CONSTRUCTING THE CANADIAN TEENAGER:
THE STAR WEEKLY MAGAZINE AND
REPRESENTATIONS OF THE YOUNG DURING THE LATE 1940s

By

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ABSTRACT

While the postwar era has attracted a great deal of attention in recent years, the experience of young Canadians through the late 1940s has been largely overlooked. As a result, the postwar phenomenon of teen culture, and construction of the Canadian teenager, have relied heavily on American interpretations. This thesis, by examining the Canadian scene, suggests the beginnings of another perspective on the postwar positioning of adolescence in the English-speaking world. Focussing on the immediate postwar years (1945-1950), representations of young people will be assessed through a popular medium, *The Star Weekly Magazine*. If the opinions reflected in this widely distributed Canadian periodical are any indication, attitudes were shifting dramatically through these years. In the immediate aftermath of war, the development of Canada’s young was rarely addressed by *Star* writers. By 1950, the subject was front and centre. Driven by developments in the field of mental health, *Star* contributors grew preoccupied with the construction of well-balanced citizens. Young Canadians were at the centre of this movement. If young people matured over a longer period of time, they would be less likely to follow in the wayward path of parents. This was the message relayed through *Star* writings during the late 1940s. While presented in progressive terms, as an opportunity for young people to internalize essential values and develop social skills, *The Star*’s emerging ideal was somewhat of a mixed blessing. In contrast to earlier counterparts, Canada’s postwar teenagers were to be continuously monitored and subject to the dictates of parents.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One: Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two: Mental Health</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three: Education</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four: Social Development</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epilogue</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Since first attracting the attention of historians close to thirty years ago, research in the field of adolescent history has become widespread.¹ But it is only within the last decade that interest has arisen in the period following the Second World War. Turning their attention to popular culture, social historians in the United States brought subjects like rock ‘n’ roll, ‘going steady’, and ‘hot-rodding’ into the realm of serious academic debate.² Their enthusiasm has, however, sparked little interest among Canada’s historians. As a result, the postwar phenomenon of teen culture, and construction of the Canadian teenager, have relied heavily on American interpretations. This thesis, by investigating the Canadian scene, suggests the beginnings of another perspective on the postwar positioning of adolescence in the English-speaking world.³

Focussing on the immediate postwar years (1945-1950), the representation of young people will be assessed through a popular medium, *The Star Weekly Magazine*. If the opinions reflected in this widely distributed Canadian periodical are any indication, attitudes towards young people were shifting dramatically through these years. In the immediate aftermath of war, the development of Canada’s young was rarely addressed. By 1950, the subject was front and centre. Reflecting on the trials, tribulations and wonders of being young in a fast-paced and modern world, *Star* writers grew preoccupied with developments in three main subject areas - mental health, education, and social development. This thesis explores representations of young Canadians in each of these areas, and the extent to which these representations shifted through time.
While adolescent history continues to grow as a field of research and study, in-depth discussion on the adolescent experience during the years immediately following the Second World War, roughly 1945-1950, remains unusual. This may be explained by the enthusiastic use of certain types of sources. In the United States, where the bulk of adolescent history has been conducted, the emphasis has been on popular culture: television, magazines, music, and film, which flourished most fully through the 1950s. This is by no means surprising. Postwar prosperity was in full swing by the 1950s, generating an array of cultural trends that attracted the interests of young people and, more recently, historians. Rock ‘n’ roll is a case in point. With this new musical form came the worshipping of teen idols, dance crazes such as the twist, televised dance programs (Dick Clark’s American Bandstand being the most famous), and teen-targeted events like the sock hop. With such hype and fanfare, it is little wonder that American historians have viewed the postwar 40s solely as a backdrop to the more interesting decade that followed.

In contrast to the 1950s focus of American historians, adolescent historiography in Canada has barely broken free of the Second World War. This too is source-driven. Until recently, Canadian research on adolescents has either focussed on, or relied heavily upon, the Canadian Youth Commission reports (hereafter referred to as the CYC). Established in 1943, this quasi-official body spent two years investigating the attitudes and opinions of Canadians between the ages of 15 and 24. Its findings were compiled in seven volumes and released to the Canadian public at varying stages between 1945 and 1948. Though tainted by the middle-class bias of researchers and respondents alike, the CYC’s research into the employment, education, recreation, health, citizenship, politics and family life patterns of Canada’s young is invaluable.
The study embraced young people from diverse occupational backgrounds: members of the armed forces, representatives from a range of religious denominations, French and English segments of the population, rural and urban elements, those who were married, those who were not, those still in school, and those who, for whatever reason, had dropped out. As noted by historian Linda Ambrose, this marked a dramatic shift in approach. Until then, investigations into the behaviour patterns of young people had focussed mainly on the deviant minority.

The mainstream nature of the CYC reports have made them attractive to historians researching in the field of adolescent history. Previously noted, Linda Ambrose has led the way, highlighting the valuable nature of the documents themselves. Through Ambrose we learn about the CYC’s commitment to youth-centred research, as evidenced by a survey that polled 1400 respondents nationally, more than 200 in-depth interviews, and scores of round table discussions, all aimed at extracting the opinions of young Canadians. We learn also of the behind-the-scenes players who made the CYC a success: Director Dick Davis, credited with having developed the Commission’s three-tiered approach; his wife Margaret, who laboured incessantly on the reports at their written stage; and George Tuttle, the star organizer who chaired youth conferences from coast to coast. Strangely silent in Ambrose’s work are young people themselves. While Ambrose makes some observations on their opinions and attitudes, the Commission’s structure, mandate, funding and member composition are her primary focus.

Building on the framework established by Ambrose, Rebecca Priegert Coulter has moved beyond the CYC’s internal and managerial structure. In early works, Coulter used the reports to enhance her understanding of the employment and educational expectations of Canada’s wartime young. More recently, Coulter has reflected on the personal views of respondents,
highlighting the human element of the CYC's work. Again, her research centres on the relationship between school and work. The 16-year-old office clerk who had self-trained in typing, the 24-year-old industrial worker who regretted having cut her education short, and 15-year-old David, who thought manual training programs impractical, are among the vignettes portrayed by Coulter. Cross-referencing these personal stories with the CYC's national survey, and the briefs submitted following round-table discussions, Coulter concludes these experiences were typical. There were many young Canadians who believed schools had left them ill-prepared for the outside world at war's end. Interestingly, these respondents did not see preparation solely in occupational terms. Beyond the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic, respondents felt education should deepen one's understanding of the adult world. How to deal with social problems, better preparation for marriage and family life, and an understanding of political and economic developments were among the noted concerns, suggesting young people had decidedly adult aims.  

The historical contributions of Ambrose and Coulter have only scratched the surface of what the CYC has to offer. The reports have yet to be studied separately, or in any great depth. A pointed focus on the opinions of respondents is also needed. Such research would yield tremendous insight into the experiences and expectations of young Canadians through war. It would, however, say little with respect to peace. The Commission folded in 1945. Through the late 1940s, the period with which we are here concerned, CYC researchers were not traversing the country exploring the views of its young. They were computing and compiling data or, as in the case of Director Dick Davis, had moved on to other projects. In the present context, the CYC is most useful for its contrasting representations: images of young workers - mature,
responsible and desirous of economic opportunity, images of young citizens - anxious to do their
civic duty, images of young lovers - dreaming of weddings, babies, and a white picket fence.¹²
These visions contrast sharply with the carefree, happy-go-lucky ‘teenager’ that would capture
the North American imagination through the 1950s. Somewhere along the way young Canadians
were rendered dependent and relieved of responsibility. To understand how and why this
occurred, we must look beyond the wartime focus of the CYC, and traditional sources as a
whole.

In recent years, Canadians working in the area of adolescent history, a relatively small
field, have begun their move into the postwar 40s. This development has been accompanied by
a greater willingness to experiment with popular culture as a research medium. At the helm of
this movement is Mary Louise Adams. In her 1994 PhD dissertation “The Trouble With
Normal: Postwar Youth and the Construction of Heterosexuality,”¹³ which extends through the
entire postwar period (1945 to 1960), Adams offers a blueprint for research of this sort.
Weaving her way through a wide range of historical sources, some traditional and others rooted
in popular culture, Adams conducts a three-way discourse analysis.¹⁴ The results are striking.
Adams demonstrates the link among discourses that took young people as their subject,
discussions on sexuality, and the postwar construction of ‘normality’ as a concept.¹⁵ Conflating
the physical process of puberty with the social experience of youth, officials, journalists, and
helping professionals viewed the sexual energies of puberty in evolutionary terms, as the driving
force of progress. If directed into noble pursuits, pubescent energy could be of great benefit to
society. Left unharnessed, it was the gravest of threats. Adams argues that this belief fuelled
a widespread campaign to ensure sexual expression developed along heterosexual lines.¹⁶
Though Adams’ work is heavily rooted in the social construction of sexuality, it is not limited by this focus. On the contrary, Adams is intent on highlighting the relationship between sexual and non-sexual categories. Symbolically positioned as “the future”, the sexual development of young people was seen as central to Canada’s national security. With heterosexuality firmly entrenched, young people would marry, form families and, in time, have children. Since families were regarded as the bedrock of Canadian society, offering a ‘haven in a heartless world’, driving the engine of the postwar economy, and serving as a bulwark against communism, this development was crucial. But it did not end there. You had to be a certain type of heterosexual. Wearing the ‘right’ clothes, enjoying the ‘right’ forms of entertainment and spending the ‘right’ way were proof of this adjustment. Hence, sexual categories extended into the non-sexual realm, regulating dress, demeanour and social activity. Adams notes that all young people, including those who had no chance of meeting the standards of normality embedded in heterosexual codes, were affected by these criteria. Young people who were or longed to be ‘different’ lived with the continuous knowledge that they would never, quite fully, measure up.

A second example of innovative research in the area of adolescent history is Doug Owram’s recently released *Born At The Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation.* Using a life cycle approach, Owram conducts a generational analysis that carries him from war’s end through the 1960s. Beginning in 1946, with the birth of the first ‘baby boomers’, Owram charts the social changes that followed ‘boomers’ as they moved through the life course. Using this approach, infants and toddlers are Owram’s focus during the late 1940s. Adolescence came later, amidst the tumult of the Civil Rights Movement, anti-Vietnam demonstrations and an
emerging hippie culture. Still, Owram offers much by way of contrast. In setting the context for the later emergence of the 'baby boom', he illuminates the adult-centred society that was supplanted. Young Canadians, Owram argues, were lost in this world. Though there had been a long-term trend towards recognizing a separate and distinct 'youth culture', evidenced most clearly in the 1920s and confined primarily to members of the middle class, this development was disrupted by historical circumstance. First came the depression, with grim realities for young and old alike. The Second World War followed, drawing large numbers of young Canadians into the world of work and battle. By the war's end the lines separating younger and older segments of the population were difficult to distinguish.

