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FEMININE MODERNITY IN INTERWAR BRITAIN AND NORTH AMERICA

Corsets, Cars, and Cigarettes

Penny Tinkler and Cheryl Krasnick Warsh

Cars, corsets, and cigarettes occupied a prominent place in British and U.S. editions of Vogue in the interwar years. All three products were presented as quintessentially modern and possessing the capacity to modernize the women who used them. This article addresses the relationship between consumption and feminine modernity, showing how affluent British and North American women were encouraged to remake themselves as modern feminine subjects through the purchase of cars, corsets, and cigarettes. By scrutinizing representations of women's relationship to modern and modernizing goods, key constituents of interwar affluent feminine modernity are identified. While Britain, Canada, and the United States took distinctive routes through twentieth-century modernity, Vogue encouraged wealthy women to imagine and create forms of feminine modernity that transcended the specificities of place.

Cars, corsets, and cigarettes were visually prominent in British and North American editions of *Vogue* in the interwar years.¹ All three products were presented as quintessentially modern and as possessing the capacity to modernize the women who used them. Through an exploration of the representation of cars, corsets, and cigarettes in a magazine principally for upper-middle-class women aged twenty to fifty, this article examines the relationship between consumption, modernity, and affluence in the interwar period. It analyzes how women were invited to imagine themselves as participants in the modern world and encouraged to remake themselves as modern feminine subjects through their consumption practices. By scrutinizing representations of modern and modernizing goods, the discussion unravels the constituents of affluent feminine modernity.

By the 1920s, decades of industrial growth, coupled in North America with rapid immigration, had firmly established the urbanized character of all three nations. Alongside the emergence of mass systems of transportation, communication, and new industrial technologies, urbanization contributed to the "cultural co-ordinates of modernization within which modernity has to be lived out."² Modernity, "the experience of living through and making sense of" the processes of modernization, and "the practical negotiation of one's life and one's identity within a complex and fast-changing world," has traditionally been conceived in male terms.³ In classic texts the public

sphere was identified as the locus of modernity from which women were excluded due to their domestic roles. Recent scholarship has convincingly challenged this view.⁴

Women were active in the public sphere and their experiences constituted "a quintessential constituent of modernity."⁵ Education, philanthropy, political action, and in particular, paid work engaged women in public life and space.⁶ In cities women were catered to in libraries, restaurants, department stores, and cinemas.⁷ Shopping and window-shopping (activities distinct from merely purchasing goods) were fundamental to women's experiences of the modern city and located women at the heart of consumer culture.⁸ Shopping also "disrupted" notions of public life as separate from the domestic and private, with consequences for the homemaker's experience of modernity. By the interwar years, "[t]he home, far from being simply a haven from the demands of modern life or a stifling place from which to escape, became central to the modernity of British life."⁹ In North America, products ranging from wringer washers to sewing machines were similarly marketed to women as essential to the modern, efficient household, while home economists taught girls to cook, clean, and consume the modern way.¹⁰ Modern life expanded opportunities for women to see, and to do so in new ways.¹¹ Consumer culture contributed to the dominance of the visual as image became key to the meaning and desirability of commodities: "spectacle and capitalism became indivisible."¹² Magazines, advertising, retail, and in Britain, the Ideal Home Exhibition guided women's participation in the "exploding culture of consumption and spectacle" central to the experience of modernity.¹³

Women's magazines facilitate exploration of the interwar culture of consumption and spectacle, revealing how modernity was cast as a feminine experience and how readers were encouraged to remake themselves as modern women. Interwar historiography provides fascinating insight into the representations of feminine modernity in the print media, especially of "modern girls" and middle-class forms of domestic modernity.¹⁴ Although upper-middle-class women feature in studies of material culture and "Sapphic modernities," interwar representations of affluent feminine modernity have received relatively little attention.¹⁵ *Vogue* is particularly illuminating of the relationship between affluence, gender, consumption, and modernity. Launched in North America in 1912, *Vogue* was targeted at and read by wealthy American and Canadian women before being introduced to their British counterparts in 1916. The journal was not, however, exclusionary. *Vogue* pattern service, for instance, catered to society folk in straitened circumstances as well as the fantasizing elite.

As its name suggests, *Vogue* was concerned with the new. Explicitly modern in tone, content, and presentation, *Vogue* offered readers a vi-

sual encounter with modernity. Women's magazines were "becoming a predominantly visual experience, constructing an audience of spectators and, by extension, consumers."¹⁶ *Vogue* particularly represents this trend because of its focus on the affluent and the dominance of advertising. The production values of *Vogue's* fashion spreads, articles, and advertisements surpassed other popular magazines. Art directors Heyworth Campbell and Mehmed Fehmy Agha produced a U.S. *Vogue* "clean, modern, and pleasing to the eye," while the work of leading photographers rendered "*Vogue's* pages artistic and handsome."¹⁷ Combining American fashion material with "local" features, British *Vogue* presented the same stylish face.¹⁸ Publisher Condé Nast and his transatlantic editors maintained these high standards because *Vogue's* market demographics appealed to advertisers. Between a fifth and a quarter of each issue was devoted to direct advertising in both monthly and fortnightly versions.¹⁹ Further space was allotted to fashion promotions. The reliance on images, increasingly photographic, contributed to the visual nature of the reading experience. First by looking and then by consuming, the predominantly female readership was promised modernity by the advertising and fashion spreads that were *Vogue's* mainstays.

Cars, corsets, and cigarettes figured prominently in *Vogue's* representation of modern femininity; these goods looked modern and, partly through their spectacular effects, they conferred modernity on the user. Recent study of the "sex of things" provides insights into how material goods are gendered through the discourses that describe them and the practices in which they are embedded, and how gendered and modern identities, subjectivities, and practices are produced.²⁰ Whereas "thing studies" typically focus on individual commodities, we scrutinize the representation of three products central to the production of new femininities. This enables us to explore common elements and tensions in constructions of affluent feminine modernity. Our article focuses on issues of British and U.S. *Vogue* published principally in 1924 and 1934, although greater attention is given to 1934, when the themes we identify are firmly established.²¹ Historians are increasingly sensitive to a range of coexisting "modernities," although comparative studies are uncommon.²² Our focus on two national editions of the same magazine allows us to assess evidence of culturally specific feminine modernities, rule out variations stemming from different publishing objectives, and isolate cultural differences.²³

Women's responses to these images are difficult to gauge. *Vogue* successfully targeted its intended audience, and though we cannot assume readers took from the magazine what the producers intended, its success renders it likely that there was substantial overlap between the intended and actual service provided. Displays of affluence and the visible maintenance of standards were established features of elite feminine culture. Yet

the right look was difficult to achieve because of sociocultural change and fashion's rapid turnover; it was particularly challenging for those working within a budget. It seems likely, therefore, that women took notice of *Vogue's* representations of feminine modernity, conveyed in an attractive visual format, because *Vogue* showed women *how* to be modern. Even if women did not act directly on the ideas they gleaned, these ideas contributed to how they envisaged affluent feminine modernity.

We first discuss how cars, corsets, and cigarettes contributed to the production of the modern woman. We then examine the details of the modern presence facilitated by these products, before assessing the promise of freedom and control they extended to women.

Modern Commodities Make Modern Women

Cigarettes were the modern way to consume tobacco. Pipe tobacco and snuff were preferred for most of the nineteenth century, but both products were associated with men, as it was considered unrespectable for women to use tobacco. From the 1880s, cigarettes, often with milder tobacco blends, became increasingly available and popular. By 1920, the cigarette's status as a modern smoke was firmly established, and its appeal was not restricted to men. From the 1880s, British and North American women increasingly adopted the cigarette habit, sometimes as an assertion of emancipation and equality with men.²⁴ By 1920, smoking was an established practice in certain feminine circles, although consumption remained a fraction of men's.²⁵ In the hands of a woman in 1920, the cigarette signified a radical shift in femininity and gender relations. Ten years later, it was commonplace to see middle- and upper-class women smoking in public as a gesture of respectable, modern womanhood.

