traditionally worn by older women.²⁸ Junior and Misses' sizes were also often labeled "years" in the catalogue during the 1930s. Customers who saw a dress sold in sizes "14 years to 22 years" would likely assume that the dress was intended for someone that age.

The catalogue regularly referred to the youthfulness of its Junior and Misses' dress customers. For example, in 1930 a Misses' dress was described as "a rare value, and one that few smart young moderns will want to miss!" and asked customers to "note

26 For example, dresses in larger sizes were usually sold in darker colours and were said to be "slenderizing," while bridal gowns and bride's maids dresses were only sold in Misses' sizes.

27 "junior, adj. and n." OED Online. December 2011. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oed.com.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/view/Entry/102082> (accessed March 06, 2012).

28 Jo B. Paoletti and Carol L. Kregloh, "The Children's Department," in Claudia Brush Kidwell and Valerie Steele, eds, *Men and Women: Dressing the Part* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 38.

the Youthful Styles.” The Fall Winter 1932/33 issue included a dress in Misses’ sizes that was “to the taste of the style-wise young modern.”²⁹ Similarly, Junior dresses were advertised as “youthful and chic” and “as dashing as youth itself.”³⁰

Despite the connotations of the Junior and Misses’ labels, and the use of words such as young and youthful to describe garments in these size ranges, Eaton’s repeatedly insisted that sizes were related to body shapes, not ages or life stages. In the Spring and Summer 1935 catalogue it attempted to correct the assumption that only younger women could wear Junior and Misses’ sizes. Under the headline “Junior is a Size, Not an Age,” Eaton’s explained that:

The word “Junior” does not necessarily mean the ‘teen-age girl – no indeed. In most cases, the size called “Juniors” are created for slim-fitted adults, as well as the modern ‘teen-age. “Junior Misses” is simply a size range to suit the smaller woman of any age who feels she too can wear “Junior” fashions successfully.³¹

Eaton’s wanted its readers to know that little distinguished its Juniors’ and Misses styles from its Women’s styles – all were similarly fashionable. Unless women were “stout” – a designation that had its own sizes and styles designed with “slenderizing” features to flatter larger figures – they were supposed to feel free to select any dress that fit, regardless of their age. Several of the garments in the subsequent pages of the 1935 catalogue were carefully described as being suited to both “the fashionable Junior Miss

29 “Real Silk Flat Crepe,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 76; “Smart!” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1932/33 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 15.

30 “Celanese,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 81; “All-Wool Charmelaine,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 23.

31 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 5.

and sophisticated older woman with the “youngish” figure.”³² Eaton’s likely wanted to advertise its garments to as wide an audience as possible, and sought to make its dresses appealing to women of all ages by claiming to sell dresses that “the Junior Miss and her youthful mother can wear equally well.”³³ Certainly it would have been appealing to all “youthful mothers” reading the catalogue to think they could wear the same fashions – and perhaps even the same dress – as their grown daughters! Indeed, by claiming Junior garments were intended for the smaller women who “feels she too can wear “Junior” fashions successfully,” Eaton’s put the emphasis on how young a woman *felt*, as opposed to her actual age.

While women had three different size ranges to choose from, prior to the 1930s retailers grouped younger and older girls together when selling clothing. Girls’ garments and patterns were sold in broad ranges: from birth to eighteen months; from eighteen months to six years; and from six years to fourteen or sixteen years.³⁴ Daniel Cook notes in his study of the American children’s clothing industry that these broad age-size ranges “illustrate a comparative lack of distinction among, in particular, the girls between the ages of 6 and 14 or 15.”³⁵ Indeed, of the five girls’ dresses sampled from the Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1929/30 catalogue, three were for sizes 6 years to 14 years.³⁶ It was the most common size range for girls’ dresses in the catalogue in the first half of the 1930s (see Table 3.2). Although girls’ bodies changed in several ways between age six and age

32 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 5.

33 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 5.

34 Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood : The Children’s Clothing Industry and the Rise of the Child Consumer* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 103-104.

35 Ibid, 106.

36 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1929/1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 40, 42, 45.

fourteen – they grew taller, developed longer limbs, and began to develop hips and breasts – dresses for girls in the 1920s and early 1930s did not always reflect these physical changes in their cut or styling.³⁷

The lack of distinction in girls' sizes reflected the fact that the market for girls' ready-made clothing was relatively small until the 1930s.³⁸ In the early decades of the twentieth century, home sewing was a common practice, and girls' day-to-day garments were among the easiest to make.³⁹ Boys' clothing, on the other hand, was more difficult to sew; suits and overalls, which comprised the majority of boys' garments sold in catalogues in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, required either tailoring skills or special sewing machines.⁴⁰ As a result, more women were willing to purchase ready-made boys' clothing. Patterns for girls' dresses, skirts, and blouses were readily

37 Cook argues that this began to change in the 1930s, when articles calling for a distinction between the girl of six and the girl of fourteen began to appear in clothing industry trade publications. Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood*, 107-108.

38 Although the industry and market for ready-made clothing was small in the first two decades of the twentieth century, fashion magazines such as *Godey's Book* and *Harper's Bazaar* included advice about dressing children and instructions about materials required to sew girls' dresses as early as the 1830s. Constance Eileen McCarthy Collard, *From Toddler to Teens: An Outline of Children's Clothing Circa 1780-1930* (Burlington, ON: n.p., 1973), 14-16.

39 Indeed, girls' dresses were considered easy enough for girls to sew themselves. Mothers and teachers, as well as magazines and other advice literature, encouraged young girls to make their own clothes, to prepare them for "women's duties," as one 1890s sewing textbook put it. Learning to sew was seen by many as part of a proper feminine upbringing. Textbook quoted in Sarah A. Gordon, *"Make it Yourself": Home Sewing, Gender, and Culture, 1890-1930* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 47.

40 Between 1890 and 1910, suits comprised more than eighty per cent of boys' clothes in the sample Jo Anne McCutcheon examined from Eaton's, Simpson's and Hudson's Bay Company catalogues. Overalls were increasingly available, making up 16.3 per cent of the 331 garments McCutcheon analysed from the catalogues published in the 1920s. As she notes, overalls required rivets and bar tacking, techniques not possible on most regular sewing machines. They were also made with heavy denim, a difficult material to sew. See J. M. McCutcheon, "Clothing Children in English Canada, 1870-1930," (PhD Thesis: University of Ottawa, 2000), 234, 236.

available, and could even be cut from women's dresses or men's shirts, making sewing girls' clothing in the home relatively easy and economical.⁴¹ By the 1920s, the variety and number of ready-made girls' garments had increased dramatically as mass production lowered the cost of manufacturing and distribution. As more and more married women took paid employment outside the home, purchasing girls' clothing also became more common.⁴²

In her analysis of Canadian mail order catalogues from 1890 to 1930, J.M. McCutcheon found few garments for girls – between 1890 and 1900 only fourteen items of clothing were advertised in the three catalogues she examined. All fourteen were dresses. Between 1910 and 1919, the number and variety of garments increased, and ninety girls' items were sold in the two catalogues McCutcheon analysed. While most were dresses, several ready-made skirts and blouses were also available, suggesting that even these easy-to-make garments could be purchased in the store instead of made at home.⁴³ Nevertheless, smaller department stores, such as Woodward's, in Vancouver, continued to offer a very small selection of ready-made dresses, coats, and sleepwear for girls in their mail order catalogue.⁴⁴

41 Home sewing was also portrayed as a demonstration of a mother's love, and part of a woman's duty as a household manager and caregiver. For a discussion of the many symbolic meanings of home sewing, see "Sewed Considerable," in Sarah A. Gordon, *Make it Yourself*, especially pages 16-19.

42 Home sewing continued to be popular as well. Sewing could be appealing for mothers given the potential difficulty of sizing girls for mail order garments, as noted above.

43 In comparison, the catalogues from the 1890s contained 219 boys' garments, and the catalogues from the 1910s contained 128 boys' garments. See McCutcheon, "Clothing Children in English Canada," 233, 240.

44 Vancouver Centennial Museum, *The Shopping Guide of the West: Woodward's Catalogues, 1898-1953*. Vancouver: J.J. Douglas, 1977.

In the 1930s, manufacturers and retailers began to “discover” the different age-related clothing “needs” of girls, and to pay more attention to girls’ garments in stores and in advertisements.⁴⁵ However, the Eaton’s catalogue only addressed two distinct groups of female customers in the early 1930s – girls and women. There was no in-between or transitional size range between them. Girls too large to wear size 14 were adult women in their physique, and so they were expected to buy garments in Junior, Misses’ or Women’s sizes, which were cut for the physically mature female figure. Evidence from the catalogues suggests that Eaton’s believed women and girls had different needs when it came to choosing a dress. It is worth examining these differences in detail, as understanding how Eaton’s appealed to girls and women helps to demonstrate what distinguished its appeals to teenaged girl consumers beginning in the 1940s.

Eaton’s put fashion at the fore-front when selling women’s dresses. The company described its mail order offerings as made of the richest-looking materials and the most up-to-date styles for less money than it would cost customers to sew a similar garment themselves. For example, in a paragraph at the beginning of the Fall and Winter 1930/31 catalogue, Eaton’s emphasized what it believed were the most important details of the dresses offered:

The NEW FROCKS will win you with their chic and their charm. The silhouette is simple and slim with supple bodice, smoothly fitted hips and gently-rippled flares and pleats. Interesting variations of the cape, youthful boleros and belts defining normal waistline are favorite themes. The clever handling of the neckline and the feminizing influence of the bows and intricate tuckings enjoy marked favor. Colors run the whole gamut of Blues, Browns, rich Red tones, vital Greens and always the modish Black. Materials include the gracious Crepe-back

45 Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood*, 96-121.

Satin, crisp Taffeta and Canton, Flat and Georgette Crepes, with those most queenly of fabrics, Lace and Velvet -- then, too, there is a smart showing of light-weight woolen models -- truly, the dress mode was never more intriguing.⁴⁶

Eaton's wanted customers to pay attention to elements such as flares, pleats, and tucks, and drew attention to distinctive necklines, waistlines, and hemlines that might be more difficult for the home sewer to execute. All the fine details in the garments justified their price, in Eaton's view. A Misses' dress with a "fancy slide" belt and "pert tailored bows" was advertised as an "outstanding value" because its price was "far lower than we ever dreamed possible for fine quality ALL WOOL JERSEY FROCK."⁴⁷

An analysis of the adjectives used in dress descriptions in the 1930s further highlights the stress Eaton's placed on fashion and appearance when selling women's dresses (see Table 3.1). In a sample of 163 dresses in Junior, Misses', and Women's sizes from 1930s catalogues, the words fashion, fashionable, and fashionably appeared ninety-nine times, more than any other descriptive word. "What colour do you prefer – black or beige? Both are very fashionable," the catalogue claimed of one dress in 1931.⁴⁸ Another description highlighted the "new tulip cuffs and pert little bows" that were "high points of fashion" on a Junior-sized dress.⁴⁹ Other common words in dress descriptions from the 1930s included: new; youthful; smart; gay; charming; chic; soft; feminine; graceful; and flattering. These were words that suggested women should be most concerned with the impression their dress made, rather than with its construction. For example, Eaton's promised that the blouse of a crepe-back satin dress in the Fall and Winter 1929/30

46 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 23.

47 Ibid, 28.

48 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 67.

49 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 25.

catalogue was “a feature that will appeal to all women who delight in new style ideas.”⁵⁰ The catalogue assumed female customers as prized novelty over durability. “Value” and “quality” were also used relatively frequently in dress descriptions, but were overshadowed by the greater number of qualitative words focused on the way a garment made a woman look and feel, its stylish details, and its relevance to current fashion trends.

In contrast, Eaton’s emphasized what was “practical” and “pretty” when advertising girls’ dresses in the 1930s catalogues. Girls’ did not need fashion – they needed useful dresses that could be worn day-to-day, according to the catalogue. “School, church, and all occasions call for a warm, practical NAVY BLUE ALL WOOL SERGE ONE-PIECE DRESS,” Eaton’s claimed in the 1929 catalogue, while a middy dress advertised the following year was “For Active Hours.”⁵¹ Eaton’s claimed its offerings were “Filling a Variety of Needs in a Girl’s Wardrobe.”⁵² The garments were touted as being versatile – even party dresses were washable, the company noted, and thus very practical.

“Warm” and “practical” were among the most frequently used adjectives in the seventy-one girls’ dress descriptions sampled from the 1930s issues (see Table 4.1), echoing Eaton’s emphasis on the utility and versatility of its girls’ garments. Girls’ dresses from the early 1930s were most often made out of comfortable, warm and easy-

50 “Lovely Style in Crepe-Back Satin,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1929/30 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 28.

51 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 44; Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 113.

52 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1929/30 Catalogue, (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 42.

to-care-for fabrics such as cotton, flannel, and wool.⁵³ Several flannel dresses were described as “cozy,” further emphasizing their warmth.⁵⁴ In the Spring and Summer catalogues, “cool” dresses were most practical for warm days – a page of girls’ dresses in 1932 was headlined “Gay as a Garden – Cool As a Breeze.”⁵⁵ Girls’ dresses were also extolled for being durable. “Sturdy” appeared six times in the sample of 1930s girls’ dresses, but was never used to describe women’s dresses in the same period. One description from the 1932 catalogue promoted a dress’s “excellent wearing abilities,” noting that it was “carefully made of sturdy COTTON DURO CLOTH.”⁵⁶ Another description noted that “COTTON BROADCLOTH will stand up well under the exacting wear of frolicksome youngsters.”⁵⁷ Though wear was not as much of a concern in girls’ garments as it was in boys’ (as we shall see in the next chapter), Eaton’s still used the image of active girls to sell clothes.

Eaton’s also wanted girls to feel stylish, and assumed girls wanted to look pretty in a way that was appropriate to their age and supposed sexual innocence. For example, Eaton’s offered a “Real Silk Fugi” dress that was described as:

So pretty for best and so practical. This simple little Frock comes in a fine quality REAL SILK FUGI. Washes and wears splendidly. Skirt gathered all around. Dainty side ties with decorative button trimming.

53 In the dresses sampled from 1929, all five were made from one of these three materials. In the 1930 catalogue, there was one silk dress compared to two wool, two cotton, and four flannel garments. There were five garments in 1931 described as cotton or flannel, as well as one silk dress and one lace dress. Flannel, cotton, and wool became less common when manufacturers started using spun rayon fabrics, which were advertised as being more durable and easier to care for.

54 “Extremely Low Priced” and “Wool Flannel Bloomer Frock,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 42, 43.

55 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 46.

56 Ibid.

57 “Wouldn’t She Be Adorable in This?” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), D.

Neat-fitting collar and long sleeves. In two shades most popular with the gay young miss. Be sure to state size and color desired.⁵⁸

Instead of being lauded as fashionable or shapely, as many women's dresses were, the details of this dress were "dainty," suggesting that trimming needed to be delicate and small to be appropriate for girls. Similar to many of the girls' dresses in the 1930s, this dress had a high collar and full sleeves, covering the wearer's upper body completely. It was the decorative buttons and ties that made it appealing, as opposed to its slimming lines. These touches were described as pretty and girlish, terms that implied femininity without sexuality. Girlish appeared five times in girls' dress descriptions between 1929 and 1932.⁵⁹ Dresses were described as "extremely pretty and girlish," or said to be cut in a "girlishly-flattering flared style."⁶⁰ The term was never used to describe dresses for adult women.

Eaton's assumed that mothers were the primary consumers of girls' clothes. The catalogue portrayed mothers as value-seeking consumers who wanted both serviceable and stylish dresses for their daughters. In 1929, the catalogue noted that "Eatonia values make buying easy for modern mothers of little daughters."⁶¹ "Modern mothers" might be busy working outside the home, but Eaton's stressed that they could still fulfill their

58 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 45.

59 "Trim, Typically Girlish Lines," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1929/30 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 42; "Extremely Low Priced," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 43; "Two-Color Frock," Eaton's 1931 Spring and Summer Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 103; "Duro Cloth – Bolero Effect," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 46; "Warm and Colorful for the Schoolgirl," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1931/32 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 54.

60 "Extremely Low Priced," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 43; "Two-Color Frock," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 103.

61 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1929/30 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 42.

maternal duty to clothe their children using the catalogue. In 1935, the catalogue advertised a cotton print dress for girls by exclaiming: “Mothers! At this low price have plenty of cool washable Frocks for daughter – here is a sturdy Printed Cotton with White collar.”⁶² Mentioning “daughter” implied that “mother” was the company’s target audience. The Fall and Winter 1940/41 catalogue announced: “At the Head of the Class! That’s where young daughter will stand in style importance when she wears this frock to school.”⁶³ Catalogue headings such as “New Togs for Young Daughter” and “Wouldn’t She Be Adorable in This Pantie Dress?” were directed at mothers more than at girls themselves.⁶⁴ Indirectly, Eaton’s also appealed to mothers by emphasizing fabrics that laundered easily.⁶⁵

62 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 16.

63 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1940/41 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 92.

64 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 42.

65 Five dresses were described as “launders beautifully,” “washes very well,” or “washable” between 1930 and 1935. See “Launders Well,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 110; “Puffed Sleeves,” “Real Silk Fugi,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1931/32 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 52; Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1933 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 26; Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1934 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1934), “Cotton Print,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 16.

Table 3.1: Comparison of the prevalence of words used to describe girls' and women's dresses in the Eaton's catalogue during the 1930s.

Word	Girls'	Prevalence in girls sample (as a percentage)	Junior	Misses'	Women's	Prevalence in Junior, Misses' and Women's combined sample (as a percentage)
<i>TOTAL SAMPLE</i>	71		32	72	59	163
Fashion/fashionable/ Fashionably	8	11	31	43	25	61
New/newly	10	14	22	48	25	58
Smart/smartly	21	30	12	35	32	49
Feminine	0	0	0	8	15	14
Youthful/ Youthfully	8	11	17	28	16	37
Value/valuable	5	7	16	10	13	24
Gay	6	8	6	16	10	20
Charming/ Charm	4	6	10	14	9	20
Soft/softly	4	6	7	11	11	18
Quality	2	3	3	16	13	20
Chic	1	1	7	19	5	19
Grace/Graceful/ Gracefully	3	4	7	10	5	14
Young/youngster	15	21	2	6	1	6
Fine/finely	8	11	2	10	8	12
Lovely/loveliness	1	1	1	10	10	13
Fit/Fitted/Fitting	4	6	2	10	4	10
Flattering/Flatterer	1	1	6	9	7	14
Slim/slimming	1	1	11	5	2	11
Modern	5	7	10	5	1	10
Pretty	8	11	1	3	3	4
Practical	6	8	2	5	1	5
Sturdy	6	9	0	0	0	0
Dressy	3	4	1	2	1	2

Word	Girls'	Prevalence in girls sample (as a percentage)	Junior	Misses'	Women's	Prevalence in Junior, Misses' and Women's combined sample (as a percentage)
Serviceable	5	7	0	3	0	2
Stylish/stylishly	5	7	0	0	2	1
Economical/economy	4	6	1	0	4	3
Warm/warmly	7	10	1	0	0	1
Cool	14	20	3	8	6	10
Girlish/Girlishly	6	9	0	0	0	0

In 1932 the catalogue included a new size of girls' clothing that suggested Eaton's believed its girls' dresses were not meeting the clothing needs of older girl customers – that there might be a customer too large for girls' sizes and too young for women's styles. In the girls' section of its Fall and Winter 1932/33 catalogue, Eaton's announced the introduction of a new size called 14x. Dresses in this size were cut fuller in the armholes, hips, sleeves, shoulders, chest, and waist. They were also three inches longer, on average, than size 14 dresses.⁶⁶ In the 1932 catalogue, the few dresses offered in this new "Specialized Style," as Eaton's described it, were labeled "party dresses;" however, subsequent issues of the catalogue included an increasing range of formal and informal dresses, jumpers, and coats in size 14x.⁶⁷ It quickly became the new upper limit of the girls' size range.

The way Eaton's advertised its 14x dresses suggests that the new size was

⁶⁶ Although Eaton's mentioned that 14x dresses were cut wider, they did not include the precise measurements of the size in the catalogue.

⁶⁷ Eaton's Fall and Winter 1932/33 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 57.

created as much to capitalize on anxieties about age-appropriate appearance as it was to cater to girls who happened to be physically larger than their peers. In the 1932 catalogue Eaton's claimed these garments were intended "for the 14-year-old girl who is plump for her age."⁶⁸ Eaton's believed this "new feature" would be "welcomed by hosts of perplexed mothers" whose teenaged girls were too large for dresses in the fourteen-years size.⁶⁹ The implication was that these girls could not simply order their dresses from the women's section of the catalogue. Women's dresses, the catalogue stressed, would not be age-appropriate for the larger fourteen-year-old girl. 14x was "made expressly for the lassies who have, until now, found it necessary to have garments altered or to wear styles that were too 'old.'"⁷⁰ Physical size was not as important as chronological age and the belief that a teenager could and should be clothed differently than a woman.

The catalogue did not say exactly what made a dress "too old;" however, the dresses available in size 14x in 1932 and 1933 shared many of the characteristics of dresses made for younger girls. Indeed, most were available in sizes from 10 to 14x, and Eaton's emphasized the same frilly necklines, puffed sleeves, and durable, washable materials as it did with all girls' dresses at the time.⁷¹ The message was that girls who matured too quickly were still girls. They were, however, hard to dress because of their size. By extending the girls' size range, Eaton's claimed to have helped mothers solve

68 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1932/33 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 57.

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid.

71 See, for example, "Chic Jumper Effect," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1933/34 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 29; "Puffed Sleeves," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1933 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 27; "And When There's a Party--" Eaton's Fall and Winter 1932/33 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 57.

their daughters' clothing woes, advertising its first 14x-sized dress with the words: "Here is the very frock she will love to wear."⁷² Size 14x represented an extension of the girls' size range, rather than the creation of a new size-style range in between girls' and women's garments.

However, in 1934, Eaton's began to refer to the higher girls' sizes as a distinct size range, called Senior Girls. The Senior Girls' sizes – 12 years, 13 years, 14 years, and 14x years – claimed to offer larger (and, implicitly, older) girls' age-appropriate styles. Between 1935 and 1940 each issue of the catalogue included a selection of dresses with this label, intended to appeal to a presumed teenage desire for sophistication, while accommodating girls' developing figures and protecting their childlike appearance. For example, in the Spring and Summer 1935 catalogue, Eaton's advertised a Senior Girls' version of a jacket frock, a popular women's style at the time. Announced as "A Chic Fashion," the printed voile dress had a longer skirt than other girls' dresses, imitating the length of women's dresses.⁷³ The Senior Girls' jacket frock also mimicked a women's garment by offering girls a variety of styling choices; the separate jacket could be worn with the dress or with other outfits, and had elasticized sleeves that could be worn up or down. The catalogue did not sell two-piece dresses in girls' sizes, likely because the style did not match the desired practicality and simplicity of garments for young girls. Separate pieces could be lost, or get in the way of a young

72 "And When There's a Party--" Eaton's Fall and Winter 1932/33 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 57.

73 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 17. Long skirts were a traditional marker of sexual maturity for women, and women's dresses and skirts remained longer than girls' dresses and skirts in the catalogue throughout the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. Paoletti and Kregloh, "The Children's Department," 38.

girls' free movement. By selling two-piece dresses to Senior Girls, Eaton's was marking these customers as mature enough to wear a style that resembled those of adult women. Eaton's wanted Senior Girls to feel grown up.

At the same time, the garment's round collar, puff sleeves, and "pert bows" were more characteristic of dresses for younger girls. The dress also had a back sash – a construction feature common to young girls' dresses both because it created a girlish bow at the back, and because it adapted to growing waists more easily than fitted waistlines.⁷⁴ By combining girlish features with a more mature style of dress, Eaton's wanted customers to know that Senior Girls dresses were "full of fashion but still very young."⁷⁵

In order to further distinguish Senior Girls' dresses and attract the attention of older girls, Eaton's also offered these garments in the same "fashion colours" as women's dresses. Most of Eaton's girls' dresses were not sold in a wide variety of colours. Of the 166 girls' dresses sampled from the catalogues, 102 were offered in only one or two colour choices. The most common colours were blue, white, red, green, and maize (yellow).⁷⁶ In contrast, several of the Senior Girls' dresses were available in the same colours as women's garments, including: Delft Blue; Dragon Red; Nile-Green;

74 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 17. Tie-back waists were popular in girls' dresses because girls did not outgrow them as quickly as dresses with fitted waists. As a girl grew, the waist could grow with her.

75 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1939 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1939), 74.

76 In the dresses sampled, "Blue" appeared in descriptions of girls' garments ninety-eight times, more than any other colour; "white" appeared seventy-four times (likely because many dresses were described as having white collars, not because Eaton's sold such a diversity of white dresses); "red" appeared sixty-six times; "green" appeared forty-nine times; and "maize" (yellow) appeared twenty times. In an interesting contrast to today, when pink and purple shades dominate clothing for young girls, twelve girls dresses were sold in pink (they were all also available in blue), and purple was not available at all.

Formosa Blue; Fresco Rose; Roseberry; Coral; and Tahiti Green.⁷⁷ While dresses for younger girls were occasionally described as being “powder blue” or “rose,” Eaton’s used much more exotic descriptions when selling Senior Girls’ dresses, likely wanting to impart a feeling of sophistication to appeal to this age group.

While Senior Girls’ dresses, like dresses for younger girls, were advertised as “sturdy” and “decidedly practical,” the word “fashion” appeared much more frequently in descriptions of Senior Girls’ dresses.⁷⁸ Eaton’s referred to Senior Girls’ dresses as “Fashion” or “Fashionable” twelve times between 1934 and 1939.⁷⁹ In 1935 a double-page spread of the catalogue heralded “Fashions for Senior Girls!”⁸⁰ Another dress was labeled “A Chic Fashion” – the word “chic” appeared only once in reference to younger girls’ dresses.⁸¹ Younger girls’ dresses were not typically referred to as “fashions.” Instead, they were “smart things,” “youthful apparel,” or “girlish styles.”⁸² While the word “fashion” appeared alongside girls’ dresses more frequently after 1940, between

77 See “You’ll Save Here,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 17; “Pique Suit,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 17; “New High Collar,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1935/36 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 15; “Low Priced Rayon Rough Crepe,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1937 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1937), 48; “Summer Charm!” Eaton’s 1939 Spring and Summer 1939 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1939), 74.

78 “Shepherd’s Check is Smart,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1934/35 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1934), 22; “Polka Dot,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 17.

79 These were the only years that Eaton’s used the “Senior Girls” label.

80 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 17.

81 In the 1933 Fall and Winter catalogue, Eaton’s advertised a dress with a “Chic Jumper Effect” in sizes eight years to fourteen-x years. “Chic” was used once in the sixteen Senior Girls’ dresses sampled, compared to once in the fifty-three girls’ dresses sampled from the same time period (1934-1939).

82 See, for example: Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 109; Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 106; Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1931/32 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 54.

1935 and 1940 the words “young” and “youth” most commonly described dresses for girls in sizes 6 to 14 years. For example, Eaton’s described a dress as being “as gay as its young wearer.”⁸³ In 1937 a page of girls’ dresses was identified as being for “THE YOUNGER GENERATION – 6 to 10 yrs.”⁸⁴ In contrast, the following year a Senior Girls’ dress was advertised as being “Not Too Old,” identifying it as youthful without actually using the word.⁸⁵ Only one Senior Girls dress in the catalogue sample was associated with the words “young” or “youthful.” It was a Rayon Crepe with “youthful puff sleeves” that was “just adorable for the sweet young thing.”⁸⁶ While Senior Girls’ dresses were made for girls who the catalogue still considered children, Eaton’s also avoided making strong associations between Senior Girls and their younger sisters.

At the same time as it was targeting larger-sized girls for special attention, Eaton’s was also breaking its girls’ size range more clearly into different age-related sub-ranges. Throughout the 1930s Eaton’s offered more dresses in an 8 to 14 years size range instead of the 6 to 14 years range, and by the end of the decade two narrower size ranges dominated the girls’ section of the catalogue – a 6 to 10 years range and a 10 to 14 years range. Girls aged six to ten were considered young girls, and the styles, trims, and hemlines of dresses sold in sizes 6 to 10 were intended to appeal to mothers’ desires for pretty and practical girlish garments. Girls aged ten to fourteen (including those wearing Senior Girls’ sizes) were assumed to be entering or experiencing puberty, growing taller and perhaps more awkward in their proportions. Eaton’s was beginning to define a

83 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 102.

84 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1937 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1937), 45.

85 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1938/39 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1938), 32.

86 “New High Collar,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1935/36 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 15.

middle ground, an in-between customer too grown up for girls' clothing but not mature enough for women's styles.

Table 3.2: Number of dresses available in different girls' sizes, by year, 1929-1939.