Though the long-term trend towards recognizing a separate and distinct 'youth culture' did resume after the war, its effects were minimal before the 1950s. Owram explains this delay by pointing to the lesser numbers of young Canadians after the war, a consequence of low birth rates during the depression-ridden 30s. With population figures at an all-time century low, it was difficult for young people to exert a cultural presence. Further, the extension of formal education to the age of 16, and expanding opportunities in the area of higher education, were, as Owram points out, nascent developments. Not until 1954 would the number of Canadians between the ages of 14 and 17 attending school top 50%. Hence, the experience of high school, a factor that accelerated the cohesion of 'boomers' through the 1950s, was not yet near universal. Television, a second spur to the cohesion of 'boomers', was also absent. Lagging behind developments in the United States, Canada opened its first transmitting stations (in Toronto and Montreal) in 1952. As noted by Owram, television was a crucial determinant in the construction of a generational identity during the 1950s.
Through the pioneering efforts of historians like Adams and Owram, we come closer to understanding the experiences of young Canadians during the late 1940s. In contrast to postwar works incorporating young people into more broadly based discussions on the Canadian family, or as part of a commentary on women, Adams and Owram position young people at the centre. I have taken a similar approach, with an added twist. My research focuses on a single source, The Star Weekly Magazine. As with any single source review, there are disadvantages to this approach. While a range of opinions were reflected through The Star's pages, the magazine, like magazines today, adopted a particular stance. It was decidedly liberal, staunchly British, and heavily steeped in a middle-class mentality. Another magazine, reflecting the opinions of its editors, writers, and readers, might view the same issues differently. Further, this is a story told through adult eyes. The extent to which young Canadians accepted and/or adopted The Star's representation is impossible to gauge. Indeed, the diverse composition of Canada's population suggests a range of responses were likely. But this is not a study on the experiences of young people. It is a commentary on The Star's perception of their experience, and one perspective on what that experience was expected to entail.

Before moving to a discussion of The Star's content, it is important to understand something of the magazine itself. In operation since 1910, The Star was finding its way into more than 750,000 homes by the end of the war. By its own estimate of 3.48 people per family, the magazine was reaching over 2,600,000 Canadians each week. While the bulk of Star readership was in metropolitan centres, the magazine boasted of representation in every community with an English-speaking population of three-hundred or more. Practically every drug and stationary store in the country carried it, and over six thousand Star carriers delivered
And the market was by no means saturated. When wartime restrictions limiting the availability of paper were eased in the summer of 1945, circulation jumped to 825,000. One year later it topped 900,000. There it held steady through to 1950.\(^\text{37}\)

Given *The Star's* overwhelming circulation, its self-proclaimed title of the largest Canadian publication holds weight.\(^\text{38}\) In 1950, *Maclean's*, one of Canada's “big three,” was running at a circulation of 411,000. *Chatelaine*'s numbers did not top 700,000 until 1958. *Saturday Night* entered the 1950s with a circulation of only 30,000.\(^\text{39}\) *Star* editors recognized and capitalized on these numbers. In 1948 *The Star* was soliciting advertising business by promising greater exposure than “the three largest Canadian standard magazines combined.”\(^\text{40}\) At a time when there was a great deal of concern being expressed with respect to the presence of American magazines in Canada, *The Star* was a force to be reckoned with.\(^\text{41}\) The fact that it was committed to using Canadian writers to ensure a Canadian perspective made it all the more so.\(^\text{42}\)

As a magazine, however, *The Star Weekly* is seldom acknowledged.\(^\text{43}\) What might account for this lack of recognition? Both the massive circulation and the underrated status of *The Star Weekly* can be understood through its association(s) with *The Toronto Daily Star*. While *The Star Weekly* was published and sold separately, it reached its readers through the distribution lines of this leading newspaper giant.\(^\text{44}\) Other magazines, dependent as they were on their own delivery systems, were at a disadvantage in this respect. Hence it could be argued, and likely was, that *The Star* was a mere adjunct of its daily parent. The magazine reinforced this perception through its presentation. It was divided into sections, a formatting style more typical of newspapers than of magazines. Further, it was not presented in magazine style. Only
one of its five sections could pass for a magazine and even here there was a reluctance to adopt the formulaic model. Where other magazines used visuals in support of feature articles, The Star's picture section focused on visuals exclusively. If the magazine's newspaper connections were not clear enough, advertisements encouraging purchase of the parent paper hammered the message home.45

While The Star's magazine status is somewhat ambiguous, its undisputed mass appeal is not. The Star was reaching better than one out of three English-speaking families nation-wide through most of the postwar 40s. Despite its claim to national representation, this readership was by no means evenly distributed. The bulk of Star readers resided in Ontario, where the magazine had captured over 490,000, or 55%, of the province's English-speaking families by 1948. With language virtually excluding all but a small number of Anglophones in the province of Quebec, British Columbia was next in line with a circulation of 92,000. While these figures call The Star's claim to national representation into question, there remains some basis for the claim in fact. The circulation gap is considerably smaller when presented in proportional terms. Close to 40% of English-speaking families were receiving the magazine in British Columbia, Alberta and New Brunswick by 1948. Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island averaged out at closer to 30%.46

Although The Star claimed to express sympathies for Canada's English-speaking peoples as a whole, contributors were preoccupied with the urban population of Ontario. This was evidenced through editorials, where issues of national concern were regularly conflated with those of Toronto, and in articles, which drew disproportionately on examples from Ontario. To some extent, this focus was warranted. Home to a wide range of national organizations,
innovative programs were often piloted in Ontario. But *The Star's* bias ran deeper. This reflected *The Star's* difficulty in establishing and recognizing itself as a national publication. Between 1910 and 1934 the magazine was sold in Ontario only, as *The Toronto Star Weekly*. It went national in 1934 in an attempt to capture western markets. In 1938 a decision was made to change the name to *The Star Weekly Magazine*, more fitting for a national publication. But names do not change attitudes. Writers had difficulty expanding their horizons beyond the magazine's home province. This then is a story told through the eyes of Ontario, or most specifically, Toronto. This otherwise limiting factor is mediated by the fact that it is also a study on mainstream opinion and perspective. At the centre of Canada's publishing and media industries, the views of Toronto, rightly or wrongly, constituted the mainstream.

*The Star* may not have embodied the voice of the nation but it most certainly believed that it did. Declaring itself to be a Canadian tradition, the magazine was promoted as a national symbol. Canadians were to be united in their homes through its tradition of family readership, and across the country through its dissemination of shared knowledge. Further, *The Star* bridged the gap between a seemingly safe past and an uncertain present. In publication since 1910, it was rooted in the solid foundations of Canada's Anglo-Celtic Protestant pioneer heritage. In its postwar adoption of democratic consumerism, it aimed to interpret progress and modernity. *The Star* would ease Canadians into the postwar world, defining the structure of Canadian identity as it went. It mattered not that Canadians were defined in and through a single province, nor that French Canadians were excluded from the definition. Beyond the frequently cited barrier of language, *The Star* saw itself as a shining example of democracy in action. With something for every member of the family, *The Star* did not discriminate on the basis of gender.
or age. It knew no income level, acknowledged little ethnic and/or racial diversity and, for the most part, overlooked regional distinctions. *The Star* attempted to speak for all Canadians not in spite of, but because of, its denial of difference.

While it is clear that *The Star* was limiting in its perspective, its massive circulation and wide distribution ensured broad segments of the population would be exposed to the opinions contained within its pages. Hence, it was one of the many influences shaping popular opinion in Canada through the late 1940s. At the same time, *The Star* was a reflection of society. Its presentation of images was a response to the internal demand for sales. It is from this dual perspective that I have approached my research into *The Star’s* postwar vision of young Canadians. To assess *The Star’s* representation, I reviewed all issues between May of 1945 and December of 1950. The commencement date of my study was chosen to coincide with victory on the European front. Though the Second World War did not reach its official end until September of 1945, with the surrender of Japan, the fall of Germany was seen as the beginning of the end. The decision to extend my research through to the end of 1950 was driven by my sense that decades do not end abruptly. They merge from one into the other through a transitional year.

Within the above-noted time frame, my review focussed on *The Star’s* three most prominent sections. The bulk of *Star* material was contained in two core installments, referred to as ‘Magazine Section One’ and ‘Magazine Section Two’. Of roughly equal length and similar in content, the division into separate sections was seemingly arbitrary. While there were some regular features in one or the other section, the topics themselves were interchangeable. Included in the content range were ‘hard’ materials supplementing developments being
addressed in leading dailies, the primary point of reference with respect to issues of the day, and ‘softer’ publications on fashion, entertainment, cooking, and the like.57 Examples of both sorts were as likely to be found in one as the other section. The Star’s picture section was the third focus of my review. This comprised solely photograph layouts, with accompanying captions. Excluded from my review were the comic section and the 30-page weekly novel, which comprised a separate component of the magazine. Examples of short fiction, woven into The Star’s core content, were included.

Criteria for the selection of material were threefold. First, I looked for any instance where the word(s) ‘youth’, ‘young people’, ‘teen-ager’ or ‘adolescent’ appeared. Second, I extracted all examples which made mention of anyone between the ages of 13 and 19. Third, I was alert for any picture or photograph where the people looked to be of adolescent age or where a theme which identified most strongly with young people was being stressed. Examples of each of these were found not only in The Star’s feature writings, but in editorial comment, advertising, works of fiction and in the picture section. To gain a sense of the culture of which young Canadians were a part, I extracted materials on Canada’s political and economic climate, writings highlighting sentiments of either anxiety or optimism, and materials relating to social disease and/or popular social trends. These auxiliary offerings helped set the context for issues concerning The Star through the postwar 40s.

To augment my research, the above criteria were used in a review of Star content in 1942, a crucial war year. It was hoped that this would establish a basis for the analysis of postwar materials. And so it did. My research confirms Star writers showed little interest in the experiences of young Canadians during this time. Wholly preoccupied with winning the war,
writers used the limited amount of newsprint available, a wartime restriction that had put space at a premium, to cultivate a common sense of purpose. Through a combination of friendly advice, cautionary concern, and, at times, severe reprimand, Star writers worked to solicit reader compliance. Each and every Canadian had a stake in preserving the democratic way of life, and each, writers argued, would suffer the consequences of failure. This sentiment is expressed clearly in the following Victory Bond advertisement.

Our men are fighting for everything we hold dear - the right to live our own lives, express our own thoughts, shape our own destinies. That's Democracy! That's what CANADA means to us. While they are fighting for this Canada of ours, will we refuse to deny ourselves? If we do, can we stand up and say we really believe in democracy? Pinching? - yes. Planning? - yes. Going without? - yes. It means all of these things.