Smoking had become a trademark of feminine modernity. From 1919, cigarette advertisements appeared in British *Vogue* featuring emancipated, modern women asserting their right to smoke. Although women were not overtly targeted in U.S. *Vogue* cigarette adverts of the 1920s, they were addressed in subtle ways.²⁶ By the 1930s, cigarette adverts directed at women were commonplace in both editions. Confident and sophisticated fashion models reinforced the centrality of the cigarette to interwar feminine modernity. Dressed in couture frocks, British models smoked as they shopped and socialized.²⁷ In a fashion spread targeted at North American women in 1934, five of six models held cigarettes, while one of the models also rested her hand on a cigarette box.²⁸ Cigarettes also routinely appeared in the promotion of non-tobacco products. Harrods advertised its hat-fitting service with an illustration of a woman smoking; British smokers also appeared in adverts for "tennis fashions," nail varnish, and alcohol (Figure 1).²⁹ In the United States, Vitality health shoes, which offered "style-wise moderns . . .

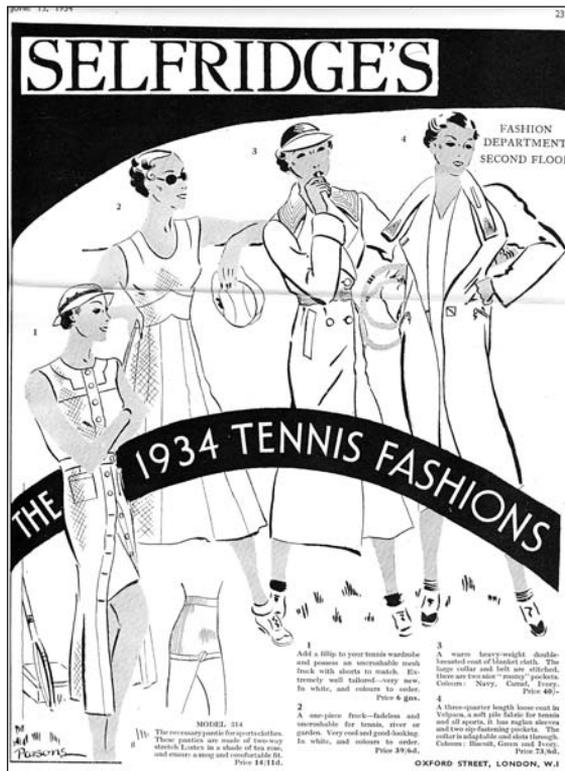


Figure 1. "Selfridge's: The 1934 Tennis Fashions," *British Vogue*, 13 June 1934, 23.

new foot-freedom," featured a confident young woman striding towards the reader, cigarette in hand.³⁰

The corseted woman was often a smoker, as was the woman driver or passenger.³¹ Like the cigarette, the motorcar signified modernity. The American car industry began around 1897, but it was not until the 1910s that car ownership began to spread among the affluent. Canada quickly followed the United States to become, by the 1920s, the second largest per capita consumer of automobiles.³² By 1900 Britain's car industry was also established and in 1911 Ford opened a plant on British soil.³³ As production increased, so did car advertising. In a 1908 Oregon paper, car advertising occupied 3 column inches; by 1915 it exceeded 2,000.³⁴

Pre-Great War automobile advertising was unique in that the product was designed to appeal to elitist self-image (as opposed to the mass market Henry Ford would target).³⁵ In 1914 U.S. *Vogue* issues, the appeal was unabashedly snobbish. Fiats were driven by royalty, while the Ohio Electric Car, with seats facing each other as in a horse-drawn coach, is boarded by

a woman with the caption "Thoroughbred!"³⁶ Although a modern form of transport, the car was not yet marketed with particular emphasis on modernity; some adverts highlighted the car's comparability with traditional modes of elite transportation. Female drivers were occasionally featured, but women passengers predominated.³⁷

The association of motoring with modern womanhood became increasingly visible in 1920s *Vogue*. There were twelve full-page car adverts (some in color), and two multipage spreads (the text showcasing advertised vehicles) in the January 1924 issues of U.S. *Vogue*. The high profile of car advertising likely indicated the increased popularity of driving among women. While only a minority of women drove in the United States in 1914 (only 23 of 425 car owners in Tucson, Arizona were women), by 1920 women comprised 20 percent of motorists in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Oakland.³⁸ Cars were also visible, albeit less frequently, in British *Vogue*, appearing on the covers, often in color. A February 1924 issue sported one full-page and five small car adverts, appealing to Britain's growing number of women drivers.³⁹ "Ladies' cars," such as the Lagonda, were promoted alongside vehicles with woman-friendly features.⁴⁰ Articles on motoring in town, country, and exotic locations reinforced the auto's visual prominence. Fashion features contributed to this high profile. In two fashion-and-car spreads, aristocrats clad in Parisian fashions posed in front of, behind, and at the steering wheels of new cars.⁴¹ By the mid-twenties, the automobile was simultaneously presented as a luxury item, a domestic necessity, and a fashion accessory. While chauffeurs were common in adverts and articles, "lady drivers" were also widespread. Waiting for her male companion, a well-dressed British woman sat at the wheel of a Vauxhall in 1924, while an American mother chauffeured her children to school (Figure 2).⁴²

The prominence of the motorcar was consolidated in the thirties. Representing the increased attention given to the woman driver, publicity for London's 1935 Motor Exhibition featured a woman at the wheel of a car, her headscarf blowing in the wind (Figure 3).⁴³ Niche marketing was more sophisticated in U.S. *Vogue* than in Britain, and certain women motorists were explicitly addressed. Chevrolets were targeted at the "bright young deb," promoted as wedding gifts for the "popular young matron," and sold as the perfect car for the modern mother: "You need a car that you can drive yourself," one that allows you to "keep the children constantly under your eyes."⁴⁴ Continuing an established trend of targeting mature elite women, several auto adverts displayed older women surrounded by opulence and chauffeurs.⁴⁵ The Chrysler, "like spacious travelling drawing rooms," offered the mature woman a desk or vanity table.⁴⁶ This advertising revealed both a respect for age lingering from the nineteenth century and recognition that older women possessing disposable wealth were much of the magazine's target elite market.

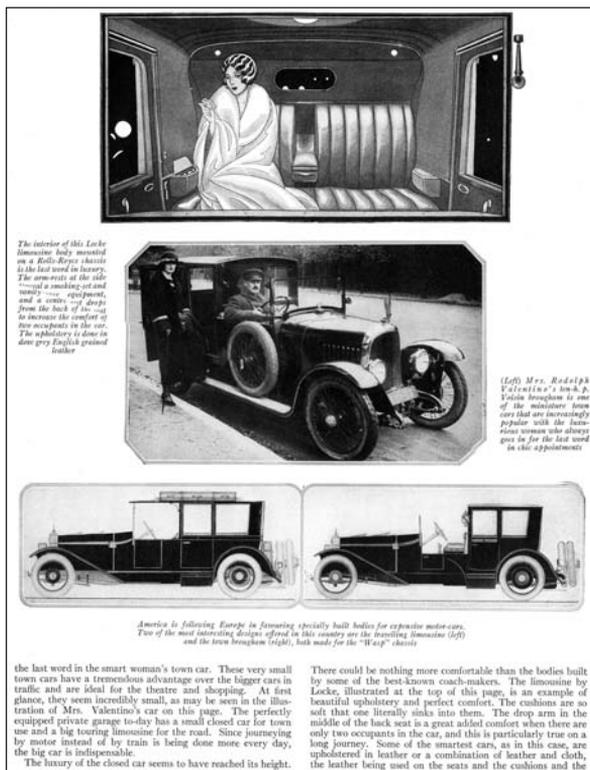


Figure 4. "Mrs. Rudolph Valentino," U.S. *Vogue*, 15 January 1924, 28.