	6 years to 10 years	6 years to 12 years	6 years to 14 years	7 years to 14(x) years	8 years to 14(x) years	10 years to 14(x) years	12 years to 14(x) years	Total sample
1929	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	5
1930	1	1	3	-	-	1	-	6
1931	1	-	1	-	5	-	-	7
1932	-	-	2	-	3	1	-	6
1933	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	5
1934	1	-	-	2	2	-	1	6
1935	13	-	2	-	-	9	11	35
1937	2	-	-	-	-	3	1	6
1938	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	4
1939	1	-	-	-	-	2	1	4
Total	20	1	11	3	15	18	16	84

Despite creating the Senior Girls' size range and more discernible tiered girls' sizes, Eaton's did not yet have a clear definition of, or strategy for marketing to, a teenaged consumer. Between 1939 and 1945, Eaton's began to target teenaged girls in several ways, essentially experimenting with different advertising tactics. Although there was no distinct "teen" size-style range until 1945, Eaton's occasionally associated both girls' and Junior dresses with a teenaged customer who was both eager to look older and prone to "figure problems" associated with physical maturation. The catalogue also began to address teenaged girls directly, situating dresses in a teenaged culture

characterized by high school attendance, dating, and peer approval.

Despite claims that “Junior is a size, not an age,” several times between 1939 and 1945 Eaton’s associated Junior-sized dresses with young women generally, and teenaged girls specifically.⁸⁷ The first example comes from the 1939 Spring and Summer issue, in which a page of the women’s dress section was dedicated to dresses designed in New York for “miss eleven-to-eighteen years.” Junior dresses were sold in sizes 11 to 19, but were not usually associated so closely with age. These dresses were “Styles for Teen-Agers,” according to the headline, and were displayed next the teenaged film actress Deanna Durbin, the “little Canadian-born lady starring in Universal Pictures” (see Figure 3.3). Durbin was born Edna Mae in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1921. She was the second daughter of British immigrants Ada and James Durbin. Due to James’ poor health, the family moved to southern California in 1923. Deanna changed her name shortly before she signed her first acting contract with MGM Studios at age fourteen. She then went on to make twenty-one films with Universal Pictures between 1936 and 1949. Producers such as Louis B. Mayer of the Metro Goldwyn Mayer film production company were drawn to her clear soprano voice and her innocent, girlish appearance. She continued to play teenaged girls into her early twenties, and was often described by journalists and film reviewers as a personification of youth.⁸⁸

87 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 5; Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1948/49 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1948), 3.

88 Doris Denbo, “Winnipeg’s Gift to the World,” *Canadian Home Journal* (March 1937): 18, 38, 40, 57. Since her retirement in 1949 at the age of twenty-six, Deanna Durbin has led a very private life; no biographies have been published of her life or career. However, thanks to re-releases of her films on video and DVD, her movies continue to be viewed, and on-line fan sites abound. See V Brookes, *The Deanna Durbin Database*, <<http://web.archive.org/web/20091027085703/http://geocities.com>



HERE'S SOMETHING SPECIAL!
A beautiful copy of Deanna Durbin's autographed picture in color dress with each of these four dresses at no extra charge.

DEANNA DURBIN

STARRING IN
"STYLES FOR TEEN-AGERS"

Deanna Durbin—the little Canadian-born lady starring in Universal Pictures, has taken the country by storm. She's lovable—adorable—the very spirit of vivacious, gay, care-free youth! Every smart "Teen-age" girl will want to be like her! And how can she help it with such peppy, breezy, it's-fun-to-be-alive dresses like these! Lucky young miss eleven-to-eighteen years to have these styles—designed especially by Eileen Joy of New York for the Deanna Durbin age! Lucky for you, too, that EATON'S secured these exciting, new, teen-age fashions at such moderate prices!

See Deanna Durbin, star of Universal Pictures, in *The Cat and the Hat*, *Mad About Music*, *Three Smart Girls*, and her new picture, *Three Smart Girls Grow Up*.



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DESCRIPTIONS OF GARMENTS SHOWN ON OPPOSITE PAGE

Pastels with Pepl!
58-150. It's the sprightly floral pattern that adds vim to the soft, cool colorings. Styled to keep you cool, too, of smooth Rayon "Petit Crepe" (trade name). Its semi-tailored lines are becoming to practically every type.
Sizes 14, 16, 18, 20 years
Lengths 42, 44, 46, 47, 48 inches
Colors MAIZE (shown); ROSE; BLUE.
EATON'S Economy price 1.98

"Tamara Crepe"
58-152. The gay blocked floral design is right in tune with Summer—so is the material—cool, frosty-smooth Rayon "Tamara Crepe" (trade name). Isn't it youthful and smart with its high shoulder.
Sizes 14, 16, 18, 20 years
Lengths 44, 44, 45, 45 inches
Ground Shades WINE (shown); BLUE.
EATON'S Economy Price 1.98

Look Peasant, Please!
58-154. Wear a Drendl—that most feminine of fashions, as lively as presents on a holiday! Here it is in luscious India Printed Cotton—trimmed to look like a bolero! "Laster" shirred waist, full skirt, and high neck with a perky white collar.
Sizes 14, 16, 18, 20 years
Lengths 42, 44, 45, 45 inches
Ground colors BROWN; NAVY; GREEN.
EATON'S Economy Price 1.98

"Velvaspun" Rayon
58-156. Here's a flattering choice for that indispensable dark-toned Print! Dress that you can't do without in Summer. A soft "Velvaspun" Rayon, surplice style with pleated Cape sleeves and a high-waisted shirred bodice.
Sizes 14, 16, 18, 20 years
Lengths 42, 44, 46, 47, 47, 48, 48 inches
Ground shades WINE (shown); NAVY GREEN.
EATON'S Economy Price 1.98

Slubbed Broadcloth
58-151. Jubilant colors for the youthful, spirited, spring for those with a zest for life! It's Slubbed Cotton Broadcloth with pleats in the skirt, crisp White Cotton Peque collar and cuffs, ribbon bow at throat! And don't forget that Cottons are easy to keep clean!
Sizes 14, 16, 18, 20 years
Lengths 44, 44, 45, 45 inches
Color as shown only.
EATON'S Economy price 1.98

Flock Dot Voile
58-153. Summer-time Cotton Voile is the cool weather! Navy only with tiny white dots, and a dainty daisy trimming of White lace. A frock with a perky peplum, two pockets and a crisp white Cotton Peque collar.
Sizes 14, 16, 18, 20 years
Lengths 44, 44, 45, 45 inches
Color as shown only.
EATON'S Economy Price 1.98

A Paisley Print
58-155. Something a little different in Prints—a quaint Paisley pattern in smooth Rayon "Tamara Crepe" (trade name). You'll look dressed up in it and feel cool as a breeze! High waistline, brief sleeves, white collar with a demure little bow at the high neck.
Sizes 14, 16, 18, 20 years
Lengths 44, 44, 45, 45 inches
Ground shades BLUE; MAIZE; AQUA GREEN.
EATON'S Economy Price 1.98

Chico Cord Cotton
58-157. If you're keen on Cottons here's a quality you'll cheer for—a nice weight in a corded weave, and cheerily printed for sunny weather! It unbuttons all down the front and has white accents of Cotton Peque.
Sizes 14, 16, 18, 20 years
Lengths 42, 44, 46, 47, 47, 48 inches
Ground shades GREEN (shown); NAVY WINE.
EATON'S Economy Price 1.98

14 EATON'S

Note Our Exchange Policy on Garments Shown on this and the Opposite Page:
If You Make an Exchange You Pay the Cost of Returning Parcel to Us.

SPRING AND SUMMER 1939

Figure 3.3: "Deanna Durbin Starring in 'Styles for Teen-Agers,'" Eaton's Spring and Summer 1939 Catalogue.

That personification of youth was reflected in the descriptions of the four featured dresses, which made a clear association between the garments advertised and the age and life stage of the intended wearer. Durbin was pictured smiling and glancing to the left, her dark hair pulled back with a small bow at the back of her head, emphasizing the characteristic youthfulness she was famous for. She was, according to the accompanying text, “loveable—adorable—the very spirit of vivacious, gay, care-free youth!” The four garments featured below Durbin were described as “breezy, it’s-fun-to-be-alive dresses.”⁸⁹ These were “the cream of the youthful crop,” dresses that imparted a “most popular girl in the crowd” look, according to Eaton’s. The catalogue claimed “it’s a very smart girl indeed who goes to her parties and important “dates” wearing this winsome frock!”⁹⁰ Such statements associated the dresses with what Eaton’s assumed were typical teenagers – carefree, social girls, popular with their peers.

Like the dresses in the Senior Girls size range, the dresses in the Deanna Durbin promotion also emphasized that older teenaged girls were at an in-between stage – both physically and stylistically. The catalogue mentioned that one of the dresses had a shirred waist made of an elastic material, which was “an easy fashion for those sometimes hard-to-fit teens.” Another was advertised as featuring “all the important fashion features this season,” including a slim waist, high shoulders and a high neckline. The catalogue wanted adolescent girls to feel that these dresses were just as fashionable as those made for adult women. However, the catalogue added that, despite these

89 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1939 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1939), 14.

90 Ibid.

fashionable features, the dress was “appealingly young for a lively ‘teen-age miss.’”⁹¹ It is not clear whether the youthfulness of the dress was appealing to its young wearers or to their parents. Either way, the Deanna Durbin promotion was trying to strike a balance between attracting young girls with grown-up dresses, and making them look older than they were.

The second example comes from 1941, when the catalogue displayed a girls’ dress alongside Women’s dresses on page six, suggesting that the company was not sure where to place teenaged girls’ clothing in the catalogue. Eaton’s may have been trying to make younger girls feel special by displaying a dress for them alongside dresses for their elders, since the company assumed girls were eager to appear older. The headline “Fashion Keeps Tab on Teensters,” which advertised the dress, associated the teenaged female customer with the 10 to 14x size range, instead of the Junior size range. The suggestion that “Fashion” had to pay attention to what teenaged girls were doing – and not the other way around – also emphasized that they were important customers.⁹²

Despite its placement in the Women’s section of the catalogue, the dress itself shared the style elements of younger girls’ garments. Eaton’s emphasized the pointed white collar, puffed sleeves, and cheeky white elephant-shaped buttons down the front of the bodice. Puffed sleeves and pointed collars were style features particularly associated with younger girls; sixty per cent of the dresses sampled that advertised puffed sleeves were girls’ dresses.⁹³ Similarly, more garments with pointed collars were

91 Ibid.

92 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1941 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1941), 6.

93 Thirty-four of the fifty-seven total garments advertised as having puffed sleeves were girls’ dresses; eight were Junior dresses; six were Misses dresses, and eight were Women’s or Larger Women’s dresses.

offered in girls' sizes than in any other size.⁹⁴ The skirt length also suggested it was intended for younger girls; while the Junior, Miss, and Women's dresses pictured above it had skirts that fell to just below the knee, the skirt on the girls' dress ended just above the knee. The baggy pockets – one on each hip – were a feature not seen on dresses for older women – indeed, dress descriptions for women were more likely to focus on how a dress would draw attention away from the hips.⁹⁵ Finally, Eaton's emphasized the way the dress was styled “especially to help eliminate [the] awkward contours” of teenage growth, “with tie-backs at the waist to give a fitted look.”⁹⁶ Ten- to fourteen-year-old girls were less likely to have developed curves, but sashes at the waist could create the illusion of curves, and allow room to grow.

At the same time, Eaton's also began marketing larger-sized girls' dresses to teenagers. The Fall and Winter 1940/41 catalogue featured several garments for “Junior Debs” among the Women's dresses and coats. A debutante, or deb, was usually eighteen years of age or slightly older, and was being introduced as a marriageable woman through a series of social events such as teas, dinners, and formal balls – her debut. “Junior Deb” was a term sometimes applied to younger teenagers – those who had reached puberty but not yet been formally introduced to society or begun dating. Eaton's applied the term to girls wearing sizes 12 to 14x. “Junior Debs call them smart,” the

94 Seven of the twenty total garments advertised as having pointed collars were in girls' sizes; two were in Junior sizes; seven were in Misses' sizes; the remaining four were in half- and women's sizes.

95 See for example: “The Eyelet Embroidery – A First Fashion,” Eaton's Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 77; “Slenderizing Stripes,” Eaton's Spring and Summer 1941 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1941), 23.

96 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1941 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1941), 6.

page headline claimed, referring to the illustrated dress, coat, and snowsuit. The dress was “picked especially to give collegiate teensters that grown-up look they long for – but we haven’t forgotten that 12 to 14x-ers are still exuberantly young!” Eaton’s pointed out that the fabric (an alpaca weave rayon that “handles superbly”), as well as the design (with “modish tucks at the shoulders and waist,” a pleated skirt, and a basted hem), were chosen specifically to address “the figure problems of growing girls, softening too-bony curves and whittling down too-chubby contours.”⁹⁷ These dresses were intended for teenaged girls, who were still growing and who, Eaton’s believed, were at a stage between girlhood and womanhood that required a specific style to reflect this age-based status.

Finally, the Spring and Summer 1943 catalogue offers an example of how the company used models to appeal to teenaged girls. Located adjacent to the Women’s dresses near the beginning of the catalogue was page headlined “The Date Line-Up for Junior Do’s,” again associating the dresses on offer with the assumed social activities of young women. In this case, the descriptions of the dresses did not contain teenage jargon. Except for the headline, there were no references to dates, school, or dances, although one “gypsy dirndl” dress was advertised as a style “adored by vivacious young on-the-go’s!”⁹⁸ Instead, the models themselves were styled in a way intended to appeal to teenaged girls. Two of them were photographed in a setting resembling a soda bar, with one holding a soda bottle with a straw, and the other leaning against the counter. The models’ hair styles and accessories suggested their younger age. All six wore small

97 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1940/41 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 6.

98 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1943 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1943), 11.

bows of flowers in their shoulder-length hair. Hair bows were a far more common accessory for girls than for women. In the entire catalogue sample, hair bows appeared on models thirty-five times; thirty were modeling girls' dresses.⁹⁹ Depicting Junior models with hair bows marked them as younger, perhaps in an attempt to appeal to teenaged customers.

These four examples illustrate how Eaton's portrayed the "teenaged girl" as an in-between stage of life when advertising both Junior- and girl-sized dresses in the early 1940s. In so doing, Eaton's both defined and solved the "problem" of dressing girls who, because of puberty, were considered awkward and difficult to fit. Teenaged girls might be chubby or thin, but Eaton's emphasized that by purchasing its merchandise, "they'll never be at the "awkward age" because their clothes are from EATON'S Catalogue."¹⁰⁰

As the catalogue began to experiment with targeting teenaged girls, it also began to address young female customers more directly. Previously, clothing descriptions for younger girls had often been addressed, directly and indirectly, to mothers, and references to "mother" did not disappear entirely in the 1940s. For example, the "Fashion Keeps Tab on Teensters" dress, discussed above, was described as being for "your growing daughter," suggesting that mothers would be placing the order.¹⁰¹ Similarly, the Fall and Winter 1942/43 catalogue addressed mothers (and again linked interest in clothing with growing up) by stating: "So your daughter is beginning to notice

99 Flowers were a far less common hair accessory in the catalogue, appearing only four times in the garments sampled. While all of the models on the page of the 1943 catalogue wore either a hair bow or flowers in their hair, due to my sampling technique (selecting every tenth dress), only one of these dresses was included in the data sample.

100 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1941/42 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1941), 129.

101 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1941 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1941), 6.

what she wears now.”¹⁰² However, Eaton’s also showed signs of trying to appeal to younger customers themselves, not just their mothers. A page of the Fall and Winter 1938/39 catalogue featured six dresses that were “Styled to please school-aged girls – priced to please their Mothers!”¹⁰³ This type of rhetoric acknowledged and reinforced the role that girls themselves played in selecting their clothing. Mother may be paying for her daughter’s clothes, but Eaton’s wanted girls of all ages to read the catalogue and choose the garments they desired. In 1942, the company claimed it was selling “the kind of clothes [girls] clamour for and mother approves – “pretties” for Sunday-best, “sensibles” for everyday.”¹⁰⁴ Eaton’s placed mothers in the removed position of overseeing – but not making – their daughters’ purchasing decisions.

During the 1940s the catalogue shifted from addressing girl customers indirectly as “she” and “her” to addressing them more directly as “you.” All nine of the references made to “her” in girls’ dress descriptions came from issues published between 1929 and 1941. “The Schoolgirl” could be “warm and stylish as can be in her good wearing ALL-WOOL FLANNEL DRESS,” the Fall and Winter 1931/32 catalogue claimed, while the following year one dress description asked “Isn’t she stylish in her VELVETEEN FROCK?”¹⁰⁵ In 1935 the catalogue insisted that mothers “Dress her up in Fashion’s sheer colorful Fairmont Printed Cotton Dress,” while the 1940 catalogue reminded mothers that “tunics are “right” from her first day of school until her late ’teens.”¹⁰⁶

102 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1942/43 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1942), 125.

103 “Long Zipper,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1938/29 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1938), 29.

104 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1942/43 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1942), 129.

105 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1931/32 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 54;
Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1932/33 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 56.

106 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 15;

References to “she” also appeared nine times in the girls’ garments sampled; only two of these references appeared after 1940.¹⁰⁷

More direct, personal appeals to “you” appeared in girls’ dress descriptions only once before 1942, but became more common in subsequent issues.¹⁰⁸ For example, a school dress was described as being “As gay and bright as your own spirits!”¹⁰⁹ The Fall and Winter 1944/45 catalogue promised that “You’ll look like a high school girl in this smart two-piece Jumper Dress.”¹¹⁰ In 1945 the company advertised “a dress that will keep you fresh and cool through sultry Summer weather.” These descriptions clearly associated the person reading the catalogue and the intended wearer of the dress.¹¹¹ In 1946 the catalogue included a dress with a “Dancing dirndl skirt to give you an “air” as you walk along to Sunday school or classroom,” while the 1947 issue promised “you’ll

Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1940/41 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 93.
¹⁰⁷ “She’ll look lovely from sun-up to sun-down!” and “She’ll count the days till she can wear it,” Eaton’s promised in separate dress descriptions in the 1940 Spring and Summer catalogue. Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 28, 29. In the Fall and Winter 1951/52 Catalogue, Eaton’s advertised a bolero-style dress in sizes seven to twelve years, claiming: “She’ll feel so grown-up in this style, to wear on more important occasions”(164). In the Spring and Summer 1957 catalogue the company advertised a First Communion dress in the same size range that “has everything she dreamed about for that special occasion!”(138). Both of these references were made to dresses available only to younger girls. Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1951/52 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1951), 164; Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1957 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1957), 138.

¹⁰⁸ A dress advertised in the Fall and Winter 1929 Catalogue asked girls to “slip into a neat little COTTON BROADCLOTH DRESS when you come home from school on Winter days.” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1929 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 43.

¹⁰⁹ Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1941/42 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1941), 130.

¹¹⁰ Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1944/45 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1944), 65.

¹¹¹ Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1945 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1945), 77. The description of a Teen-sized dress in the same catalogue included a similar line: “You can see from the illustration that this is a spirited dress that will take you through the summertime in style and comfort” (p. 89).

look as charming as Heidi herself!” and the 1949 catalogue offered a taffeta dress that would be “whispering compliments wherever you go!”¹¹² By addressing the reader as “you,” Eaton’s assumed girls were selecting their own clothes, and invited them to picture themselves in the dresses advertised.

Eaton’s combined these more direct appeals to girls with language that the company believed was popular among teenaged customers. The description of a “Peppy Plaid” flannel dress began: “When you walk into your classroom wearing this pretty plaid cotton flannel frock, your chums will say “Gee, it’s swell.””¹¹³ Girls were told “You’re a pretty cute trick in this neat ‘n’ natty Navy Spun Rayon!”¹¹⁴ One dress was described as “Really Keen,” while another was a “solid sender with plenty of zing.”¹¹⁵ When readers were told “You will want to “simply live” in this Tailored Spun Rayon Dress,” the quotation marks identified “simply live” as a colloquial teenaged phrase that meant girls would like it so much they would want to wear it all the time.¹¹⁶ By using words that Eaton’s believed young people themselves used with their friends, such as “tops” “keen,” and “swell,” Eaton’s hoped to appeal more directly to younger customers.

The catalogue related girls’ appearances to their social success, stressing the importance of peer approval when advertising girls’ dresses. Dress descriptions

112 “Duck of a Frock,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1946/47 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1946), 128; “Little Shepherdess,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1947 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1947), 93; “Rustling Rayon Taffeta,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1949), 147. For other examples, see “It’s Your Pal,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1945/46 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1945), 73; “You’ll Look Sweet,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1946/47 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1946), 131.

113 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1942/43 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1942), 126.

114 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1948/49 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1948), 175.

115 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1942/43 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1942), 125; Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1948/49 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1948), 176.

116 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1942/43 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1942), 125.

mentioned how a particular style would win the approval of classmates and “chums.”¹¹⁷ In a 1941 catalogue, Eaton’s introduced two fictional characters meant to epitomize and appeal to school-aged girls. “Sally” and “Peg” were “typical young Canadians,” pictured modeling coats and holding school books as they walked along the street towards the camera. They were “too old for dolls, too young for dates,” once again placing the 10-to-14x-sized girl in a category between girlhood and womanhood. What was supposedly important to Sally and Peg – and to every “Sally and Peg” in the country, Eaton’s emphasized – was school, sports, clothes, and friends. Eaton’s incorporated Sally and Peg into its dress descriptions, perhaps hoping that if Sally and Peg approved of a dress, other teenaged girls would as well. One dress was labeled “Peg’s favourite for school – and lots of her chums think it’s nice enough for church and Sunday school!” Another dress description asked, “Isn’t It Adorable? Little wonder Sally and her pals love this honey of a frock!” Sally declared that a third dress was “tops with the bunch!”¹¹⁸ The message to girls was that these dresses would be popular among their peers, and as a result they would be popular if they wore them.

As Eaton’s shifted to addressing young female customers directly in its catalogue, the company portrayed the wearer of Eaton’s 10 to 14x garments as a fashion-conscious young consumer more concerned with how a dress made her look than its more practical characteristics. In the sample of girls’ dresses from 1930s catalogue issues, Eaton’s used terms such as value, economical, and serviceable to describe girls’ dresses. These terms appeared with less frequency in the 1940s and 1950s, when Eaton’s

117 See, for example, “Peppy Plaid,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1942/43 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1942), 126.

118 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1941/42 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1941), 129.

was placing more emphasis on appealing directly to girls with slang terms and references to peer approval. No girls' dresses were described as economical or serviceable in the dresses sampled from 1940s and 1950s catalogues, and the word "value" appeared only twice.¹¹⁹

In 1945, Eaton's introduced a new size-style range aimed specifically at teenaged girls. Initially called the "Teenster" size range, the catalogue referred to it as "Teen" after 1953. The size range included four sizes (10, 12, 14, and 16). Eaton's again insisted that these sizes were based solely on body proportions, not on ages. A twelve-year-old girl might not wear a Teen size 12, nor could a girl who normally ordered dresses in girls' size 12 years necessarily fit a Teen size 12. The company wanted customers to measure to be sure they ordered the appropriate size. However, as Table 3.3 highlights, the differences between the body measurements for girls' and Teen dresses were minimal. For example, the bust measurements were identical, although the addition of size 16 in the teen size range meant that larger (and presumably older) girls could also wear Teen dresses.¹²⁰ The girls' sizes were also intended for less curvy bodies; the waist measurements for girls' dresses were slightly larger than for Teen dresses, while the hip measurements for girls' were slightly smaller than for the Teen sizes. Nevertheless, the

119 When the company did appeal to "value" in girls' dress descriptions after 1935, it still assumed that mothers were the customers concerned about getting value for money, not girls. In 1945, Eaton's introduced the girls' section of the catalogue by claiming that: "Mothers have come to count on EATON'S when they plan wardrobes for the children – because of the wide assortments available, the dependable qualities and the good value they get for their money." Eaton's Spring and Summer 1945 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1945), 75.

120 When Eaton's introduced the 10 to 16 size range in 1945, the company initially claimed that Teen dresses were "cut fuller in the bust than Children's clothes." This might have been the case in 1945, but by the early 1950s both size ranges had the same bust measurements. Eaton's Spring and Summer 1945 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1945), 74.

difference was only a half-inch; in the case of girls' and Teen size 14, the hip and waist measurements were identical. The length measure was the biggest difference – Teen dresses were much longer than girls' dresses. While this might suggest that these dresses were intended for taller girls, it also reflects the assumption that older girls should wear longer skirts.

Table 3.3: Measurements from girls' and Teen size charts, in inches, from the Spring and Summer 1956 Catalogue.

Girls	Bust	Waist	Hips	Length	Teen	Bust	Waist	Hips	Length
10	28	24.5	29	32	10	28	24	29	36
12	30	25.5	31.5	36	12	30	25	32	43
14	32	26	34	41	14	32	26	34	44
14x	33	26.5	35.5	43	16	34	27	36	45

While the company's much-repeated caution to "Measure and Be Sure" was certainly good advice, the size charts suggest that the Teen size range was more about marketing a distinct teenaged style than about catering to the specific body types of growing teenaged girls. A girl with a thirty-two-inch chest measurement could purchase and wear a dress in either girls' size 14 years, Teen size 14, or, in the 1950s, Misses' size 12. While the hip and waist measurements differed slightly, with some alterations the dress would fit.¹²¹ The Teen size range was different, not because of its sizes, but

¹²¹ Given the variety of body types, it is likely that many women had to alter their ready-made garments in some way – and still do.

because of the way it was targeted to high school girls – the “teenster” customers Eaton’s coveted.

Initially, Eaton’s marketed Teen clothing in much the same way it had sold the 14x size range in the mid-1930s. “Teensters,” as the company called them between 1945 and 1954, were poised between childhood and adulthood. The Teen-sized dresses were labeled “Girlhood Fashions for Growing-Ups” when they were introduced in the Spring and Summer 1945 catalogue, and were positioned just before the girls’ section of the catalogue, separate from the clothing for adult women.¹²² Eaton’s introduced the size-style range by situating Teen clothes in-between: “more fashion conscious and sophisticated than young Sis’s clothes,” but “not so mature as Juniors’ and Misses’ fashions.”¹²³ Once again, Eaton’s was suggesting that there was an age-based style hierarchy that had less to do with actual body measurements than with expectations about teenaged appearances. Teenagers were “still girlish,” as Eaton’s claimed on the opening page of the girls’ section in 1945, demonstrating the assumption that teenaged girls matured faster physically than mentally. They might need larger sized dresses, but socially and psychologically they were not ready to look like sexually mature women.

Eaton’s saw the Teen customer as a high school student. Teen-sized dresses were “for a collegiate miss,” and “suited to the pep and ginger of a high-schooler perpetually on the go.”¹²⁴ Throughout the 1946, 1947, and 1948 issues of the catalogue, Eaton’s associated potential Teen customers with school attendance and activities. “Attention Teeners!” the catalogue announced in 1945, asking girls to “Pick these peppy clothes for

122 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1945 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1945), 74.

123 Ibid.

124 Ibid.

your winter activities – at school and after, for comfort indoors and out.”¹²⁵ In 1947, the catalogue proclaimed “It’s always Teen Time at EATON’S” and offered “super duds for school time.”¹²⁶ Another page was headlined: “Styled to a Teen’s Taste for the Whirl of School Activities.”¹²⁷ Similarly, in the girls’ section of the catalogue in 1948 the company claimed that Eaton’s “school togs stand at the head of the class with clothes-conscious teen-agers.”¹²⁸ The accompanying drawing showed two teenagers walking down the stairs of a school building – the girl adjusting her jacket hood while the boy slings his books over his shoulder. On the following page the catalogue offered Teen-sized clothes “rating an a-plus with your class mates too!”¹²⁹ The association between the Teen size range and the school girl continued in the 1950s catalogue issues.¹³⁰

While the female Teen customer was assumed to be a student, Eaton’s most frequently appealed to teenaged girls by referring to their sexuality, their dating activities, and their assumed desire to attract positive male attention. Teen dresses were praised for their suitability on dates. A dress in the Fall and Winter 1946/47 catalogue was a “formula for success for dancing, dating,” while a page of Teen dresses in 1953 was headlined “top rating for teen dating.”¹³¹ The Spring and Summer 1947 catalogue

125 Ibid, 76.

126 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1947 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1947), 88.

127 Ibid, 94-95.

128 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1948 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1948), 118.

129 Ibid, 118, 119.

130 For example, in 1951, Eaton’s featured a page of “Round-the-Clock Fashions for On-the-Go School Girls” in Teen sizes. Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1950/51 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1950), 172.

131 Eaton’s 1946 Fall and Winter 1946/47 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1946), 124; Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1953/54 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1953), 22.

included three dresses chosen “to keep a ‘teen-ager looking keen for all the big ‘oh-casions” in her lively life.”¹³² The phrase implied that teenaged girls needed to dress for many social events, and at the same time alluded to the excitement, wonder, and pleasure female teenagers were assumed to experience as they engaged in such activities. By suggesting where girls might wear their dresses, Eaton’s was also subtly shaping its intended customers – someone considered old enough to date and attend dances.