The call to patriotism, shown starkly here, permeated The Star as a whole. Saturating the magazine’s wartime content, the theme of unity drew writers away from the interests, needs and concerns of specific individuals and/or groups.

The Star’s overarching commandment of unity appears also to have drawn writers away from a recognition of the specific contributions of young Canadians. A survey conducted by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics based on the 1941 census confirmed less than 40% of Canadians between the ages of 15 and 19 were still in school. Many had entered the workforce, filling gaps left by departing servicemen. Others were devoting their energies to the harvesting of Canada’s crops. Some had lied about their age and enlisted in the Armed Services. Despite the presence of these large numbers of young people in the adult world, rarely were they addressed separately in Star writings. Why might this be? The CYC report Youth & Jobs in
Canada, published as late as 1945, offers a clue. The report opened with the following statement.

Young people today have jobs. As members of the Armed Services, as employees in expanded industries, as workers on the farm, they are playing a vital part in Canada’s war effort, and have the satisfaction of being accepted as members of the adult community.  

Young Canadians who assumed adult roles had, in the CYC’s perspective, crossed the line into adulthood. Were Star writers operating under the same premise?

The absence of materials relating to the experiences of young Canadians continued through the close of 1945 and well into 1946, as Star writers turned their attention to the task of peacetime reconversion. In keeping with the patriotic spirit endorsed by Star writers through the war, the reintegration of veterans was the magazine’s most pressing and immediate concern. This population comprised primarily men. Having sacrificed greatly for their country, soldiers, as Star readers were frequently told, were entitled to assistance, compassion, and unlimited patience from patriotic citizens. Heralding the benefits of The Veteran’s Rehabilitation Act, a federally-sponsored program designed to facilitate the reintegration process, Leslie Roberts was typical of writers who attempted to carry the theme of patriotic unity through to peace.

...the nation has jumped to the task, not as an unpleasant chore which can’t be avoided, but as a job it has been waiting to do ever since the boys joined up, the implementing of a promise given when the troops sailed away, a promise which only began to be kept when the charter was written in Ottawa and which can only be fulfilled by the Canadian people as a whole, working together ... 

Roberts was not alone. Writer after writer highlighted the importance of aiding veterans in their transition to civilian life. While some contributors acknowledged the effect this preferential
treatment would have on working women, there was silence on the repercussions for Canada’s young.

Beginning in 1947, writings on young Canadians began to surface with regularity. Between 1948 and 1950 there was an explosion of interest. Focussing on differing aspects of the developmental process, Star writers addressed a range of related issues. In the pages that follow, I will explore the three most common. In chapter two the focus is on mental health, a subject that attracted an exorbitant amount of attention in The Star through the late 1940s. Concerned by the dramatic increase in social problems like alcoholism, divorce and juvenile delinquency, and their potential impacts on society as a whole, Star writers lobbied for a more encompassing approach to mental health. Young Canadians were at the centre of this movement. Chapters three and four explore The Star’s endorsement of practical measures aimed at ensuring the construction of well-balanced and healthy citizens. In chapter three I address The Star’s rising interest in education, and the extent to which developments in Canada differed from those of the United States. Turning to the social world, chapter four focuses on the informal training, or social development, that was to supplement experiences in the classroom.

Before moving to pointed discussions on mental health, education and social development, it is important to address The Star’s inconsistent use of terms. Interchangeable as they may seem, the signifiers ‘adolescent,’ ‘youth’ and ‘teenager’ were used by Star writers in highly specific ways. The term ‘adolescent’ was reserved largely for discussions that were biological in tone - hormonal changes and/or workings of the body. A broader and more commonly cited term was ‘youth’. This referent, used most often by writers commenting in the areas of mental health and education, had both positive and negative connotations. For some,
‘youth’ were the promise of the future, the beacon of modernity, and the driving force of evolution. Others highlighted the dangerous and unpredictable nature of ‘youth’, painting them as a threat to the social order. In discussions on social development, where the word ‘teenager’ was most likely to appear, there was an entirely different representation. Teenagers, were lighthearted, free from responsibility, and continually engaged in the pursuit of fun. The increasing use of this term is, of itself, an indication of a change in The Star’s perception of what it meant to be young.

Given that The Star lacked a term which was consistent in meaning, I have chosen to draw heavily on the referents ‘young people’ and ‘young Canadian(s)’ in all instances where the word ‘teenager’ is not used, indicating if and when writers were clear about who was being addressed. I do this with some hesitation, recognizing that the substitution of one term for another does not, in reality, make it more inclusive. For example, a gender-neutral term might address one sex only. The issue of race is just as troubling. Were young people of differing cultures and races embraced in The Star’s terms? It is impossible to know. The absence of a clearly defined age-range is another complicating factor. The boundaries of precise chronological age were weakened by the collapsing of age lines through war, making it difficult to assess target audiences. These limitations are, to some extent, mediated by the pointed focus of this review. As previously noted, this thesis does not explore the experiences of young people, but rather The Star’s presentation of those experiences. When viewed in this light, The Star’s homogenized representation is a reflection of the magazine’s denial of difference.
NOTES


6. For a discussion on the middle-class bias of CYC researchers and respondents see Rebecca Priegert Coulter, “Schooling, Work and Life: Reflections of the Young in the 1940s,” *Rethinking Vocationalism: whose life/work is it?* eds., Rebecca Priegert Coulter and Ivor F. Goodson (Toronto: Our Schools/Our Selves Education Foundation, 1993) 73-75.


10. Coulter, 77-83.


12. Canadian Youth Commission, *Youth Also Plan: A Guide For The Study Of Post-War Problems* (Toronto: CYC, n.d. [1943] ) 1-32. This guide was distributed to organizations planning on hosting a round table discussion. The suggested topics for debate in areas relating to employment, citizenship and marriage/family were serious indeed.


15. Ibid., introduction, 1.


19. Ibid., 44.

20. For an early discussion on the pressures of consumerism and their impact on children and youth see David Reisman *The Lonely Crowd* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950) 73-82.


23. Ibid., preface, ix-x.

24. Ibid., 140-142.

25. Ibid., 141.

26. Ibid., 141.

27. Ibid., 87-99.

28. For an example in which young people are woven into a discussion on the family see Mona Gleason, “Language, Surveillance and Sound Mental Health: Psychologists and the Family in Post-World War II Canada,” paper presented at a conference held in Montreal by the Canadian Historical Association, August 25-27, 1995; for an example of a discussion in which young people are woven into a discussion on women see Veronica Strong-Boag, “Canada’s Wage-Earning Wives and the Construction of the Middle Class,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 29, no. 3 (1994): 13-14.

29. For an example of how overwhelming this support could be see Ross Harkness, “Canada’s Record in Social Security,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (11 June 1949) Section #1: 2.

30. Political Advertisement, *The Star Weekly Magazine* (28 January 1950) Section #1: 11. *The Star* regularly reported on developments in Britain but the most direct example of British loyalty comes by way of the editorial decision to cover events leading up to the election showdown between Clement Attlee and Winston Churchill in 1950.


32. For a discussion on the diversity of young people in postwar Toronto see Adams, 96.


41. For a discussion on concerns with respect to American intrusions in the magazine market see Fraser Sutherland, *The Monthly Epic: A History of Canadian Magazines* (Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1989) 113-121.


43. The lack of acknowledgement in Sutherland’s *The Monthly Epic* is a case in point.

44. Harkness, *J. E. Atkinson of the Star*, 174-188.

45. For just one example see Advertisement, *The Star Weekly Magazine* (17 December 1949) Section #2: 4.


47. Adams, 6.


49. A fact also noted by Adams, 5-7.


53. For a thoughtful discussion on the power of mainstream discourses see Adams, 46.

54. For a discussion on the CYC’s impressions on magazine readership, and the influence of magazines on Canadians, see the Canadian Youth Commission, *Youth, Marriage & the Family* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1948): 170-171.
55. For an example of an advertisement highlighting all of the magazine’s sections see Advertisement, *The Star Weekly Magazine* (19 January 1946) Section #1: 14.

56. For example, the editorial page always appeared in Magazine Section #1, but topics raised in the editorial section were discussed at length in both sections.


60. For just one example see Gregory Clark, “Hey! What’s Cooking Here?” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (7 March 1942) Section #2: 12.


Weekly Magazine (9 February 1946) Section #2: 11; Sandra Lea, “Glamour Wears Long Frocks,”


69. For just two examples see Frederick Griffin, “Home To Canada!” The Star Weekly Magazine (4 August 1945) Section #1: 5; Marjorie Earl, “40,000 Vets Go Back To College,” The Star Weekly Magazine (21 September 1946) Section #1: 4.

70. For just one example see Elizabeth Hawes, “Women Will Not Go Back To The Kitchen,” The Star Weekly Magazine (8 December 1945) Section #2: 7.


72. Lest we believe this was in any way connected to managerial and/or structural changes at The Star itself, it is important to note that editorial influence remained stable through this period. See Harkness, J. E. Atkinson of the Star, 188.

73. The word teenager appeared in Star writings in its original hyphenated form, as teen-ager. When using direct quotes I will revert to this style. In all other instances the more modern version will appear.


75. For the purposes of this study I will assume Star writers accepted adolescence/youth/teenhood commenced at puberty and extended through to the age of 19. While this yardstick may, at times, prove inaccurate, the alternative of excluding all writings where age is not specifically mentioned is wholly impractical.
CHAPTER TWO: MENTAL HEALTH

In June of 1945 The Star ran an article entitled “What’s For Tomorrow.” In it, Leslie Roberts updated readers on a broad range of technological advances that were in the process of being converted to peacetime use. Synthetic rubbers, dehydrated foods, shrinkproof rayons, indestructible nylons, pre-fabricated homes, a plethora of labour-saving devices, and the twistable wonders of lucite loomed on the horizon. Tame in comparison to those promising paper houses, robotic salesmen and combination car-planes, Roberts’ predictions are a reflection of the mainstream optimism that permeated The Star Weekly at war’s end. Rarely did writers dwell on the negative. The tone was upbeat and confident. As the 1940s wore on, this confidence began to wane. For every writer who offered a utopian vision of prosperity and progress, another heralded a more ominous view. The pessimist’s position was that social disease was running rampant, undermining the psychological well-being of Canadian society. As writers grappled with a perceived increase in social problems like alcoholism, divorce and juvenile delinquency, they became increasingly preoccupied with the mental health of young Canadians. If deficiencies of personality could be addressed before entering adulthood the cycle of social disease, reframed in Star writings as mental illness, might be broken. As evidenced through The Star, this perspective gained credence through the late 1940’s, legitimating unprecedented intrusion into the lives of young Canadians.