In 1924, mere possession of a car signified modernity, although style was sometimes emphasized. By the thirties style was paramount: "The days when the possession of any sort of car—providing it was one's own—was considered sufficient, are gone. The most devastating ensemble is wholly, and not just partially, ruined by the un-smart car. A glittering limousine is vulgar and an undersized 'sports car' rather absurd."⁴⁷ Fashion spreads consolidated the car's status as a fashion accessory: models in elegant clothes posed alongside elegant cars, as did Mrs. Rudolph Valentino (Figure 4).⁴⁸ Emphasis on the latest version was more pronounced in North America: "For nothing can be desirable that is anywise out of date. . . That's why we present . . . the new Cadillacs and La Salles. Styled completely in the vogue of tomorrow, so original and fresh and beautiful that they put years between yesterday and today."⁴⁹ One advert, alluding to the importance of modern possessions for social standing, featured a woman admiring the latest model: "Since this car came out, our car has seemed hopelessly out-of-date."⁵⁰ The

lesser emphasis on novelty in Britain may indicate that its readers were not generally as affluent as their transatlantic cousins, yet British advertisers stressed tradition and craft.⁵¹ This may indicate the greater importance of tradition for the British elite, as well as differences in auto manufacturing; in contrast to North American mass production, the British industry relied upon "craft skills, short production runs and a diversity of models."⁵²

Compared to cars and cigarettes, corsetry initially appears as the antithesis of modernity. Corsets were key to the Victorian female form. Young North American women equated corsets with tradition and constraint rather than modern lifestyles and fashions. Conveying the link between going without a corset and asserting oneself as a modern woman, a discussion of the corset-free fashion was entitled: "Woman decides to support herself."⁵³ Influenced by the Poiret gown, women's access to sports, and the popularity of the tango, U.S. *Vogue* noted in 1914 that "the mode of the corsetless figure is an established one."⁵⁴ The editors were, however, ahead of their own advertisers. In March and November 1914, U.S. *Vogue* carried fifty-two corset adverts; by 1919 this had diminished to eight.

In the early 1920s, corsets were still featured in both editions of *Vogue*, but they were not usually marketed as modern. Bones were used to create shape, and buttons and laces to secure the garment, while frills served as decoration.⁵⁵ There were signs of change. The departure from traditional-style corsetry was trumpeted in a 1919 edition of U.S. *Vogue*, where a young woman modeled "Woman's Modern Undergarment": lingerie entitled "Futurist."⁵⁶ In Britain, too, occasional corset adverts celebrated such technological advances as rustless bones and elastic thread which appealed to "modern womanhood."⁵⁷ By the 1930s, new textile technology transformed the corset.⁵⁸ Whereas Victorian corsetry shaped and controlled the torso, by 1934 the term "corsetry" was often used interchangeably with "foundation wear" to include undergarments, like girdles, that controlled the waist and hips.⁵⁹ Repackaged as the creator of the unequivocally modern body, corsetry achieved a high profile in U.S. and British *Vogue*. Whereas adverts in 1924 featured demure women, often scrutinizing themselves in a mirror, full-page adverts of the 1930s boldly displayed women's bodies as modern spectacles. Like cars and cigarettes, by the 1930s corsets were central features of feminine modernity; corsets were, quite literally, foundational.

Corsets enabled women to remake themselves as modern women: "These little garments make the figure that make the clothes that make the girl."⁶⁰ Constantly changing fashions produced bodies that required corsetry as each style required a different body shape to best display it. An advert that berated women for building up their new season's wardrobe *before* updating their corsetry revealed the significance of these garments: "What a pity it is they had those smart new clothes made to fit their cast-off figure

instead of this lovely new one!"⁶¹ A corset enabled women to "welcome the new silhouette"; it assured "fashion accuracy."⁶²

Bodily perfection was elusive for all corsetless women. British readers were told: "Rodin, the great sculptor, once said that the period for which a woman maintains perfect beauty can be measured in months or even in weeks."⁶³ In North America, women were told that "even a slip-of-a-girl needs a proper foundation," while in Britain "controlettes" were proffered for "many young girls" who have "*sway back* . . . a wide hip, an overdeveloped thigh."⁶⁴ Persuading young, slim women that they required corsets was a means to both increase the "junior" market and convince all women that being fashionable required corsetry.⁶⁵ Corset companies created classifications of the female figure and corsets to meet the needs of each, in keeping with modern production methods. The aura of scientific rationality was, however, tarnished by lack of precision: "Gossard's early twentieth-century chart defined nine figure types, Warner's 1921 classification had eight, and Berlei's 1926 study of Australian women found five."⁶⁶

A Modern Presence

Corsets, cars, and cigarettes contributed to the production of the modern woman by facilitating a modern way of looking and moving. "Lines" were key to the modern look, especially by the 1930s, and this applied as much to women as to cars.⁶⁷ "Improve your line," declared a typical British corset advert of the thirties, while another promised "That streamline figure is yours in a Berlei."⁶⁸ Making explicit the difference between "modern" and "old-fashioned" corsetry, an advert in U.S. *Vogue* celebrated "[n]o hooks or bones or foolish frills. Just line . . . line . . . rhythmic lines!"⁶⁹ This image of the fashionable woman as streamlined had entered common parlance by the thirties as demonstrated by Dr. Atlee's critique of the nursing uniform at Canada's Dalhousie University: "Surely if it has become necessary that automobile builders make their automobiles with graceful lines—a nurse might have a streamlined, graceful tonneau."⁷⁰ As Atlee observed, "streamlines" were a key feature of the modern car's attractions. *Vogue* adverts of the twenties occasionally mentioned "harmony of lines," but emphasized construction details, interior design, space, comfort, and quality.⁷¹ By the 1930s, streamlined profiles were routinely highlighted. "Madam, are you stream-line minded?" asked one North American essay: "If not, you must become so at once. The final decree in the divorce between the modern automobile and the horse-drawn carriage of yesterday has been pronounced, and the vertical line has gone."⁷² In Britain "the streamline story" rehearsed the attractions of the latest car with attention to their lines; the Talbot, for instance, was "an aerodynamic vehicle in the latest manner."⁷³ Allusions to

air travel and aerodynamic qualities hint at developments in flight technology and contribute to the motorcar's status as a signifier of modernity.

Slimness was key to a streamline look on both sides of the Atlantic by the 1930s.⁷⁴ Adverts suggest that even cars benefited from a slender look; the Ford V-8 was presented as "trim, lithe and colourful."⁷⁵ Corsets, not surprisingly, placed great emphasis on this. "There's nothing so pleasing as a slim, suave, silhouette," declared one U.S. advert, while in Britain readers were encouraged: "Have slick lines! Wear the slimmest gowns! Coax unruly curves into slenderness—with comfort!"⁷⁶ Reduction in size to the slim, modern body ideal was another benefit promised by some adverts for foundation garments: "Worn next to the body with perfect safety, the tiny perforations permit the skin to breathe as its gently massage-like action removes flabby, disfiguring fat with every movement."⁷⁷

Smoking was also aligned with streamline and appeared frequently as a weapon in the modern arsenal against fat. Although cigarette adverts in *Vogue* did not overtly connect smoking with slimming, this connection was visible in other print media.⁷⁸ The equation of smoking and slimness was, however, achieved in *Vogue* by the appearance of smokers and smoking alongside features on diet, exercise, and corsetry. In an advert for Berlei, for example, the cigarette appeared in the hands of a slim, corseted woman with a "streamline figure" (Figure 5).⁷⁹ The modern, slimline aesthetic was also achieved in another way by smoking. Cigarettes, especially when supported in a holder, contributed to an impression of slenderness through the elongation of the hand or arm.⁸⁰

Smoking, from its first appearance in British *Vogue*, was firmly associated with youthful femininity. Adverts for De Reske cigarettes in 1919 featured single young women, while adverts for Player's cigarettes, which targeted the "Bachelor Girl" from the mid-1920s, consolidated this association (Figure 6).⁸¹ By the 1930s, young American debutantes were also featured smoking in American *Vogue*. According to Miss Mimi Richardson, Camel helped modern young women manage their hectic lifestyles: "keeping on the go is easy now."⁸² In contrast to Britain, mature women smokers also appeared frequently in U.S. *Vogue*. Camel, for instance, trotted out dowagers named Coolidge, Carnegie, and Fish to praise their choices of smokes.⁸³ While their age was suggested by their marital status and clothing, these women were still usually slim in appearance. The slim, youthful look most commonly associated with the woman smoker was reflected in fashion features in North America and Britain from the 1920s.

Youth was pivotal to feminine modernity. From as early as 1914 in U.S. *Vogue*, corset manufacturers attempted to stave off the diminishing appeal of their products for a new generation favoring body-hugging fashions. "Smart Set" corsets, for instance, displayed young, slim models appearing



Figure 5. "Berlei," *British Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 44.