Eaton’s promoted its Teen dresses as not only appropriate to wear on a date, but as the perfect way to get a date as well. The catalogue called a 1946 Teen dress a “compliment catcher – with beau-magnet flattery.”¹³³ Eaton’s specified exactly what kind of male attention its female customers could expect if they purchased the dress offered in the Spring and Summer 1947 catalogue: “Just listen to ‘em whistle when you go by wearing this date timer,” the catalogue proclaimed.¹³⁴ The company implied that its Teen customers would be flattered by the cat-calls of male strangers, and that attracting unsolicited attention from young men was part of what it meant to be a female teenager. Dresses that were “plentifully supplied with the lively detail that rates second glances” would ensure that the girls wearing these dresses would also be gazed upon with favour.¹³⁵ While younger girls were still being asked to look “smart” in their ready-

132 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1947 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1947), 89.

133 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1946/47 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1946), 124.

134 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1947 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1947), 89.

135 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1953/54 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1953), 2.

made purchases, teenaged girls were being asked to “steal his heart away” in Eaton’s clothing.¹³⁶

The colour of Teen dresses further distinguished them from dresses for younger girls and older women. Nearly a third of the Teen dresses sampled from the catalogue were sold in fashion colours, including turquoise, Sapphire Blue, Coral Pink, Burnt Sugar Tan, and Emerald Green.¹³⁷ The catalogue stressed that colour was an important way to stand out in a way that was still age-appropriate. In the 1945 Spring and Summer catalogue the company offered a “swish young party frock” in “catch-eye colors,” including lime green. Lime was not a subtle colour, and only one women’s dress in the garments sampled was sold in “Lime Fruit Green (light),” a slightly more subdued version of the bright green shade.¹³⁸ Eaton’s also offered Teen-sized dresses in black. Black was an uncommon colour for girls to wear because it was considered either too dreary (associated with mourning) or too sophisticated, making girls look older. Generally, the adults who made children’s clothes approved of light and bright colours that symbolized young people’s supposed innocence and energy.¹³⁹ The Eaton’s

136 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1949), 140.

137 Seven of the nineteen Teen-sized dresses in the catalogue sample were sold in fashion colours.

138 The Misses’ dress offered in lime was described as a “peppy young fashion” because of its bright colour. See Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 8. A girls’ dress was also offered in Lime in 1949. See “Bewitchingly Be-bibbed,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1949), 145.

139 In western culture, black is the colour associated with death and mourning, while white is associated with life, purity, and innocence. See Valerie Steele, “Dressing for Work,” in Claudia Brush Kidwell and Valerie Steele, *Men and Women: Dressing the Part* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 75. While children often wore mourning dress in the nineteenth century, by the twentieth century it was

catalogue reflects these beliefs. Of the 222 dresses sold in black in the catalogue sample, 211 were in Junior, Misses', or Women's sizes. Five girls' dresses included some black, such as a black bow or black braid trim, but none were solid black.¹⁴⁰ One dress in Senior Girls' sizes was a black-and-white check pattern.¹⁴¹ Eaton's only offered a solid black dress for girls in Teen sizes, suggesting that the company was trying to emphasize sophistication to appeal to teenaged customers eager to appear older.¹⁴² While younger girls were not "ready" to wear black, Teen customers were deemed old enough to don the darker shade.¹⁴³

Dress descriptions for Teen dresses drew more attention to the physical shape of their intended wearers. Unlike the 10 to 14x size range, little mention was made of the awkward contours of rapidly-changing growing bodies. Eaton's continued to focus on figure problems in the dress descriptions of some of its girls' dresses. For example, the

considered inappropriate to dress children in black. That reluctance was strengthened when fashion designers began using black to make formal and sophisticated dresses. In 1926, French designer Coco Chanel created a simple black dress that became popular because it was flattering and elegant. Black became popular for women, but this only increased its perceived inappropriateness for children's wear. See Valerie Mendes and Amy De La Haye, *20th Century Fashion* (London: Thames & Hudson, Ltd, 1999), 72.

¹⁴⁰ See "Gay Print Dress," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 102; "Choice of Real Silk or Celanese," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1933/34 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 30; "Gibson Girl Striper," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1948/49 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1948), 176; "Bewitchingly Be-bibbed," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1949), 145; "Schoolroom Classic," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1950/51 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1950), 182.

¹⁴¹ "Shepherd's Check is Smart," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1934/35 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1934), 22.

¹⁴² Eaton's only offered one solid black dress in the teen size range. See "Compliment Catcher," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1946/47 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1946), 124.

¹⁴³ Black is seen as perfectly acceptable for twenty-first-century teenaged girls. For example, the 2012 online catalogue for dELiA*s, a retailer of girls' and teen clothing, includes ten "little black dresses."

catalogue made special note of the elastic-shirred waistline of a long-sleeve plaid school dress in the Fall and Winter 1951/52 catalogue, remarking that this feature “adjusts without fuss to the figure.”¹⁴⁴ Elastic waistlines allowed girls’ bodies to change shape without outgrowing their clothes.

However, Teen dresses were described as having “supple silhouettes” that emphasized the hourglass figure popular in women’s fashions in the late 1940s and 1950s.¹⁴⁵ While both girls’ and Teen dresses reflected the rounded shoulders, small waists, and flaring skirts of what became known as the feminine New Look, only Teen dress descriptions focused on the wearer’s proportions. Eaton’s called attention to the tailored or close-fitting nature of Teen dresses, using words such as smooth, supple, and flatter – words that were used much less often to refer to girls’ dresses (see Table 3.3). Descriptions of girls’ dresses focused on the movement and construction of the skirt. For example, girls’ dresses featured “full whirly skirts” or “triple-tiered skirts, ruffled all the

144 “Long-sleeve Cotton Plaid,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1951/52 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1951), 163. For other examples see “Bewitchingly Be-bibbed,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1949), 145; “Hi There, Sailor,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1946/47 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1946), 129; “Winsome Twosome,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1959 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1959), 139.

145 “For the Teens,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1953/54 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1953), 2. Following the Second World War (during which many governments regulated dress design to conserve fabric), French designers began to emphasize padded waists and rounded shoulders in their designs. Christian Dior’s 1947 collection embodied this new silhouette, which became known as the New Look. By the 1950s the silhouette was ubiquitous in ready-made clothing. See Claudia Brush Kidwell, “Gender Symbols or Fashionable Details?” in Claudia Brush Kidwell and Valerie Steele, *Men and Women: Dressing the Part* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 138.

way round.”¹⁴⁶ The 1957 catalogue featured a party dress with a “Full-length Slip of Rayon Taffeta with a frilly nylon net overflounce.”¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ “Rustling Rayon Taffeta,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1949), 147; “Rustling Rayon Taffeta,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1950/51 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1950), 185.

¹⁴⁷ “Young Hearts,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1957 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1957), 138.

Table 3.4: Comparison of prevalence of words used to describe Teen-sized, girls'-sized, and Junior-sized dresses in the 1940s and 1950s, from most to least common (greater than five per cent occurrence in sample).

Teen ¹⁴⁸			Girls			Junior		
Word	Number	%	Word	Number	%	Word	Number	%
New	8	42	Young	43	52	Fashion	31	56
Fashion	5	26	Fashion	34	41	New	24	44
Young	4	21	Smart	21	25	Young	17	31
Soft	4	21	Fit	18	22	Smart	14	25
Tailor	4	21	Pretty	17	21	Soft	13	24
Smooth	4	21	Soft	15	18	Fit	13	24
Supple	3	16	Gay	13	16	Slim	10	18
Flatter	3	16	Pert	9	11	Pleasing	9	16
Neat	3	16	Finish	8	10	Simple	9	16
Smart	3	16	Swing	8	10	Supple	9	16
Swish	2	11	New	7	8	Fine	8	15
Lively	2	11	Slim	6	7	Lovely	8	15
Spirit	2	11	Special	6	7	Lively	8	15
Novel	2	11	Sturdy	6	7	Pert	7	13
Pert	2	11	Novel	6	7	Quality	7	13
Pretty	2	11	Grown-up	5	6	Cool	7	13
Simple	2	11	Practical	5	6	Pretty	6	11
Slim	2	11	Comfort	5	6	Smooth	6	11
Fit	2	11	Tailor	5	6	Becoming	5	9
Gay	2	11	Warm	5	6	Flatter	4	7

148 The total number of dresses in each size range sampled from the catalogues published between 1940 and 1960 is: Teen – nineteen; Girls – eighty-three; Junior – fifty-five.

In contrast, Teen dress descriptions more often mentioned the way a particular dress could highlight the teenaged figure. For example, a dress in the 1945 catalogue was noted as having a “fitted top,” while a dress called a “Compliment Catcher” featured a “pouf of a peplum” and a “self belt for a tiny waist.”¹⁴⁹ Seven of the nineteen Teen dress descriptions emphasized that the dress would make waists appear smaller. In most of these cases it was unclear whether the catalogue was referring to the waistline of the dress or of the intended wearer. For example, in 1947 the catalogue advertised a “Sweetheart of a Frock” and noted that the “wee waist is nipped in with a shiny leatherette belt in color contrast.”¹⁵⁰ Similarly, in 1955 Eaton’s noted that the “waist is minimized by self-covered belt and slide.”¹⁵¹ While girls’ dresses highlighted tie-back waists to improve fit, Teen dresses advertised “willowy waistlines” that suggested teenaged girls should be interested in purchasing clothing that emphasized their presumably curvy figures.

149 A peplum is a short over-skirt or ruffle that is attached to the waistline of a jacket, blouse, or dress. The effect makes the hips appear larger and the waist appear smaller, creating a more curvy silhouette. “Prettied-Up for Dressing-Up,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1945 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1945), 74; “Compliment Catcher,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1946/47 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1946), 124.

150 “Sweetheart of a Frock,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1947 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1947), 89.

151 “The New, Long-Waisted Look,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1955 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1955), 145. For other examples see “In Gabardine, No Less!” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1948/49 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1948), 166; “Gay Cotton Calico Dress,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1953 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1953), 137; “Dreamy Romantic,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1960/61 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1960), 71. In the Spring and Summer 1947 Catalogue, all three of the dress descriptions on page 89 (the opening page of the teen and girls’ clothing section) also noted the “nipped in” or “slimming” look that the dresses would give their teenaged wearers.

The visual presentation of Teen dresses also emphasized the slender figure and more sophisticated look of the idealized teenaged customer. Teen models were depicted in shoes with low heels – not as high as a woman’s shoe, but clearly not the flat shoes worn by younger girls. They also did not wear the same ankle socks as younger girls. Heeled shoes and stockings were both visual indications of maturity, and yet the fact that Teen models wore low heels suggests that teenagers were still considered too young to sport the same footwear as women. Furthermore, while girls were generally depicted with their hair banded, bowed, and occasionally pig-tailed, Teen models were shown with more reserved and less adorned heads that had more in common with the models of Junior and Misses’ dresses than with the younger girls (see Figures 3.4 and 3.5).



Figure 3.4: Girls' dresses modeled in the Spring and Summer 1947 Catalogue.



Figure 3.5: Teen dresses modeled in the Spring and Summer 1948 Catalogue.

The fact that Eaton's most often chose to draw models instead of photographing them allowed them to depict an idealized slim teenaged girl with a developed figure.¹⁵² As Lisa Jacobson notes in her history of advertising, drawings of this period promoted a "streamlined modernist aesthetic" that made women's bodies much thinner than they were in reality. Some advertisers apparently believed that drawings were more effective in selling garments because they allowed consumers to imagine what they might look like.¹⁵³ Teen models like those in Figure 3.5 had slim, high waists that created unrealistically long legs. They were drawn with hourglass figures, which were not – and are not – a common female body shape.¹⁵⁴ The effect was to make Teen models look both older and thinner than most teenaged girls actually were. This body consciousness was in stark contrast to the playful innocence suggested by many girls' models. Teenaged customers were being shown an image of "the teenager" that few – try as they might – could imitate.

In the 1950s Eaton's made several additional distinctions between its girls' and Teen size ranges. Firstly, Eaton's offered more selection for teenaged customers. The Fall and Winter 1946/47 catalogue had offered eight dresses and four coats in sizes 12,

152 In the sample of catalogue issues examined here, all those published before 1946 were drawn. Girls and Teen dresses were photographed in 1946, 1950, 1951, 1953, 1958, 1959, and 1960. The remainder of the issues used drawings.

153 Lisa Jacobson, *Raising Consumers: Children and the American Mass Market in the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 137.

154 A study of 6,000 women in 2005 found that only eight per cent had an hourglass figure. Far more common were rectangular (forty-six per cent) and pear shaped bodies (twenty per cent). See Helen McCormack, "The Shape of Things to Wear: scientists identify how women's bodies have changed in 50 years," *The Independent* (21 November 2005). <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/the-shape-of-things-to-wear-scientists-identify-how-womens-figures-have-changed-in-50-years-516259.html>.

14, and 16, but by 1950 Eaton's offered a greater number of dresses and coats as well as a selection blouses, skirts and slacks in Teen sizes.¹⁵⁵ Slacks and narrow-legged pants known as "slim jims" were still considered casual wear, evidenced by the fact that there were still more than twice as many dresses and skirts available than there were trousers. While only dresses and coats were initially sold in Teen sizes, the company quickly expanded its offerings.

In 1955 Eaton's dedicated a separate section of the catalogue to Teen garments for the first time. The new section was called Teen Fair, and it grouped all the Teen-sized garments together in "a galaxy of gay young sizes 12 to 16," instead of combining girls' and Teen sizes on the same pages.¹⁵⁶ Over eight pages Eaton's displayed Teen dresses, skirts and blouse sets, sweaters, cardigans, slacks, and coats. The section also included a page of "dainty bra's," "sleek girdles," and nylon crinolines.¹⁵⁷ Eaton's had sold lingerie in smaller sizes before, but this was the first time it sold undergarments alongside other clothing instead of placing them in the women's lingerie section. Teen Fair was intended as a one-stop mail order shop for teenaged customers, underlining their growing importance to Eaton's.

¹⁵⁵ Those wearing girls' sizes, in comparison, had fifteen coats and twenty-seven dresses to choose from in 1946. Eaton's Fall and Winter 1946/47 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1946), 124-125. In 1950 the catalogue included nine dresses, six coats, five blouses, three skirts, and two pairs of slacks in Teen sizes. Eaton's Fall and Winter 1950/51 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1950), 172-186.

¹⁵⁶ Eaton's Fall and Winter 1956/57 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1956), 135. The Teen Fair section appeared in each catalogue sampled except the Fall and Winter 1958/59 Catalogue, when the section was titled Campus Corner. Nevertheless, Campus Corner was exclusively for Teen-sized garments.

¹⁵⁷ Eaton's Fall and Winter 1956/57 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1956), 142.

By 1960 female teenagers had their own size range and catalogue section that included every type of garment – from underwear to hats and everything in between. The biggest differences between Teen garments and women’s clothing lay in their presentation; Eaton’s continued to emphasize the teenaged girl’s in-between status by selling them clothes supposedly made “just for them” in their own section separate from both girls’ and women’s garments. Eaton’s imagined girl customers taking baby steps towards sophisticated women’s wear, moving as she matured from girlish young sizes, to more fashion-conscious Teen clothing.

Eaton’s first asserted that some teenaged girls required larger garments because they were not yet mature enough to wear the women’s sizes. The Senior Girls’ dresses copied style elements of women’s dresses while maintaining some of the characteristics common to girls’ clothing. Eaton’s then experimented with selling girls’ and Junior-sized dresses to teenagers, styling their models and tailoring their advertising language to appeal to female high school students.

Then in 1945, Eaton’s opened the girls’ section of its mail order catalogue with a description of their ideal young female customer, marking a new concerted focus on the teenager. Eaton’s Teen clothes were “especially for the girl who will soon be “Miss”... specially styled with fashion touches for her growing sophistication. We’ve assembled get-ups that score high with the juke-box crowd – at school and after – for week-day routines and “slick-hair” affairs.”¹⁵⁸ The “girl who will soon be ‘Miss’” was between childhood and adulthood. She was still growing physically, but she was also, Eaton’s believed, flourishing in her sophistication, her self-awareness, and her role as a

158 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1945/46 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1945), 71.

consumer. She needed clothes “especially” for her – for the social functions and daily school routine she was assumed to have. And she needed to win peer approval by wearing clothes that “score high” with her classmates.

The advent of the Teen size range in 1945 marked a turning point for the retailer; the proportions were narrower at the waist and longer in the skirt, but the differences between girls’ and Teen dresses were more about marketing than garment construction. Throughout the late 1940s and 1950s, the Eaton’s catalogue dedicated an increasing amount of space to Teen dresses lauded for their fashionable features and intended for body-conscious high school girls engaged in dating and dressing for “slick-hair affairs.”¹⁵⁹ Though the thin, white, middle-class and materialistic teen depicted in the catalogue pages did not reflect the majority of the teenaged girls to which Eaton’s intended to appeal, Eaton’s, and other retailers like it, were establishing a age-based style hierarchy that divided girls into age groups and marketed to each in distinct ways. This process – through size ranges and advertising language – helped to foster and strengthen the cultural belief that the teenaged years formed a distinct period of life.

Eaton’s successors – retailers such as dELiA*s – assume without question that teenaged girls are a distinct market. Visitors to dELiA*s website enter a teenaged space of targeted advertising, “prom perfect” dresses, and constant entreaties to “Shop Now” at the click of a mouse. Similarly, male teenagers are viewed as equally distinct consumers – both from adults and from their female peers. Retailers targeting teenaged boys take a different approach than those targeting teenaged girls; for example, the online catalogue for West 49, a popular retailer of clothing for teenaged males, includes

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

links to video from skateboarding, surfing, and snowboarding competitions. The customers are called “guys.” Retailers today appeal to teenaged girls and boys in different ways, and so did Eaton’s. The next chapter explores the changing ways that Eaton’s advertised to teenaged boys between 1930 and 1960.

CHAPTER FOUR

“Man-sized Youths” and “Style-conscious lads”: Selling suits and masculinity to teenaged boys in the Eaton’s catalogue

In 1935, the boys’ clothing section of the Eaton’s catalogue included a page of garments specifically “for the ’teen age Youth.” The three suits illustrated on the page were all sized for boys aged twelve years to nineteen years, and included a three-piece “Student Sport Style” suit and a blue double-breasted model that had “all the good appearance and wearing qualities for which a boy could ask.”¹ Though little distinguished the style of these “teen age” suits from those advertised for younger boys (or for men), references to styles for “students” suggested that boys were asking for specific qualities in their suits, setting the teenaged boy consumer apart from his father and younger brother. While younger boys were seen to “dress up” as “little men,” Eaton’s portrayed teenaged boys as becoming men, in their physical stature, their desire to express their own style, and their economic autonomy. The Eaton’s catalogue illustrates the way the company appealed to the teenaged boy’s increased size, maturity, self-awareness, and independence in order to sell suits. The Spring and Summer 1935 catalogue marked the first time the company used the word “teen age” to advertise boys’ clothing, the first indication that Eaton’s was beginning to view boys between the ages of twelve and nineteen as a distinct group of “man-sized” and “style-conscious” customers.

¹ Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 138.

Until the mid-1930s, Eaton's advertising grouped together boys of all ages – from six to eighteen or nineteen years. Like other retailers, Eaton's assumed that mothers were the primary buyers of boys' clothing, and consequently much of the catalogue's language prior to the 1930s was addressed to them. As historian Jo-Anne McCutcheon describes in her study of children's clothing in Canada from 1880 to 1930, Eaton's, Simpson's, and the Hudson's Bay department stores appealed to "new mothers" by emphasizing their stock of sturdy and affordable ready-made boys' clothing.² Between 1910 and 1930, trade publications such as the *Dry Goods Review* noted that an increasing number of department stores were separating out their boys' clothing from men's wear, providing special sales and advertising attention to the "small boy."³ Retailers sought, on the one hand, to make boys feel like their clothing merited the same consideration as their older brothers' and fathers' and, at the same time, to make mothers – who were buying boys' clothing – feel more comfortable than they might have been shopping in the same department as men. The boys' department – both within Eaton's stores and in its mail order catalogues – was well established by the mid-1930s, when Eaton's began to see the older boy – the teenager – as a market segment in need of his own product and marketing strategy.

The catalogue's efforts to both define and attract the teenaged boy draws attention to male consumers, a group often ignored by retailers and scholars alike. Historians have focused far more on female consumers than on their male counterparts. Women were, in many cases, the ones providing food and clothing for their households

2 J. M. McCutcheon, "Clothing Children in English Canada, 1870-1930" (PhD thesis, University of Ottawa, 2002), 272.

3 McCutcheon discusses this trade discourse in greater detail. See "Clothing Children in English Canada," 143-146.

and, as a result, were more often seen in shops than were men. Furthermore, over the years women's domestic labour has become fodder for critics of consumer culture. From Thorstein Veblen, the American social scientist who argued that women consumed to display the wealth of their husbands, and Vance Packard, the social critic who believed advertisers created "false needs" that persuaded people to buy, to second-wave feminists who depicted female consumers as unenlightened dupes of capitalism, women have been portrayed throughout the twentieth century as "natural" consumers who, because of essential biological traits, were drawn to consumer culture.⁴ Rational men could resist the lure of consumer culture, so goes the theory, but women were by nature irrational and easy prey for advertisers.⁵ Social and labour historians have altered these notions by examining the labour that female consumers were doing and the often empowering roles women played in the retail industry.⁶ With the help of gender theory, some historians have also begun to assert that consumption was not merely a feminine pursuit.⁷

4 Donica Belisle, *Retail Nation: Department Stores and the Making of Modern Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 126-127.

5 Similar arguments can be made about the differences between child consumers and adult consumers. This is likely not a coincidence, since women were traditionally infantilized, denied political suffrage, and legally given the same status as young dependents. Consider Adam Smith, who argued that manufactured goods were more "fitted for the playthings of children than for the serious pursuits of men." Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), quoted in Belisle, *Retail Nation*, 127.

6 See, for example: Joy Parr, *Domestic Goods: The Material, the Moral, and the Economic in the Postwar Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Ruth Schwartz Cohen, *More Work for Mother: the ironies of household technology from the open hearth to the microwave* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); Denyse Baillargeon, *Making Do: Women, Family and Home in Montreal during the Great Depression*, trans. Yvonne Klein (Waterloo, ON: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1999); (Susan Porter Benson, *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986).

7 Christopher Breward explores the intersection of masculinities and consumer desire

Furthermore, scholars now argue that constructions of the female consumer existed in relation to shifting notions of masculinity; we cannot understand one without the other.⁸

Exploring Eaton's approach to teenaged boys sheds light on the gendered nature of the retail market. Clothing has long been a powerful visual and symbolic marker of both gender and age identities.⁹ Eaton's was not merely offering trousers and jackets to its male customers in its catalogues; it was selling a particular hegemonic masculine image. R.W. Connell argues that hegemonic masculinity is "the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations."¹⁰ While multiple masculinities – or ways of defining male appearance and behaviour – exist in tension in every culture, some are more accepted, more promoted, and more authoritative than others. Variations of the familiar three-piece suit have been symbols of manly modesty, virtue, and power since the eighteenth century. The suit was (and is), in Anne Hollander's words, the "standard masculine civil costume"¹¹ and a "badge of

in Victorian Britain. See *The Hidden Consumer: Masculinities, fashion and city life, 1860-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

- 8 Cynthia Wright, "The most prominent rendezvous in feminine Toronto': Eaton's College Street and Organization of Shopping in Toronto, 1920-1950" (PhD thesis, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, 1993), 41.
- 9 Valerie Steele, "Appearance and Identity," in Claudia Brush Kidwell and Valerie Steele, eds., *Men and Women: Dressing the Part* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 6-21.
- 10 R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 76.
- 11 Anne Hollander, *Sex and Suits* (New York, 1994), 3. On the history of the development of the three-piece suit within the context of political power and campaigns for enfranchisement, see David Kutcha, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 133-172. On the role of the suit and "western dress" in a colonial context, see Frances Gouda, "From Emasculated Subjects to Virile Citizens: Nationalism and Modern Dress in Indonesia, 1900-1949," in Stefan Dudink, Karen Hagemann, and Anna Clark, eds., *Representing Masculinity: Male Citizenship in Modern Western Culture* (Houndsmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 235-257.

professional status.”¹² Yet men’s clothing has not drawn a lot of scholarly attention, partly because, as Jenna Weissman Joselit notes, paying too close attention to one’s attire was – and in some contexts still is – considered effeminate.¹³ In defining and engaging with the male teenaged consumer, Eaton’s had to rectify the masculine appearance of its suits with the presumed feminine activity of shopping. Evidence from the catalogues illuminates how retailers viewed and approached their male customers, and explores what kind of masculinity Eaton’s was selling to teenaged boys.

Teenaged male consumers, in particular, have drawn little attention from historians. David Fowler’s *The First Teenagers: The Lifestyles of Young Wage-earners in Interwar Britain* was one of the first studies to demonstrate that working-class teenagers of both sexes spent their discretionary income on commercialized leisure and consumer goods as early as 1930.¹⁴ Lisa Jacobson suggests that, beginning in the 1920s, American marketers and magazine publishers promoted the image of an archetypal boy consumer – demanding, influential, and precocious.¹⁵ Advertisers embraced the boy – depicted as a

12 Valerie Steele, “Dressing for Work,” in Claudia Brush Kidwell and Valerie Steele, eds., *Men and Women: Dressing the Part* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 67. While the suit is often associated with professionalism and respectability, scholars have also demonstrated that, in practice, the wearing of a suit can take on multiple and conflicting meanings. Consider, for example, the way African- and Latino-American young men used the “zoot suit” to make a political statement during the Second World War. See Luis Alvarez, *The Power of the Zoot: Youth culture and resistance during World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008). Sociologist Dick Hebdige also demonstrates how the Teddy Boy subculture of 1950s Britain relied on the “theft” of upper-class fashion, giving the suit a new and subversive meaning. See Dick Hebdige (1979), *Subculture: The meaning of style* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 80-84.

13 Jenna Weissman Joselit, *A Perfect Fit: Clothes, Character, and the Promise of America* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2001), 76-77.

14 David Fowler, *The First Teenagers: The Lifestyles of Young Wage-earners in Interwar Britain* (London: The Woburn Press, 1995), ch.3.

15 Lisa Jacobson, *Raising Consumers: Children and the American Mass Market in the*

white, middle-class “mini-patriarch” within his family, capable of charming his parents into buying goods because they wanted to please him.¹⁶ This “boy” encompassed all boys, and did not categorize different kinds of consumer behaviour or preferences based on age.¹⁷ The teenaged male consumer was not a distinct persona, according to Dan Cook. In his study of the children’s wear industry in the first half of the twentieth century, Cook claims that “boys’ clothing beyond the age range of about eight to ten was often relegated to men’s wear,” suggesting that retailers and advertisers saw no difference between teenaged boys and men, nor made any effort to reach a specific “teenaged boy” customer.¹⁸ However, evidence from a representative sample of men’s and boys’ garments from the Eaton’s catalogue demonstrates that this was not the case in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.¹⁹ In line with its increasing focus on teenaged girls, examined in the previous chapter, Eaton’s also began changing its advertising strategy in the mid-1930s to appeal specifically to older, teenaged boys.

Canadian retailers began to recognize the importance of identifying and catering to boys’ specific garment needs and desires in the opening decades of the twentieth century.²⁰ Retailers believed that in order to sell boys’ clothing they needed to please both mothers and sons. The Eaton’s catalogue sold boys’ and men’s wear in separate but

Early Twentieth Century (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 93.

¹⁶ Ibid, 97.

¹⁷ Ibid, 96. For example, Jacobson notes that one of the most aggressive promoters of the boy consumer was *American Boy*, a magazine read by boys ranging in age from nine to nineteen. As a result, the magazine’s image of the boy consumer had to appeal to both younger and older boys.

¹⁸ Daniel T. Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood: The Children’s Clothing Industry and the Rise of the Child Consumer* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2004), 127.

¹⁹ For the methodology that guided this research, please see the appendix.

²⁰ See McCutcheon’s analysis of the *Dry Goods Review*, in “Clothing Children in English Canada,” 134-202.

adjacent sections, and used different strategies to sell men's ready-made clothing and boys' garments. An examination of these strategies demonstrates how Eaton's categorized and approached younger and older male customers before the company began to target teenaged boys specifically in their catalogues.