The positive outlook that gripped Canada’s national conscience at war’s end was reflected most clearly in The Star through advertising. Substituting wartime images of frugality with inducements to spend, manufacturers rode a wave of peacetime optimism. "Victory
Kitchens,” a wide range of labour-saving devices, and “finer, thriftier, safer” cars were, as noted in one advertisement, “just around the bend.” Some manufacturers conveyed the message of optimism through leisure. “The War is over! - and with Victory has come release from the pressure of work in wartime tempo,” ran the text in one such ad. Other manufacturers used the anticipation over returning veterans to generate sales. The following excerpt is taken from an advertisement encouraging the purchase of silverware, which ran under the title “Back Home For Keeps.”

There comes spring, laughing in the window. There goes winter, away from your heart. It’s all the happy days - the holy days rolled into one - you’re laughing, you’re crying, there are stars in your eyes - it’s the day your man comes home.

Drawing a direct link between returning veterans and the attainment of material possessions, ads like Community Silverware’s were built on the assumptions of peace, prosperity and entitlement. The war was over, the world was safe, and Canada’s future looked bright.

By 1947 the process of peacetime reconversion was, in The Star’s view, complete. With the aid of the Veteran’s Rehabilitation Act, veterans had made the transition to civilian life, the economy was relatively free from governmental interference, and the manufacturing industry was enjoying an unprecedented boom. If the earlier predictions of Star writers were to be believed, the climate for contentment was ripe. Why then were Canadians expressing discontent? This rising pessimism was reflected through The Star in a variety of ways. For some writers, it was expressed most clearly through alcoholism.

While alcohol abuse among men had long been regarded as a problem, Star writers expressed little concern through the postwar honeymoon period. By late 1946 the tide was
Mental Health

shifting. In December of that year Borden Spears pushed the issue of alcoholism to the forefront, reporting on a recently initiated chapter of Alcoholic’s Anonymous. By 1948, fellow writers were following suit. Alcoholics were chastised for being a menace to themselves, their families, their communities and, in one writer’s nationalistic declaration, their country. While the majority of those plagued by alcoholism were men, women were not immune. In one article, published in April of 1948, a writer enraged by mothers who lounged in “beverage rooms”, leaving children to fend for themselves, called for the banning of sales to women. The “female bar-fly” was, in this writer’s estimation, as menacing as her male counterpart.

Rising divorce rates also encouraged a sense of pessimism in The Star Weekly. The Star entered sustained discussion on this subject late in 1946, around the same time that alcoholism was being presented as a concern. In December of that year the magazine ran an article entitled “Canadian Divorce Soars.” Citing an increase of more than 35% over the previous year, writer Norman Phillips called for a national institute of family relations, to stem the rising tide of divorce. In British Columbia, where the rate was highest, one out of every five marriages was breaking down. Writer after writer lamented the emotional impact of these dissolutions, most specifically on children. Some, such as Blair Bolles, believed the rising divorce rate hailed “the increasing disintegration and disorganization of family life.”

A dramatic increase in the number of juvenile delinquents was further evidence of a persisting social malaise. In contrast to discussions on alcoholism and divorce, delinquency was acknowledged as a problem from the onset of peace. Early writings were not, however, rooted in a Canadian context. The focus was on American and German youth. The fact that Star writers were not commissioned to report on delinquency suggests editors and/or writers did not
recognize it as a Canadian concern. By 1947 they felt differently, as evidenced by a dramatic rise in discussions of this sort. With few exceptions, statistics were rarely cited. The enormity of the problem was reflected in other ways. The 1947 editorialist who alerted readers to the violent tendencies of Canada’s delinquent young offers a particularly graphic example. In this piece, Star readers learned of a pair of Vancouver teens who had killed two policeman, and a group of Toronto ‘lads’ who, desperate to obtain money to go to the movies, had been driven to commit murder. While these acts were no doubt extreme, they demonstrated the debauched path that delinquency could take.

An interrelated indicator of social decay was the skyrocketing increase in institutionalized mental illness. Marjorie Earl was among the first to address this plague. In November of 1946, Earl published “Our No. 1 Health Problem.” In this grim statement on Canada’s collective mental health, Earl offered an alarming statistic. More citizens were admitted to mental hospitals each year than graduated from Canadian universities. Over 10% of the population was suffering from some variation of mental disease, with 1.5% exhibiting an extreme form of “abnormal psychosis.” If this trend continued, warned Earl, “one out of every 20 Canadian babies” would find their way into a mental hospital. While Earl’s views might seem extreme, they were in keeping with those of Star contemporaries. One writer, noting that admissions to mental hospitals had more than doubled over the preceding decade, believed mental illness was more threatening than “cancer, polio and tuberculosis combined.” In another example, a writer argued mental illness was “responsible for more chronic invalidism, unhappiness, inefficiency and personal disability than any other type of illness.”
Grappling with a dramatic rise in antisocial behaviour, Star writers were drawn to a shared understanding of the problem. Canadians were suffering from poor mental health. Something in their psychological makeup had run amuck, generating a negative response that manifested in antisocial behaviour. Through this psychological explanation, Star writers sanctioned professional intervention in the personal realm on a widespread scale. If left untreated, those experiencing maladaptive tendencies would, writers assured, progress along the path to mental illness.

In addition to the 50,000 patients in mental institutions today, there are estimated to be hundreds of thousands who suffer from mental and personality disorders among the general population. Social problems such as broken homes, alcoholism, dependency, crime and delinquency are in varying degrees the result of mental illness.24

In this democratized explanation, mental illness is presented as a danger that threatened all Canadians equally, irrespective of class, gender, race and/or ethnicity. The good news was that it was curable. In contrast to earlier theories, which held antisocial tendencies to be fixed in biology, writers maintained that mental balance could be restored.25

The threat of mental illness extending into the general population, coupled with the belief that it could, in fact, be prevented, caused Star writers to be more vocal in their support for the extension of mental health services. A call for resources figured prominently in these works. Writers lobbied for the establishment of community-based mental hygiene clinics, recruitment and training of mental health professionals, funding for research, parent education programs and interventions at the primary and secondary school levels.26 The general sentiment was that the costs associated with extended health services would pale in comparison to those incurred when
social problems were allowed to persist. A 1950 editorialist, who factored "lowered productivity, absenteeism and inefficiency" into the equation, estimated that mental illness was costing Canadians as much as $700,000,000 annually.

From the perspective of future costs, the current generation of young Canadians, those perched on the edge of adulthood, were of critical concern. These were the parents and leaders of tomorrow - the generation that would guide Canada into the modern world. They were also, as Star writers were quick to point out, the group most susceptible to negative influences. This message was conveyed in a number of ways. First, there was the suggestion that young people were amenable to antidemocratic ideals. The Hitler Youth served as a frightening reminder of the direction this proneness could take.

Without doubt Hitlerism has left its mark in the jungle of the German mind; especially on the young. The Germans between 15 and 25 still have Naziism in their blood. They are the ones who soon will be running the country.

Fears with respect to heightened susceptibility were intensified by developments in the Russian zone of occupation. In 1950, Star writer Matthew Halton reported on the Free German Youth, an organization established and funded by the Soviet Union. Condemning this act as a blatant attempt to woo impressionable Germans into the clutches of communism, Halton warned that western forces would require a generation equally impassioned with the fire of democracy.

The dangers inherent in heightened susceptibility were reinforced by circumstances closer to home, in the United States. A number of writers, Federal Bureau of Investigation Chief J. Edgar Hoover amongst them, took note of the increased representation of young people in crime. Hoover warned that impressionable youngsters were ideal targets for well-established
criminal organizations in both the U.S. and Canada. Statistics on a recent American crime wave had estimated the average age of criminals engaged in black market activity, common robbery and hijacking at 17, with the highest increase amongst 17-year old boys and 18-year-old girls.\(^{32}\) Hoover reminded readers that criminals in border cities moved easily from country to country.\(^{33}\) Canada had good cause for concern.\(^{34}\)

While the Hitler Youth and the U.S. delinquency wave were blatant illustrations on the dangers of heightened susceptibility, \textit{The Star} also offered less dramatic evidence. For example, in the previously noted discussion on Alcoholic’s Anonymous, Borden Spears informed readers that most organization members had begun drinking while still in their teens, at an impressionable age.\(^{35}\) A 1948 editorial addressing developments at Yale University’s School For Alcohol Studies offers a second example. The writer reported that a recent study on drinking patterns amongst middle-class Americans confirmed the problem had taken root between the ages of 15 and 20. More than two-thirds of those surveyed had their first drink in high school. Not surprisingly, they had been suffering from “emotional disturbance” at the time.\(^{36}\)

The message of heightened susceptibility was also conveyed through \textit{Star} writings on mental illness. An article written on Essondale, a state-of-the-art mental health facility in British Columbia, serves as a representative example. In this piece, \textit{Star} readers learned that most Essondale schizophrenics exhibited “serious maladjustment before the age of 20.” The added complication of failing to seek treatment was also highlighted. Not only were young people more susceptible, they were more inclined to deny the existence of a problem. Outside intervention was, from this perspective, crucial.\(^{37}\)
Explanations as to why young people should be more susceptible to negative influences were not provided by *Star* writers. Given the historic association between adolescent and hormonal development, one expects there were biological underpinnings to this belief.\textsuperscript{38} The occasional reference to misguided adolescent energy supports this claim.\textsuperscript{39} But *Star* writers were not about to endorse biological explanations.\textsuperscript{40} This reluctance is understandable when *The Star*’s environmental perspective is taken into account. If young people were governed by their nature, and subject to the dictates of biology, there was no hope of controlling their development.\textsuperscript{41} This was wholly unacceptable to writers intrigued with the prospect of creating a perfect society through the construction of well-balanced citizens.\textsuperscript{42}

The first step towards ensuring young people did not fall prey to undesirable forces was an understanding of their source. What factors were negatively influencing their development? Downplaying the racial, economic, ethnic and gendered aspects of these experiences, writers searched for common causes. Not surprisingly, the Second World War was, for many, at the centre. Long separations, hastily formed wartime marriages, economic restructuring, and the re-assignment of peacetime roles had made the resumption of peacetime relations difficult, for both parents and children.\textsuperscript{43} Impacting young people in a variety of ways, these disruptions generated a range of negative behaviours that included a “spirit of wartime abandon,” a persisting “lack of moral sense,” “the existence of distorted values” and a “war-hero” mentality.\textsuperscript{44} One writer, reflecting on the “strain imposed on juvenile minds by the violence and horrors of a world-wide war,” highlighted the resulting upset “to homes and social relations.”\textsuperscript{45}

A second factor negatively shaping young Canadians was the inadequate supply of housing, presented in *Star* writings as a crisis of epic proportion.\textsuperscript{46} Before the war, Canadians
had lived in substandard housing out of necessity. There were homes available but people could not afford to buy. In the aftermath of war the situation was, for many, reversed. They had money, but a shortage of homes presented a barrier to purchase. Skyrocketing marriage rates added fuel to the fire, forcing many families into cramped facilities and/or intergenerational households. Again, there was particular concern expressed regarding the effect(s) of these arrangements on young people. Writers regularly linked juvenile delinquency with an inadequate supply of housing arguing, as did one observer, that living conditions were crucial to the construction of “happy, healthy, stable citizens.”