Figure 6. "De Reszke: Miss Kyrle Bellew," *British Vogue*, June 1919, inside front cover.

on youthful curves and slender lines"; "Youth is in the air. The ambition of every smart woman is to look as youthful as the girl of to-day."⁸⁹ "Youthlastic," a "new wonder fabric," was clearly a timely discovery; corsets made with "youthelastic" offered "the grace of youth for every woman," including those with "generous proportions."⁹⁰ Youth as a signifier of modernity was not confined to the female form, but appeared also in descriptions of cars.⁹¹ There was a "vigour and exuberance of youth in all that Buick does."⁹² The Apperson promised "The Spirit of Youth and Spring," while the Ford V-8 contained "the gay, glad spirit of youth."⁹³

Representations of cars, cigarettes, and corsets reveal that these products similarly contributed to a modern presence. This similarity might be acknowledged explicitly, particularly in the case of the corseted body and the motorcar. An advert in U.S. *Vogue* featured photographs of corseted women with a sketch of a fast-moving car.⁹⁴ The evocative image of angelic lightness featured in a corset advert of 1934 resembled the hood ornament of the 1935 Buick 96S Sport Coupe (Figures 8 and 9).⁹⁵ Descriptions reinforced the impression that the corseted body was akin to the automobile: "High powered control for streamlined mortals. . . . These sleek little Carter Softies carve curves where they should be . . . streamlines where bulges once ruined all! Diaphragms vanish . . . hips grow slithery . . . even last-through-the-doors are held quite in control."⁹⁶ The language and imagery of car advertising also sold corsets. One feature, entitled "Streamlined chassis," described "sports model" corsets with "stocking suspension."⁹⁷ The comparison was not one way; one car had a "streamline tail . . . not only efficient but . . . attractive to look at for it goes well with the sloping windscreen and the falling waistline."⁹⁸ The slippage between descriptions of cars and women's bodies by the thirties reveals the dominance of the discourse of the modern aesthetic. Such attributes as "[h]andsome lines and softly lustrous finish" and "soft and irresistible" power also suggest the car's feminization, a process noticeable by the 1920s.⁹⁹ Although the car as feminine is not surprising, it is telling that this conceptualization was directed explicitly at women rather than men, perhaps an indication of manufacturers' recognition of women's desire for control of their gender and destiny.

The slippage between descriptions of women and cars created the impression that women's bodies were commodities, an impression reinforced by the bold display of women's bodies and references to the modern body's production. Indeed, the corseted body of the 1930s, like the automobile, was represented as the product of modern manufacturing processes. British and American corset adverts heralded "that glamorous poured-in look!"¹⁰⁰ In one advert, the model appeared to be leaking.¹⁰¹ With graphic reference to a modern production line, another advert featured four identical, corseted female models emerging from the ground as if ascending on an elevator.¹⁰²



Figure 8. "Marian Jacks," U.S. *Vogue*, 15 June 1934, 21.



Figure 9. "Northstar Gallery: Flying Ladies," <http://northstargallery.com/cars/cargalflyingladies.htm>.

Corsetry, like cars, also denoted an infrastructure; Berlei (Figure 5) portrayed a woman in transparent evening wear, revealing the lines of her corsetry in what was akin to seeing the technology beneath a car's paneling.¹⁰³

Science and technology were fundamental to the achievement of feminine modernity. While articles extolled the benefits of sport, diet, and fresh air, women still required technological assistance to produce a modern body.¹⁰⁴ Although some 1920s advertisers heralded rustless bones and surgical webs, 1930s technology was routinely presented as revolutionizing corsetry.¹⁰⁵ Vassarette foundations, for example, boasted in 1934 of a "light, new porous fabric" with "its own air cooling system."¹⁰⁶ Unlike traditional corsetry's mechanical or surgical features, modern corsetry functioned with technologies so effortless they appeared magical (itself a paradoxical term in a scientifically advanced age); Carter's Softies felt "like nothing" but "work like magic," as did modern motorcars.¹⁰⁷ The miracles of science usurped those of nature, at least for the layperson.

The magical properties of modern corsetry purportedly solved flaws in women's bodies and nature itself. In one advert, nature, personified as a woman, inspires and assists (male) artists and inventors, who in turn strive to improve nature's imperfect product—the female body: "Nature is the inventor's friend. . . . From Nature's shaping of her works to offer the least and most even resistance to the winds, artists and scientists have together created the Charnaux Streamline of Beauty. The application of electricity to the making of Lastex has at last made possible a corset which is a cunning improvement on the firm skin and rippling muscles of youth itself."¹⁰⁸

Modern women were to appreciate the science and technology in their corsetry and their cars. Technical details in 1920s motorcar promotions focused on the power of the engine, weatherproofing, and conversion from an open to closed vehicle. Some adverts provided more technical detail: the Vauxhall was "designed to satisfy alike the fine taste of those who judge a car from the aesthetic point of view, and the critical opinion of those who examine it with the eye of the engineer."¹⁰⁹ The advert described both the "beauty of proportion and daintiness of finish" and the "duralumin connecting rods and . . . combustion chamber." Although a woman sat at the wheel of the car, her male companion stood in the background. It is ambiguous whether the woman driver possessed both aesthetic and engineering perspectives, but this ambiguity may have been a deliberate avoidance of an explicit masculinization of technological appreciation. Ambiguity had disappeared by 1934. "Madam, are you mechanically minded?" asked one North American feature. "If not, you must become that, too, or you will not be able to choose your new automobile to [fulfill] your particular requirements."¹¹⁰ Vacuum-powered brakes, knee-action wheels, and air-cushion tires were some of the features promoted to British and North American

women. The new Lanchester had an “overhead–valve engine” and the advert detailed how the cylinders produced an economical, smooth, and silent drive.¹¹¹ While it is debatable whether women were expected to understand technology, familiarity with technological jargon was one aspect of a modern woman’s consumer literacy. This complemented a sense of style acquired through more traditional feminine purchases. Women needed “knowledge of what constitutes smartness—in clothes, as also in cars.”¹¹²

Freedom and Control

Cars, corsets, and cigarettes assisted women in the attainment of a modern lifestyle characterized by freedom of movement. The cover of British *Vogue* in January 1928 depicted a fashionable young woman propped against a palm tree, her motorcar in the background.¹¹³ This image conveyed the essence of feminine modernity and the place of the motorcar in it. The car facilitated this woman’s independence and freedom of movement, important themes throughout the interwar period. “Now I can drive myself when and where I choose,” exclaimed a young married woman in a Singer car advert in 1924, while in a 1934 advert the Ford V–8 facilitated “going places in a thoroughly modern manner.”¹¹⁴ “Speed and dash,” offered by modern cars, enabled women to meet the multiple demands of modern life at a modern pace.¹¹⁵

Freedom of movement and suppleness were also essential features of the modern female body. In Britain this was exemplified by the keep–fit movement and the success of the Woman’s League of Health and Beauty.¹¹⁶ There was no equivalent in North America, although the League had followers in Canada. Nevertheless, the modernity of the active and lithe body was established in such other ways as sports promotion. Coeducation exposed an increasing number of wealthy American women to a sports–orientated environment, both as spectators and participants.¹¹⁷ From these ranks, the upper–middle–class Northeastern American advertising executives and copyeditors emerged, who “naturalized” golf, tennis, and water sports (their own pastimes) as the common and modern pursuits of their audiences.¹¹⁸ Sporty fashion features and articles on exercise reminded *Vogue* readers of the centrality of the body to the modern woman.¹¹⁹ Given the corset’s function as a form of body control, it paradoxically was routinely promoted as providing freedom.

Pre–1920 advertisers occasionally appropriated the discourse of the women’s movement to sell corsets; shortly before female suffrage was finally won in North America, Bien Jolie’s corsets “emancipated” women.¹²⁰ “Freedom of movement” was mentioned in some 1920s adverts. In spite of bones and buttons, Georges corsets promised “the freedom and comfort which every one of the feminine sex has for years yearned.”¹²¹ Other

Now being shown in the better stores. Reproduced by courtesy of the manufacturer.