One of the most noticeable differences between Eaton's men's and boys' clothing in the 1930s was its sizing systems. As in the case of women's clothing, sizes can shed light on the way Eaton's categorized its customers. Men's suits were not sold in specific sizes. Eaton's order form required customers to list chest width, waist measurement, and desired trouser length when ordering a suit. As long as a man had a chest width of between thirty-six and forty-four inches and a waist between thirty-two and forty-two inches, he could be fitted with a suit from the Eaton's catalogue.²¹ Boys' clothing, on the other hand, was sold by age-size, as was most children's clothing. Boys' clothes generally included garments in sizes 6 to 18 years.²² Each size corresponded to a distinct chest and waist measurement. The smallest suits had a twenty-four-inch chest (size 6) and each age-size was one inch larger than the last. Size 18 suits were for boys with thirty-six-inch chests. The waist measurements also began at twenty-four inches and increased by an inch every two to three age-sizes, reaching a thirty-two-inch waist at size 18.

These sizing systems reflect several assumptions Eaton's made about its male

21 Eaton's also sold suits in Young Men's sizes, for customers with thirty-four- and thirty-five-inch chests and waists as narrow as twenty-nine inches.

22 For ease of reading, and to better reflect the way the catalogue referred to sizes, numerals are used for sizes throughout this chapter.

The boys' clothing section occasionally included one or two suits for boys as young as four, but the majority of suits were for boys aged eight to eighteen. Clothing for younger boys was part of the children's clothing section, which included garments for boys and girls two to seven years old.

customers. Firstly, boys shopped in the boys' section until they were eighteen years old (younger if they grew more quickly) and then moved into men's clothing with no transition between the two size ranges. By the age of eighteen, Eaton's assumed boys had reached physical maturity and could wear men's suit sizes and styles. However, boys were also assumed to grow at a certain – and fairly constant – rate until they were eighteen. While men could order a suit in any combination of chest width and trouser length measurements, and therefore be fairly assured of a good fit, boys that did not measure up to Eaton's standard sizing likely had more trouble ordering a suit that fit. Eaton's recognized that its age-sizes would not always accurately predict a boy's size at any given age, and so asked that customers include a boy's age, weight, and height alongside their chest and waist measurements on the order form.²³

Another important difference between men's and boys' clothing was the greater variety of garments available to boys in the catalogues. Boys suits were sold with three different kinds of pants, reflecting the belief that boys should not wear long pants until they reached a certain age or size. "Breeching," the occasion when mothers purchased the first pair of long pants for their sons, was a popular rite of passage in nineteenth-century middle- and upper-class families. Boys donned long pants to symbolize that they were leaving the maternal protection and more feminized clothing of infancy behind. Long pants gave boys a more masculine appearance as they began to grow up.²⁴ McCutcheon explains in her study of boys' clothing that the proscription against

23 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 84.

24 Jo B. Poaletti and Carol L. Kregloh, "The Children's Department," in Claudia Brush Kidwell and Valerie Steele, eds., *Men and Women: Dressing the Part* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 31-33. Size and age were both factors when deciding to put a boy in long pants; a large boy might be breeched at a younger age than a smaller boy, because he was beginning to look more like a man.

dressing pre-pubescent boys in long pants was fading by the 1920s. She found several examples of suits sold in that decade that included long pants for boys as young as three years.²⁵

Despite this trend, Eaton's continued to offer alternatives to long pants with their boys' suits throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Knee pants were sold with younger boys' suits, in sizes from 4 to 10 years.²⁶ More commonly, bloomer-style pants were offered instead of, or in addition to, long pants. Bloomers were short pants that usually ballooned out from the waistband and were buckled snugly at the knee. Bloomers were available in sizes as small as 6 and as large as 16 in the 1930s.²⁷ Boys were also sometimes expected to don long pants before the age of sixteen. A suit available in sizes 10 to 16 in the 1933 catalogue was advertised as "an ideal choice for first 'longers,'" suggesting that boys this age might be wearing long pants for the first time. Boys needed their own section of the catalogue because Eaton's believed their clothing needs at different stages of their physical development differed from men's.

An analysis of how the company appealed to male customers in its catalogues suggests Eaton's believed male consumers required a less paternal sales pitch than female mail order shoppers. While Eaton's generally assumed its female customers were passive and malleable, the company believed male customers were less likely than

25 McCutcheon, "Clothing Children in English Canada," 244.

26 See for example, "Lower Price on Junior Tweed Suit," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1931/32 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 165, and "Double-Breasted Suit of Brown Tweed – A Savings for Junior," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 95.

27 See for example, "Exceptional Value in Two-Bloomer Suit," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 14; "Good Value Renown Jr.," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 181; "Choice of One or Two Pairs Golf Bloomers," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1934 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1934), 101.

female consumers to be persuaded by appeals to fashion.²⁸ Men were assumed to want to shop quickly, not leisurely, and to know what they wanted. Historian Cynthia Wright notes that Eaton's often admonished its counter staff in Toronto for employing elaborate sales pitches on male shoppers. Eaton's told its employees that men did not want to linger over a selection of items – they were busy, productive people, and wanted to shop quickly and efficiently.²⁹

Suit descriptions in the catalogues reflected Eaton's assumptions about male customers, and lacked much of the elaborate or flowery language found in many descriptions of women's garments. The men's section had fewer headlines and sales tags than the women's or children's sections, and the suit descriptions contained fewer adjectives, instead relying on details about construction methods and materials to sell suits. In 1929, Eaton's advertised a suit in its own "Birkdale" line that was "the climax of fine materials and expert tailoring." To reinforce the quality of the product, Eaton's outlined the suit's workmanship for potential customers, explaining the construction of the garment in great detail:

All seams sewn with silk and pressed out flat, all buttons are sewn on with linen thread, lapels and collar are well padded with extra stitches to retain shape, and there are many more features which never vary - Vest is regular style, and the trousers are finished with belt loops, cuffs and five pockets.³⁰

In other catalogue issues Eaton's informed customers that its suits were "Tailored in our own workrooms, under strict supervision," and emphasized the linen canvas foundations

28 Donica Belisle suggests that department stores such as Eaton's both shaped and reinforced gendered stereotypes in their depiction and treatment of male and female customers. See *Retail Nation*, 133.

29 Wright, "The Most Prominent Rendezvous," 49.

30 "Bennett Model in Blue or Grey," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1929/30 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 213.

of its suit jackets, “without which a suit soon loses its shape.” Eaton’s also mentioned that it tested all suits in its Research Bureau, to ensure that its quality and workmanship exceeded that of suits sold at the same price in other stores.³¹ “Value” and “Tailoring” were the two most common qualitative words used in descriptions of men’s suits in the 1930s, suggesting Eaton’s believed its male customers would be drawn by appeals to quality suits at reasonable prices.³²

Eaton’s, like other clothing retailers, believed that mothers were the ultimate consumers of boys’ clothing. Men’s suits, on the other hand, might be bought by men themselves or by their wives, mothers, or female relatives (in their role as household purchasers). The catalogue’s presentation of men’s suits reflected this ambivalence. Headlines for men’s clothes such as “Men! Low Prices!” and “Men! You Save at These Prices” appealed directly to male consumers themselves, and others advertising “Dressy Materials in Two Smart Styles for Men” and suits “For Discriminating Men and Young Men” addressed no specific customer. Boys’ clothing, on the other hand, was aimed squarely at their mothers.³³

Catalogues issued in the 1930s demonstrate Eaton’s desire to appeal primarily to mothers while also presenting boys as being choosy about their clothes. Eaton’s

31 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1937 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1937), 130; Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1934/35 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1934), 200.

32 The word tailored appeared eleven times in the nineteen men’s suit descriptions sampled from the 1930 catalogues (a fifty-eight per cent rate of occurrence). The word value was used twenty times, an occurrence rate of 105 per cent.

33 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1931/32 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 179; Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 107; Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 166; Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1929/30 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 213.

dedicated a much greater amount of catalogue space, and more text, to boys' clothing than it did to either men's or girls' garments. The boys' section of the catalogue included a wide selection of ready-made suits, trousers, shirts, sweaters, and coveralls designed for boys aged three to eighteen. Furthermore, several of the 1930s issues opened the boys' section with long paragraphs explaining why mothers needed to pay attention to their boys' clothes, and extolling the virtues of Eaton's merchandise. The boys' section of the Fall and Winter 1929/30 catalogue was headlined: "BOYS! BIG VALUES AWAIT YOU ON EVERY PAGE!" However, the accompanying text was addressed to mothers. Under the heading "His Clothes Are Most Important," Eaton's painted an idyllic picture of "boyhood days – days of play and fun when adventure is just around the corner, lurking behind every tree, and fences are obstacles to overcome, even at the expense of clothing." Boys were presumed to be more interested in playing than in keeping their clothes free of rips and tears, but Eaton's asserted that "these are things that mother cannot overlook." In order to please this imagined mother, Eaton's stressed that all its boys' garments were "made with the fundamental requirement of Boys' Clothing foremost in mind -- that mothers may find at EATON'S value, style, and long service in Boys' Clothing of real worth."³⁴ The most important aspect of boys' clothing, in Eaton's estimation, was meeting mothers' presumed desire to purchase durable garments for their sons.

Similarly, advertising language in the boys' section of the Spring and Summer 1930 catalogue adopted the mothers' perspective. "That boy of yours has often made you wonder how he could wear out his clothes so quickly," the headline claimed, continuing

34 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1929/30 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 199.

that the problem was solved when “you bought his suits and other wearing apparel from EATON’S, where sturdiness, long wear and smart styles always go hand in hand.”³⁵ The number of direct appeals to “mother” found in the boys’ section was highest between 1929 and 1934 (see Table 4.1). Of the seven boys’ suits sampled from the 1932 catalogue, six made explicit claims that mothers approved of the garments. “Mothers who like to see their boys in Blue will save money on these Suits of Wool and Cotton Blue Cheviot,” one description of a suit for boys sized 6 to 16 years claimed.³⁶ The following year, of the eight suits included in the analysis, only three mentioned mothers directly. The decline continued in 1934, when two references to mother as a consumer of boys’ clothing appeared in the nine suits sampled from the Fall and Winter catalogue.³⁷

35 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 14.

36 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1932/33 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 159.

37 Fathers were rarely mentioned in the boys’ section of the catalogue, except when Eaton’s wanted to draw attention to its long history of clothing boys. For example, in 1934, when the catalogue had been in circulation for fifty years, Eaton’s reminded customers that: “Styles have changed, the World has forged ahead, but a boy to-day is just about the same at heart as his Dad or Grandad when they were boys, and Just as Hard -- if not harder -- on his clothes. For fifty years EATON’S Mail Order has catered to the clothing needs of the Canadian boy, building an enviable reputation for quality, style, and value.” This kind of sales rhetoric again asserted the image of the active boy in need of rugged clothing. However, while dads made good role models, they were not addressed directly as the purchasers of boys’ clothing. Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1934/35 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1934), 190.

Table 4.1: References to “mother” in Eaton’s catalogue sample of boys’ suits, by year.

Year	Total Sample Size	References to “mother”
1929	8	1
1930	13	1
1931	11	2
1932	7	6
1933	8	3
1934	9	2
1935	25	1
1941	3	2
1942	2	1
1955	3	1
1956	1	1
Total	96	21

Whether “mother” was mentioned explicitly or not, Eaton’s appealed to mothers’ presumed desire for durability and low price. Eaton’s always noted when a suit came with extra trousers, reminding readers in 1930 that trousers were “the part that bears the brunt of wear and naturally wear out quickest.”³⁸ Eaton’s offered boys trousers with reinforced seat and knee patches, to reduce wear.³⁹ Eight of the 142 boys’ suits in the

38 “Two-Pant Grey Suit,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 21.

39 The description of a suit titled “Good Value Renown Junior” noted that “Double seat and knees give extra strength.” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 181. The catalogue used upper case letters to advertise a bloomer suit in a 1931 catalogue: “BOTH BLOOMERS WITH DOUBLE SEAT AND KNEES.” “All-Wool Blue Botany Serge Suit with Regular Bloomers and Golf-Style Bloomers.” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1931/32 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 167. Several suits in the Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue emphasized the double seat and knees of Eaton’s trousers. The description of a suit titled “The Trousers Have Double Seat” began: “If he is hard on his clothes – and what boy isn’t? – here is a suit featuring one or two pairs of longs

catalogue sample advertised the benefits of a double seat or knees. The company also emphasized the strength of the materials it used to make its suits. Its tweeds were “hard-wearing” and “strongly woven to resist the wear every boy’s suit receives.”⁴⁰

Eaton’s claimed mothers were getting more value for their money when they outfitted their sons at Eaton’s. “Thrifty Mothers Will Find Big Values Here,” the catalogue claimed in 1931. Similarly, a page in the Spring and Summer 1933 catalogue announced: “Here’s Good News for Mothers – 25% of our Boys’ Clothing Prices are Lower!”⁴¹ Since boys were portrayed as being particularly active and hard on their clothing, Eaton’s claimed its durable garments saved money because they did not need to be replaced as often. The catalogue reminded customers in 1931 that boys were “building sound bodies at the expense of clothes,” and though their “romping, playing, [and] days of fun” asked a lot of a suit,” Eaton’s clothes offered “long wear at low cost.”⁴² At the same time, Eaton’s also emphasized its low prices, for example, in its description of a “Double-Breasted Suit of Brown Tweed” in 1932: “If he is a regular boy and hard on his clothes, won’t mother be glad of this remarkably low price?” The catalogue emphasized that the price of this knee-pant suit was “Typical of the many

with double seat that provides extra wear.” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 122.

40 “In Double-Breasted Style,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 135. See also: “Double-Breasted Suit of Brown Tweed – A Saving for Junior,” made of tweed that was “a strong material that challenges wear.” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 95; and Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 139, where the company noted that “The Suit Junior wears every day should be of strong BROWN WOOL and COTTON TWEED like this one.”

41 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 174; Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1933 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 101.

42 “Lower Price on Junior Tweed Suit,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1931/32 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 165.

savings in this Book.”⁴³ Likewise, the company claimed that a suit in the 1933 catalogue was “A value you’ll talk about.”⁴⁴

Analysis of the adjectives used in the catalogue in the 1930s offers further evidence of Eaton’s desire to appeal primarily to mothers when selling boys’ suits. The sample of boys’ clothing included ninety suits from catalogues published between 1929 and 1939. The adjectives used most frequently to describe these garments are listed in Table 4.2. Words emphasizing the construction and cost of boys’ suits were among the most common. Eaton’s believed mothers were concerned about household finances, and as a result, the words “value,” “price” and “economy” appeared frequently in the descriptions sampled.⁴⁵ Equally important was the durability of the suits, expressed in words such as “sturdily,” “strongly,” “serviceable,” “quality,” and “long-wearing.” Eaton’s also emphasized the workmanship, using terms such as “finish,” “appearance,” “neat,” and “tailored.”

43 “Double-Breasted Suit of Brown Tweed – A Saving for Junior,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 95.

44 “All-Wool Worsted with Stripe,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1933 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 101. For other examples, see the description of “Remarkable Bargain!” which asked readers: “Do you ever remember being able to buy Suits of the famous FOX’S ALL-WOOL BLUE CHEVIOT SERGE at this or anywhere near this unusually low price? It is not likely that you have for this is one of the biggest bargains we have offered in boys clothing for a considerable time...There is no denying the saving you are offered here, for Suits like these would ordinarily be much higher in price.” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 219; and the description of “Fancy Brown Tweed – A Serviceable Material for Every-day wear,” which claimed that “Mother is bound to be more than pleased with the savings effected here.” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1933/34 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 172.

45 “Value” appeared fifty-one times in the sample (in reference to sixty-six per cent of the suits sampled) “Price” appeared twenty-four times (27 per cent of total) and “Economy” appeared eleven times (twelve per cent of total).

Table 4.2: Words used to describe boys' suits sampled from Eaton's catalogue, 1929 to 1939.

Words	Number of times appeared in 1930s catalogues (>5)
Smart/Smartly	59
Value/Values/Valuable	51
Sturdy/Sturdily/Sturdiness	26
Finish/Finishes/Finished	25
Price/Priced	24
Strong/Strongly	24
Appearance	16
Serviceable	15
Neat/Neatly	14
Quality	13
Tailor/Tailored/Tailoring	11
Economy/Economize	11
Popular	10
Fine/Finely	10
Best	10
Practical	9
Fit/Fitted	9
Man/Manly/Mannish	7
Long wear/Long-wearing	6
New/Newly	6
Roomy	5
Pleasing	5

Although Eaton's appealed to mothers' presumed desire for strong and inexpensive boys clothing, the catalogue focused much of its attention on assuring mothers that their sons would look well-dressed in a suit. The most common adjective used in relation to boys' suits in the 1930s sample was "Smart," presumably because this is the way Eaton's believed mothers wanted their sons to look. Smartness implied neat and trim – even stylish – appearance, without associating the male wearer of Eaton's suits with the whims of fashion and style that were often considered feminine.⁴⁶ The word "appearance" was also used to emphasize the way a particular suit would "retain its good appearance" even after long wear.⁴⁷ "You can make no mistake here from the standpoint of economy and good appearance," Eaton's declared of a bloomer suit in the 1932 catalogue, suggesting that mothers would be as concerned about the way a suit looked as they were about its cost.⁴⁸

Though Eaton's targeted mothers as the primary buyers of boys' clothing, the company also appealed to some extent to boys themselves, implying in its catalogue advertising that boys had an active role to play in choosing their own clothes. In the Fall and Winter 1931/32 catalogue Eaton's advertised that it carried "The Styles Boys Like... At Prices Mothers Can Afford to Pay."⁴⁹ Descriptions of suits often highlighted features that would attract boys. The Fall and Winter 1934/35 catalogue described a pair of trousers available for eight- to eighteen-year-old boys, appealing directly to the boys

46 "smart, n.2". OED Online. December 2011. Oxford University Press, <http://www.oed.com.proxy.bib.uottawa.ca/view/Entry/182447>.

47 "Two-Pant Grey Tweed," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 21.

48 Blue Botany Suits with Golf Bloomers and Longs," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 97.

49 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1931/32 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 165.

themselves: “Boy - these LONGS are real nifty! Made of BLUE CORDUROY with 22-inch cuff bottoms, they sport such style features as quarter-cut pockets, fancy emblem, and wide two-button waistband.” By using slang terms such as “nifty,” and focusing on the novelty features of the trousers, Eaton’s hoped to attract boys’ attention.⁵⁰

The catalogues also implied that boys had specific style preferences. In 1930, the Spring and Summer catalogue advertised a suit “cut on double-breasted lines that are decidedly popular,” while the following year Eaton’s claimed double-breasted suit jackets gave “a mannish appearance to this smart style that appeals to boys.”⁵¹ Double-breasted jackets closely imitated adult suit styles, and the catalogue implied that boys wanted to look like their fathers and older brothers. Eaton’s also believed boys favoured suits sold with a pair of golf bloomers and a pair of long trousers. The 1930 Spring and Summer catalogue advertised bloomer pants “made on roomy sizes that allow free, easy action,” making them ideal garments for play.⁵² Eaton’s drew attention to the fact that suits with one bloomer pant and one long pant could extend the life of a suit, since boys could wear the bloomers for play and save the long pants for more formal occasions. Boys were assumed to like this feature too, since they could play in bloomers without worrying about angering their mothers by ruining their long suit trousers. Eaton’s advertised that its trouser-and-bloomer suits were “Practical Styles that Appeal to the Boyhood Spirit.”⁵³ The Fall and Winter 1930/31 catalogue advertised a suit for boys aged six to ten years of age “that will appeal to the little chap.” It read: “He will like the

50 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1934/35 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1934), 196.

51 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 21; Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 179.

52 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 14.

53 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1929/30 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 202.

long trousers for best wear and the golf bloomers for everyday wear.”⁵⁴ Eaton’s highlighted the flexibility of these suits to meet boys’ presumed desire for clothes that could stand up to play.

The Eaton’s catalogue presented mothers and – to a lesser extent – sons as active consumers, albeit with often differing priorities. “Mother Wants VALUE, The Boy Wants STYLE,” a page of the boys’ section of the Fall and Winter 1932/33 issue proclaimed.⁵⁵ Eaton’s reminded readers: “You can’t expect every boy to take care of his clothes,” so the company made its suits “to stand the strain of happy boyhood play.”⁵⁶ Eaton’s offered mothers sturdy materials, careful construction, durable linings, and double seats, while boys were lured with styles they liked in garments that did not need much care. “Double seat, double elbows – and you’d never know!” the catalogue announced of one suit in its 1940 catalogue, claiming “That’s what boys like about the extras in EATON’S Suits – they don’t spoil the good style.”⁵⁷ Eaton’s believed it could satisfy both mothers and their sons, thanks to “years of experience in catering to the demands of the boy and his Mother.”⁵⁸

However, Eaton’s approach changed in the 1940s and 1950s, as the company began to appeal more frequently to boys themselves than to their mothers. The company addressed older boys directly, and began presenting teenaged boys as a group of consumers distinct from both younger boys and men – a group with its own clothing

54 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 228.

55 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 160.

56 “Fancy Grey Tweed with One or Two Longs,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1933/34 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 173.

57 “Reinforced for Extra Wear,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 123.

58 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1932/33 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 160.

needs and “demands.” Mothers were mentioned less frequently in the boys’ section after 1935 (see Table 4.1). Between 1935 and 1941, none of the suits sampled mentioned mothers, suggesting that Eaton’s was moving away from appealing directly to mothers.⁵⁹ In earlier catalogues, the word “mother” had appeared in relation to garments for younger and older boys alike.⁶⁰ The 1935 Spring and Summer catalogue asserted that Eaton’s could clothe boys of all ages equally well, informing mothers that “Whether your boy is still in the boisterous full-of-life stage or has reached the grown-up young man age, you will find just the right clothes for him at EATON’S.”⁶¹ The implication was that mothers were involved in the selection and purchase of their son’s clothing regardless of his age.

In contrast, in the 1940s and 1950s the catalogues mentioned mothers almost exclusively in descriptions of suits for younger boys, sized 6 to 12 years. These suit descriptions emphasized the features that would appeal to boys and mothers alike. These

59 The fact that fewer garments were sampled from the 1940s and 1950s catalogues reflects a reduced number of boys’ suits available in Eaton’s catalogues. Sports coats and trousers, and more casual sweaters, shirts, and vests, were more numerous than suits in these decades.

60 The headline of a page in the Fall and Winter 1934/35 Catalogue read “If He’s Full of Fun and Hard on His Clothes, Dress Him in Sturdy Pants Like These,” and included garments in sizes 8 to 18 years. See “Corduroy for Wear,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1933/34 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 196. Other suits with descriptions including the word “mother” included: “Fancy Brown Tweed – A Serviceable Material for Every-day wear” (sized 10 to 16 years), Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1933/34 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 172; “Blue Cheviot Suits One or Two Longs” (sized 6 to 16 years), Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1932/33 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 159; “Brown Tweed Suit With Golf Bloomers and Longs” (sized 8 to 14 years), Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1932/33 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 161; “All-Wool Worsted with Stripe” (sized 12 to 18 years), Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1933 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 101.

61 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 135.

suits had “details that will please the young lad” and “such a low price that mother will be proud of her savings!”⁶² Other pages of the catalogue referred to mothers more indirectly. For example, a page of suits for boys sizes 6 to 10 years in the Fall and Winter 1944/45 issue was headlined “Dress Him Right for School or Play,” implying that mothers or guardians were purchasing boys’ clothing, not the boys themselves.⁶³ Other catalogues advertised that Eaton’s suits required little laundering. A 1958 catalogue noted that the material of a suit in sizes 4 to 10 years “should save you many trips to the cleaners” – a message clearly directed at mothers.⁶⁴

While Eaton’s was mentioning mothers less often in its catalogues, the 1940s and 1950s issues also included more direct appeals to teenaged boys themselves. The company did this in several ways. First, it began offering boys’ suits in narrower and more well-defined size ranges. Throughout the 1930s Eaton’s had offered boys’ suits in large size ranges that did not clearly categorize boys according to age. For example, the same pair of trousers were available in size 6 and size 18.⁶⁵ Similarly, suits were sold in several different overlapping size ranges, including: suits with knee pants in sizes 4 to 12 years; suits with bloomers in sizes 8 to 16; suits with trousers and bloomers in sizes 6 to 16; and suits with trousers in sizes 4 to 12, 6 to 16, 10 to 18, and 12 to 18.⁶⁶ While suits

62 “Boys’ Blue Cheviot Sport Style Suit,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1941 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1941), 146; “Fancy Tweed in a Peppy Style,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1941 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1941), 147.

63 Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1944/45 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1944), 106.

64 “Good-Quality Splash Pattern Suit,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1958/59 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1958), 236.

65 See, for example: “All-Wool Blue Serge Trousers,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1929/30 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1929), 209; “Khaki Drill Outing Trousers,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1931 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1931), 180.

66 See, for example: “Double-breasted Suit of Brown Tweed – A Saving for Junior,”

with short pants tended to be offered in smaller sizes, indicating they were for younger boys, the catalogue sold suits with long pants for boys as young as four, suits with knee pants for boys as old as twelve, and suits with bloomers for boys as old as sixteen. Eaton's gave no explanation for these multiple overlapping size ranges, but their use in the 1930s suggests Eaton's did not consider teenaged boys a distinct category of consumers at this time.

By the mid-1940s the catalogue was offering fewer size ranges for boys' clothing, instead relying on three consistent size ranges for boys' suits. These size ranges were: from size 6 years to size 10 years, often called Junior suits; from size 10 years to size 15 years, dubbed Intermediate, and from size 14 years to size 19 years, for Senior boys.⁶⁷ Intermediate and Senior suits were only sold with long pants; after the 1935 catalogue, bloomers were only offered in sizes smaller than 14.⁶⁸ Knee pants and breeches (like bloomers) were only sold in Junior sizes.⁶⁹ These new sizing categories

Eaton's Spring and Summer 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 95; "Blue Botany Suits with Golf Bloomers and Longs," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 97; "Blue Cheviot Suits One or Two Longs," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1933/34 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 159; "Smart Double-breasted Style All-Wool Blue Cheviot," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1934/35 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1934), 190; "Dressy!" and "Norfolk Style," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 2; "All Wool and Decidedly Smart," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1939 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1939), 91.

⁶⁷ There was occasionally a slight deviation from these age-sizes; for example, suits might be sold in size 5 to 10 years instead of 6 to 10 years, or from 10 to 16 years instead of 10 to 15 years.

⁶⁸ "Suit with Sweater Vest," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 185. This suit with bloomers was sold in sizes 8 to 14 years.

⁶⁹ Suits with long pants were also available in "Junior" sizes; however, short pants were not available in larger sizes in the garments included in the catalogue sample analyzed. See, for example, "Quality Junior Suit," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1940/41 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 161; "Fancy Tweed with Extra Pants," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1946/47 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company,

distinguished between younger and older boys more clearly than Eaton's had in the past, creating "stages" of boyhood that Eaton's defined and appealed to in different ways.

The Intermediate and Senior boys had not only donned long pants, but were also more likely to be described in the catalogues as students. The Fall and Winter 1935/36 catalogue included "Students' Two-Pant Suits" in sizes 14 to 19 years, while a page of the 1937 boys' section announced that "Style and Value are "Classmates" at EATON'S," referring to the presumed student-status of the boys who might purchase the suits offered in sizes 14 years to 19 years.⁷⁰ Several catalogues in the 1940s advertised suits in Intermediate and Senior sizes as "practical for the boy at school" or "a wise choice for service at school."⁷¹ In contrast, the Junior suits sampled from the 1940s and 1950s contained only one reference to school or to young boys being students.⁷² Instead,

1946), 138; and "Three Pieces," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1947 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1947), 116.

70 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1935 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 182; Eaton's Spring and Summer 1937 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1937), 135.

71 "Double-Breasted" and "Blue Cheviot," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 123; see also "Pleated Pants with Zipper Fly" and "Striped Tweed! Pleats! Zipper!" Eaton's Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 122; "Fancy Check Tweed in Sports Back," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1941 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1941), 148; "Students' Suit," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1945 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1945), 106; "Study Striped Worsted," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1953 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1953), 159.

72 A suit sized 6 to 10 years appeared on a page headlined "Dress Him Right for School or Play!" in the Spring and Summer 1944 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1944), 106. In the 1930s sample, references to school or to boys as students appeared thirteen times in advertisements for suits (total sample was eighty-two garments). Five of those suits were sold in sizes for boys both younger and older than ten; only one was in sizes 6 to 10 years. "Exceptional Value in Two-Bloomer Suit" (sized 8 to 16 years), Eaton's Spring and Summer 1930 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1930), 14; "Grey Tweed Two-Pant Junior Suit" (sized 6 to 10 years), Eaton's Spring and Summer 1932 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 100; "Brown Tweed Suit with Golf Bloomers" (sized 8 to 14 years), Eaton's Fall and Winter

Eaton's emphasized that Junior suits were for dress up and for play, or "for dressing up the "little man" just like dad!"⁷³ Even though Junior boys were old enough to attend school, Eaton's preferred to appeal to them (and their mothers) by emphasizing how easy it was to play in the company's garments.