Expressing a dramatic variation on this theme, writer Blair Bolles warned that young people reared in “miserable home environments” would be incapable of preserving the time-honoured tradition of democracy.

An albeit minor, though frequently noted, influence thought to be injuring young people was the American film industry. Though rarely acknowledged in isolation, the negative influence of Hollywood movies, and the amoral lifestyle of popular film stars, was woven into many discussions on delinquency and/or childrearing. In a 1946 piece that was, in the main, critical of parents, writer Ross Harkness sympathized with the parental challenge of combatting Hollywood’s influence. A similar view was presented in “What Will The Neighbours Think,” Harkness’ piece on the views of “juvenile crime expert” Clifford R. Shaw. Shaw believed the task of inculcating morality in young people was made more difficult by movies depicting “drinking, easy divorce and immorality” as parts of “normal social life.”

While many writers explained disturbances among young Canadians in relation to the more general postwar climate, the most popular explanation was negative parental influence. This view, shared widely by professionals working in the field of mental health, was reflected
through *The Star* in a variety of ways. The writer of "The Juvenile Delinquent," while acknowledging the difficulties of rearing children in poverty, and in the absence of adequate housing, blamed parents for having limited their expressions of love.\(^5\) In another example, by an editorialist commenting on the National Film Board's release of twin films dealing with "the unseen causes of mental ill-health," readers were warned of the link between early childhood experiences and happiness in adult life.\(^6\) The following writer summed it up best.

> It is the type of training and guidance a child receives from the day he is born through adolescence that determines his or her general stability. The lonely and pampered child is in danger of becoming poorly adjusted to life. The child whose parents are too possessive and give him little or no chance to develop his abilities and acquire social poise may become neurotic.\(^7\)

If reared in a happy, healthy, and well-balanced home, and "trained to be self-confident members of the family group," children would develop into the well-balanced citizens nature had intended them to be.\(^8\) When denied this right, society would pay the cost.

To demonstrate the effects of parental neglect and/or poor parenting, *The Star* published tragic stories of lives torn apart.\(^9\) Eighteen-year old Harold’s offers a classic example. Harold had been a happy, well-adjusted child until his father’s return from the war. Harold grew disillusioned when the war-hero turned out to be an alcoholic. As a result of his father’s drinking problem, tensions between Harold’s parents grew and the marriage broke down. Young Harold was forced to choose between the alcoholic father who had turned his world upside down and a distraught mother in need. Siding with his mother, he quit school, took a job as a mechanic, and became the family breadwinner. Deeply disturbed by these events, Harold began compensating for his injured feelings by showing off and being boastful. People began to talk
about him, intensifying Harold’s sense of insecurity. By the time Harold sought help for his problem, he was “on the verge of a breakdown.” But Harold was one of the lucky ones. Early detection and treatment ensured he would develop into a well-balanced citizen.  

Mary had not been as fortunate as Harold. Mary had breezed through high school with relative ease, graduating at the top of her class, and with the potential for a promising career as a concert pianist. By her second year of university Mary was forced to drop out. She had grown moody, irritable, solitary, and was prone to frequent crying spells. By the time she was admitted to a mental hospital Mary had developed into a full-blown schizophrenic, seeking solace in an imaginary world of her own making. In exploring the source of Mary’s discontent, psychiatrists determined she was a victim of childhood trauma. Reared by a domineering mother and an emotionally absent father, Mary had been unable to assert herself as an individual. As a result, she was a lonely and unhappy child, with few friends and even fewer outside interests. Mary carried these early experiences into adult life, withdrawing from the mainstream university community. With no friends to turn to for support, “she broke under the load” of her illness. Building on the example of Mary, writer George Thorman warned parents of their crucial role in the developmental process. Disturbances formed early in life could manifest years later, Thorman warned.  

In stories such as Harold’s and Mary’s, we see the basics of what constituted normal and healthy development through the late 1940s. In keeping with The Star’s overwhelming endorsement of the nuclear family model, happy families translated into happy and well-adjusted personalities. While this had, to some extent, always been true, there were several interesting twists after the war. First, as discussed in the work of Mary Louise Adams, there was a dramatic
shift in emphasis. While discussions on the importance of the family had been common before the war, the focus was on “women, motherhood and the development of proper femininity.” In the aftermath of war, attention centred on the development of well-adjusted children. Second, as noted by Doug Owram, there was a increasing sense that seemingly innocent acts could have dramatic repercussions. Parents could err to a far lesser extent than had Harold’s or Mary’s and still create a problem. This was a more effective means of social control, bringing the behaviours of all groups under the social microscope. Healthy families were to be gendered, middle-class, wedded to anglo-saxon principles, and amenable to the advice of experts. To ensure sound mental health in offspring, adult men and women needed to align themselves with these values. Those who did not would pay the price.

While Star writers worried about differing aspects of the postwar experience of young people, with some highlighting circumstances that fell beyond the control of parents and most centring on parenting practices themselves, they shared a common belief. Society needed a dramatic overhaul to ensure better living conditions for all and, by extension, to improve the lot of Canada’s young. This challenge was undertaken by the Mackenzie King Liberals, who held the federal seat of power at war’s end and were re-elected to Ottawa in 1949. King’s government enacted a range of social security measures aimed at alleviating insecurity, stimulating the economy, and ensuring a more equal distribution of wealth after the war. The underlying assumption was that a prosperous nation would be healthy, well-balanced, and free to enjoy life. But suitable environments in the future could not compensate for problems in the present. To combat existing mental disturbances, Canada had to go one step further.
In August of 1948, under the leadership of Minister of Health & Welfare Paul Martin, Canada's National Health Act (N.H.A.) was enacted. This comprehensive program was designed to operate in conjunction with existing social measures. While the Act addressed a range of health services, including the introduction of a medical insurance program, the overwhelming bulk of Star materials focussed on its mental health component. Part of this focus can be explained by the allotment of N.H.A. funds. Mental health was the second biggest expenditure of the overall program, with disbursements of between $4,000,000 and $7,000,000 slated for distribution among the provinces. The enormity of this figure becomes apparent when contrasted with the less than $2,000,000 slated to cover the costs of crippled children, venereal disease, public health and professional training combined, a gap that writer Fred Bodsworth, author of "The Health Plan In Action," felt no need to question. Bodsworth praised these mental health initiatives, emphasizing Canada's role as a leader in the field. So too did the 1949 editorialist who commended the Minister's aim of setting "the highest health standards in the world." The basis for this optimism was Canada's innovative approach to treatment.

Hailed as a benchmark in the annals of medical history, the principles guiding the mental health component of the National Health Act were based on three interrelated beliefs. First, there was the optimistic premise that people were products of their environment. This was an advance over earlier biological models, which held all behaviours to be inherited and fixed. Second, was the belief that change could be invoked through compassion. People reacted more positively when they did not fear condemnation, the professionals argued. Third, was the belief that manifestations of mental illness were not, of themselves, the problem. The deeper cause was hidden from the human eye, in the emotional disturbances of a long ago past. Once the true
cause was determined, a cure could be implemented through a change in environment. In this essentially positive approach, the human condition is presented as infinitely malleable, to be altered at will through the wonders of modern science.

*Star* support for the principles embedded in the National Health Act, and their direct application to young people, is evidenced most clearly through discussions on delinquency. “Not To Punish, But To Change” offers a typical example. Reporting on a revolutionary program undertaken in British Columbia, co-writers Dorothy Livesay and Dorothy MacDonald expressed their support for New Haven, a facility for delinquent boys. Moving far beyond a simple custodial role, the emphasis at New Haven was on reform. New Haven delinquents were separated from seasoned criminals to eliminate “the harmful effects of association.” In segregated facilities boys were met with a “human approach,” as social workers explored the “deep-rooted fears and difficulties” that had caused their delinquency. Families were invited to participate in certain phases of the treatment process, to help wards gain “insight into [their] character and motivations.” In addition, wards were taught skills that would facilitate future adjustment and, in keeping with the structure of the ‘real’ world, received wages for work performed. In the New Haven example we see the basic tenets of the mental health program. Young boys were capable of change. A compassionate approach, implemented through a supportive and secure environment, was the most effective way of bringing about that change.74

“More Clinic Than Court” serves as a second example of the health plan in action. In this piece Harold Hilliard profiles the innovative strategy of judge Hawley S. Mott, the pride of Toronto’s juvenile court. In contrast to earlier and more punitive approaches, Mott viewed the delinquents who came before him as “socially sick.” His job was to explore the reason(s) behind
Mental Health 38

their wayward behaviour and the ways in which home and social conditions might alleviate recidivism. Mott’s “clinical approach” began with an in-depth psychiatric assessment, addressing the “medical, family, physical, mental, school and social history” of the child. With assessment in hand, Mott began interviewing the persons closest to the child’s life, searching for the source of mental disturbance. Once identified, a team of professionals worked to ameliorate the negative influences unearthed by Mott’s investigations. Not surprisingly, many were familial. Reflecting the more general tone of The Star’s writings on delinquents, class did not factor into Mott’s explanations, suggesting delinquency had more to do with how a child was raised than with what parents were able to provide.75

Mental health surveillance was not limited to institutionalized populations. In keeping with The Star’s support for initiatives in this area, writers came out in full support of mental health clinics, an essential component of the overall program.76 While clinics were meant to service Canadians of all ages, the emphasis on early detection generated a focus on the young that was by no means implicit. A swift and determined action could mean the difference between a well-balanced citizen and a life plagued by mental ill-health. For this to work, detection was to precede the emergence of a self-destructive behaviour. Warning signs need not be connected to the behaviour itself. For example, in a Star article on schizophrenia, readers were told to be on the alert for “shyness, seclusiveness, resentment and jealousy” in children, sure signs of impending mental illness.77 In another example writer Ben Rose praised school guidance counsellors for their subsidiary “mental hygiene” role - spotting youngsters in need of “special attention.”78 In a particularly disturbing show of support, Helen Christine Bennett praised recent developments in the state of New York, where a team of mental health
professionals, operating on school premises, were on hand to redirect wayward children into appropriate “social channels.”

The principle of early detection, and its potential for misuse, is illustrated through the story of 8-year-old Sally. Sally was exhibiting “bossy, quarrelsome, disobedient and domineering” behaviours. Sally’s mother, at her wits end, took the child to a Hamilton mental health clinic. Concluding that Sally’s “superior vocabulary” and “extreme self-confidence” were warning signs of impending mental illness, the doctor provided some interesting medical advice. Sally should not be allowed to advance too quickly in school, or to become cognizant of her own superiority. An instructional course with older children, where Sally might be made to feel inferior, would serve to remedy the situation. Sally’s parents followed the doctor’s orders and Sally developed into a “normal, well-behaved child.” Readers were left to speculate on the delinquent path that Sally’s domineering spirit might have taken.