**It responds to your slightest move
—yet holds the figure firm!**

FOR ease and comfort, freedom and grace, firm hold and perfect mold in a corset—there is nothing that can take the place of Kenlastic, knitted elastic.

Here is the same unvarying quality, the same even strength and lasting resiliency that for more than half a century has made this famous fabric first choice of America's leading physicians in anatomical cases.

Kenlastic, knitted elastic, is surgical elastic—made in several weights and in beautiful designs and delicate pastel colorings for the finer productions of America's best corset manufacturers.

Remember: In elastic corsets, it must be knitted elastic — KENLASTIC. Nothing else will do.

JAMES B. KENDRICK CO., INC. (Department J)
Germantown, Philadelphia — 107 South Avenue, New York

Kenlastic
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.
"the knitted elastic"

Figure 10. "Kenlastic," *U.S. Vogue*, 1 January 1924, 97.

manufacturers assured women that their products were suitable for such sports as "hunting, riding and dancing."¹²² Like a well-tuned car, Kenlastic corset material "responds to your slightest move" (Figure 10).¹²³ The language of liberation became a mainstay of corset advertising by the 1930s: a corset "follows every movement without impeding it" and its "control permits glorious ease, absolute freedom of movement."¹²⁴ Alluding to the paradox in modern corsetry marketing, and suggesting that the "corsetless fad" had followers on both sides of the Atlantic, an advert in *British Vogue* promoted "that lovely, supple uncorseted look that comes of perfect corseting."¹²⁵ Foundation garments were presented as facilitating an active lifestyle. Liberty celebrated the launch of their newest foundation as "[m]ade

for freedom-loving moderns. Just right for cruising . . . dancing . . . sports. Lets you bend, stretch or walk without a reminder that it's there."¹²⁶ The importance of movement and activity was even signaled in the names of corsets—"danceabout," "runabout," and "playabout."¹²⁷

Unlike the corset and car, which physically offered freedom of movement, the promise of the cigarette was more subtle but no less significant. In the context of the relative novelty of smoking among women in the 1920s, smoking symbolized freedom, serving as an index of a woman's break with nineteenth-century gender norms and the associated unequal gender relations. Smokers also purportedly rejected demure and passive femininity. Wielding cigarettes, women appeared dressed for tennis, golf, and other sports (Figure 1).¹²⁸ The cigarette was also instrumental in women's colonization of new, especially public, space; women smokers appeared in hotel lobbies and railway carriages, and generally on the move, usually in a motorcar (Figures 3, 4, 6).¹²⁹ They were also portrayed enjoying space in new ways. The woman smoker, without chaperone, was unafraid of drawing attention to herself. In British *Vogue*, for instance, young women were featured smoking and making a spectacle of themselves at such elite public events as punting on the Thames at Henley.¹³⁰

Modern women were also presented as wanting control. Corsets were sold to women not as an imposition but as meeting their desire for body control. "Moulding," "restraining," "holding," and "controlling"—this was the traditional language of corset advertising and it remained prominent in the 1930s. But in the course of a decade, a subtle but highly significant shift occurred in the promotion of corsets. While regulation of the female body was the function of corsetry in 1924, by 1934 adverts also stressed that corsetry *gave women* control of their bodies. Munsing adverts promised "[c]ontour control . . . [c]urves . . . lines . . . silhouettes—call them what you will, you want to mould them, govern them completely"; they "give[] you complete command of your figure—put[] in your own hands the mastery of curves and lines."¹³¹ Modern cars also promised control. In Britain the 1920s driver of a "lady's car" "revelled in the power and speed of its willing engine."¹³² In another British advert, a car streaked past with a woman at the wheel, and the text read: "A Light pressure upon the ALVIS accelerator and . . . [i]mmediately there is a magnificent response . . . effortless speed . . . surging power."¹³³ Power and control were also themes in U.S. *Vogue*: "You are very sure of it as you drive the car and how swiftly, silently and comfortably you travel along. . . . Smooth power flows through quiet gears—the quick response of the car commands your confidence."¹³⁴ The pleasure of driving was closely tied to the control it offered: "Truly, a new thrill in motoring" declared an advert for Ford cars, while one for Chrysler motors stated that it was great for people who "thrive on thrills."¹³⁵

Describing the most luxurious new cars, one feature explained how "these new automobiles are inspired by the fish under the sea and the birds in the air, and go hand in hand with our dreams of conquest."¹³⁶ In this case the modern car was inspired by nature but superior to it. Conquest referred both to the control of the natural world and to women's ascendancy in socio-economic and political realms. The decades around World War I witnessed important advances in women's position and rights in Britain and North America, although equality remained elusive. Women attained the vote on the same terms as men, and in Britain and Canada, they could serve as Members of Parliament.¹³⁷ Higher education and employment opportunities expanded, as did women's access to contraception and knowledge about the working of their bodies. Constructions of femininity changed, as did women's expectations and aspirations. Suggesting changes in gender relations and family life, an advert for the new Fisher Coach portrayed a father holding a baby while the rest of the family waited in the car.¹³⁸ Equality was explicitly addressed in a series of adverts for Riley cars, featured in British *Vogue* in 1934. Focusing on the "undeserved accusation" by men that women are poor drivers, one advert promised women the opportunity to prove men wrong: "And isn't this the way to do it: Drive a car, madam, that puts you on more than level terms. The Riley is not a 'woman's car,' but [one] that in the hands of a woman has surprised the world of motoring by its remarkable performance. . . . And if your gear-changing has hitherto been a little uncertain, Pre-selectagear will positively compel you to become an expert. 'Oh, it's a woman driving!' 'Yes, sir, and driving a jolly sight better than you.'"¹³⁹

Control, however, was still conceptualized as fundamentally masculine. Men still dominated technological research and design, even if women were employed in the production of modern goods.¹⁴⁰ The car was, nevertheless, portrayed as a machine in the hands of a woman. The tension is interesting and suggestive of broader processes whereby women had a greater role in society, facilitated by the franchise and their role in economic production, but where the economic and political driving forces in society were still dominated by men and perceived principally as masculine. As one car advert made clear, without the help of technology from Riley, women drivers would still crank their gears.

Modern forms of control were presented as "gentle," whether in the responsiveness of the car or the workings of a corset. "Gentle persuasion to figure perfection," declared Bon Ton, while Smedley's underwear was compared to "a perfect dancing partner . . . holds without undue pressure and follows every movement without impeding it."¹⁴¹ In relation to corsetry, this gentleness was deceptive, since control was presented as absolute. Foundationwear named "Fan-tom Grip" and "Invisagrip" suggests an ominous side to corsetry.¹⁴² Women's bodies were not allowed to escape:

"This Charnaux fabric will stretch to any movement and never allow the controlled lines of bodily beauty to escape."¹⁴³ Modern technology offered "amazing control": "pulled tight here to steal an inch from your waistline . . . twisted there, to curve your rear extremity into a line of beauty . . . tightening where it needs it to sleek your thighs."¹⁴⁴

Conclusion

Cars, corsets, and cigarettes were presented in *Vogue* as making modern women, shaping how women looked and moved, and conferring new freedoms and powers. Reflection on how these products produced modern women reveals the constituents of affluent feminine modernity. These commodities individually and collectively promised women a streamlined, slim, and youthful presence, and they facilitated freedom of movement, including the use of new spaces in new ways. These features of feminine modernity were underpinned by scientific and technological advances; technical literacy was in itself an element in the construction of feminine modernity. Through the repetition and reinforcement of key themes, representation of cars, corsets, and cigarettes contributed to the impression of a fairly coherent version of what it meant to be a modern woman. For the most part, *Vogue* displayed images of empowered, mobile, and modern women who actively engaged in, and enjoyed, consumption. The pleasures and potentials of affluent feminine modernity were not, however, without tension. This positive image was tempered by the recurring depiction of woman as commodity or mannequin, and new forms of femininity as the products of male design, even if dependent on female labor. Though women were often portrayed as embracing, even controlling, technologies that facilitated new femininities, they were also portrayed as in their grip. These tensions may indicate ambivalence about new femininities and the corresponding shift in gender relations.¹⁴⁵ This ambivalence was, however, the grey side of otherwise colorful and exciting representations of modern womanhood; *Vogue* was dominated by optimism about the potentialities of modernity. While this analysis does not reveal how British and North American women drew on *Vogue's* representations and worked them into their identities, it does reveal that the representation of goods in *Vogue* offered readers a remarkably coherent, attractive, accessible, and compelling version of feminine modernity at a time when women were looking for guidance and inspiration.