The catalogue used what Eaton's believed was popular jargon to appeal to teenaged boys. On two occasions Eaton's referred to garments as "nifty" in the catalogues sampled from the 1930s. The use of slang terms increased significantly in the 1940s, especially in descriptions of garments intended for older boys. In 1942, a page of suits sized 14 to 19 was headlined "Snappy Styles for Young Chaps," while a page in the Fall and Winter 1944/45 catalogue advertised "Warm Weights and Snappy Styling in Cold Weather Togs."⁷⁴ In 1947, on a page headlined "Slick Suits for Seniors," Eaton's invited "senior" boys to "choose from suits in classy styles or make up your own nifty two-some." The headline employed slang that was popular among teenagers, but also underlined that "senior" boys were consumers in their own right by suggesting they select their own mix-and-match trousers and jackets to express themselves.⁷⁵ One suit on the page was advertised as a "Snappy All-Wool Tweed" that was "right on the beam with

1932/33 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1932), 161; "Double Breasted Style in Grey Tweed" (sized 8 to 16 years), Eaton's Spring and Summer 1933 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1933), 103; "Grey Tweed" (sized 8 to 16 years), Eaton's Spring and Summer 1934 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1934), 104; "Suit with Sweater Vest" (sized 8 to 14 years), Eaton's Fall and Winter 1935/36 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 185.

73 A page of Junior suits in the Eaton's Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue was headlined "Juniors' Play, Dress Togs." Eaton's Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1949), 160; "Rayon Gabardine Suit," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1951 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1951), 163.

74 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1942/43 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1942), 191; Eaton's Fall and Winter 1944/45 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1944), 106.

75 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1947 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1947), 121.

the latest style points” and “just about as snappy as you’ll see this season.”⁷⁶ While these garment descriptions still mentioned the “splendid quality” materials and “careful tailoring” of these suits, their construction and durability – so much emphasized in earlier catalogues – was less important than their style.

Whereas previously the catalogues had described certain suits as being preferable to boys because of their “mannish” appearance, or claimed boys preferred golf bloomers to long trousers because of comfort, now older boys were portrayed as demanding suits with particular style features. In 1935 a suit for boys in sizes 14 to 18 claimed to have “all the good style points demanded by the student-age youth.”⁷⁷ While Eaton’s continued to mention the quality wool materials of the garment, they also asked catalogue readers to “Note the double-breasted vest, longs with slant pockets, two-button waist and twenty-two-inch cuffs.”⁷⁸ These were features not mentioned in descriptions of smaller suits, suggesting they were qualities Eaton’s believed would appeal to older boys. Similarly, a page of the Spring and Summer 1937 catalogue advertised “PREP SCHOOL STYLES” for older boys and claimed the suits were “in the new colorings and patterns for the coming season.”⁷⁹ While Eaton’s had mentioned suit styles that were “popular” with boys in previous issues, this was the first time among the suits sampled that the company specifically mentioned seasonal colours and patterns as being important features of boys’ suits. The following year the catalogue again referred

76 “Snappy All-Wool Tweed,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1947 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1947), 121.

77 “All-Wool Worsted Carefully Tailored,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1935/36 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1935), 183.

78 Ibid.

79 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1937 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1937), 137.

specifically to a suit's colour and pattern to appeal to boy customers: "If you have decided on Blue and want a check pattern that is up-to-date and smart here is a Suit that should please you in style and price."⁸⁰ The idea that a boy would be concerned that his suit was "up-to-date" – as opposed to being comfortable, "mannish," or made for play – appeared only in descriptions of older boys' suits, suggesting Eaton's believed this desire to appear fashionable was particular to teenaged – rather than younger – customers. "The good style of this sporty model is sure to catch your eye!" Eaton's claimed of a Senior suit in the Spring and Summer 1940 catalogue that was "cut to make you look your best."⁸¹ The same page of the catalogue advertised another suit with the "stylish" features meant to appeal specifically to teenaged boys:

Here is something new boys! Tweed in sporty stripes styled for the youth who knows what to wear and is looking for a smart suit that is a little different in appearance from the ordinary. And it is outstanding value, too, at this price. Cut on single-breasted lines with novelty back from All-Wool Tweed in Brown or Green – two popular shades you'll see a lot of this season. Serviceable Venetian linings. Trousers have pleats at waist, zipper fly, belt loops and 20-inch cuffs bottoms – all the style features that are in demand by the 'teen-age boy whether he is at school, at business or wants a suit for general wear.⁸²

The description contained more references to the garment's style than to its construction. While the catalogue noted the suit's "serviceable" linings and all-wool materials, and claimed it was an "outstanding" value, much more attention was given to features that were supposedly "in demand" by older boys – specifically the zipper fly and pleats, which were also mentioned in two other suit descriptions in the same catalogue.

80 "All-Wool Blue Check Tweed," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1938/39 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1938), 140.

81 "Pleated Pants with Zipper Fly," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 122.

82 Ibid.

Teenaged boys were portrayed here as knowledgeable consumers who knew what they wanted. Eaton's even suggested this suit was intended for the boy who wanted to set a trend by wearing something "a little different" but still "popular."

Analysis of the adjectives used to describe larger boys' suits further suggests that Eaton's wanted to portray the teenaged boy as a customer more concerned about style than his younger brother. The most common adjectives used in descriptions of suits for older boys were: smart; tailored; sporty; quality; and popular.⁸³ The durability and value of garments received much less mention than it had in previous descriptions of suits for boys in larger size ranges. Words such as serviceable, price, and sturdy were each used to describe only six per cent of the larger-sized suits sampled. Teenagers were still assumed to be more active than their fathers, needing suits that "take everyday punishment well," as one suit description in 1955 claimed.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, Eaton's placed more emphasis on the aesthetic features of suits for older boys than on their durability. In contrast, Eaton's continued to appeal to these qualities when selling suits for younger boys; the most common adjectives to describe boys' suits in the 1940s and 1950s were: finish; smart; young; best; value; quality; neat; sturdy; and serviceable.⁸⁵

83 In the forty-nine suit descriptions sampled, the word smart was used sixteen times (a thirty-three per cent rate of occurrence); tailored and sporty both appeared ten times (a twenty per cent rate of occurrence); quality was used nine times and popular appeared eight times, each occurring in approximately eighteen per cent of the sample.

84 "Two-Way Nylon Strengthened," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1955 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1955), 237.

85 Of the fifty-six Junior suits sampled, the words finish/finishes/finished appeared seventeen times (a thirty per cent rate of occurrence); smart appeared sixteen times (twenty-nine per cent occurrence); young was used thirteen times (twenty-three per cent occurrence); value, best, quality, and neat each appeared eleven times (twenty per cent occurrence); sturdily/sturdy/sturdiness appeared ten times (eighteen per cent occurrence), and serviceable was used nine times (sixteen per cent occurrence).

The word sporty was never used to describe suits for younger boys, and words such as popular occurred with less frequency than in descriptions of suits for older boys.⁸⁶

The catalogue also mentioned colour with increasing frequency when advertising suits for older boys. Under the headline “Hi-Styles for Young Canada” Eaton’s offered a suit in the “much-wanted brown shade,” with “extra slacks in harmonizing Fawn shade.”⁸⁷ The company implied that brown was not only popular, but desired by male teenagers. Furthermore, the addition of extra slacks in a different shade reflects Eaton’s belief that boys wanted to mix and match their clothes. Whereas previously boys’ clothing had typically been available only in darker colours such as navy, grey, brown, and black, in the 1940s and 1950s less traditional colours such as green and teal began to appear on the pages of the boys’ section. Of the garments sampled, nine suits were offered in green – eight of those suits were for Intermediate or Senior boys sized ten years to nineteen years.⁸⁸ Four boys suits were available in teal, and three of those were

86 The word popular appeared six times in descriptions of Junior suits in the 1940s and 1950s, a rate of occurrence of eleven per cent.

87 “Grads Extra-Quality Suit,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1949), p.158.

88 In 1947 one suit for younger boys (sized six years to ten years) was offered in a “green check pattern,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1947 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1947), 116. Suits offered to older boys in green included: “Here’s a Sporty Style in All-Wool Check Tweed,” and “Striped Tweed! Pleats! Zipper!” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 122; “All-Wool Tweed Two-Trouser Suits,” and “Reinforced for Extra Wear,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1940 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 123; “Durable Check Tweeds,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1940/41 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1940), 159; “3-Piece Tweed,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1942/43 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1942), 189; “Smart Striped Worsted Suit,” Eaton’s Fall and Winter 1942/43 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1942), 191; “Student’s Suit,” Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1945 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1945), 106.

available in larger sizes.⁸⁹ This pattern suggests that Eaton's believed older boys would be more interested in buying suits in less traditional colours. The catalogue also offered older boys more colour choices. The majority of boys' suits of all sizes were sold in two different colours. However, eight suits were offered in three colours, and one suit was offered in four colours. Seven of these nine suits – sold in catalogues between 1935 and 1951 – were sizes 14 to 19 years. Eaton's believed it could appeal to teenaged boys by offering more – and different – suit colours.

The “style-conscious lad” continued to be featured in catalogues in the later 1940s and 1950s.⁹⁰ For example, the Spring and Summer catalogue in 1949 advertised “Suits for Intermediates in snappy styles and fine fabrics.”⁹¹ Elsewhere Eaton's advertised that its suits were “style leaders” for boys who wanted an “up-to-the-minute look” with the “Latest Weaves of Fashion” and “Top-Notch Styling.”⁹² Older boys were

89 In 1953 a Junior suit (sizes 4 to 10) was sold in Teal or Brown. Eaton's Spring and Summer Catalogue. Eaton's Spring and Summer 1953 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1953), 171. Suits offered in teal to older boys included: “Smart Striped Worsted Suit,” Eaton's Fall and Winter 1942/43 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1942), 191; “All-Wool Tweed,” Eaton's Spring and Summer 1945 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1945), 108; “Eaton's ‘Grad’ All-Wool Worsted,” Eaton's Spring and Summer 1951 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1951), 152.

90 A Senior suit in the Fall and Winter 1956/57 catalogue claimed to have the qualities that “style-conscious lads” appreciated. See “‘Duraleen’ Finish,” Eaton's Fall and Winter 1956/57 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1956), 306. Similarly, a page of the subsequent catalogue advertised a suit as “an up-to-the-minute look that's a sure-fire hit for the style-conscious lad – a look of distinction that typifies EATON'S standard of quality.” See “Single Breasted Suit – Rayon Twist with Duraleen Finish,” Eaton's Spring and Summer 1957 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1957), 192.

91 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1949), 164. A page in the Spring and Summer 1951 catalogue also drew attention to its “‘Sharp’ Styles” in suits sized ten years to fifteen years, Eaton's Spring and Summer 1951 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1951), 155.

92 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1956/57 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1956), 306;

also the only male catalogue customers to be offered suits with draped trousers, a style popular with teenagers and young men in the mid-1940s and early 1950s.⁹³ Trousers with a drape were wider at the knee and tapered at the ankle, creating a distinct silhouette. Trouser width at the ankle was not a feature that was mentioned in descriptions of most boys' suits (or men's, for that matter); however, several Senior suits sold between 1948 and 1951 made special mention of the "drape effect favoured by Young Canada."⁹⁴ In 1949 a suit styled "to-the-minute" advertised pants that were twenty-three inches wide at the knee and seventeen inches at the bottoms.⁹⁵ In the 1951 catalogue the drape was more extreme, tapering from twenty-three-inch knees to a twelve-inch cuff bottom. Eaton's noted that these were the "lines popular with most youths."⁹⁶ By offering draped trousers only in suits for older boys, Eaton's was again marking the particular style preferences of teenaged customers.

Eaton's Spring and Summer 1957 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1957), 192, 194.

93 Draped trousers were part of the zoot suit style adopted by young men in several North American cities during the Second World War. The look was subversive during the war – and was actually banned in some cases – because the draped trousers and long suit jacket required a large quantity of material. With wartime shortages, such fabric use was illegal and, according to some, unpatriotic. Young men dressed in zoot suits clashed with uniformed soldiers in Los Angeles and Montreal. While the zoot suit was not widely popular, a similar style of draped trousers were manufactured and sold in department stores in the immediate post-war years. See Alvarez, *The Power of the Zoot*; Jon Savage, *Teenage: The Creation of Youth, 1875-1945* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2007), 397-401; and Jeffrey Keshen, *Sinners, Saints and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War*. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 207-208.

94 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1951/52 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1951), 198.

95 "Grads Extra-Quality Suit," Eaton's Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1949), 158. In 1948 draped trousers were also offered in a suit that promised "Lots of Colour – Lots of Style!" Eaton's Fall and Winter 1948/49 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1948), 197.

96 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1951/52 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1951), 198.

Beginning in 1948 Eaton's also renamed and modified its size-style range for Senior boys, referring to them as Grads, linking older adolescent boys to their presumed student status more closely than before. The Intermediate range for boys sized 10 to 15 years remained, but suits that had previously been sizes 14 to 19 years were now sold by chest size in inches, without reference to the age of the wearer. However, the measurements were the same as the 14 to 19 year sizes; the smallest Grads suits came in a thirty-two-inch chest and a twenty-nine-inch waist, the same measurements as the size 14 sold between 1935 and 1947.⁹⁷

In 1955 Eaton's expanded the Grads sizes to include chest sizes of forty inches, in what the catalogue termed a "Special Service for Man-Sized Youths." The company explained that it had been "keeping an eye on statistics" and had noticed that "teen-agers are taller and huskier for their age than those of previous generations."⁹⁸ Eaton's solution was to offer "specially-proportioned" suits for these "man-sized youth," so larger boys would not have to buy men's sizes before they had reached the age of maturity (in this case, roughly nineteen years of age).⁹⁹ Eaton's claimed that this expanded offering of Grads suits would save boys – and their parents – money because the suits were less expensive than similarly-sized men's suits.¹⁰⁰ However, the extension of the Grads sizes

97 Grads sizes 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, and 38 similarly corresponded exactly to the previous sizes 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20. Size 20 years was not used very often; most Senior garments were sold in sizes 14 to 19 years.

98 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1955 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1955), 237; Eaton's Fall and Winter 1956/57 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1956), 306.

99 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1955 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1955), 237; Eaton's Fall and Winter 1956/57 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1956), 306.

100 Eaton's Spring and Summer 1955 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1955), 237; Eaton's Fall and Winter 1956/57 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1956),

to include males with a forty-inch chest width also reinforced the idea that boys' maturity was not a matter of their physical size as much as their age – even larger boys needed suits made for boys, as opposed to for men.

The term Grads associated Eaton's suits not only with students, but also with academic success. The label implied that the teenager wearing Eaton's suits would be a graduate who would soon join the workforce. The suggestion that these suits were intended for older boys who were almost men was reinforced by the fact that the catalogue did not refer to wearers of Grads sizes as boys. Grads suits were for "Junior Young Men," "the big young fellow," "Young Canada," or "students" – the words "boy" or "lad" did not appear in any descriptions of the Grads suits.¹⁰¹ The Grads label suggested teenaged boys were being promoted to full adult sizes and styles, that they were successful students, and, as "Young Canada," that they represented the future of their country.

Between the mid-1930s and the 1950s, Eaton's provided separate suits for older boys even though, physically, larger boys could have simply bought suits from the men's section of the catalogue. Analysis of the catalogues reveals that from the mid-1930s onwards, Eaton's appealed to teenaged boys in a different way than it advertised to either younger boys or men. The teenaged boy consumer was defined by his larger stature, his

306. The Grads suits were significantly less expensive than Eaton's men's suits. Men's suits (with two pair of trousers and no vest) included in the catalogue sample from the 1955 and 1956 catalogues cost between \$37.50 and \$62.50. Grads suits in the same catalogues cost \$21.95 and \$33.95.

¹⁰¹ "All-Wool English Worsted," Eaton's Fall and Winter 1948/49 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1948), 185; Eaton's Spring and Summer 1953 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1953), 159; Eaton's Spring and Summer 1949 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1949), 158; Eaton's Fall and Winter 1951/52 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1951), 198.

desire for a particular style features in his suits, and his autonomy from “mother.” By the mid-1940s the company had divided boys’ clothing into three age-based size ranges, and saw younger and older boys as having distinct clothing needs and wants. Teenaged boys were “man-sized youths,” Eaton’s argued, implying that boys were physically mature but still too immature to buy suits from the men’s section of the catalogue. Older boys were also portrayed as “style-conscious lads,” and descriptions of larger-sized suits often highlighted the garments’ aesthetic features and colours.

By labelling teenaged boys “man-sized youths” and “style-conscious lads,” Eaton’s demonstrated the close relationship between boys’ clothing and notions of masculinity. The boys depicted in the pages of the catalogues wore suits; they were the image of the hard-working and enterprising businessman-in-training, a student who recognized that his dress projected an image, and wanted that image to exude success. By buying a suit from Eaton’s, the teenaged boy was purchasing an image of progress that married fashion and consumption to heterosexual masculinity. In other words, Eaton’s projected an image of the teenaged boy consumer – one interested in his appearance and in the changing styles of suits – that fit with the expectations of future career success many adults had for young men and, Eaton’s assumed, teenaged boys had for themselves.

Teenagers – both male and female – were increasingly evident in the Eaton’s catalogue in the years between 1930 and 1960. As the previous two chapters demonstrate, the company employed several distinct and gendered strategies to advertise clothing to the “new” teenaged market. While teenaged girls were assumed to want slim-fitting and sophisticated garments to win popularity from high school peers and potential

beaus, teenaged boys' suits were sold with appeals to subtle style and their status as almost-men. Size ranges evolved to focus more narrowly on those in their teenaged years, despite the reality that customers' body sizes varied widely. Mothers, initially addressed as the consumer of clothing for their sons and daughters, were rarely mentioned, as Eaton's strove to assert teenaged consumer autonomy and justify teenagers' consumer desires. However, the catalogue was not the only way in which Eaton's attempted to define and target teenaged customers. In the company's urban retail stores across Canada, Eaton's executives and employees worked to bring more teenagers to the cash registers and to understand what their teenaged customers wanted. These efforts are considered in chapter five.

CHAPTER FIVE

Saturdays at the Store: Eaton's Junior Councils and the commodification of the authoritative teenaged consumer

In 1939, Jack Brockie, the manager of Eaton's Merchandise Display Department at the Toronto store, saw something that made him stop and think. According to his later recollections, he was crossing the floor of the children's wear section when he heard the raised voices of a mother and teenage daughter who were arguing over a coat. The mother wanted to purchase the coat in question, but the daughter wanted to look in the women's wear section of the store to find a more sophisticated style. Brockie questioned the manager of the children's wear department and learned that this type of family dispute was a common occurrence. He began to wonder: Were the clothes available to teenaged girls at Eaton's more suitable to parents' tastes than to their children's? Was the department store serving young people adequately?¹ He decided Eaton's needed to learn more about this "new and unexplored group of customers" – teenagers.² In 1940 he started two store-sponsored youth councils – the Junior Fashion Council for girls, and

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- 1 Sociologist Daniel Cook has noted that stories of teenaged customers shopping in clothing departments that were meant for adults appeared frequently in American merchant trade publications in the 1930s. See Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood: The Children's Clothing Industry and the Rise of the Child Consumer* (Durham, N.C., Duke University Press, 2004), 129. Interview with Mr. J.A. Brockie, October 3 1968, Eaton's Archives Subject files (sub-series 162; hereafter 162), T. Eaton Company fonds (series 229; hereafter 229), Archives of Ontario (hereafter AO), Toronto Ontario.
 - 2 "Students and a Store," (December 29, 1960), p. 3., D.H. Morrison's Public Relations Office files (sub-series 146; hereafter 146), 229, AO.

the Junior Executive for boys.³

Between 1939 and his retirement in 1963, Brockie played a leading role in promoting Eaton's merchandise to teenagers.⁴ While Eaton's mail order catalogues engaged in a more one-way relationship with customers, advertising clothing to girls and boys, the councils began as a way to solicit teenagers' opinions, and fostered a more interactive relationship between teenagers and store employees. The councils soon evolved into a much more extensive programme that combined public relations and advertising objectives. At Saturday morning meetings, young men and women selected from local high schools listened to guest speakers, watched films, approved merchandise, planned social events, and toured store departments. Sometimes they worked on special projects, planning window displays or fashion shows, or composing their own advertising copy for a contest. Their activities were highly gendered, yet all were designed to figure out what young people liked, and to introduce them to Eaton's merchandise. By 1946, Junior Councils and Executives met at Eaton's stores in Toronto,

3 The Junior Fashion Council was changed to simply the Junior Council in the early 1940s.

4 Brockie was born in Toronto in 1898 and began working at Eaton's in 1914 as a stenographer. He served briefly with the 71st battery of the Canadian Field Artillery in 1918 and achieved the rank of Corporal, although he never served overseas. Back at Eaton's in the 1920s, Brockie caught management's eye after helping produce a series of theatrical plays and revues for his fellow employees, and he was transferred to the Merchandise Display Department. In 1928 he began producing Eaton's annual Santa Claus Parade in Toronto. He led the Merchandise Display Department from 1936 until 1951, when he was made the manager of Eaton's new Public Relations Office. He retired in 1962. Brockie also served as president of the fledgling Canadian Public Relations Society in 1953 and 1954. Steve Penfold recounts some of the details of Brockie's career in "The Eaton's Santa Claus Parade and the Making of a Metropolitan Spectacle, 1905-1982," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 44:87 (August 2011): 1-28.

Montreal, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Calgary, and Edmonton.⁵

Brockie and his fellow council advisers (as the Eaton's employees who supervised the councils were known) kept records of weekly meetings, ideas, application forms, and other documents related to council activities. While Eaton's retail councils were not unique in Canada, the files kept by Brockie and his fellow advisers are unparalleled.⁶ These records shed light on the relationship company employees were trying to foster between the department store and urban high school students across Canada. Eaton's executives saw these groups as a "teen-age indicator," keeping the company informed of young people's likes and dislikes, as well as giving Eaton's an advertising medium in Canada's urban high schools.⁷ At the same time that Eaton's was

5 In Winnipeg, the Council and Executive were still meeting in 1985, according to the store's newsletter, *Eaton's Winnipeg News* (October 24, 1985).

6 The Robert Simpson Company also started the "Collegiate Club" at its Toronto store in 1939. The Collegiate Club's fifty-six fourteen- to nineteen-year-old members, representing thirty-two local schools, engaged in activities similar to their peers in Eaton's Junior Councils and Executives: they held bi-monthly meetings; talked about "ads and back-to-school clothes and Saturday jobs;" planned dances and fashion shows for their schoolmates, and heard from various retail experts. Simpson's programme was profiled in an article in *Mayfair* magazine. See "Teenagers Club," *Mayfair* (August 1945), 93. Several American retailers also started youth councils in the late 1930s and 1940s. "American Teen-Age Councils in Retail Stores," *Junior Executive Bulletin* (12 March 1947), p. 9, T.H. Miller's files relating to the Winnipeg Junior Council and Executive (sub-series 198; hereafter 198), 229, AO. Brockie's files on the Junior Executives and Junior Councils suggest that he was aware of similar projects south of the border, and he likely fostered relationships with those involved at American stores. As Steve Penfold notes in the case of the Santa Claus Parade, Brockie and his staff were "active and important participants" in a "broad network of corporate parade-makers," in which the flow of ideas between Eaton's and American department stores was "circular and reciprocal." Penfold, "The Eaton's Santa Claus Parade," 17. Lorraine O'Donnell also found evidence in the Eaton's records that company executives such as Brockie read American trade publications and solicited expertise from American department stores. Lorraine O'Donnell, "Visualizing the History of Women at Eaton's, 1869 to 1976," (PhD thesis, McGill University, 2002), 203-204.

7 "Youth Unlimited: The Story of Eaton's Junior Council and Executive," (n.d.), p. 4,

trying to forge a relationship with high school students, it was attempting to validate teenagers' active participation in the retail marketplace, both by portraying high school students as authoritative consumers and claiming to offer educational activities to familiarize teenagers with the retail industry. Eaton's saw the teenager as a consumer persona to be defined, catered to, and, ultimately, commodified.⁸

By the time Brockie started the council programme in 1939, Eaton's was already experienced at crafting a particular image of its employees and then using that image to further its profits. As Donica Belisle demonstrates, Eaton's used its employees' health to promote itself as a respectable and safe workplace, advertised workers' activities to further its own image as a benevolent provider, and "incorporated [employees] appearances and actions into advertising and publicity."⁹ The council programmes built upon this paternalist approach and allowed Eaton's to reach beyond its workforce and shape a model of the teenaged consumer that tacitly sanctioned the department store's youth marketing endeavours.

The first members of Toronto's Junior Council were hand-picked by Jack Brockie himself, who later recalled that he relied on store employees to volunteer the names of their daughters, sisters, and friends. However, as other stores formed their own groups, Brockie and the other advisers realized they would need a more comprehensive and objective way to recruit members. High schools provided a ready-made pool of

Box 2, J.A. Brockie files (sub-series 151; hereafter 151), 229, AO.

8 Childhood is commodified, sociologist Daniel Cook argues, when that specific stage of life takes on economic exchange value. Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood*, 6.

9 Belisle, *Retail Nation*, 109.

potential recruits.¹⁰ Store employees likely did quite a bit of leg-work to contact the schools in their cities and establish a relationship with teachers and administrators. Meeting minutes show that a large number of urban public and private high schools – twenty in Toronto and a dozen in Winnipeg, for example – participated in the programme. Students interested in joining the Junior Council or Junior Executive had to be nominated, either by a teacher or administrator, or by an outgoing member of one of the councils. Schools could nominate more than one member each year.

By involving the school in the process, Eaton's saved itself the trouble of having to recruit members. With a few simple announcements at each school and, after the programmes had been running for a few years, mainly through word of mouth, Eaton's was able to interest high school students in applying to become members of the council. The process also acknowledged the schools' role by relying heavily on the teachers' assessments of the students; only students who had their school's approval could be Junior Councillors or Executives. In stores where former members were allowed to nominate future members, the selection process allowed Eaton's to claim that they were involving the students in the selection of their own representatives, creating a sense that the process was somewhat democratic, or an expression of popular will. Application forms, grades, and, in some cases, reference letters, were forwarded to the council advisers at each store. In some cases, these advisers interviewed the candidates before making their decisions. In all cases, the final decision belonged to the company. New

10 As historian Mary Louise Adams notes, high schools brought together a larger group of teenagers than any other institution, making them "targets of adult/expert observation and intervention." Mary Louise Adams, *The Trouble with Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 99.

members were selected in the early spring and their terms began the following autumn.

Besides their status as high school students, little is known about the hundreds of students who were Junior Councillors and Executives at Eaton's stores across Canada in the 1940s and 1950s. However, a small sample of application forms survives in the T. Eaton Company fonds at the Archives of Ontario. The files of Tom Miller, employee at Eaton's in Winnipeg and Junior Executive adviser for more than twenty years, include 108 application forms and some accompanying reference letters from the years 1950 to 1952. Of the total, twenty-five of the applications were successful, twenty-seven were labelled "Rejected and Alternates," twenty were "Not Chosen," or unsuccessful, and thirty-six were chosen as alternate representatives, should the preferred applicant be unable to serve.¹¹ These application forms hint at the criteria that Winnipeg store employees used to select the high school students who would provide them with information about teenaged consumer preferences.

The application form asked thirty questions, from personal information – date of birth, age, grade level, home address – to clothing size, hobbies, and future ambitions. Applicants had to include their favourite subject, their part-time job, and their father's occupation.¹² They were asked what activities and sports they participated in at school and in the larger community. The application forms tell us a little bit about a sample of the boys who applied to be Executives in Winnipeg. The form itself, as well as a comparison of the attributes of successful and unsuccessful applicants, also demonstrates

11 Miller also conducted a survey of thirty-nine young men who were Junior Executives in 1946 and 1947, in the interests of keeping track of the programme's "alumni."

12 The Junior Council application forms were identical to the Junior Executive forms, except they asked for girls' dress size instead of suit measurements. No completed Junior Council application forms were found in either Miller's or Brockie's files.

some of the company's priorities when selecting the teenagers who would represent both their peers and the company.

The application form included six separate questions related to extra-curricular activities, hobbies, and sports, suggesting that Eaton's was very interested in what potential applicants did outside the classroom. Indeed, the boys accepted as Executives were not necessarily students with high academic achievement as measured by their grades. In fact, the average grade of accepted, rejected, and alternate applicants alike was roughly seventy-five per cent – a solid mark, certainly, but not exceptionally high. Among rejected and alternate applicants, twenty-seven per cent stated a grade of eighty per cent or above. Only three applicants listed a grade below sixty per cent. On the other hand, a third of the accepted applicants had grade averages below seventy per cent.¹³ Five applications that were accepted gave no grade average at all.¹⁴ Given that a significant number of students with high grades were rejected, while a smaller number of students with average grades were selected, high academic achievement did not seem to be the first priority for Eaton's officials choosing Junior Executives.