It is difficult to imagine a child with “extreme self-confidence” and “superior vocabulary” being viewed as a problem today. Yet in postwar Canada, these characteristics were disturbing enough to warrant psychiatric intervention. What made this so? Part of the answer lies in the postwar preoccupation with traditional roles. Emerging standards of femininity, as evidenced through Star discussions on women, did not condone dominance in females. It was important that this undesirable characteristic be squelched early. Sally’s story also speaks to the issue of class. Well-intentioned parents were economically secure, child-centred and, with one parent situated in the home on a full-time basis, had the time to explore their children’s disturbances and, more importantly, to follow through on the instructions of doctors. If you, as
a reader, were unable or unwilling to adopt this standard, you were failing in your role as a parent.

While we can expect that developments in the mental health field impacted young Canadians in different ways, Star discussions offer little insight in this regard. Examples of implementation amongst young people of differing ethnic, racial, religious and sexual orientations are virtually non-existent, and illustrations with respect to gender are rare. Writers preferred to speak in more general terms, highlighting the importance of ensuring mental balance in 'children' or 'youth'. When positioned within The Star's wider context, and its overwhelming support for traditional family values, the basis of this adjustment is clear. Young people should marry, become either breadwinners or homemakers, and rear mentally-balanced children in a loving, caring and supportive single family dwelling. The measure of sound mental health in adults, it is reasonable to assume this principle extended to those about to become adults. If differences were collapsed in this model, it is because Star writers expected everyone to be working towards the same goal.82 Those who were not would be drawn back into the fold through the threat of being branded mentally-deficient.

In the immediate aftermath of war, mental health was of little concern to Star writers. A preoccupation developed over time, in response to a perceived rise of social problems. As it grew, so too did a sense that young Canadians were a population in special need. If the influences negatively impacting this highly susceptible group could be identified and ameliorated, a generation of well-adjusted Canadians would sail happily into adult life, breaking the cycle of mental disease. But detection and treatment were important only insofar as they, as noted by one writer, caught those who were “beginning-to-wander.”83 The true goal was to
prevent them from wandering. Educational initiatives and a heightened emphasis on social
development were a means to this end. Each of these developments took young people as their
subject, and each were captured in The Star Weekly Magazine. In the pages that follow we will
see how they wound their way into the lived reality of young Canadians, constructing normative
standards of behaviour and generating a new understanding on the experience of being young.
NOTES


4. For an example of the frugal nature of wartime advertising, and the extreme expression that it could take, see Advertisement, “You Can Help To Win The War ... Make Shoes Last Longer Than Before,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (7 November 1942) Picture Section: 13.


17. For just two examples see J. Edgar Hoover, “Post-War Crime Wave?” The Star Weekly Magazine (9 June 1945) Section #2: 11; Saul K. Padover, “Can We Salvage German Youth?” The Star Weekly Magazine (17 November 1945) Section #1: 5.


19. I was able to locate only one instance where statistics were cited. Interestingly, the figures support a drop in the delinquency rate of over 40%. See Harold Hilliard, “More Clinic Than Court,” The Star Weekly Magazine (1 April 1950) Section #2: 1. For a discussion of the disjuncture between image and reality with respect to delinquency rates see Owram, Born At The Right Time, 143-144.


32. J. Edgar Hoover, “Post-War Crime Wave?” The Star Weekly Magazine (9 June 1945) Section #2: 11. While Hoover presented these crimes as gender-neutral, this is not likely to have been the case. For a full discussion on viewing female delinquency through the lens of sexual transgression see Mary Louise Adams, “The Trouble With Normal: Postwar Youth and the Construction of Sexuality,” diss., University of Toronto, 1994, 135-143. Scheduled for publication under The Trouble With Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Sexuality (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

34. For a discussion on how Canadian concerns were magnified by articles and movies coming out of the United States see Owram 144,


40. For a discussion on the link between Hitler’s Final Solution and a rejection of hereditarial principles in Canada see Owram, 40. For a discussion on the eugenics movement in Canada see Angus McLaren, *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1990).


59. *Star* writers drew on personal stories regularly. While there is no evidence to support the fictitional nature of these tales, their authenticity is suspect. Surnames were often absent and the stories seemed to fit remarkably well with whatever point the writer was attempting to make.


63. Owram, 41.

64. For a in-depth discussion on the nature of parenting advice and the extent to which adults were controlled through it, see Mona Gleason, “Disciplining Children, Disciplining Parents: The Nature and Meaning of Advice to Canadian Parents, 1945-1955,” *Social History* XXIX, no. 57 (1996): 187-209.

65. See Solinger, 45-54. In her work on single white pregnancy in America Solinger found that postwar psychologists believed girls became pregnant because they had not received appropriate messages with respect to gender in the home. This was a powerful reminder to parents who feared the repercussions of a daughter’s developing sexuality.


72. For just one example see Dorothy Livesay and Dorothy MacDonald, “Not To Punish, But To Change,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (7 August 1948) Section #1: 8.

73. For a classic example of this principle see Borden Spears, “A Drunk Is A Sick Man,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (15 February 1947) Section #1: 4.


82. For a condensed discussion on *The Star’s* vision of the ideal family see Melba Lent, “Design For Family Life,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (27 August 1949) Section #2: 10.

CHAPTER THREE: EDUCATION

In January of 1946, amidst the confusion of early peacetime reconversion, The Star reported on an address given in Toronto by Dwight D. Eisenhower. Captured in the pages of a Star editorial, the American General had strong words for his audience, a University of Toronto convocating class. Eisenhower highlighted the importance of moral development amongst young people. As parents and leaders of the future, they held the power to eliminate bigotry, prejudice, and the drive towards territorial expansion that had historically resulted in war. In this early articulation of youthful responsibility for a better world, we see the link between individual development and national harmony that would drive The Star’s preoccupation with young Canadians as the 1940s wore on. But examples like Eisenhower’s were, at this point, rare. Before 1947, Star writers showed little concern for the education of Canada’s young. When the subject of education arose it was veterans who were positioned at the centre. As the 1940s progressed, and veterans made their way through the education system, this changed. Star writers came to view education in broader terms, as a mechanism for the construction of a healthy and well-balanced citizenry. Through education would come respect for democratic principles, a spirit of cooperation and, on a more basic level, a commitment to the postwar nuclear family. Together, these values would build the foundations of a stable and secure society.

Having learned a valuable lesson from the social chaos that followed in the wake of the First World War, Canadian politicians took precautionary measures between 1939 and 1945. Task forces were mobilized and legislation enacted well before the Second World War veterans
came marching home. An array of assistance programs, financial disbursements, and economic incentives awaited, under what came to be known as the Veteran’s Charter.² The opportunity to pursue one’s education was amongst them. Star writers like Leslie Roberts came out in full support of this, and other, veteran programs.

While he is in training for a vocation or trade, or during his time in university, the government will send him a pay cheque every month, and the brilliant student can keep on assimilating knowledge at the country’s expense until, in the opinion of his teachers, he has reached the limit to which he can aspire.³

In Roberts’ patriotic opinion, every veteran had the potential to learn more than they already knew. All that was needed was a chance. He shared this view with Star contemporaries who reminded readers that the education of veterans was crucial to Canada’s national development.⁴

While the extension of educational opportunity to veterans was a noble aim, practical application was a nightmare. A 1946 article entitled “40,000 Veterans Go Back To College” expresses this well. Writing in September, at the commencement of classes, Marjorie Earl was critical of the educational climate in which veterans were being forced to learn. Educational institutions were stretched to their absolute limit, informed Earl. Instructor shortages, crowded classrooms, limited supplies, minimal lab space, and a severe housing crunch were the result. As veterans banged at the classroom door, with federal subsidies and full tuition payments in hand, school administrators were scrambling to find solutions to the dilemma. The University of Toronto petitioned Ottawa for the release of graduates and former teachers from armed and civil service. At Montreal’s McGill University, temporary classrooms were being fashioned out of reconverted recreational space. The University of Saskatchewan was meeting its housing demands by boarding students in a former flying school. The lack of textbooks was another
problem. With a wartime paper shortage still in effect, veterans were forced to share. In a particularly disturbing example, a single psychology text was expected to service more than 200 students.\(^5\)

Cramped quarters, inadequate supplies and overworked instructors were not enough to lead *Star* writers to a reassessment of education for veterans. Even Earl ended on a positive note, commending veterans for their perseverance in the face of adversity. In this patriotic climate, no one was prepared to argue that veterans were getting more than they deserved, nor detracting from the educational opportunities of younger Canadians. Reflecting on a 1945 work of fiction entitled “High School Soldier,” one might question whether writers even recognized the fact. Fearful that the war would end before he was old enough to join, 15-year-old Jerry lies about his age and enlists in active service.\(^6\) While Jerry is risking his life on the European front, his mother undertakes a desperate search for her son. One evening, while watching a theatre newsreel, she sees Jerry being decorated by a general. The search is over. At his mother’s insistence, Jerry is released from service. He returns home to streets lined with townspeople, a marching band, and a full assembly in his honour. But trouble lay in the wings. Despite the opportunity for a fully subsidized education, Jerry’s entitlement as a Canadian veteran, he refuses to go back to school. His father, a veteran of the First World War, tries to reason with the boy. The father’s arguments are telling. Jerry should return to school because medals and cheers faded with time and, having fought in the war, he deserved better. Being young was incidental.\(^7\)

While *Star* writers were grappling with the educational dilemmas of veterans, concerns with respect to young people who, unlike Jerry, had not fought in the war, were of a different sort. In a 1946 editorial, which ran under the title “A Major Problem,” the issue was jobs.
Expressing concern for those under the age of 25, and most particularly for the group between the ages of 15 and 19, the following editorialist did not, as one might expect, call for extended education. Full employment was the rallying cry.

 Maintenance of full employment at fair wages is important for the prevention of social unrest and damage to the people’s health. A period of unemployment would be particularly upsetting to youth, because when work is scarce, as was noted in the last depression, young persons have a harder time finding employment.8

Despite the acknowledgement of ‘youth’ as separate and distinct, this writer saw little difference with respect to need. A similar message was conveyed through an editorial that ran under the title “Behind The Delinquent Child.” As late as 1949, this writer was arguing that young people were experiencing economic frustrations similar to those of their parents.9 These examples suggest that elements of the adult status acquired by young Canadians during the war had carried through to peace, influencing The Star’s perception of their needs.