Through the representation of modern commodities, *Vogue* promised similar versions of feminine modernity to women on both sides of the Atlantic. That the commonalities should appear more striking than the differences is not surprising. One explanation is that both editions shared the same production values. But this was not the only reason. The content

of each edition was tailored to the needs of local readers, evident in differences in the representations of cars and cigarettes.¹⁴⁶ This sensitivity to local context suggests that commonalities would also stem, in part, from assumptions about cultural similarity. These assumptions were, no doubt, shaped by the increased economic, social, and cultural interconnections of North America and Britain in the early decades of the twentieth century. These interconnections were particularly apparent among the social and financial elite. Affluent women moved freely between North America and Britain. As one car advert explained to British readers: "with your Riley you can corner at fifty and lap Brooklands [New York] at about double that speed."¹⁴⁷ The social life of elites also overlapped considerably. Society hostesses "saw their role as the integration of Anglo–America elites" and were very successful; such Americans as Mrs. Simpson and Lady Emerald Cunard, and her daughter Nancy were key figures in British society.¹⁴⁸ While it is true that Britain, Canada, and the United States had "peculiar routes through twentieth-century modernity," the representation of cars, corsets, and cigarettes in interwar *Vogue* encouraged British and North American women to imagine and create forms of feminine modernity that transcended the peculiarities of place.¹⁴⁹

NOTES

This article focuses upon Britain and Anglophone North America, i.e. the United States and English Canada. We acknowledge the generous support of the British Academy (Tinkler) and SSHRC / Canadian Tobacco Research Initiative (Warsh).

¹The Canadian market share of such popular American magazines as *Saturday Evening Post*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and *Vogue* totaled more than all domestic magazines combined (50 million in 1926); Mary Vipond, "Canadian Nationalism and the Plight of Canadian Magazines in the 1920s," *Canadian Historical Review* 58, no. 1 (1977): 43.

²Alan O'Shea, "English Subjects of Modernity," in *Modern Times: Reflections on a Century of English Modernity*, ed. Alan O'Shea and Mica Nava (London: Routledge, 1996), 11.

³*Ibid.*, 19.

⁴See Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity* (London: Harvard University Press, 1995); and Judy Giles, *The Parlour and the Suburb* (Oxford: Berg, 2004).

⁵Mica Nava, "Modernity's Disavowal: Women, the City and the Department Store," in O'Shea and Nava, *Modern Times*, 40.

⁶Lisa Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women: Imagery of the Suffrage Campaign, 1907–14* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1987); Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull–House* (New York: Macmillan, 1915); Lillian Wald, *The House on Henry Street* (New York: Henry

Holt, 1915); Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s–1920s* (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1979); Martha Vicinus, *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850–1920* (London: Virago, 1985); Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880–1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Working Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); and Nava, "Modernity's Disavowal," in O'Shea and Nava, *Modern Times*.

⁷Susan Porter Benson, *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890–1940* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986); William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Pantheon, 1993); Joy L. Santink, *Timothy Eaton and the Rise of His Department Store* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 163–81; Robert Sklar, *Movie-Made America: A Cultural History of American Movies*, rev. ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1994); Nava, "Modernity's Disavowal," in O'Shea and Nava, *Modern Times*; Erica Diane Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure: Women in the Making of London's West End* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); and Jeffrey Richards, *The Age of the Dream Palace: Cinema and Society in Britain, 1930–39* (London: Routledge, 1984).

⁸Rappaport, *Shopping*, 6.

⁹Giles, *Parlour and Suburb*, 60. See Alison Light, *Forever England: Femininity, Literature and Conservatism between the Wars* (London: Routledge, 1991); and Deborah S. Ryan, "'All the World and Her Husband': The Daily Mail Ideal Home Exhibition, 1908–39," in *All the World and Her Husband: Women in Twentieth-Century Consumer Culture*, ed. Maggie Andrews and Mary M. Talbot (London: Cassell, 2000), 10–22.

¹⁰Pamela Walker Laird, *Advertising Progress: American Business and the Rise of Consumer Marketing* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998); Veronica Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919–1939* (Mississauga, ON: Copp Clark Pitman, 1988), 113–44; and Barbara Riley, "Six Saucepans to One: Domestic Science vs. the Home in British Columbia, 1900–1930," in *Not Just Pin Money: Selected Essays on the History of Women's Work in British Columbia*, ed. Barbara Latham and Roberta J. Pazdro (Victoria, BC: Camosun College, 1984), 159–84.

¹¹Penny Tinkler, *Smoke Signals: Women, Smoking and Visual Culture in Britain* (Oxford: Berg, 2006), 5–11.

¹²Thomas Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England: Advertising and Spectacle, 1851–1914* (London: Verso, 1991), 16.

¹³Nava, "Modernity's Disavowal," in O'Shea and Nava, *Modern Times*, 46. See Andrews and Talbot, *All the World and Her Husband*; and Giles, *Parlour and Suburb*. Sally Alexander, "Becoming a Woman in London in the 1920s and 1930s," in *Metropolis, London: Histories and Representations since 1800*, ed. David Feldman and David Stedman Jones (London: Routledge, 1989), 245–71, discusses the consumer aspirations of working-class young women in interwar London who could "imagine an end to drudgery" as they gazed upon "images of streamlined kitchens" in film and advertising in women's magazines (247). Michael Schudson notes that American women's magazines "quickly became consumption tutors, taking over from mother and grandmother": *Advertising: the Uneasy Persuasion* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 182.

¹⁴Suzanne Marchand, *Rouge à lèvres et pantalon: des pratiques esthétiques féminines controversées au Québec, 1920-1939* (Montréal: Hurtubise, 1997); Paula Fass, *The Damned and the Beautiful: American Youth in the 1920s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977); Mary P. Ryan, "The Projection of a New Womanhood: The Movie Moderns in the 1920s," in *Our American Sisters: Women In American Life and Thought*, ed. Jean Friedman and William Shade, 3rd ed. (Lexington, MA: D. C. Heath, 1982), 366–85; Ruth Schwartz Cowan, "Two washes in the morning and a bridge party at night: The American housewife between the wars," *Women's Studies* 3, no. 2 (1976): 141–71; Billie Melman, *Women and the Popular Imagination in the Twenties: Flappers and Nymphs* (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1988); Penny Tinkler, *Constructing Girlhood: Popular Magazines for Girls Growing Up in England 1920–1950* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1995); Adrian Bingham, *Gender, Modernity, and the Popular Press in Inter-War Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Birgitte Søland, *Becoming Modern: Young Women and the Reconstruction of Womanhood in the 1920s* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Louise Ryan, "Negotiating Modernity and Tradition: Newspaper Debates on the 'Modern Girl' in the Irish Free State," *Journal of Gender Studies* 7, no. 2 (1998): 181–97; Mary Louise Roberts, *Civilization without Sexes: Reconstructing Gender in Postwar France, 1917–1927* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); and Giles, *Parlour and Suburb*.

¹⁵See, for example, Tinkler, *Smoke Signals*; Virginia Scharff, *Taking the Wheel: Women and the Coming of the Motor Age* (New York: Free Press, 1991); Laura Doan, *Fashioning Sapphism: The Origins of a Modern English Lesbian Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); and Laura Doan and Jane Garrity, eds., *Sapphic Modernities: Sexuality, Women and National Culture* (London: Palgrave, 2006).

¹⁶Sally Stein, "The Graphic Ordering of Desire: Modernization of a Middle-Class Women's Magazine 1914–1939," in *The Context of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, ed. Richard Bolton (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), 146.

¹⁷Mary Ellen Zuckerman, *A History of Popular Women's Magazines in the United States, 1792–1995* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 115.