Despite this trend, company officials in Winnipeg preferred boys who wanted to pursue post-secondary education. The majority of the sixty-eight boys applying to be

13 Grade averages were usually included in letters of recommendation. Some letters included a broad range (sixty to seventy per cent), while others failed to mention the applicant's academic performance. Applications with ranges and those which omitted grades were not included in these calculations. The sample included thirty-seven of forty-three rejected and alternate applications, and eighteen of twenty-five accepted applications. Junior Executives Chosen 1951-52, and Not Chosen, 198-229, AO.

14 It is possible that the grades for these applicants were included in the letters of recommendation. However, four of these five did not have letters of recommendation included in the file. It is impossible to say whether they did not submit letters with their applications or whether the letters have since gone missing.

Junior Executives in 1951 aspired to attend university. However, a greater number of boys accepted as Executives were planning to attend university than those who were rejected or chosen as alternates; while three-quarters of rejected and alternate applicants planned to go to college, eighty-four per cent of accepted applicants thought they would pursue post-secondary education. Only three of the successful applicants said they were not planning to attend, and one said he was undecided. The application forms from the previous year show the same pattern. Of the twenty-three rejected applicants, eight left the question blank, and a further four said they did not plan to attend college or university.¹⁵

A pattern also emerges when we compare the anticipated course of study listed on application forms. Eaton's wanted to know not only if boys intended to attend a post-secondary institution, but which one they thought they would attend, and what they wanted to study. If they did not plan to attend university, Eaton's asked them to describe their future plans. The company seemed to prefer applicants that were considering entering business-related disciplines and jobs over those intending to enter other fields. Rejected and alternate applicants most often listed engineering as their chosen discipline, followed by arts, science, and commerce. However, commerce was the most common answer among accepted applicants, followed by engineering and science. Furthermore, of the three successful applicants who said they did not intend to attend university, one listed "business man" as his ambition, while the other stated that "since I am studying commercial occupations I expect to follow that line of work." Council advisers seemed to slightly favour students who showed an interest in entering the

15 Not Chosen, 198-229, AO.

business world.

Successful Junior Executives were fair students with a potential interest in business; however, more crucial to their selection was their knowledge of, and participation in, school and community events. In addition to their hobbies, applicants were asked to list the “official positions” they had held both at school and in organizations outside school, and were also asked about the “social functions out of school you take part in.” Analysis of the applicants’ answers to these questions suggest that Eaton’s Winnipeg employees preferred those students who held more official positions in school. Of the twenty-five successful applicants in 1951, nearly three-quarters of them fit the bill. These positions ranged from captaining a sports team or representing a class to editing the school yearbook. More than a quarter of the successful applicants – seven of the twenty-five – listed four or more official positions.¹⁶ Among the forty-three alternates and unsuccessful applicants that year, fully seventy per cent listed between one and three official school positions. Nearly half of those not chosen listed only one position, and six applicants did not list any.¹⁷ Successful applicants were also more likely to have held leadership positions. Forty per cent of successful applicants were or had been class or school president, while only twenty-one per cent of unsuccessful ones listed such positions on their applications. A greater number of unsuccessful applicants also listed positions with less authority, such as “member of rugby, swimming, basketball, track, and rowing teams,” or member of the “decoration

16 Only one of the twenty-five applicants listed one “official position;” eleven of twenty-five applicants listed two; four listed three. *Junior Executives Chosen, 1951-52, 198-229, AO.*

17 Thirty of the forty-three unsuccessful applicants listed between one and three official school positions on their applications, and eight gave four or more. *Not Chosen, 198-229, AO.*

committee of the canteen.”¹⁸ Those with experience in positions that required leading groups of their fellow students seemed to receive preference as Junior Executives.

Most boys listed some sort of activity that occupied their time outside of school. These activities ranged widely; some boys listed attending parties and dances, while others noted that they were readers at church or volunteered with Cub Scout troops. Participation in such events or groups did not seem to be a deciding factor in a boy’s success as a Junior Executive applicant. Although several unsuccessful applicants (eight) gave no answer to this question, the number of social activities listed was similar for accepted and rejected applicants alike.

However, holding official positions in organizations outside of school appears to have held some weight. Almost half of the forty-three unsuccessful candidates did not list any official positions outside of school, while two-thirds of chosen applicants listed at least one official position. Still, although Eaton’s wanted its Junior Executives to be involved in the community, the application forms suggest that participation in school activities was more valuable than community involvement, from the company’s perspective, as boys with more experience in school organizations beat out boys who were more involved off-campus.

The application form also included two additional and somewhat different questions related to activities. Boys were asked to list the “school activities you are interested in” and the “social functions you have in your school.” The first question suggested that the boy did not have to be an active participant in these activities; if he liked watching debates, but was not a member of a debating club, he could include

18 Not Chosen, 198-229, AO.

“debates” on his list. The second question was even more passive, and seemed to test boys’ knowledge of their schools. The students interpreted it this way as well. Among the responses given by those students who were labelled as alternates in 1951, several boys listed general events that could be expected to occur at most high schools. “We have operetta, dances, debates,” John Wade, a sixteen-year-old grade eleven student wrote, while David Williamson, fifteen, listed off “February Frolics, Sadie Hawkins dance, 2 class parties a year, the Holly Hop, Graduation exercises and dance, Grade X Wind-up, [and] many similar functions.” Sixteen-year-old William Paterson even included “school tea” on his list, which, he noted in brackets, was “not for students.”¹⁹ This question was either intended to judge the fullness of the school’s social calendar – potentially so that council advisers could plan activities to coincide with school events – or to measure the social savvy of Junior Executive applicants.

The company was clearly looking for young people with connections. Eaton’s was “coolhunting” – looking for students with appeal among their peers, who would be interacting with many friends who were eager to listen to them and copy their spending patterns.²⁰ In meetings with store executives, council advisers were told to find outgoing and popular representatives, and warned not to “over emphasize either scholastic or athletic ability, but [to] find a boy or girl who is typically an all around student and who has the cooperation and support of the student body.”²¹ Academic achievement was less

19 Junior Executive Alternates, 1950-51, 198-229, AO.

20 Malcolm Gladwell explains that the key to coolhunting is to find “cool” people – people who can identify trends – not “cool” objects. See Gladwell, “The Coolhunt,” *The New Yorker* (March 17, 1997). http://www.gladwell.com/1997/1997_03_17_a_cool.htm. Accessed May 15, 2010.

21 Minutes of the Meeting of the Junior Council and Junior Executive Advisers held at Toronto May 30, 31, and June 1, 1950, p. 9, 198-229, AO.

important than “general ability and an outgoing personality.”²² Eaton’s wanted students with a good knowledge of, and experience with, the social activities of their schools and peer groups, in order to connect the department store to what they believed was a lucrative base of customers.

Eaton’s also asked applicants for information about their physical size. The data appeared to be of lesser importance than boys’ social prowess; however, consciously or unconsciously, size did seem to matter to the advisers who selected Junior Executives in Winnipeg. Boys were asked to include their height and weight on their applications, along with their hat size, collar size, suit size, and shoe size. If the boys’ reports of their own proportions can be believed, successful applicants were more likely to be taller than unsuccessful ones. Eleven of the twenty-five successful applicants in 1951 were six feet or taller. The two shortest applicants were both five feet, seven-and-a-half inches tall. Conversely, rejected and alternate applicants had an average height of only five feet, five inches. Only ten of the forty-three unsuccessful applicants in 1951 were six feet or taller, and the shorter applicants were five-foot-one, five-foot-four, and five-foot-five-and-a-quarter. This discrepancy cannot be attributed to age difference; although several of the rejected applicants were fourteen and fifteen years old, and thus perhaps expected to be shorter than the others, these younger boys were all above the average height.

On the other hand, average weight did not differ much between successful and unsuccessful candidates. This means successful candidates in Winnipeg were likely to be slimmer, since they were on average taller than unsuccessful candidates who carried roughly the same mass on a smaller body frame. Indeed, eight of the boys (among the

²² “Students and a Store,” (December 29, 1960), p. 6. Box 40, 162-229, AO.

twenty-five chosen as Executives) who were at least six feet tall weighed between 150 and 170 pounds. Eaton's preference for taller, slightly slimmer boys has no obvious explanation. Certainly nothing in the material given to advisers asked them to select taller boys. However, Junior Executives sometimes modelled clothing – either for fellow students or in newspaper advertisements – so perhaps advisers looked for taller, slimmer figures to display the clothing to best advantage.

The sample of application forms from the Winnipeg store also sheds light on the occupational activities of high school students in the early 1950s. Many of the boys who applied to be Junior Executives worked part-time after school or on weekends, or had summer jobs. Eaton's seemed to prefer applicants with some work experience; 17 of the twenty-five successful applicants (sixty-eight per cent) worked either weekends or during the summer holidays, while only sixteen of the forty-three rejected and alternate applicants (thirty-seven per cent) claimed to be working. Among those with jobs, applicants with retail experience were slightly more successful than those without.²³ Three of the successful boys worked (or had worked during the summer) at Eaton's – one in the coffee bar, one in the mail order department, and one on the men's clothing floor. Others worked at the Hudson's Bay Company department store, the Safeway

23 More than one third of the boys chosen as Junior Executives listed retail jobs, as opposed to slightly less than thirty per cent of rejected and alternate applications. Retail in this case is defined strictly as jobs where goods were sold. The actual percentage of boys in these jobs may have been higher, given that several of the six successful applicants whose answers were not specific enough to determine what kind of work they were doing could very well have been selling goods. For example, the boy working at the Guest Shoe Company could have been selling shoes or making shoes. The boy working at the Winnipeg Canoe Club could have been giving lessons, working in a pro shop, or serving in the club restaurant. The boy working at Dickson's Motors could have been a mechanic or he could have been selling cars or car parts. Given the numerous possibilities, I categorized these responses as "not specified."

grocery store, and a local car wash. The unsuccessful applicants who listed retail experience worked in similar jobs, although only one worked at Eaton's. Far more of the unsuccessful applicants were unskilled labourers, with jobs in construction, at the railway yards, as a painter, and as a farm labourer. While nearly a quarter of unsuccessful applicants with part-time jobs were labourers, none of the successful applicants worked these kinds of jobs.

The application also asked each boy to list his father's occupation. Eaton's claimed it wanted this information because the sons of Eaton's managers and executives were not eligible to become Junior Executives. Presumably, the company was trying to avoid accusations of nepotism in the selection of teenagers for the council. It is impossible to tell if Eaton's used this information strictly for this purpose or not, but it is curious that the company required this level of qualitative detail; for example, a simple yes or no question could have confirmed whether an applicant had a father who worked in a managerial or executive position at Eaton's. Furthermore, given that Eaton's employed more women than men (and allowed women to continue working after marriage), if the company was truly interested in avoiding nepotism they might have also asked about the employment of applicants' mothers.²⁴

However, Eaton's did not appear to favour boys from more affluent families based on the responses to the father's employment question. One third of successful applicants in 1951 were the sons of labourers (thirty-six per cent), as were an almost

24 Donica Belisle reports that, in 1939, Eaton's Toronto store employed 4,962 men and 5,981 women. While men were more likely to fill managerial positions, women filled these positions in departments deemed "feminine," such as millinery, foundation garments, fancy goods, and the Wedding Bureau. Belisle, *Retail Nation*, 161, 163.

equal proportion of the unsuccessful applicants that year (thirty-five per cent). Seven boys who became Junior Executives in 1951 were the sons of retail employees or clerks, while another six had fathers in the civil service or the professions.²⁵ One was the son of a business owner. The fathers of the other two applicants were deceased. Three of the rejected applicants left this question blank.

Analysis of the application data indicates that Eaton's staff were looking for a particular type of Junior Executive or Councillor. That applicant was of average academic ability, with some ambition, a close connection to their high school's social scene, and influence in their peer group, but with no family ties to Eaton's management. The company saw these teenagers as a valuable source of information about popular merchandise and spending behaviour, but they also saw them as representatives of the company in schools and the community. The company was aware that, if properly chosen, the council programme could be seen as a community service, providing education and supervised entertainment for high school students. The teenaged consumer could be transformed into embodied evidence of the company's goodwill and benevolence if the programme was presented in a positive light.

Company staff sought to achieve that image through the publication of several promotional documents intended to explain the programme to parents, school administrators, and interested media. "Youth Unlimited" was a history of the Junior

25 I classified the listed occupations into broad categories: None; Retired; Not Given; Not Specified; Labourers (skilled and unskilled); Foremen/Supervisors; Retail Employees, Salespeople, and Clerks; Professional and Civil Service; Business; Farmers. This broad classification system was appropriate given the scant information provided on most application forms. The categories are, as much as possible, mutually exclusive; the Business code was only applied to proprietors and merchants, for example, not to people who worked *for* a particular company.

Council and Executive programme written in the late 1940s. It was found in Jack Brockie's files, and it is unclear whether it was ever released outside the company. Another publication entitled "Students and a Store," on the other hand, was explicitly created by the Public Relations Office in 1960 "to take care of requests from the press, etc., regarding the Jr. Council and Jr. Executive."²⁶ These materials emphasized the authority of teenagers as they described the origins and activities of the Junior Council and Junior Executive. They presented young people as more akin to adults than to children in their ability to choose their own clothes.

Both documents stressed that high school students were mature. "Youth Unlimited" claimed teenagers were "important citizens of Canada," granting them full person status although they remained below the age of majority.²⁷ Particularly during the Second World War, when many older teenagers were enlisting to fight in Europe, Eaton's believed "17 ½ was considered 'old enough'" to make adult choices. During the war, "high school kids stopped being children," according to the company.²⁸ Many Canadian adults were concerned that children were being asked to grow up too quickly, to their detriment.²⁹ However, Eaton's believed young people were "literate, educated, exuberant, intelligent, and capable."³⁰ If they were mature enough to don uniforms in defence of their country, they were also mature enough to be recognized as consumers in

26 Memo, re: Students and a Store, (December 29, 1960), Box 40, 162-229, AO.

27 The age of majority in the 1940s and 1950s was twenty-one years. "Youth Unlimited: The Story of Eaton's Junior Council and Executive," (n.d.), p. 1, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

28 "Students and a Store," (December 29, 1960), p. 3. Box 40, 162-229, AO.

29 Jeffrey Keshen discusses these concerns, voiced by educators, social critics, politicians, and educators, during the war years. See "The Children's War: 'Youth Run Wild,'" in *Sinners, Saints, and Soldiers* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 194-227.

30 "Students and a Store," p. 3.

their own right.

The documents also stressed teenaged authority by pointing to young people's economic clout. Teens were more autonomous in the 1940s because they shopped alone, and often spent their own money, the company asserted. "Youth Unlimited" described high school girls as "anxious to do their own buying." Both documents claimed that high school girls were leaving their mothers at home when they went shopping, and "acting more independently in their selection of merchandise."³¹ These statements presented young women, in particular, as avid and independent shoppers.

Young people were also opinionated customers, according to Eaton's. The department store said repeatedly that only teenagers could tell the company what they and their peers liked. "Youth Unlimited" described high school girls as "a group searching for clothes suitable to their school and social life, a group with strong likes and dislikes and a good idea of what they wanted." "How were Eaton's to know what to sell them?" the document asked, then answered, concluding "the most logical approach was to talk to the girls themselves, for actually, who could know better what they wanted than the young people who were doing the buying?"³²

Eaton's presented itself as the teenager's champion. While other adults might dismiss their lack of experience, Eaton's asserted that teenaged opinions were astute and valuable. "Youth Unlimited" described teenagers as "frank and decided" individuals.³³ "Students and a Store" recounted how Eaton's buyers were astounded by the insights that Councillors and Executives provided. One Eaton's employees – a shoe buyer –

31 "Youth Unlimited: The Story of Eaton's Junior Council and Executive," (n.d.), p. 3, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

32 "Youth Unlimited," p. 3.

33 "Youth Unlimited," p. 3.

recalled his surprise when he brought a selection of shoes to a Junior Council meeting and the girls present chose as their favourites the four styles he believed to be the “best values.” Clearly he did not expect the teenaged girls to recognize what he considered to be a good deal. He was also astonished when the same four shoes outsold all others in their category that year.³⁴ Eaton’s believed this kind of insight made the high school student an authority worth listening to.

By describing high school students as mature and responsible, Eaton’s muted any argument that the company was taking advantage of young people. Officials were aware that they might be criticized for sponsoring high school events and for marketing directly to teenagers. Council advisers were warned to design their activities carefully, because “board of education rules do not permit any commercialism in the schools,” and “school principals will always ... want to guard against the exploitation of students for commercial purposes.”³⁵ Specific complaints about Eaton’s programme were either not recorded or have not survived.³⁶ However, the programme advisers made passing references to conflicts between Eaton’s and the schools. There is at least one example of

34 “Students and a Store,” (December 29, 1960), p. 4. Box 40, 162-229, AO.

35 Minutes of the Meeting of the Junior Council and Junior Executive Advisers, held at Toronto May 30, 31, and June 1, 1950, p. 10, and Minutes of Junior Executive Conference, August 14, 15, 16, 1946. Printed in the Junior Executive Bulletin 1947, 198-229, AO.

36 Eaton’s concern about maintaining good relations with the school boards is somewhat surprising given Catherine and Robert Gidney’s research, which demonstrates that between 1920 and 1960 manufacturers were permitted to advertise and distribute “teaching-aids” to Canadian teachers. However, it seems that at least some school boards had policies discouraging teachers from circulating material supplied by commercial interests (see main text below). Gidney and Gidney posit that the use of such “teaching-aids” declined in the 1960s when schools began to receive more funding from provincial governments to supply their classrooms, suggesting teachers preferred not to use commercial teaching aids when they had an alternative. See “Branding the Classroom: Commercialism in Canadian Schools, 1920-1960,” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 41:83 (November 2008): 345-379.

a school ending its relationship with Eaton's. St. Andrew's College, a private boys' school in Toronto, had a student representative on the Junior Executive in the 1940s, but they "discontinued this as they felt it was too commercial for their school."³⁷ This development was mentioned in passing in an internal Public Relations Department memo discussing the possibility of displaying Eaton's sports equipment in Toronto schools. The minutes from the Junior Council and Executive Representative Meeting in May 1948 recorded a similar problem with school authorities. While those present believed Eaton's received greater publicity from sporting events than from other social events, such as dances, the minutes noted that "some groups ... are prevented from tying in with various sporting events because of the opposition from local school authorities."³⁸ It is unclear from the records whether school authorities were opposed to commercial sponsorship generally or to Eaton's in particular. However, given these isolated incidents, Eaton's executives showed sensitivity to criticism that their programme may not be solely educational and that they could be seen to be exploiting teenagers who were still, in some eyes, susceptible to persuasion and in need of protection because of their age.

Eaton's staff worked hard to cultivate good relations with both parents and school administrators. Council advisers contacted local high school principals and guidance counsellors each spring to solicit their assistance in selecting the following year's councillors and executives from among the student body. Advisers were reminded

37 "Re: Prep Shop at College Street Store," memo from W.J. Bundy, Public Relations Department to J.A. Brockie, Public Relations Department, 1953, Merchandise Display, 1952-1956, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

38 Minutes of the Meeting of the Junior Council and Junior Executive Advisers held at Toronto May 1948, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

at their joint meeting in May 1950 that “all selections [for school representation on the councils] must have the authorization of Principal and staff.”³⁹ Eaton’s executives knew that their activities in the schools would be better received if the students in their programme were well-liked by school staff.

Eaton’s also cultivated good will with some local schools by offering to assist with school activities in exchange for having the company name associated with school events. Eaton’s created the Band Box – a portable sound system equipped with current popular recordings – that schools could use free of charge to host dances.⁴⁰ The Band Box had to be reserved by a Junior Executive and appeared in most cases to have been operated by the boys as well. Eaton’s also printed tickets, posters, and programmes free of charge for school events – and included the store’s name on each one. The Toronto store created class timetables and circulated them to students in participating schools during the first week of classes.⁴¹ Occasionally, Eaton’s also made films available to the schools. Sports films such as “Play Championship Basketball” were apparently enthusiastically received by Junior Executives, and often screened repeatedly for the benefit of their school sports’ coaches and male classmates. Nevertheless, the few complaints Eaton’s received about their activities suggest that not all schools accepted or

39 Minutes of the Meeting of the Junior Council and Junior Executive Advisers held at Toronto May 30, 31, and June 1, 1950, p. 9, 198-229, AO.

40 The meeting minutes in Brockie’s files suggest that the Band Box was popular; different students requested its use at nearly every meeting between January and April 1947, for example. At a joint meeting of the councils in Toronto on January 25, 1947, the students claimed the schools “needed” this service. Junior Executive Bulletin, January 29, 1947, Junior Executive Bulletin 1947, 198-229, AO.

41 The timetables’ distribution was discussed at one of the regular meetings of the Junior Councils’ and Executives’ staff advisers. Minutes of the Meeting of the Junior Council and Junior Executive Advisers held at Toronto May 30, 31, and June 1, 1950, p. 11, 198-229, AO.

appreciated this kind of assistance.

Occasionally, Eaton's stores also held special events aimed at convincing parents and teachers of their good intentions. In Montreal, the Junior Council adviser organized a Mother and Daughter Tea on the grounds that the event was "an excellent way to explain to the Mothers the purposes of the Council and win their confidence and support."⁴² Certainly, Eaton's recognized that mothers still exercised some influence over their daughters' shopping habits. The Montreal store also hosted a Principals' Meeting, where Councillors and Executives invited school principals to a dinner to meet the advisers and Eaton's executives, "in an attempt to tie-in and cooperate closely" with school officials.⁴³

From Eaton's head office in Toronto, Jack Brockie also cultivated personal relationships with principals and school board officials in order to ensure the programme's success. In September 1947, C.W. Robb, Superintendent of the Toronto District School Board, advised Brockie amicably in a letter to send any Eaton's promotions directly to school principals. Teachers, he informed Brockie, were not permitted to circulate "material of an advertising nature" in their classrooms, according to the policy of the Toronto School Board. Despite board regulations prohibiting advertising in the schools, Robb went on to say that "the Board of Education has been indebted to the T. Eaton Company on so many occasions in the past that I am of the opinion that this rule could be stretched a bit."⁴⁴ Although Robb did not specifically state

42 Ibid, p. 5.

43 Ibid, p. 9.

44 Letter from C.W. Robb, Superintendent of Secondary Schools, to J.A. Brockie, Merchandise Display Department, September 4, 1947. Junior Promotions 1947, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

how Eaton's had helped the school board, it is clear that the company had succeeded in generating enough goodwill with school authorities that Robb was willing to permit Eaton's to promote its goods and activities to students when he might normally restrict such activities.

Brockie's close relationship with Superintendent Robb also proved beneficial when a school board east of Toronto opposed the company's attempts to form a Junior Executive in its city. The Toronto School Board wrote to school authorities in Belleville, Ontario, endorsing the programme, and convincing them to allow Eaton's to proceed in their schools.⁴⁵ The minutes of the Junior Executive advisers conference in 1946 indicate that other stores also encountered unnamed "problems" with local school authorities. The delegates decided to "make up a confidential report of these individual situations with information on how they were handled" so that advisers could help each other avoid the perception that they were exploiting high school students.⁴⁶ They also recommended the creation of a distinct "Junior Council" and "Junior Executive" stationary to be used "in conduction of school business for the Company." The meeting minutes noted that this stationary would "keep any commercial taint out of Eaton's dealings with the schools," presumably because school officials would not see the Eaton's name and logo on the letters, memos, and application forms associated with the programme.⁴⁷

45 Minutes from the Junior Executive Advisers' Meeting, February 1947, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

46 Minutes of Junior Executive Conference, August 14, 15, 16, 1946, Junior Executive Bulletin 1947, 198-229, AO. No record of the confidential report was found in the company's records.

47 Recommendations for Approval from Minutes of Junior Council and Junior Executive advisers, May 19-21, 1947, 151-229, AO.

Brockie believed Eaton's staff could take best advantage of the Junior Executives and Councillors if they understood how the school board functioned. In August 1946, Milton Jewell, Assistant Principal at Malvern Collegiate Institute in Toronto, gave advisers tips on how school authorities "should be handled to achieve the most satisfactory results."⁴⁸ The Board of Education, he claimed, would allow Eaton's to sponsor school activities and recruit council representatives from among the student population if the company could "sell them on the idea that *we* are doing something for the school."⁴⁹ He explained the school board hierarchy. The Superintendent of Schools should be approached first with new ideas, he argued, adding "it always helps to flatter him." However, if the Superintendent was not co-operative, Jewell directed Eaton's staff to "try the Board of Education and the parents," or to "work individually with the principals," who "carry a lot of weight with the Superintendent." Finally, he reminded the advisers that the schools' purpose was to educate. Advisers should remember that:

...anything you do to interfere with the students' studies will meet with ... disapproval. On the other hand, if you can show them that you have something that will help the boys with their individual studies or in their life work, the school authorities will be all for you.⁵⁰

In an undated memo to Brockie, Jewell further recommended that the Executive be "patterned after a directors' meeting" in order to foster a "business attitude" that would

48 Minutes of Junior Executive Conference, August 14, 15, 16, 1946, Junior Executive Bulletin 1947, 198-229, AO.

49 Emphasis added. Jewell grouped himself with the company staff; he clearly believed they were working towards the same goals, even though advisers were paid Eaton's employees trying to increase sales, and he was a school administrator.

50 Minutes of Junior Executive Conference, August 14, 15, 16, 1946, Junior Executive Bulletin 1947, 198-229, AO.

be educational for the male students.⁵¹

Such advice may have lead Eaton's to stress the programme's educational benefits for students. In its public relations pamphlet "Students and a Store," the company admitted that its motivations to start the councils were "not altogether altruistic in the beginning," but claimed that the company quickly realized its "moral responsibility" to these students, "whose education could be greatly broadened through intimate contact with executive level representatives of the largest and most successful retailing enterprise in Canada."⁵² The groups' meetings were often intended to be a window to the retail world.⁵³ Eaton's growing focus on educational activities throughout the 1940s reveal how the department store attempted to reconcile the idea of an opinionated and style-savvy teenager with the assumption that high school students still needed some shielding from the full force of the retail world. Eaton's wanted its councils to be "the informal equilateral exchange of information between bright, opinionated school "kids" and knowledgeable, experienced business executives."⁵⁴

The educational tone of department store youth promotions was in keeping with a larger move by educators towards vocational guidance and hands-on job training. During the 1940s, Canadian educators were debating ways to make high school education more relevant and appealing to older children. Experiential learning and vocational guidance were among the methods proposed by youth organizations,

51 Memorandum from M.H. Jewell, Assistant Principal at Malvern Collegiate Institute, to Jack Brockie, Head of Merchandise Display Department, n.d., file 71 – Junior Executive and Council, 1942-1945, 151-229, AO.

52 "Students and a Store," (December 29, 1960), p. 5, Box 40, 162-229, AO.

53 These meetings are discussed further below.

54 "Students and a Store," (December 29, 1960), p. 5., Box 40, 162-229, AO.

government-sponsored commissions, and federal agencies.⁵⁵ While these recommendations usually focused on activities controlled by schools, stores such as Eaton's could be seen as providing an aligned educational service by organizing youth councils. Department stores had ready access to the people who could teach students about the retail industry, and they had the means to employ them part-time. Department stores did not offer council members part-time work simply to help them earn money – although the students *were* paid. The stores claimed to be more interested in exposing young people to potential careers.⁵⁶ The fact that Eaton's council programme operated in several major Canadian cities for more than twenty years suggests that school authorities saw some educational merit in the councils.

Although Eaton's promotional material emphasized the educational benefits of council membership, the councils' activities illustrate the company's multiple and sometimes conflicting priorities. Eaton's wanted to convince high school students that the department store could meet their specific consumer needs. To do so, they wanted to glean information from them to better understand the teenaged consumer. The annual programme varied by location, but most stores followed similar meeting patterns. Junior Councillors and Executives met weekly from September to April, following the school calendar with breaks for exams and holidays. Students met early on Saturday mornings

55 Jeffrey Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers*, 219-221. R.D. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario's Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 23-24.

56 For example, at Simpson's, one of Eaton's main retailing competitors, its Collegiate Club members were apparently "assigned a Saturday job in the department where their interests lie," not necessarily in the department where Simpson's needed their labour. Working in the store was the students' "big chance to get a real behind-the-scenes, first-hand look at some aspect of a trade, career or profession they may want to follow up later." "Teenagers Club," *Mayfair* (August 1945), 95.

in one of Eaton's meeting rooms. Some stores, like the Montreal store, had dedicated "Council Rooms," while groups in other cities met in multi-purpose rooms, such as the Winnipeg store's Grill Room, which happened to be vacant on Saturday mornings. At the end of each Saturday morning gathering, the groups' advisers served bottles of Coca-Cola and distributed pay to the Councillors and Executives who also worked in the stores part-time. Outside of the meetings, the representatives often attended Eaton's-sponsored dances and sporting events at their schools.