Though early postwar writers rarely acknowledged the education of Canada’s young directly, there was, on some level, an awareness of its importance. This is evidenced most clearly through discussions on Family Allowance. Initiated in 1945 on a broadly based platform of child rights, the Family Allowance Act was to ensnare young people in the educational web. While all Canadians under the age of 16 were eligible for federal monthly payments, enrolment in an academic and/or authorized training program was a central qualifying condition. This provision was overwhelmingly endorsed by Star writers who, as shown below, viewed the Act in broader terms.

Family allowances were designed by the farseeing leaders of the Liberal party to strengthen the “rank and file,” to improve the quality and efficiency of the Canadian people. Children who eat
better food, who do not miss school, who receive vocational and cultural training, whose health is guarded in youth, grow up to become more intelligent, more industrious men and women.\textsuperscript{10}

Crediting the Family Allowance Act with increasing “health and happiness,” “contributing to the development of better citizens” and ensuring “opportunities for all,” \textit{Star} writers showed their support for the program and, albeit indirectly, for the education of young Canadians.\textsuperscript{11}

\textit{The Star} addressed the issue of educating Canada’s young directly beginning in 1947. This shift, as suggested in a 1948 editorial, was related to the fact that veterans had completed, or were nearing completion, of their studies.

On the whole, Canada’s rehabilitation program has been carried through with remarkable efficiency, and the returned men have become reincorporated in the national fabric with a minimum of difficulty. In vocational and other schools and in universities, instructors pay tribute to the devotion to their studies which most students have exhibited.\textsuperscript{12}

With veterans firmly positioned on the road to civilian life, \textit{Star} writers turned their gaze towards the education of Canada’s young. But they did not, surprisingly enough, insist that the doors to Canadian universities remain open. It might even be argued they lobbied against such a measure.

The earliest of \textit{Star} writings to address non-veteran education came from the pen of Benjamin Fine who, interestingly, was an American.\textsuperscript{13} No single writer published more on the subject of education in \textit{The Star}.\textsuperscript{14} This, of itself, is significant. Reporting on educational developments in the United States, where the emphasis was on expansion at the post-secondary level, Fine offered a view that was decidedly American. It is odd then that his work should comprise the bulk of materials within \textit{The Star} on the subject of education through this time.

While British and American writers were regularly extended the opportunity to express
themselves through *The Star Weekly*, issues of national concern were the domain of Canadian writers. The magazine’s founder, J.E. Atkinson, was committed to offering *Star* readers a Canadian perspective. Writers were flown to locations all over the world, including the United States, in an attempt to meet this goal. Yet with education, local writers were not commissioned to cover developments in the United States, nor did they report on higher education from within Canada. This suggests Fine’s writings might have been a filler, purchased on a syndicated basis at a relatively low cost for use when *The Star* needed to fill space. Fine’s views, and the subject of higher education as a whole, were of little consequence to *Star* writers. That is, until he drew them into an educational debate.

The educational initiatives endorsed in the work of Benjamin Fine were twofold. First, there was the prospect of eliminating all barriers to the pursuit of higher education. Based on the premise that a “nation’s most valuable resource [was] an educated citizenry,” Fine believed every American should be given the opportunity for higher learning. An array of fellowships and bursaries would make this possible. The second recommendation, curriculum reform, was intended to facilitate the first.

... barriers of a restricted curriculum are as serious as barriers of race or religion. If the colleges offer only a single, narrow academic program, large numbers of students will be unable to qualify for admittance. Many young people who have no verbal skills and intellectual interests have abilities along different lines.

The types of courses proposed for those lacking in verbal and intellectual abilities included such things as how to look for a job, family living, saving money, budgeting and developing an appreciation for manual labour. Through this non-academic instruction, education would ensure
a “fuller realization of democracy” and facilitate “international understanding and cooperation,” promised Fine.\textsuperscript{16}

Focussing their attention on developments in the province of Ontario, a number of The Star's writers took issue with the initiatives endorsed by Fine.\textsuperscript{17} While they agreed with the basic principle of educational equality, they challenged the wisdom of broad admittance to institutes of higher learning. A sidebar inserted into one of Fine's pieces expresses this well. Critical of America's “education for all” approach, the anonymous contributor argued that mass education was impractical at the university level. To support this contention, the views of high profile university administrators were presented. In the following quote, the opposition of Vincent Massey, chancellor of the University of Toronto, is explained.

While insisting that the doors of the university should be open to all who wish to enter, with necessary financial aid given, his [Massey's] belief is that the real function of a university is the education of the nation's future leaders, and this should not be hindered by students not intellectually qualified to be there.

Massey's views were, the writer reported, shared by University of Toronto president, Dr. Sydney Smith. Clear on his position of selective recruitment, Smith supported the raising of entrance requirements and an enrollment limitation of 10,000 students. Former Prime Minister Arthur Meighen had also spoken out on the subject, criticizing government measures that allowed for the introduction of practical subjects at the university level.\textsuperscript{18}

While some writers highlighted objections of an intellectual nature, others emphasized the financial impediments to unrestricted access. In a 1949 article entitled “The Case For Limiting Enrolments,” writer A.C. Givens presented the views of Robert Charles Wallace, the president of Queen's University. Though Wallace supported the elimination of educational
barriers in principle, he believed it was totally impractical. Absorbing large numbers of students on a continuing basis was not economically feasible.\textsuperscript{19} Wallace’s view was supported in an article entitled “Our Universities Are Going Bankrupt,” published as late as 1950. In this piece, writer A.O.C. Cole painted a grim picture of developments on Canadian campuses. Endowments were down, costs were up and fees had been raised to the “saturation point.”\textsuperscript{20}

Driven by developments south of the border, The Star was drawn into a debate concerning the future of education in Canada. Their response suggests Star writers held an educational perspective that was distinctly Canadian. The Truman administration was aiming for a doubling in college enrollment by 1960, and investing large sums of money to make this vision a reality.\textsuperscript{21} Yet writers reporting on developments in Canada showed little support for expansion in the post-secondary realm. In keeping with the magazine’s endorsement of preventative measures, writers were preoccupied with system performance at lower levels. This is evidenced most clearly through editorials. In a particularly telling example, a link between the quality of elementary and secondary schools and the quality of students entering Canadian universities was drawn. Universities could not be faulted for denying entry to those lacking the basic foundation of a good education, the writer argued.\textsuperscript{22} In another example, a writer warned that if Canada failed to promote “the education of its young” the nation would pay a high price.\textsuperscript{23} Reminders such as these were common through the late 1940s.

If Star writers, aside from Fine, were not reporting on post-secondary developments, they showed great concern in the arena of public education. The basis of this concern was threefold. First, there was the condition of the schools themselves. Writers argued that young Canadians were being forced to learn in an unhealthy environment, a circumstance that could not help but
hamper their development. Bombarded with this message through editorials, Star readers learned that over 80% of schools had inadequate lighting, water supplies frequently went untested, caretaking services were grossly inadequate, physical and health education equipment was lacking, and 71% of schools were still using outdoor toilets. The following editorialist, reflecting a mental health perspective, commented on the difficulties of learning under such conditions.

School health is of primary importance in our education and national development. The first aim of the schools is to develop young Canadians sound in mind and body. Pupils cannot be expected to build and practise the health habits which are taught when many environmental factors are the antithesis of the teaching.

Education, it seems, was about much more than the simple acquisition of knowledge. Through schools, children internalized habits that would help them to become good citizens.

Added to the poor condition of the schools themselves, was an acute shortage of qualified teachers. In a 1949 article entitled “What’s Behind The Teacher Problem,” writer J. E. Belliveau presented Star readers with some disturbing statistics. Over 200 Canadian schools had been forced to shut their doors, and close to 7,000 were operating with unqualified instructors, the majority being in rural areas. In the province of Alberta alone, there were 20,000 children receiving instruction from people with no training. Drawing on the findings of a recently completed survey of over 50,000 Canadian teachers, Belliveau cited a range of reasons for the “teacher problem.” Low wages, few opportunities for advancement, inadequate educational facilities, lack of prestige, little security, oversized classrooms and heavy workloads were among them. While some, such as the Ontario Commission on Education, argued a lowering of
standards would attract recruits in sufficient numbers, Star writers like Belliveau were inclined to side with teaching associations. These groups saw the solution in higher wages, better working conditions and greater professional recognition. One writer, opposing the proposition of lowered standards, reminded readers that high quality teachers ensured high quality education and, by extension, a nation of well-educated citizens.

The third aspect of education to arouse the concern of Star contributors was, not surprisingly, content. Indeed, this issue was at the centre of the magazine’s educational anxieties. While writers expressed concerns with respect to facilities and the lack of suitable teachers, these worries were noted primarily in editorials. Rarely were they positioned at the centre of a feature article. Not so of content. As Star writers came to view education in broader terms, as a mechanism for the construction of healthy and well-balanced citizens, they became interested in what young people were learning. This was particularly true with respect to secondary education, an emphasis that, according to Doug Owram, paralleled that of Canadian educators. In his research on baby boomers, Owram found that the “secondary school crisis” completely absorbed educators through the late 1940s. With more and more young people entering high school but having no expectation of continuing on to university, the system needed a dramatic overhaul.

Writing in 1956, the authors of Crestwood Heights, a sociological study on a middle-class community in Toronto, reflected on the dramatic shift in educational approaches in Canada after the war. Where once schools had been geared towards “the three R’s” and/or vocational training, the postwar focus was on building personality, cultivating character and the broadening of a vaguely defined “social knowledge.” Through the late 1940s this development
was in its infancy. Still, there are hints of its emergence in *The Star's* postwar writings. Those commenting on developments in the field of education expressed a view in line with *Crestwood's* findings. Education should build essential characteristics, argued *The Star's* writers. These values included a democratic mindset, a co-operative spirit and, on a more practical level, a respect for traditional family values. In short, young people needed to adapt. An acceptance of existing social structures was, *Star* writers suggested, the surest way to happiness.

*The Star's* emerging emphasis on adjustment comes through clearly in a 1948 article entitled “Guidance Into The Right Job.” Reporting on the rise of vocational guidance programs, writer Ben Rose highlighted the importance of instilling realistic expectations in those about to enter the adult world. The programs were geared towards helping high school graduates make career decisions in keeping with their ability, and in line with the labour market. For many, this required an adjustment of ambition. Citing a recently completed study at Toronto’s Lawrence Park Collegiate, Rose noted that 79% of boys and 59% of girls had indicated it was their intent to enter a professional occupation. Rose warned that the labour market, particularly after the influx of an army of recently graduated veterans, was not designed to absorb these numbers. Canada needed plumbers and typists, not lawyers and dentists. Vocational guidance programs helped bring expectations in line with this reality.