¹⁸The early image of British *Vogue* was controversial as British editor Dorothy Todd (1922–26) envisaged it as a literary and artistic magazine. Todd was eventually dismissed, and British *Vogue* was brought into line with its U.S. counterpart. Edna Woolman Chase and Ilka Chase, *Always in Vogue* (London: Gollancz, 1954); Jane Garrity, "Selling Culture to the 'Civilized': Bloomsbury, British *Vogue*, and the Marketing of National Identity," *Modernism/modernity* 6, no. 2 (1999): 29–58; and Christopher Reed, "Design for (Queer Living): Sexual Identity, Performance, and Decor in British *Vogue*, 1922–1926," *GLQ* 12, no. 3 (2006): 377–403.

¹⁹By 1926, U.S. *Vogue's* advertising revenues topped all major North American periodicals except *The Saturday Evening Post*; Zuckerman, *Popular Women's Magazines*, 115. In 1930, U.S. *Vogue's* paid circulation totaled 133,931, which was ten times less than *Better Homes and Gardens*, but *Vogue* collected \$3,012,593 from advertisers, while *Better Homes* garnered \$500,000 less; David Reed, *The Popular Magazine in Britain and the United States, 1880–1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

²⁰Victoria de Grazia and Ellen Furlough, eds., *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective* (London: University of California Press, 1996);

Mary Louise Roberts, "Gender, Consumption, and Commodity Culture," *American Historical Review* 103, no. 3 (1998): 817–44; Kathy Peiss, "Making Faces: The Cosmetics Industry and the Cultural Construction of Gender, 1890–1930," *Genders* 7 (Spring 1990): 143–69; Peiss, *Hope in a Jar: The Making of America's Beauty Culture* (New York: Henry Holt, 1998); Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*; and Tinkler, *Smoke Signals*.

²¹Sample materials were collected as part of a longitudinal, comparative study of *Vogue*. The larger study sampled years 1924–1964, also the launch issues of British and U.S. editions of *Vogue*. For each sample year we examined representations of key commodities in all issues. We also selected one issue per sample year and listed every item from cover to cover, noting size, use of color, and placement to provide context for our analysis. In this article, we focus on the sample years 1924 and 1934. To contextualize this study, we also scanned issues produced around and between these dates. Our sample is supplemented by issues of *Vogue* from other years that were collected on an ad hoc basis during this and previous research.

²²Bernhard Rieger and Martin Daunton, "Introduction," in *Meanings of Modernity: Britain from the Late-Victorian Era to World War II*, ed. Martin Daunton and Bernhard Rieger (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 4. See also O'Shea, "English Subjects," in O'Shea and Nava, *Modern Times*; and Bernhard Rieger, "'Fast couples': Technology, Gender and Modernity in Britain and Germany during the Nineteen-thirties," *Historical Research* 76, no. 193 (2003): 364–88.

²³As long as editors worked within Nast's vision, the editors had considerable authority over their particular national editions.

²⁴Tinkler, *Smoke Signals*; Cassandra Tate, *Cigarette Wars: The Triumph of "The Little White Slaver"* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Jarrett Rudy, *The Freedom to Smoke: Tobacco Consumption and Identity* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill/Queen's University Press, 2005); and Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, "Smoke and Mirrors: Gender Representation in North American Tobacco and Alcohol Advertisements Before 1950," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 31, no. 62 (1998): 183–221.

²⁵In 1924, women's smoking constituted 5 percent of national tobacco consumption in the U.S. and 1.9 percent in Britain; Jordan Goodman, *Tobacco in History: The Cultures of Dependence* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993), 136.

²⁶Cheryl Krasnick Warsh and Penny Tinkler, "In Vogue: North American and British Representations of Women Smokers in *Vogue*, 1920s–1960s," *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History/Bulletin canadien d'histoire de la médecine* 24, no. 1 (2007): 9–48.

²⁷British *Vogue*, early March 1924, 70–72; late June 1925, 70; 19 February 1930, 36; 13 June 1934, 82.

²⁸U.S. *Vogue*, 15 March 1935, 62–63; 15 April 1924, 75, 42.

²⁹British *Vogue*, 7 March 1928, 14; 8 February 1928, 10; 11 July 1934, 24; 12 December 1934, 95; "Selfridge's: The 1934 Tennis Fashions," 13 June 1934, 23.

³⁰U.S. *Vogue*, 1 February 1934, 8f.

³¹British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 44; U.S. *Vogue*, 15 January 1924, 27–30; 15 March 1934, 20.

³²Michael Bliss, *Northern Enterprise: Five Centuries of Canadian Business* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1987), 395–97.

³³Clive Lee, "Regions and Industries in Britain," in *Twentieth-Century Britain: Economic, Social and Cultural Change*, ed. Paul Johnson (London: Longman, 1994): 38–56.

³⁴Schudson, *Advertising*, 205.

³⁵Donald Davis, *Conspicuous Production: Automobiles and Elites in Detroit, 1899–1933* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1988), 3–8.

³⁶U.S. *Vogue*, 15 April 1914, 131; 1 April 1914, 121.

³⁷U.S. *Vogue*, 15 January 1914, 110.

³⁸Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, 25–26, 117.

³⁹The number of women drivers increased dramatically after 1914. By 1933, 12 percent of all driving licenses were held by women; Sean O'Connell, *The Car in British Society: Class, Gender and Motoring, 1896–1939* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1998).

⁴⁰The electric push-button starter was marketed towards the female driver (U.S. *Vogue*, 15 January 1914, 110), as was the electric car pre-1914; Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, 39.

⁴¹U.S. *Vogue*, 1 January 1924, 31–33, 110.

⁴²British *Vogue*, late March 1924, ii; U.S. *Vogue*, "Ford Closed Cars," 1 February 1924, 113.

⁴³British *Vogue*, "Olympia Motor Exhibition," 18 September 1935, 110.

⁴⁴U.S. *Vogue*, 1 March 1934, 18; 15 March 1934, 20; 1 July 1934, [n.p.].

⁴⁵U.S. *Vogue*, 15 March 1919, 93; 15 November 1919, 96.

⁴⁶U.S. *Vogue*, 1 March 1934, 99.

⁴⁷British *Vogue*, 24 January 1934, 73.

⁴⁸U.S. *Vogue*, "Mrs. Rudolph Valentino," 15 January 1924, 28.

⁴⁹U.S. *Vogue*, 15 January 1934, inside cover.

⁵⁰U.S. *Vogue*, 15 March 1934, inside cover.

⁵¹Brigid Keenan, *The Women We Wanted to Look Like* (London: Macmillan, 1977), cites the difference in standards and affluence found in the homes of North American and British social elites.

⁵²Lee, "Regions and Industries in Britain," in Johnson, *Twentieth-Century Britain*, 46.

⁵³U.S. *Vogue*, August 1917, 67, 80; and Jill Fields, "Fighting the Corsetless Evil: Shaping Corsets and Culture, 1900–1930," *Journal of Social History* 33, no. 2 (1999): 360.

⁵⁴U.S. *Vogue*, 1 March 1914, 13.

⁵⁵See British *Vogue*, early April 1918, viii; U.S. *Vogue*, 15 January 1924, 68.

⁵⁶U.S. *Vogue*, 15 March 1919, 1.

⁵⁷British *Vogue*, late March 1924, xxxv; late February 1924, 78.

⁵⁸"Lastex" yarn, for instance, was developed in the United States around 1930 and arrived in England in 1934; British *Vogue*, 21 February 1934, 36.

⁵⁹*Ibid.* 17; 24 January 1934, 65.

⁶⁰U.S. *Vogue*, 1 April 1934, [n.p.].

⁶¹British *Vogue*, 24 January 1934, 65.

⁶²British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 28, 26; U.S. *Vogue*, 15 April 1934, 100.

⁶³British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 123.

⁶⁴U.S. *Vogue*, 1 March 1934, 72; British *Vogue*, 14 October 1936, 35.

⁶⁵Fields, "Corsetless Evil," 369.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 372.

⁶⁷Streamlines lose their prominence in *Vogue* by 1938. All other themes identified as features of 1930s affluent modernity, including a more general focus on "lines," remain in evidence in 1938.

⁶⁸British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 55, 44.

⁶⁹U.S. *Vogue*, 1 February 1934, 75.

⁷⁰Quoted in Kathryn McPherson, *Beside Matters: The Transformation of Canadian Nursing, 1900–1990* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996), 170.

⁷¹For example, British *Vogue*, late March 1924, 74.