A sample of minutes from group meetings survives in the company's records at the Archives of Ontario.⁵⁷ These records provide an in-depth look at the kinds of activities Junior Councillors and Executives were engaged in on a weekly basis.⁵⁸ These

57 Beginning in 1946, a National Secretary of the Junior Councils and Executives, working out of the Toronto store, collected and shared the meeting minutes from Councils and Executives across the country. He compiled newsletters, informing each group of what the others were doing, and keeping advisers up-to-date on ideas from other youth marketing ventures, mainly in the United States. As a result, a sizable sample of minutes from group meetings survives. Further meeting minutes were found in the personal files of T.M. Miller, the Junior Executive adviser at the Winnipeg store during the late 1940s and 1950s, and in Jack Brockie's files on the Toronto groups.

58 This sample includes minutes from most of the meetings of the Junior Executives at stores in Toronto, Montreal, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Calgary, and Edmonton between December 1946 and April 1947, as well as minutes from the Toronto Junior Council meetings between January and May 1948, and minutes from both groups at all the stores from January 1950 to January 1951. The sample includes 382 line items; 272 from Junior Executive meetings, sixty-two from Junior Council meetings, and forty-eight from meetings where the Executives and Councillors met together. Joint meetings were most often held at the beginning and ending of each school term, when store executives welcomed the students, or thanked them for their participation.

In order to analyze the meeting minutes, I assigned each line item to one of the following twenty-three categories: Administration of Group; Announcement; Award; Contest; Employment-related; Fashion Show; Field Trip; Film; Guest Speaker (from outside Eaton's); Guest Speaker (from inside Eaton's); Member Request; Merchandise Presented; Not Determined; Opinion of Merchandise Solicited; Opinion of Non-merchandise Solicited; Planned Community Service; Planned Social

activities reflect Eaton's belief that teenagers were candid consumers – authorities on young trends. They also reflect the company's understanding of the gendered consumer authority it expected girls and boys to wield.

The Councillors and Executives were frequently peppered for their opinions on everything from their career plans to their favourite date outfits. In written surveys, and through more informal discussions during meetings, company employees asked the teenagers their preferred clothing fabrics, colours, and brands. Eaton's wanted to know what prices they expected to pay for suits and sweaters, which stores they patronized, and how much they spent on clothing each year. The October 1947 survey conducted at the Montreal store was particularly thorough. In addition to asking the Councillors and Executives their preferred store for purchasing books, cameras, records, and school supplies, Eaton's quizzed the students about their reactions to department store advertisements in local newspapers, asking them what they found attractive about specific ads and whether they usually purchased items they saw advertised.⁵⁹ The sample of meeting minutes suggests that the Councillors participated in written questionnaires more often than the Executives; however, Jack Brockie's files also refer to regular Junior

or Sporting Event; Questionnaire; Reported Community Service; Reported Social or Sporting Event; Retail-related Activity; and Supplies Provided to School. Each line item was only assigned to one category, depending on the type of action the item described. Nearly half of the line items (168 of 382) were categorized as: Administration of Group; Announcement; Planned Community Service; Reported Community Service; Planned Social or Sporting Event; or Reported Social or Sporting Event. These were line items broadly concerned with the day-to-day business of running the groups – items that reported forming committees, distributing pays, reiterating store rules and regulations, and ordering uniforms. The Announcement category included instances when group advisers informed the students about upcoming community and Eaton's-sponsored events. Closer analysis of the other categories is below.

59 Survey No. 4: Teen-Age Shopping Habits and Advertising, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

Executive surveys conducted in the early 1940s. These surveys were either discontinued by 1946 (when the meeting minutes analyzed here begin), or were not reported in the minutes.⁶⁰

The councils also demonstrated their clout when Eaton's apparel buyers brought selected items from their departments and asked the girls or boys for their feedback. Nearly a third of the items from the Junior Council meeting minutes sampled described focus group-style sessions in which girls were asked for their opinions on clothing, shoes, or accessories. In contrast, feedback sessions on clothing and other merchandise comprised less than five per cent of items discussed at Junior Executive meetings.⁶¹ In most of these instances, staff members solicited the students' opinions in advance of placing orders. They also sought feedback that would help them create store-front window displays and youth-focused apparel advertisements for local newspapers. On occasion, Councillors were given samples of clothing to wear. For example, at a May 1948 meeting of the Toronto Junior Council, Mr. Sharpless from Eaton's shoe department asked that six councillors be fitted with a new style of saddle shoe. The

60 The minutes sample includes eight line items categorized as Questionnaire: two at Council meetings (three per cent of total line items from the minutes sampled); three at Executive meetings (one per cent of total); and three at Joint Council-Executive meetings (six percent of total). In a letter to Branch Advertising Manager J.P. Heffernan, Brockie noted that "At the commencement of each new season, when new [representatives] take over their duties, we hand out a Questionnaire to be filled in, and it is surprising to note the changes from year to year as to the habits of the young crowd." Letter from Jack Brockie, Merchandise Display Department, to J.P. Heffernan, Branch Stores Advertising, March 27, 1947, Box 3, 151-229, AO.

61 Nine of the sixty-two line items from Junior Council meeting minutes were categorized as Opinion Solicited (Merchandise), while ten of the sixty-two line items were categorized as Merchandise Presented. Five of the 272 line items from Junior Executive meeting minutes were categorized as Opinion Solicited (Merchandise); two of the 272 line items were categorized as Merchandise Presented.

minutes reported that “the girls are going to wear these shoes to school all the time.”⁶² Voluntary participation in this kind of product endorsement suggests the girls involved liked the shoes, and were willing to show them off at school and tell their friends where they got them. Jack Brockie and fellow staff advisers saw student endorsements as advertising that money just could not buy.

Eaton’s even created special merchandise tags for garments approved by the Junior Councillors or Executives. The company hoped high school students would use these tags to choose peer-approved merchandise. Although the tags were the company’s idea, it was important to the council advisers that the approval process be unbiased. They agreed at their bi-annual meeting in November 1947 that the students should not feel any pressure to approve merchandise, and that each approval should be decided by secret ballot.⁶³ By attaching so much weight to the Councillors’ and Executives’ opinions, Eaton’s employees demonstrated that they believed the teenagers knew best what would sell. The approved outfits were often advertised in local and student newspapers, modelled by the Junior Councillors and Executives themselves.

In the early 1940s, Eaton’s was one of the few large department stores to host what it called “School Fashion Presentations” – fashion shows for high school students. In July 1944, Jack Brockie requested \$2,500, in addition to a \$3,500 annual budget for the Toronto Junior Council, for school fashion promotions. “We are established in every Toronto and Suburban High School,” Brockie noted in his request, adding that fashion shows thus far had “received so much favourable comment, both from Staff and

⁶² Meeting of the Toronto Junior Council, 1 May 1948.

⁶³ Minutes from the Junior Council and Executive Advisers’ Meeting, November 1947, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

Students, and the Board of Education have not frowned on this type of publicity, rather labelling it as “Educational” in preparing students for the Business World.”⁶⁴

These fashion shows allowed council members to voice their opinions about clothes (and to have fun), all while advertising for company merchandise on the catwalk.⁶⁵ In the large Toronto and Montreal stores, Junior Councillors frequently discussed and planned bi-annual fashion shows during their weekly meetings. These shows featured fashions chosen by the Councillors. Occasionally the Councillors also held smaller fashion shows during their weekly meetings, displaying outfits and practising their modelling skills for each other. A small show took place at an Edmonton Junior Council meeting in 1950, when Miss L. Foster, of the “Teen Shop,” brought fifteen dresses to the meeting. “Each girl modelled one style for the others, the minutes reported, adding that “the girls had a delightful time, both in modelling and in making frank comments... about the garment and the model!”⁶⁶ The Hamilton Junior Council adviser reported in November 1947 that the Councillors were practising modelling every week.⁶⁷ In Winnipeg small fashion shows took place in the store’s Grill Room. Figure 5.1 shows a group of teenaged girls modelling, narrating, and sitting in the audience.⁶⁸ Although adult employees helped to choose accessories and style the girls behind the

64 “Budget Notes,” 4 July 1944, File #84 – Merchandise Office 1944, 151-229, AO.

65 Eaton’s often asked female employees to participate in fashion shows. Donica Belisle notes that many women likely enjoyed these experiences, participating “to have fun, to engage in creative forms of self-display, and to showcase their bodies and perhaps their sexuality;” nevertheless, fashion shows were ultimately advertising campaigns for Eaton’s benefit. Belisle, *Retail Nation*, 120.

66 Junior Council Meeting, Edmonton, February 27, 1950.

67 Minutes from the Junior Council and Executive advisers’ Meeting, November 1947, 151-229, AO.

68 Russ Gourluck, *A Store Like No Other: Eaton’s of Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: Great Plains Productions, 2004), 114.

scenes, the fashion shows appeared to the audience as exclusive teenaged spaces. The absence of adults on stage and at the microphone enhanced the impression that young people were mature enough to express their own consumer desires.



Figure 5.1: Members of the Winnipeg Junior Council participate in a fashion show at the Grill Room in the Eaton's store, undated. From Russ Gurluck, *A Store Like No Other: Eaton's of Winnipeg*. Winnipeg, Manitoba: Great Plains Productions, 2004.

Fashion shows offer one example of the gendered nature of the groups' activities. In meeting minutes, items categorized as "Fashion shows" constituted an equal proportion of girls' and boys' meetings. However, while fashion shows were discussed equally during meetings, the details of the discussions were quite different. The girls almost always acted as models in the fashion shows, while the boys were more often engaged as ushers and escorts. For example, at one 1947 meeting the boys at the Montreal store were asked "to make themselves available for the Fashion Show on February 22nd to ... operate the Band Box as well as certain ushering duties and escorting the models."⁶⁹ Following the show, the minutes reported that three of the Executives, "dressed in tails, escorted the three lovely models in formals up the runway at the finish of the show and they were greeted with a round of applause."⁷⁰ A September 1950 fashion show in Toronto featured both boys and girls, but the boys still played a secondary role. A series of scenes re-enacted the school day; girls' modelled items from Eaton's fall collection, with "Executives dressed in Rugby Uniforms to add atmosphere." The second scene featured "fellows and girls" in "lumberjackets, weskits, trousers, and tailored skirts and slacks."⁷¹ Male models tended to wear sporting gear or outdoor, casual clothing, and were positioned to ensure that girls were the centre of attention. The Hamilton Junior Executive appears to be the only group that hosted and modelled in their own fashion show without girls on stage.⁷² In another case, the Junior Executives in Toronto planned to invite friends and peers to a fashion show Stag Party,

69 Junior Executive Bulletin 1947, 198-229, AO.

70 Junior Executive Meeting, Toronto, March 15, 1947.

71 Joint Meeting, Toronto, September 16, 1950.

72 Minutes from the Junior Executives advisers' Meeting, February 1947, 151-229, AO.

where merchandise would be displayed, but not modelled.⁷³ Boys dressed in tuxedos walked the models down the catwalk, but some council advisers seemed reluctant to make boys the object of others' gaze. Many more boys distributed tickets to the fashion shows in their high schools. In one case, the chairman of the Hamilton Executive offered a prize to the boy who distributed the most tickets to peers who attended the event.⁷⁴ The roles of ticket salesman, master of ceremonies, and escort were deemed more masculine, allowing boys to be involved in fashion shows without actually modelling merchandise.

Fashion shows were not the only activity that benefited Eaton's image as an educator while also boosting the bottom line. The meeting minutes suggest that the company wanted young people to get behind the scenes in the selection and marketing of the goods they would ultimately buy, and to learn about the operations of a big department store. The male Executives were more likely to engage in these kinds of activities than the female Councillors. For example, in a two-month period in 1947, Junior Executives in four different stores heard ten presentations about operations of various Eaton's departments, from Receiving and Customer Service to Merchandising, Advertising, and Staff Welfare.⁷⁵ Nearly ten per cent of minute items noted during Junior Executive meetings concerned field trips to different Eaton's departments and, occasionally, to other local businesses. For example, in 1947 the Winnipeg Junior Executive visited the Gerhard Kennedy Sportswear plant and the Eaton Mail Order Building. The Montreal group visited the Eaton's Clothing Factory and a scarf manufacturer. The Hamilton group visited the Firestone plant, and the Edmonton

73 Junior Executive Meeting, Toronto, January 4, 1947.

74 Junior Executive Meeting, Hamilton, March 12, 1947.

75 Junior Executive Bulletin 1947, 198-229, AO.

Executives toured the offices of the *Edmonton Journal* newspaper.

Such tours allowed local businesses to expose high school students to their products and operations. When the Winnipeg Junior Executives toured the Gerhard Kennedy Sportswear plant, they were shown bolts of cloth, and then escorted around the various machines that sewed the clothing. Company officials demonstrated the garment-making process, and explained how styles and colours were chosen. However, Gerhard Kennedy also “urged the Junior Executive to make known their wants and needs in clothes so that manufacturers and retailers might supply those needs.”⁷⁶ Such field trips were both education and advertisement, since they gave retailers a captive audience and an opportunity to establish a closer relationship with teenaged consumers.

Several times each year the students learned and applied the skills of selling merchandise. During an annual advertising contest, Councillors and Executives submitted their best ads after receiving tips on copy-writing and layout.⁷⁷ The company awarded prizes for the entries they judged to be the best, and printed the winning ads in local newspapers. Occasionally, the students were asked to create floor displays. With staff guidance and instruction, they chose outfits to dress male and female mannequins.⁷⁸ Councillors and Executives also received training as salespeople and worked in some store departments part-time, especially during the Christmas and Easter shopping seasons. As Junior Councillors and Executives, students became retail apprentices.

Weekly meetings offered ample opportunity to teach teenagers about Eaton’s

76 Junior Executive Meeting, Winnipeg, March 8, 1947.

77 Junior Executive Meeting, Winnipeg, March 8, 1947.

78 See, for example, the report of the Toronto Junior Executive Meeting, 8 February 1948, and the report of the Calgary Junior Executive Meeting, 1 March 1948. Junior Executive Bulletin 1947, Box 1, 198-229. See also Record of Hamilton’s Eaton’s Junior Fashion Council Meetings 1944-45. Box 2, 151-229, AO.

merchandise. When members of store departments brought items to the students for approval, they often included a lecture on manufacturing in their presentations. For example, at the March 1, 1947 meeting of the Winnipeg Junior Executive, sportswear manufacturer Gerhard Kennedy talked to the boys about shirt materials and styles before asking them to comment on his clothing.⁷⁹ Similarly, minutes from the Toronto Junior Council show that Miss Hessie of Eaton's Corset Department spoke to the girls on several different occasions about "girdles; their importance, and the different types, 'with statistics.'"⁸⁰ Teaching the students about merchandise exposed them to Eaton's product lines. However, it also served to underline the councils' educational function. Speaking to a meeting of Junior Executive advisers in 1946, Brockie stressed that "if [the programme] can educate the boys' to know quality merchandise, their parents will be convinced that they are learning something from Eaton's."⁸¹

79 Winnipeg Junior Executive Meeting 1 March 1947, Junior Executive Bulletin 1947, 198-229, AO.

80 Junior Fashion Council Report, Meeting on Saturday October 12, 1940, and Toronto's Junior Fashion Council Meetings, 1943-44, Toronto Eaton's Junior Fashion Council Meetings, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

81 Minutes of Junior Executive Conference, August 14, 15, 16, 1946, Junior Executive Bulletin 1947, 198-229, AO.



Figure 5.2: The Toronto Junior Councils and Junior Executives (pictured above), undated. These two photographs appeared in a company-produced history of Eaton's, and illustrate the gender differences that played out in weekly council meetings. The girls are pictured smiling, chatting, and admiring several items of clothing, while the boys mimic a board meeting, with pens and papers poised to conduct business. From *The Story of a Store: the history of Eaton's from 1869*. Toronto: T. Eaton Company, 1947.

In addition to learning about buying and selling from store employees, Eaton's wanted teenagers to learn more about themselves from personality coaches and career counsellors. From their inception in the early 1940s, the councils attempted to improve members' grooming and deportment. Female Councillors learned how to apply make-up and care for their skin, choose a flattering hairstyle, and develop good posture and a winning personality.⁸² Guest speakers taught both the male Junior Executives and female Junior Councillors dance steps and etiquette.⁸³ Increasingly in the late 1940s the students also learned about jobs they might be interested in pursuing after high school graduation. Guest speakers from local businesses, schools, newspapers, and radio stations told them about the qualifications they would need to succeed as teachers, journalists, and entrepreneurs.⁸⁴ Vocational counsellors also administered preference tests to help the students determine what careers suited their interests, and gave them tips on succeeding at job interviews.⁸⁵ The activities reflected in the meeting minutes demonstrate the

82 Toronto's Eaton's Junior Fashion Council Meetings, 1943-44, and Record of Toronto's Eaton's Junior Fashion Council Meetings, 1944-45. Junior Council meetings 10 January 1948 and 21 February in Toronto. Toronto Eaton's Junior Fashion Council Meetings, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

83 Joint Junior Council and Executive meeting, Toronto, January 11, 1947. Junior Executive Bulletin 1947, 198-229, AO. Eaton's executives took an active interest in the appearance of all employees in order to make them better salespeople. Belisle notes that "through skills development classes, physical recreation programs, and regular medical evaluations, welfare workers tried to make customer-service employees polite, enthusiastic, intelligent, and physically attractive." *Retail Nation*, 122.

84 See for example: Junior Executive meetings in Montreal, 1 March and 8 March 1947; in Hamilton, 19 February 1947; in Toronto, 18 January and 15 February 1947; in Winnipeg 8 February 1947; and Junior Council meetings in Montreal 25 February 1950 and 20 January 1951.

85 Winnipeg Junior Council meetings 20 January and 10 February 1951. Junior Council Minutes, Community Chest 1950, 198-229, AO. See also Toronto Junior Council meeting 1 May 1948.

company's multiple and gendered priorities for the councils. During the few years of meetings examined here the students were sounding boards and sources of information, company promoters and retail apprentices, volunteer labourers and customers. Eaton's thanked the students for helping them "understand" the teenaged consumer while at the same time crediting itself for serving young customers.

According to his own recollections, Jack Brockie started the Junior Council to ensure that Eaton's in-store merchandise met the needs of the teenaged consumer. While the council programme was both a marketing and public relations strategy, there is also evidence that some company executives believed teenagers could change the way Eaton's organized and operated its stores. The company's desire to measure their sales effectiveness and reorganize their departments accordingly is evident in the surveys that Junior Councillors and Executives were asked to complete and in the records of the Merchandise Display Department, whose job it was to ensure goods were presented in a pleasing and effective way. Eaton's officials were concerned that young people were increasingly spending their clothing dollars in small shops and chain stores instead of patronizing department stores, and were keen to make the stores more appealing to young people.⁸⁶

Finding out how teens shopped, and where, was often the focus of the company's surveys. In a letter to the head of Branch Stores Advertising, Brockie informed J.P. Heffernan of the benefits of polling students:

If Departments will believe what they read in the analysis of these

⁸⁶ Donica Belisle notes that department stores faced increased competition from chain stores and, although they remained the largest and most influential stores into the 1950s, "by the Second World War the department store had become stodgy, inflexible, and expensive." *Retail Nation*, 43.

surveys, they can capture sales and build up good will and satisfaction, but if they feel they are right and youth is wrong, then there is little that we can do about it. We have found in Toronto, that once Departments are convinced that they are helped by the Councils, then things happen and the youngsters are used for all kinds of tests, so that the merchandise we show will appeal to the young shoppers.⁸⁷

To this end, surveys included a raft of questions about what young people liked. Members of the Junior Executive in Winnipeg were asked what kind of clothes they typically wore in different situations. “What do you wear at home studying?” was the first question, followed by five other questions about what boys wore “out on a movie and coke date” or “when out with the gang.” While the boys’ answers varied little from “sweater and pants,” Eaton’s clearly wanted to know what items made up the typical high school wardrobe, so they could be sure to stock them in their stores.⁸⁸ In a survey of seventeen high school girls in Belleville, Ontario, the Eaton’s branch store Canadian Department Store (CDS), asked the girls to list their favourite colours and materials for suits, dresses, and formal gowns.⁸⁹ Council advisers asked for precise detail on the frequent questionnaires.

Eaton’s was also keenly interested in where young people shopped and why. The 1947 Montreal survey asked the ninety-two Councillors and Executives to list their three favourite places to shop for eleven different clothing items.⁹⁰ They were also asked why they preferred these shops. In the Belleville survey, girls were asked specifically why

87 Letter from Merchandise Display Department to J.P. Heffernan, Branch Stores Advertising, 27 March 1947, Box 3, 151-229, AO.

88 Junior Executive Questionnaire, 1947, 198-229, AO.

89 Report of Belleville Clothing Questionnaire, Box 3, 151-229, AO.

90 Survey No. 4: Teen-Age Shopping Habits and Advertising, Box 3, 151-229, AO.

they preferred specialty shops to department stores.⁹¹ In Montreal students were asked to “list any suggestions you would like to see carried out in the departments where you shop.”⁹² Council advisers hoped to use the students’ feedback to advocate for changes to the store layout and sales floor procedures. As Brockie noted in a letter to Heffernan: “Questionnaires or surveys serve as good support in convincing Departments that they are missing the “beat”, if such is the case, or proving that they are on the right track.”⁹³

The students had several ideas about how Eaton’s could improve its various departments. In Belleville the girls appreciated that department store shopping meant you did not “have to go from one store to another to secure a variety of articles,” but preferred the wider variety and originality of the merchandise in speciality shops.⁹⁴ In the 1947 survey, Councillors and Executives asked for more room in store departments, clearer directional signs, and larger fitting rooms, among other desired improvements. However, several of their comments reflected a desire for a high-school-only clothing department; the male students requested that sports jackets in school colours be made available, and many students asked Eaton’s to put “All teen-age clothes in one place.”⁹⁵

Several Eaton’s stores experimented with the idea of exclusive clothing departments for teenaged customers in the 1940s and 1950s. Department stores such as Powers in Minneapolis, Minnesota had already created sex-segregated departments

91 The female students claimed smaller stores offered greater variety and originality in merchandise. Report of Belleville J.F.C. Clothes Questionnaire, n.d., Box 3, 151-229, AO.

92 Survey No. 4: Teen-Age Shopping Habits and Advertising, Box 3, 151-229, AO.

93 Letter from Merchandise Display Department to J.P. Heffernan, Branch Stores Advertising, 27 March 1947, Box 3, 151-229, AO.

94 Report of Belleville Clothing Questionnaire, Box 3, 151-229, AO.

95 Survey No. 4: Teen-Age Shopping Habits and Advertising, Box 3, 151-229, AO.

aimed at high school students.⁹⁶ Eaton's was segregating teenaged clothing in its mail order catalogue; however, some company officials believed Eaton's stores needed a space that would separate teenaged clothing styles from children's and women's in a way that appealed to high-school-aged customers. Toronto had two departments catering to the needs of younger women in particular – the Young Toronto Shop (later called the Young Moderns department) and the Hi-Spot. The name of the former suggests it was supposed to appeal to a broad range of younger women – from college students and working women to younger married women. Montreal had a similar department, called the Young Montrealer Shop. The Hi-Spot, on the other hand, was named to imitate a popular teenaged hang-out – a spot for the so-called “Hi” – or high school – crowd. In Winnipeg the Young Modern Shop was intended to serve both high school girls and younger women more generally. For the boys, Eaton's created the Grad Shop, located within the Men's Department in most stores.

While the Hi-Spot was the Toronto store's attempt to give female teenagers their own distinct space within the store, it received criticism from Junior Councillors and Eaton's employees alike. In an undated memo to Jack Brockie, employee B. Warner argued that the name did not suit the third-floor department because “the average high school student does not purchase clothes on the 3rd floor but on the 4th.” Junior Councillors generally did not approve of the merchandise in the Hi-Spot, finding it “too junior for the ... high school crowd.”⁹⁷ They preferred the fourth floor – the Young Moderns department – where they could find more sophisticated clothing. The

⁹⁶ Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood*, 131.

⁹⁷ “Hi-Spot” memo to Jack Brockie from B. Warner, undated, File 88 – Miscellaneous, 151-229, AO.

association with high school was apparently off-putting to older teenagers who preferred to see themselves as future college students or career women.

Eaton's was having difficulty pinning down exactly who the high school girl was, and what she liked to buy. Warner did not blame the fickleness of young female customers for the failure of the Hi-Spot. Instead, she blamed the organization of the floor itself, which, she argued, was confusing to customers because it did not separate the clothing into distinct enough age groups. Sociologist Daniel Cook demonstrates that retail spaces often marked a commercial-sartorial hierarchy of age progression – retailers wanted young customers to value moving from a younger size-style category to an older one, and often organized spaces so that younger girls and boys had to pass through sections for older children to reach their own.⁹⁸ Similarly, at Eaton's Warner advised dividing the Hi-Spot into a section called Young World, for younger girls, and a section for a group she called “junior teens” wearing sizes 12 to 16, and then creating a separate Teen Shop targeting girls aged fifteen to twenty, who would likely wear Junior or Misses' sizes. She included a potential floor plan (see Figure 5.3).

98 Cook, *The Commodification of Childhood*, 116, 137.



Figure 5.3: Line drawing reproduced from B. Warner's sketch of a proposed floor plan creating separate and larger departments for teenagers. In "Hi-Spot" memo to Jack Brockie from B. Warner, n.d. 151-229, Archives of Ontario.

It is unclear if the Merchandise Display Department followed Warner's advice and eliminated the Hi-Spot section. Reorganizing an entire floor to cater to ever-more-specific age groups could be a risky proposition, particularly if teenaged girls were going to continue to shop in a variety of departments. However, the problems with the Hi-Spot reveal that Eaton's was struggling to establish how and where to best sell clothes to teenagers. The company was relying on the opinions of Junior Councillors and Executives to help determine how to alter its stock and store layout.

Eaton's hoped that its council programme and exclusive departments would make teenagers feel empowered, and, in turn, lead to customer loyalty. But while the Councillors and Executives did lots of talking to Eaton's employees, there is some

evidence that not everyone was listening. In 1948, the General Merchandise Office surveyed departments to find out how they were using the advice of Councils and Executives when buying stock. It discovered that many departments were not consulting the groups, offering council members discounts on merchandise, or using the approval tags.⁹⁹ While the staff advisers hoped to capitalize on the students' feedback, it is difficult to say how much authority teenagers actually had over what ended up on store shelves.

Being singled out and asked for their advice certainly made some Councillors and Executives feel important. Eaton's was telling them they were the arbiters of teenaged style, and they were listening. The teenager was, the company argued, able to make stylistic and purchasing decisions alone. Eaton's believed high school students wanted to be treated like adults and taken seriously. And the few recorded reactions from students suggest that at least some Councillors and Executives appreciated the company's efforts. When asked what they had gained from the councils at the end of the 1945 term, most members said they were proud to have been chosen to represent their schools. Councillors described feeling on the "inside track," and "part of the store." One said it was a marvellous experience "for any girl interested in fashion."¹⁰⁰ Several Executives claimed Eaton's "seemed to have greater faith in students than any other large organization."¹⁰¹ In 1944, Toronto Junior Executive members claimed that "the co-operation received from Eaton's on school activities ... could not be beaten."¹⁰² Students

99 Minutes from the Junior Council and Executive advisers' meeting, May 1948, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

100 Junior Fashion Council 1944-45, file 69, 151-229, AO.

101 Eaton's Junior Executive First Fall Questionnaire, 1944., Box 2, 151-229, AO.

102 Ibid.

felt that a certain amount of prestige accompanied their positions as Councillors and Executives; students' photographs appeared occasionally in their cities' daily newspapers, and some school yearbooks included the initials "E.J.C." or "E.J.E" following the names and photos of council representatives.¹⁰³

The Junior Councils and Executives were part of Eaton's effort to establish high-school students as consumers in their own right, and to involve them in the retail marketplace. The store wanted teenagers to turn to Eaton's for everything from their clothes and shoes to their records, sports equipment, and bedroom furnishings. The company sought to portray young people's interactions with consumer culture as liberating, to encourage students to see spending money as crucial to their self-expression. However, it also sought to manipulate high school students, to profit from their insights, and to use them to advertise to their peers.

Eaton's actions suggest that the company believed teenagers inherently desired – and even had a right – to purchase goods. By claiming that young people were an authoritative and cohesive group with particular needs, department store employees were working to legitimize teenagers' active participation in the consumer marketplace. Its promotions focused on teenagers' maturity, and its activities involved students in the retail process. At the same time, company records reveal that the retailer was keen to avoid accusations from teachers or parents that it was inappropriately manipulating young people. To that end, store employees emphasized the opportunities for academic and personal growth afforded to Junior Councillors and Executives.