⁷²U.S. *Vogue*, 15 February 1934, 53.

⁷³British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 87; U.S. *Vogue*, 15 September 1934, 101.

⁷⁴In 1924, an advert promised the "full-figured woman" the "secret of slenderness," but more often slimness was implicit in references to youth or fashion; British *Vogue*, late March 1924, xxx.

⁷⁵U.S. *Vogue*, 1 September 1934, [n.p.].

⁷⁶U.S. *Vogue*, 1 November 1934, 111; British *Vogue*, 21 February 1934, 52.

⁷⁷U.S. *Vogue*, 15 June 1934, 94.

⁷⁸Tinkler, *Smoke Signals*; and Warsh, "Smoke and Mirrors."

⁷⁹British *Vogue*, "Berlei," 3 October 1934, 44.

⁸⁰Tinkler, "Smoke Signals."

⁸¹British *Vogue*, "De Reszke," early June 1919, inside front cover; 7 March 1934, 138.

⁸²U.S. *Vogue*, 1 December 1934, 101.

⁸³U.S. *Vogue*, 15 May 1934, 114.

⁸⁴U.S. *Vogue*, 1 March 1914, 23.

⁸⁵U.S. *Vogue*, "Princessa," 1 April 1934, 110.

⁸⁶U.S. *Vogue*, 15 October 1934, 111.

⁸⁷U.S. *Vogue*, 1 April 1934, [n.p.]; 15 September 1934, 120.

⁸⁸British *Vogue*, late January 1924, 81; late March 1924, 93.

⁸⁹British *Vogue*, 7 March 1934, 32.

⁹⁰British *Vogue*, 7 February 1934, 23.

⁹¹Reed, "Design."

⁹²U.S. *Vogue*, 15 June 1934, inside cover.

⁹³U.S. *Vogue*, 15 March 1919, 93; 1 September 1934, [n.p.].

⁹⁴U.S. *Vogue*, 15 February 1934, 10; British *Vogue*, 27 June 1934, 18. In 1920s France, according to Roberts, the "fashionably dressed modern woman was also linked to the new consumer plaything of the decade—the automobile"; Roberts, *Civilization without Sexes*, 78.

⁹⁵U.S. *Vogue*, "Marian Jacks," 15 June 1934, 21. Also, see the 1930 Cadillac V-16 Imperial Limousine; for samples of hood ornaments, see <http://northstargallery.com/cars/cargalflyingladies.htm>.

⁹⁶U.S. *Vogue*, 15 February 1934, 101.

⁹⁷British *Vogue*, 21 March 1934, 96–97.

⁹⁸British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 87.

⁹⁹British *Vogue*, late May 1925, ix; 3 October 1934, 113.

¹⁰⁰U.S. *Vogue*, 15 February 1934, 80; British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 56.

¹⁰¹British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 30.

¹⁰²U.S. *Vogue*, 15 April 1934, 10.

¹⁰³Although the scientific style of this advert was unusual, adverts commonly portrayed women in their corsetry and then in their day / evening clothes. See U.S. *Vogue*, 1 February 1934, 78; 15 March 1934, 16a.

¹⁰⁴U.S. *Vogue*, 1 June 1934, 49; British *Vogue*, 24 January 1934, 48–49.

¹⁰⁵British *Vogue*, late March 1924, xxxv; late February 1924, 78.

¹⁰⁶U.S. *Vogue*, 1 April 1934, [n.p.].

¹⁰⁷U.S. *Vogue*, 15 February 1934, 10. The modern car offered an effortless, almost magical, performance; British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 113. There was speed and power that the rider hardly felt as well as silence. Implicit in the promotion of silence was its contrast with older, noisier technologies, like automobiles or factories. British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 54; 7 February 1934, 79.

¹⁰⁸British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 15; U.S. *Vogue*, 1 October 1934, 117.

¹⁰⁹British *Vogue*, late March 1924, ii.

¹¹⁰U.S. *Vogue*, 15 February 1934, 53.

¹¹¹British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 117; U.S. *Vogue*, 15 March 1934, inside cover.

¹¹²British *Vogue*, 10 January 1934, 69.

¹¹³British *Vogue*, 25 January 1928, front cover.

¹¹⁴British *Vogue*, late February 1924, 75; U.S. *Vogue*, 1 September 1934, [n.p.].

¹¹⁵U.S. *Vogue*, 15 March 1934, 20.

¹¹⁶Jill Julius Matthews, "They had Such a Lot of Fun: The Women's League of Health and Beauty Between the Wars," *History Workshop Journal* 30, no. 1 (1990): 22–54.

¹¹⁷Fass, *The Damned*.

¹¹⁸Matthew Scheirov, *The Dream of a New Social Order: Popular Magazines in America, 1893–1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 127, 134.

¹¹⁹U.S. *Vogue*, 15 February 1934, 36–37; 15 January 1934, 69; British *Vogue*, 13 June 1934, 23.

¹²⁰U.S. *Vogue*, 15 November 1914, 88.

¹²¹British *Vogue*, late March 1924, xxxv.

¹²²*Ibid.*, xxvii.

¹²³U.S. *Vogue*, "Kenlastic," 1 January 1924, 97.

¹²⁴British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 28, 123.

¹²⁵British *Vogue*, 7 February 1934, 81.

¹²⁶British *Vogue*, 21 February 1934, 52; U.S. *Vogue*, 1 March 1934, 72.

¹²⁷British *Vogue*, 21 February 1934, 37.

¹²⁸British *Vogue*, 2 May 1934, 110; 13 June 1934, 40; U.S. *Vogue*, 15 January 1934, 69.

¹²⁹British *Vogue*, 5 February 1930, 79; 5 March 1930, 84; 5 February 1930, 79; 5 March 1930, 84; early June 1919, inside front cover; 25 January 1928, front cover; U.S. *Vogue*, 15 January 1924, 24.

¹³⁰British *Vogue*, early July 1920, inside front cover.

¹³¹U.S. *Vogue*, 1 February 1934, 78; U.S. *Vogue*, 1 October 1934, 111.

¹³²British *Vogue*, late May 1924, 89; late February 1924, 74.

¹³³British *Vogue*, 7 March 1928, 14.

¹³⁴U.S. *Vogue*, 1 September 1934, [n.p.].

¹³⁵*Ibid.*; 15 September 1934, 101.

¹³⁶U.S. *Vogue*, 15 February 1934, 88.

¹³⁷Women were enfranchised in Canada in 1919 and the United States in 1920. British women thirty years and older received the vote in 1918, and suffrage equal to men in 1928.

¹³⁸U.S. *Vogue*, 15 December 1924, 13; British *Vogue*, late April 1924, 96.

¹³⁹British *Vogue*, 10 January 1934, 69. Women drivers were frequently described by men as bad drivers; see O'Connell, *The Car in British Society*, 53–56.

¹⁴⁰Miriam Glucksmann, *Women Assemble: Women Workers and the New Industries in Inter-war Britain* (London: Routledge, 1990); Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); Winnifred D. Wandersee Bolin, "The Economics of Middle-Income Family Life: Working Women During the Great Depression," *Journal of American History* 65, no. 1 (1978): 60–74; Mercedes Steedman, *Angels of the Workplace: Women and the Construction of Gender Relations in the Canadian Clothing Industry, 1890–1940* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997); and Veronica Strong-Boag, "The Girl of the New Day: Canadian Working Women in the 1920s," *Labour/le Travailleur* 4 (Fall 1979): 131–64.

¹⁴¹British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 53, 28.

¹⁴²U.S. *Vogue*, 1 March 1934, 72.

¹⁴³British *Vogue*, 3 October 1934, 15.

¹⁴⁴U.S. *Vogue*, 1 September 1934, [n.p.]; British *Vogue*, 21 March 1934, 113.

¹⁴⁵Rieger and Daunton, "Introduction," in Daunton and Rieger, *Meanings of Modernity*.

¹⁴⁶Other feature differences are beyond this discussion's scope.

¹⁴⁷British *Vogue*, 7 February 1934, 89.

¹⁴⁸Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918–1951* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 24–27. The Cunard shipping fortune was originally Canadian.

¹⁴⁹O'Shea, "English Subjects," in O'Shea and Nava, *Modern Times*, 26.