In trying to make teenagers authoritative consumers without betraying their

103 Minutes of the Junior Executive Conference, August 14, 15, 16, 1946, 198-229, AO.

presumed juvenile innocence, Eaton's fashioned a commercial persona of a teenaged consumer – a socially-involved high school student who was clothes-savvy, but, at the same time, lacked the skills and experience to fully understand the retail industry. Despite their astute reading of teen-aged fashions and fads, the Councillors and Executives were still “kids” in Eaton's eyes; they needed the company's guiding hand to navigate successfully into adulthood. Council members became viable commodities for Eaton's. Dressed in blazers with the council crest on their chests, these high school girls and boys were visible in Eaton's stores, at their schools, and at other community events, as an embodiment of the company's goodwill towards youth and as living billboards for the company's teenaged merchandise.

Between 1930 and 1960, Eaton's took two distinct approaches to the teenaged consumer. In its mail order catalogues, Eaton's advertised teenaged-specific clothing sizes and styles, employing aspects of high school culture to attract young consumers, and, in the process, shaping associations between age, appearance, and consumption. Store employees, on the other hand, emphasized the authority of the teenaged market, and claimed to be listening to what high school students themselves wanted. Both approaches helped to make the forthright, fashion-conscious teenager the predominant model of Canadian youth in the 1940s.

CONCLUSION

“Youth must be served”

Canadians today are surrounded by consumer products, and from a young age we hear and see advertising messages designed to spark desire. Whether in spite of, or because of the pervasive nature of marketing in our daily lives, some parents believe they need to protect their children from clothing and other goods that might make them look or act older than they are, while others enter their children in beauty pageants. The media draw our attention to overt violence in video games, and the hyper-sexuality of girlhood fashions. When confronted with the criticism that their products are too mature for children, marketers often reply that children are ageing more quickly now than they did in the past – growing faster and reaching puberty earlier because of better nutrition, and maturing faster due to greater access to information outside of their parents’ control.¹ In 2002, when retailer Abercrombie and Fitch began selling a line of sexy thong underwear for girls as young as ten years old, they argued that these girls were “style-conscious and want underwear that doesn’t produce a Visible Panty Line.”² This is a common claim that retailers and marketers use to justify their campaigns: they argue that they are just giving kids what they want, recognizing them as individuals and respecting their stated needs – as though the marketing messages themselves are not playing a role in directing those desires.

1 Lianne George, “Why are we dressing our daughters like this?” *Maclean’s* (1 January 2007), 38.

2 *Ibid.*

But who decides what kids “need” to buy? And how does consumer culture shape definitions of childhood, youth, and growing up? This thesis has explored representations of the teenaged consumer and then examined Eaton’s mail order advertising and in-store campaigns in order to show how the persona of the teenaged consumer emerged between 1930 and 1960. Years before the baby boom generation began shaping youth marketing practices with their considerable consumer clout, retailers such as Eaton’s asserted that the teenager was an avid, authoritative, style-conscious clothes consumer, setting out to corner the high school market by making students feel that the company was meeting (rather than creating) their special needs – needs some high school students helped define, but which the department store ultimately approved.

Different groups claimed to be serving young people’s needs during this period. A growing emphasis on the importance of chronological age and changing expectations about the stages of life shaped concerns about those in their teenaged years during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Census documents suggest that officials were interested in tracking when and how teenagers moved from school to work and, when young people did not transition to supporting themselves quickly enough (as was often the case during the Depression), they recommended less formal education and more hands-on job experience. Census officials, as well as the educators and community and religious leaders exemplified by the Canadian Youth Commission, expected mid-century teenagers to be either learning or earning, and wanted to serve youth by making it easier for them to find work and become productive and independent members of Canadian society. Young people’s status as consumers was not their primary concern.

Consumer magazines illuminate a somewhat different, but related set of expectations for the Canadian teenager. While still assumed to be either studying or working, the white, middle-class young woman depicted and discussed in the pages of *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Home Journal*, and *Mayfair* also required a growing number of consumer products to help her navigate her teenaged years and reach maturity. In the 1930s, the college co-ed was the predominant persona, but by the 1950s an idealized high school student increasingly epitomized the teenager. Magazine features and fashion spreads told young and old alike that the teenager was preoccupied with personal appearance, popularity and peer-approval, and then fostered the belief that purchasing clothing and beauty products could ensure social success in the form of friends, a job, and, for girls, ultimately a husband.

Consumer magazines claimed to be serving youth by offering advice about how to look their age. In the process, they shaped and strengthened the image of the teenaged girl as a sloppy, awkward, and inexperienced dresser who was drawn to fads. At the same time, she was seen to have strong opinions about products and styles she liked and disliked, and was depicted as a girl who shopped and had money to spend. This teenaged consumer seems tame in comparison to the depictions of “juvenile delinquents” and youth gang members that were also prevalent in the media during and after the Second World War.³ However, given current concerns about the self-esteem and critical body image of many teenaged girls, historians should ask if the attempts by consumer magazines to serve youth by offering beauty, confidence, and self-expression through consumption were not equally powerful in shaping society’s attitudes toward young

3 Jeff Keshen, *Sinners, Saints and Soldiers: Canada’s Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 194-227.

people in earlier eras.

This thesis demonstrates that Canadian retailers have been targeting teenagers with specific campaigns and products since the late 1930s. The systematic study of Eaton's catalogues, examining clothing of all sizes over several decades, illuminates the numerous and nuanced ways that Eaton's advertised clothing to an in-between age, size, and style before the advent of Teen sizing in the mid-1940s. This analysis reveals that Eaton's diverse attempts to define and target a teenaged audience did not happen overnight, nor did they necessarily progress in a straight line. Different size ranges and special catalogue sections appeared and disappeared over the period examined here. This evidence adjusts our assumptions about when Canadian retailers began to consider the teenager as a distinct customer, and underlines the highly gendered messages about teenaged appearance and behaviour contained within the pages of Eaton's semi-annual catalogue. Girls were portrayed as desiring popularity and male attention, and boys' suits promised a stylish masculinity that would win peer approval. Teenaged boys were considered avid clothing consumers, despite the more pervasive image of teenaged consumers as girls, especially in consumer magazines. Boys and girls alike were depicted in the catalogue as active and selective consumers who wanted stylish and age-appropriate clothing.

Eaton's corporate records of the Junior Council and Junior Executive programmes also spotlight the company's ongoing attempts to legitimize teenaged consumer desire after 1939, when Jack Brockie formed the first Junior Council at Eaton's Toronto store. In promotional materials for the programme, Eaton's argued that "Youth must be served..."

...and Eaton's endeavour to do this by meeting them on their own ground, meeting and understanding them. It would have been impossible to contact these important citizens of Canada as individuals but it is possible to talk to them through the council and executive groups who are truly representative of the Canadian High School Youth.⁴

"Youth must be Served" implied both that young people should be catered to, but also that they should be assisted. The expression neatly captures the fine line between manipulation and liberation that characterized Eaton's teenaged promotions in the 1940s and 1950s. Eaton's suggested not only that teenagers should be recognized as willing consumers, but also that the company could help high school students mature successfully by exposing them to, and teaching them about, consumer products and retail business. By labelling high school students as "important citizens" (despite the fact that they were not yet old enough to vote in federal elections), Eaton's claimed to be acting in teenagers' best interests, while also serving the company's desire to profit from increased sales and customer loyalty. The councils gave their teenaged members considerable clout within the stores, while transforming them into commodities Eaton's could use to promote its corporate image and sales inside the country's urban high schools.

The formation of the teenaged consumer resonates well beyond the walls of the high school or the department store. In a post-industrial economy, stores are not just the places where teenagers shop; the mall is also often their workplace. If institutions in the 1970s were inculcating working class values into teenaged boys and preparing them for a lifetime of manual and wage labour, as Paul Willis argued in his British study, how

4 "Youth Unlimited: The Story of Eaton's Junior Council and Executive," (n.d.), p. 3, Box 2, 151-229, AO.

have institutions played a role in teaching children to consume, and shaping their consumer identities?⁵ Sociologist Linda McDowell has argued that high school students today are “learning to serve” more than “learning to labour”; the service-oriented nature of a large segment of the North American economy has increased the importance of consumption, not only to how we buy goods, but also to how we work and earn money.⁶ Consumer spending also comprises more than half of Canada’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a powerful – though some would argue flawed – measure of a society’s wealth.⁷ When the economy slows, Canadians of all ages are encouraged to spend; in this context, shopping and measuring well-being according to material goods can be framed as important work, or as a patriotic duty.⁸ Teenagers have not yet reached voting age, but they constitute a powerful group of consumer-citizens in Canada.

Through its Junior Council programme, Eaton’s forged relationships with teenagers both as potential customers and as potential employees, training them to work part-time and offering them career advice. Consumption was preparation for adult life,

5 Paul Willis, *Learning to Labour: How working-class kids get working-class jobs* (Farnborough: Saxon House, 1977).

6 L. McDowell, *Redundant Masculinities? Employment, Change, and White Working Class Youth* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003).

7 In both 2009 and 2010, consumer spending made up nearly sixty per cent of Canada’s GDP. Exports, on the other hand, made up thirty-five per cent of Canada’s GDP in 2010. GDP is a measure of a country’s output per person, and does not take into consideration issues such as leisure time, health, life expectancy, or income inequality. Lars Osberg and Andrew Sharpe, *New Estimates of the Index of Economic Well-Being for Canada and the Provinces, 1981-2008* (Ottawa: Centre for the Study of Living Standards, 2009), iv.

8 Lizabeth Cohen examines the ways in which the American government encouraged spending as a patriotic duty following the Second World War in *A Consumers’ Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York, Knopf Books, 2003). In the weeks following the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, DC on September 11, 2001, then US President George W. Bush employed similar rhetoric, urging people to keep spending to help the American economy avoid recession.

part of becoming economically independent, in the company's view, and part of being a productive member of society. While census officials and others concerned about young people focused on vocational employment and earning, Eaton's wanted teenagers to see both earning *and* spending as markers of adult status. In the process, the company's attempts to legitimize teenaged consumption by emphasizing its promotions as "educational" and portraying teenagers as authoritative customers illustrate how consumer goods and advertising have shaped contemporary understandings of childhood and growing up in Canada. Ultimately, Eaton's represented the teenaged consumer as a bridge between childhood and adulthood. Far from isolating and alienating teenagers from their elders – as consumer culture has often been accused of doing – the teenaged consumer of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s was most often portrayed as moving towards adulthood, not delaying it.

Earning and spending are activities that resonate with the current situation facing many teenagers in Canada. Young people today are the main target of a lucrative consumer market and at the same time, those who are not in school or recently graduated face higher levels of unemployment than older segments of society. Like the teenagers of the 1930s, many are choosing to spend more time in school, to take jobs that do not necessarily match their skill levels, and to prolong leaving their parents' homes.⁹ Faced with potentially dim employment prospects and constant messages about spending,

9 Canadians between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four years are twice as likely to be jobless than older Canadians. Claire Penhorwood, "Canada's Youth Face Job Crunch," CBC News (26 March 2012), <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2012/03/19/f-canada-youth-unemployment.html>. For an examination of the challenges facing many American youth, see Stephen Marche, "The War Against Youth," *Esquire* (26 March 2012), <http://www.esquire.com/features/young-people-in-the-recession-0412>.

today's teenagers appear bound for a long period of dependence. Youth must be served, indeed, but by whom? And to what end? This study demonstrates that consumer culture is closely connected to the question of how to prepare young people for maturity.

In 1957, *Maclean's Magazine* writer John Clare claimed retailers were trying to cash in on the "market that just grew up" in his article "The Mad Scramble for the 'Teen-Age Dollar.'" Yet selling to teenagers was hardly novel by the late 1950s. For at least twenty years Canada's largest department store had been advertising clothing to customers in their teenaged years, studying and shaping teenaged desire through Junior Councillors and Executives, and tailoring its retail spaces in the hopes of attracting teenaged consumers. By 1957 the Eaton's catalogue had distinct size ranges for teenaged girls (Teen) and teenaged boys (Grad). By 1957 *Chatelaine* magazine had a monthly column dedicated to the teenager – her clothing, her fads, and her questions about how to look and act in order to win approval. The teenager was synonymous with the high school student, and teenaged culture was becoming synonymous with consumer culture. By 1960, when the children of Canada's baby boom started reaching their teenaged years, the teenaged market was, in fact, already grown up.

APPENDIX

Eaton's Catalogue Databases

The analysis presented in chapters three and four is based on evidence from semi-annual mail order catalogues issued by the T. Eaton Company, Limited, between 1929 and 1960. In order to systematically examine the changes in clothing styles and advertising strategies, I created two databases using Filemaker Pro that include nearly 900 garments from the catalogues. This appendix provides a brief history of the Eaton's catalogue and describes the construction of the databases.

The Eaton's catalogue was one of the first retail mail order publications in North America. It appeared in 1884 and its popularity grew quickly; it reached more than one million people nationally by 1904.¹ By the 1930s it had expanded into an illustrated and highly-detailed tome offering hundreds of pages of goods. The 1930 Fall-Winter catalogue claimed to have twelve thousand items for sale "Priced To Satisfy A Nation."² In addition to its wide selection of men's and women's clothing, outerwear, undergarments, shoes and boots, the Eaton's catalogue sold nearly anything and everything, from children's toys to houses. The catalogue offered fabric by the yard, and notions, for the seamstress – and sewing machines as well. There was a wide selection of hardware and farm equipment – including wagons, cream separators, and an incubator to hatch chickens. Customers could furnish their houses; dishes, household appliances,

1 Donica Belisle, *Retail Nation: Department Stores and the Making of Modern Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2011), 48.

2 Eaton's Fall and Winter 1930/31 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Co, Limited, 1930), 1.

bedding, and window furnishings were sold in wide variety. There were bicycles and scooters for riders of all sizes, ice skates, football helmets, and other sports equipment. Customers could buy pipes and the tobacco to smoke in them. Books, typewriters, sheet music, and pianos were all available. Seeds for the vegetable garden, coffee for the percolator, and tires for the car – with the Eaton’s catalogue, cash, and a shipping address, anyone in Canada could purchase anything they could possibly need or desire. As the company claimed on the cover of its 1951 Spring and Summer catalogue, Eaton’s wanted to be “A big store at your door.”³

As a historical source, the Eaton’s catalogue has often been used as a window into the daily lives of twentieth-century Canadians. Anecdotal evidence points to the importance of the catalogue, especially in rural places, where it not only offered much-needed goods, but also acted as a source of inspiration for home sewers, entertainment for children, and a way for teachers to give lessons on the value of money.⁴ While it has been heralded as a nationalist symbol of Canadian commerce and a nostalgic emblem of an earlier era, few scholars have critically examined the catalogues’ contents and messages.⁵ From cover to cover, the Eaton’s catalogue was an advertisement for the T. Eaton Company, Limited, promoting its goods and values to potential customers. As Donica Belisle demonstrates in her recent history of department stores, the catalogues conveyed nationalist messages of a white, middle-class Canadian consumer and a

3 Eaton’s Spring and Summer 1951 Catalogue (Toronto: T. Eaton Co, Limited, 1951).

4 Eleanor Thompson, “Eaton’s Mail Order Catalogue – Oral History Project,” Canadian Museum of Civilization, Library, Archives and Documentation, History Records, Box 1-164, file 6.

5 Exceptions include: Jo-Anne McCutcheon, “Clothing Children in English Canada, 1870-1930,” (University of Ottawa, PhD Thesis, 2001); Belisle, *Retail Nation*.

paternalistic, civilizing company.⁶ Such analysis demonstrates that the catalogues cannot be read simply – their true value as historical sources lies not only in the goods they sold, but also and more critically in the way they contributed to broader cultural change.

To date, little systematic analysis of the clothing in the Eaton's catalogue has been done. Historian J.M. McCutcheon's research on children's clothing in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries is the exception. McCutcheon examined all the children's clothing offered in ten mail order catalogues produced by Eaton's, the Robert Simpson Company, and the Hudson's Bay Company between 1890 and 1929.⁷ By comparing the type, construction, and promotion of children's garments, McCutcheon demonstrated a shift from home sewing to ready-made garments, and explored how department stores sold children's clothing to mothers and boys.

The research strategy employed here builds upon the techniques used by McCutcheon, examining a sample of garments over time and comparing their description. In order to observe the emergence of new sizes and styles made for teenaged consumers, this analysis examines clothing for adults as well as children. The company's understanding of "adult" and "children's" garments helped illuminate the various "in-between" size ranges that Eaton's used, particularly in the 1930s and early 1940s. Given the changes that were observed from one catalogue to the next – a teenaged size range or advertising tactic was in many cases used only for a year or two before a new one was tried – sampling garments from each year was prudent, and revealed the more nuanced changes. Since the Eaton's catalogue was published bi-annually, garments from every

⁶ Belisle, *Retail Nation*, 45-81.

⁷ McCutcheon's sample included 1,163 garments. She analysed each garment based on: gender; garment type; material; construction; age of wearer; style; colour, and cost. J.M. McCutcheon, "Clothing Children in English Canada, 1870-1930," 207.

other catalogue – or one catalogue per year – were entered in the database. In cases where a particular catalogue was unavailable or too damaged to read properly, the next available catalogue was sampled in its place. A complete list of the catalogues sampled, along with the number of male and female garments included from each catalogue, is shown in Table A.1.

Each Eaton's catalogue contained many different types of garments – dresses, coats, suits, sleepwear, sportswear, and undergarments. I decided to make the type of garment a constant variable, and limited my sample to dresses (for females) and suits (for males). Every tenth dress and suit was included in the database, representing roughly ten per cent of the total number of dresses or suits in each catalogue. Dresses and suits occupied the most space of all the garments in the catalogues, although sportswear – more casual separates such as skirts and blouses for women and trousers and sports coats for men – was a growing section of the catalogue throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.⁸ Despite the growing popularity of sportswear, middle-class respectability still dictated that dresses and suits were the most appropriate attire for women and men in public. In his study of Canadian childhoods, historian Neil Sutherland notes that many schools had informal dress codes until the 1960s; girls were not permitted to wear slacks or jeans, and coveralls were not allowed for boys. Girls often only had one outfit for school – either a dress or a skirt and blouse, while boys generally wore slacks and, occasionally, jackets.⁹ While people might dress more

8 For an analysis of the role of sportswear in the Eaton's catalogue, see Betsey Baldwin, "Athletic Wear and Fashion in Canada, 1900-1950, through the Eaton's Catalogue," 1999, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Library, Archives and Documentation, History Records, Box 1-164, file 11.

9 Neil Sutherland, *Growing Up: Childhood in English Canada From the Great War to*

casually at home surrounded by family members, social norms dictated slightly more formal attire when entertaining, attending school or work, shopping or engaging in other social activities.

In order to complement and contextualize this intensive research on Eaton's, I also sampled the Simpson's catalogues, including every tenth dress and suit from catalogues published in 1930, 1935, 1940, 1945, 1950 and 1955. Between the Eaton's and Simpson's catalogues, the sample includes 980 garments. Eaton's produced three different versions of the catalogues during these years: the Toronto catalogue (which was also distributed, with minor changes, through the Moncton Mail Order office); the Winnipeg catalogue (distributed across Western Canada); and a French catalogue (after 1931, a translation of the Toronto book, produced in Toronto).¹⁰ I sampled only from the Toronto catalogues, given that, as several historians have suggested, by the 1930s, the clothing content of the Toronto and Winnipeg books was increasingly uniform; after 1949, only one catalogue, produced in Toronto, was distributed across the country.¹¹

Readers of the Eaton's catalogue could expect to see merchandise displayed in the same manner and order in nearly every issue, and this facilitated the transfer of data

the Age of Television (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 27-31.

10 Lorraine O'Donnell, "Visualizing the History of Women at Eaton's, 1869 to 1976," (PhD thesis, McGill University, 2002), 270-271.

11 Between 1890 and 1930, the Winnipeg catalogue did offer a greater selection of work wear and overalls. The differences in the children's departments were also more pronounced, with more work wear offered in children's sizes and no distinct girls' section of the Winnipeg catalogue in the 1920s. See Catherine M. Cole, "Comparative Analysis of the Toronto and Winnipeg Editions of the Eaton's Mail Order Catalogues, 1905-1945," Canadian Museum of Civilization, Library, Archives and Documentation, History Records, Box 1-164, 41-45. In the 1930s the content of the two catalogues became more similar, and by 1944 three-quarters of the content was identical in both catalogues. O'Donnell, "Visualizing the History of Women at Eaton's," 271-274.

from the catalogues to the database. Apparel and accessories always occupied the first half of the catalogue, with the latter half dedicated to all other goods. This meant Eaton's spent more effort displaying and advertising clothing than any other item it sold in the catalogues. Most garments were grouped by sex and type. Women's dresses, coats, millinery, and sportswear was usually located at the beginning of the catalogue, followed by women's sleepwear, support garments and lingerie. Men's suits, overcoats, and work-wear garments were usually placed well into the catalogue, the last items of clothing to be presented. Eaton's never advertised men's and women's clothes on the same page. However, boys' and girls' garments sometimes appeared on the same page, particularly infants' clothing and garments for children as old as six.

The primary database (PD) includes almost all aspects of information pertaining to each garment sampled. In most cases Eaton's titled each item of clothing or outfit, giving each garment a distinct headline to attract readers' attention. In the database each garment is identified by its garment name, and each garment name is a distinct case. The PD captures verbatim all information about the garment printed in the catalogue, including the price, tag lines printed at the top of the page, and the description of the garment (including material, style, colours, and sizes available). The PD also includes indirect fields pertaining to the image associated with the garment. While the images themselves are not included in the PD, each record notes: whether the garment was illustrated; whether the illustration was a drawing or a photograph; what position the model is in; the hair length of the model; the accessories the model is wearing; and the estimated age of the model in relation to the size range of the garment.

The garment description database (GDD) breaks down the information contained

in each garment description for further analysis. In addition to identifying information about each garment (catalogue issue, page number, garment title, gender), it includes fields recording the size range description of each garment. This is the verbatim description of the size as given in the catalogues. It also includes fields for the smallest and largest size for each garment. In addition, the GDD notes the number of colours for each garment, and includes fields for whether the garment was sold in black or in “fashion” colours. The fields used in each database, with a description of the fields and a list of values used, are found in Table A.2.

Both databases were designed with future research questions in mind. The PD reproduces all of the information related to each garment that was contained on a page of the Eaton’s catalogue. While this analysis focuses on clothing designed and marketed to teenagers, the comprehensive nature of these databases allows for the exploration of a broad range of historical and socio-cultural questions about clothing, textiles, and fashion, gender and age constructions, business and marketing, and the cost of living. To this end, the PD will be deposited at the library and archives of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, so that it can be used in collaboration with its collection of mail order catalogues.

Table A.1: Catalogue Data Sample by company, issue, and number of garments.

Company	Issue		Sample Size
Eaton's	Fall Winter 1929-30	Total	25
		Female	14
		Male	11
	Spring Summer 1930	Total	26
		Female	15
		Male	11
	Fall Winter 1930-31	Total	20
		Female	12
		Male	8
	Spring Summer 1931	Total	27
		Female	15
		Male	12
	Fall Winter 1931-32	Total	9
		Female	4
		Male	5
	Spring Summer 1932	Total	16
		Female	9
		Male	7
	Fall Winter 1932-33	Total	16
		Female	9
		Male	7
	Spring Summer 1933	Total	15
		Female	11
		Male	4
	Fall Winter 1933-34	Total	15
Female		9	
Male		6	
Spring Summer 1934	Total	16	
	Female	9	
	Male	7	
Fall Winter 1934-35	Total	15	
	Female	10	
	Male	5	
Spring Summer 1935	Total	111	
	Female	86	
	Male	25	
Fall Winter 1935-36	Total	17	
	Female	13	
	Male	4	
Spring Summer 1937	Total	21	
	Female	15	
	Male	6	

Company	Issue		Sample Size
	Fall Winter 1938-39	Total	15
		Female	12
		Male	3
	Spring Summer 1939	Total	19
		Female	14
		Male	5
	Spring Summer 1940	Total	64
		Female	53
		Male	11
	Fall Winter 1940-41	Total	46
		Female	42
		Male	4
	Spring Summer 1941	Total	18
		Female	14
		Male	4
	Fall Winter 1942-43	Total	17
		Female	14
		Male	3
	Fall Winter 1944-45	Total	17
		Female	14
		Male	3
	Spring Summer 1945	Total	22
		Female	18
		Male	4
	Fall Winter 1946-47	Total	17
		Female	14
		Male	3
	Spring Summer 1947	Total	21
		Female	16
		Male	5
	Fall Winter 1948-49	Total	20
		Female	16
		Male	4
	Spring Summer 1949	Total	25
		Female	19
		Male	6
	Fall Winter 1950-51	Total	24
		Female	20
		Male	4
	Spring Summer 1951	Total	22
		Female	18
		Male	4
	Fall Winter 1951-52	Total	22

Company	Issue		Sample Size
		Female	18
		Male	4
	Spring Summer 1953	Total	23
		Female	18
		Male	5
	Fall Winter 1953-54	Total	21
		Female	19
		Male	2
	Spring Summer 1955	Total	24
		Female	19
		Male	5
	Fall Winter 1956-57	Total	20
		Female	16
		Male	4
	Spring Summer 1957	Total	19
		Female	15
		Male	4
	Fall Winter 1958-59	Total	18
		Female	16
		Male	2
	Spring Summer 1959	Total	21
		Female	17
		Male	4
	Fall Winter 1960-61	Total	19
		Female	17
		Male	2
Simpson's	Spring Summer 1930	Total	12
		Female	9
		Male	3
	Fall Winter 1935	Total	17
		Female	12
		Male	5
	Spring Summer 1940	Total	18
		Female	14
		Male	4
	Fall Winter 1945	Total	15
		Female	11
		Male	4
	Spring Summer 1950	Total	21
		Female	15
		Male	6
	Fall Winter 1955	Total	15
		Female	13

Company	Issue		Sample Size
		Male	2

Table A.2: Database fields, description of field, and value list or range of values.

Database	Field	Description	Value List/Range
Primary Database	Year		1929 – 1960
	Issue		Spring Summer Fall Winter
	Page		
	Company		Eaton's Simpson's
	Page Title	Largest headline on the page, if any	Verbatim
	Page Description	Sub-headlines or other descriptive text on page	Verbatim
	Page Description 2	Sub-headlines or other descriptive text on page	Verbatim
	Gender	“U” stands for garments sold as “unisex”	M (male) F (female) U (unisex)
	Garment Title		Verbatim
	Garment Type		Dress Suit
	Garment Description		Verbatim
	Price	If two prices were listed (as in the case of suits with choice of one pant or two), the higher price was always entered – both prices were also included in garment description.	Verbatim
	Garment Image	Is the garment illustrated?	Yes No
	Image Type	Is the image an illustration or a photograph? And does the image include a person, or just a garment?	Drawing Photograph Drawing (no face) Photograph (no face)
	Image Action	Brief description of the	

Database	Field	Description	Value List/Range
		model's position, whether standing or sitting, placement of hands, anything in hands.	
	Model Hair	What length of hair does the model have?	Up Half up Down chin length Down shoulder-length Down long Short Pony-tail Pigtails Braided pigtails
	Garment pattern	What is the pattern of the material in the garment displayed?	Solid Floral Polka Dots Printed Striped Checked Overchecked Herringbone
	Model Accessories	List accessories model is wearing	Shoes Hat Gloves Purse Bracelet Necklace Earrings Hair band Hair bow Tie Handkerchief
	Model Age	Based on the range of age-sizes that the garment is offered in, is this model near the low, medium, or high part of the age/size range?	Low size Med size High size

Database	Field	Description	Value List/Range
Garment Description Database	Year		1929 – 1960
	Issue		Spring Summer Fall Winter
	Page		
	Company		Eaton's Simpson's
	Page Title	Largest headline on the page, if any	Verbatim
	Page Description	Sub-headlines or other descriptive text on page	Verbatim
	Page Description 2	Sub-headlines or other descriptive text on page	Verbatim
	Gender	"U" stands for garments sold as "unisex"	M F U
	Garment Title		Verbatim
	Garment Type		Dress Suit
	Garment Description		Verbatim
	Price	If two prices were listed (as in the case of suits with choice of one pant or two), the higher price was always entered – both prices were also included in garment description.	Verbatim
	Size Range Description	How did the company identify this size range in the catalogue?	Boys' Girls' Grads' Juniors' Larger Women's/Extra Sizes Little Women's/Half-Sizes

Database	Field	Description	Value List/Range
			Men's Misses' Senior Girls' Teen Women's
	Lowest Size	What is the smallest size the garment is offered in?	Verbatim
	Highest Size	What is the largest size the garment is offered in?	Verbatim
	Number of colours		
	Offered in Black	Is the garment available in black?	Yes No
	Fashion Colours	Has the company used unusual or descriptive colours?	Yes No
	Model Age	Based on the range of age-sizes that the garment is offered in, is this model near the low, medium, or high part of the age/size range?	Low size Med size High size

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