Good citizens accepted their limitations, built on their strengths and worked to be the best that they could be. This overriding aim would be achieved through the internalization of values, the primary function of education. Central amongst these values was a democratic mindset. *The Star* showed its support for democratic teachings in a variety of ways. Some writers, like Harold
Albert, presented glowing examples of democracy in action. In “Anything Goes At This School” Albert reported on Summerhill, a “demonstration school” in Britain, where children were awarded complete and unbridled freedom. The children met yearly to devise school rules, and weekly to express their opinions, share their views and, if required, chastise peers. The results were astonishing! Given the freedom to make decisions, Summerhill children imposed their own limits, reported Albert, implying similar measures might prove successful in Canada.\textsuperscript{34} Star support for democratic education could also be relayed indirectly, through contrast. In “Jap Children Learn A New Way” Star readers learned what democracy was not. Bowing “towards the emperor’s palace,” “march[ing] into school,” and singing “war songs in class” were, the writer assured, impositions on democratic freedom.\textsuperscript{35}

It was not enough to develop a democratic mindset. You had to be prepared to defend it. This message was relayed through works of fiction like “The Family Crisis.” Having internalized the message of democratic freedom, young George criticizes the antiquated views of his history professor in the campus paper. The instructor demands a retraction and George, committed to the principle of free speech, refuses. George is expelled and his father, who happens to teach at George’s college, resigns in a show of solidarity. Explaining this decision to his wife, George’s father relays an important message to Star readers.

Wersig offered to let George stay in school if he published an apology and resigned from the paper. But I said this was a free country, with freedom of speech even in college newspapers. I said a teacher can say almost anything he wants to about a pupil, so why shouldn’t a pupil get a chance to talk back?\textsuperscript{36}

Through this example Star readers learned that young people were free to express their opinions, that they should be prepared to defend that freedom, and that those who expressed differing
views shared this right. Further, readers learned that these values were to be instilled through
a democratically-oriented education system.

The freedom to act in accordance with one’s principles would be tempered by a
cooperative spirit, the second component of educational training endorsed by *Star* writers. This
message was relayed most clearly through discussions on sport. In “Exercise, The Safety Valve,”
writer Fred Hein used the lure of cooperation to support his bid for the inclusion of physical
fitness programs in the secondary school curriculum. “Self-control” and “co-operativeness”
were natural outgrowths of physical activity, declared Hein. These characteristics would teach
people how to get along with those who were different than themselves.

> Now, these things do not just happen. They come about when
> youth has been skillfully guided toward an appreciation of
> physical activity and its values in mental hygiene. Such attitudes
> can result when physical education has the place it deserves in the
> school curriculum.

The value of sport lay in its intriguing mix of competition and cooperation. Team players
worked together, building a cooperative spirit, while competing against an external foe, the
opposing team. Competitive energies were released at the same time as cooperative relations
were being built. It was, argued Hein, a win-win situation. It was this line of reasoning that
caused writer Thomas Gorman to oppose the inclusion of boxing in the secondary school
curriculum. Gorman found boxing inappropriate not because it was offensive, degrading and
animalistic, but because it was lacking in the “cooperation of team play.”

*The Star*’s cooperative message, and its relationship to educational experiences, extended
beyond the limited focus of the team. This comes through clearly in a 1949 work of fiction
entitled “Intercollegiate Mile.” Persuaded into a blind date with a member of the school track
team, Kit becomes frustrated with her date's open admiration for the team's top runner. Assuming that winning is always preferable to losing, she reflects on the possibility of Spike coming in first. She is horrified to learn that his role is to tire rival runners out, paving the way for the team's top-runner to breeze cleanly over the finish line. When Kit expresses her disdain for a "cooperative spirit" that requires intentional loss, Spike drops her like a hot potato. Confused and indignant, Kit relays the story to her father. Once again, she is chastened: "If you were high hat with this Jones boy simply because he's willing to be what's best for his team," scolds Kit's father, "I'm downright ashamed of you." Recognizing the error of her ways, Kit attends the race, roots for the school's top runner, and makes her apologies accordingly. 40

Embedded in The Star's presentation of democratic and cooperative images was a sense that females, whether wives, mothers, girlfriends, or even a casual date, had greater difficulty internalizing essential values. The wife in "The Family Crisis" could not understand why her husband and son were sacrificing their futures in defense of free speech. Kit found it difficult to accept the cooperative spirit shared by Spike and her father. Using a less offensive approach, writer Eve Bennett reinforced the perception of ignorant women in "Dora And The Atomic Age," a work of fiction that also touched on the subject of education. Through a bizarre set of circumstances, an elderly socialite named Dora is brought into contact with 17-year-old Veronica. She begins to worry that Veronica will cut her education short, lured into marriage by one of the many suitors who swarm her constantly. Her concern peaks after a meeting with her local women's group, during which Dora realizes that the women of her community know little about the atomic bomb. Faced with the prospect of ignorance in the next generation, Dora offers to finance Veronica's education. While Bennett did not deny the importance of females
internalizing essential values, as evidenced by the suggestion that Veronica should pursue her education, a sense that they were less capable of doing so lurks just beneath the surface.\textsuperscript{41}

The third aspect of educational content addressed in \textit{Star} writings was the importance of instilling a respect for traditional family values. The breadwinner/homemaker dichotomy, reinforced through \textit{Star} writings on building a happy marriage and the tragedy of divorce, was at the centre of this training. In these writings \textit{Star} contributors expressed a belief that if young people understood their familial roles, the problems plaguing the modern family would be solved. In one example, the writer called for “a carefully graded system of general education for marriage, parenthood and family living.”\textsuperscript{42} Another writer drew a direct link between rising divorce rates and a faulty education system, speculating that the rate would come tumbling down “if young people could be suitably educated in the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood.”\textsuperscript{43} Through these examples, we see the basis of \textit{Star} support for marital training in the classroom.

While calls for the introduction of marital training were, in the main, presented as gender neutral, discussions on the curriculum sent out a very different message. Marital training, a life skill that focussed heavily on domestic instruction, was directed largely at girls. This comes through clearly in a 1950 article entitled “New Trends In Home Economics.” Reporting on developments in Ontario’s home economics program, writer Melba Lent highlighted the gendered nature of marital instruction. While the boys were required to learn a range of domestic skills, they learned them for entirely different reasons. Exposure might help boys understand “the responsibilities of other family members” and, in rare cases, prove useful for those who remained bachelors. Instruction in table manners, meal preparation, home decorating
and “doing a washing of which any Monday-morning housewife would be proud” were of very different value to girls. Girls’ were developing abilities “testifying to their skill as homemakers.” Despite these dramatically different interpretations, the central message was, in Lent’s view, the same. Through new and improved educational methods, young people would become “good members of families” and useful “citizens in a democratic state.”

Even when differences were minimalized, there was a subtle message that girls should be less interested in their education. “Choosing between marriage and career?” asked writer Helen Shaffer in 1949. The most appropriate choice was to prepare for both. Many of the skills that proved useful in the labour force were also applicable in the home. The workplace taught manners, grooming, consideration and, perhaps most importantly, a “willingness to cooperate.”

Writer Margaret Frances offered a more practical reason for pursuing an education. It could be of use in later life, when one’s family was grown. In support of this claim Frances offered the story of a middle-aged woman who had re-entered the field of medicine after having spent 20 years rearing her children. And, of course, you could always enter school and quit when the more desirable option of marriage presented itself. This was what 18-year-old Edith did in a 1950 work of fiction entitled “I’m Going To Be Married.” In all of these examples the notion that education was of temporary and/or sporadic value to females was strong. No such message was relayed to boys, suggesting more general discussions on career building were directed at that group.

For all the rhetoric of accepting and learning to appreciate difference, gender was the only distinction that stood out in The Star’s educational writings. Characteristics that divided Canadians along racial, ethnic, sexual, and class lines were, for the most part, ignored. On the
rare occasion that they did appear the emphasis was on assimilation. In a 1950 piece entitled “Higher Education For The Indian,” writer Harold Hilliard commended Ottawa’s recently instituted “fraternization” policy. Focussing on the Caughnawagan Iroquois, Hilliard reported that Ottawa’s refusal to offer secondary education on reserves was bringing Indians into the city of Montreal. This was, in Hilliard’s view, a good thing. The opportunity to mingle with “white cousins” and assimilate into the “Canadian way of life” was of inestimable value to Indian children. Indeed, Hilliard was happy to report that Caughnawagan characteristics were becoming “so blurred that many have only vague likenesses, and some are easily mistaken for whites.”

As *The Star* expanded its focus beyond the education of veterans, a sense that young Canadians were in need of special attention grew. Given that they were to embark on adult lives soon after high school, working and/or marrying, this was an incredibly crucial time in their lives. Young people needed to develop realistic expectations if they were to be happy with their lot in life, but occupational aims were of less importance than the cultivation of a specific mentality. True happiness would be acquired through the cultivation of a democratic mindset, the internalization of a cooperative spirit and a deepened respect for traditional family roles. Armed with these qualities, young Canadians would be ready to face the world and, it was hoped, counter some of the negative influences that awaited. But educational development was only one aspect of this preparation. Many of life’s lessons were learned outside the classroom, in the social world. It is here that we see the white, middle class and heterosexual model that educators were working to achieve. It is here that we learn, in Mary Louise Adams’ terms, what it meant to be ‘normal’.
NOTES


6. When the war began enlistment age was set at 21. The minimum age was subsequently lowered to 19, and then to 18. See Department of National War Services, *National War Services Regulations, 1940 (Recruits)* (Ottawa: Edmund Cloutier, 1941) 5; Ruth Roach Pierson, *They’re Still Women After All: The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1986) 113.


13. Fine’s accomplishments are noted in preambles to the following pieces. Benjamin Fine, “Revolution in Higher Education,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (17 July 1948) Section #2: 2;


30. For a discussion on Canada’s “secondary school crisis” see Owram, 113


37. This was not an entirely new idea. For an intriguing discussion on the relationship between athletics and the cultivation of character, and the extent to which this was associated with military preparedness, see A. B. McKillop, “Marching As To War: Elements of Ontario


In March of 1950, The Star reported on a speech that had recently been given in St. Catharines, Ontario. The speaker, Dr. Paul Lambert, made a bold acknowledgement. Young people biologically prepared for marriage, and physically prepared for work were, through artificial means, being prevented from maturing. Expressing his support for this delayed maturation, Lambert assuaged the fears of his middle-aged audience. Modern dating practices were not, as others suggested, causing young people to grow up too quickly. Young people were, Lambert assured, content to remain young. Through this glaring example we see how dramatically The Star's postwar stance had changed. In five short years the magazine had gone from a complete disinterest in the development of young Canadians to open support for controlled maturation. This move was driven by The Star's preoccupation with ensuring the construction of a well-balanced citizenry. In keeping with the magazine's emerging mental health perspective, which emphasized the benefits of prevention, writers supported an extended period through which learning could take place. While much of this instruction was to occur in the classroom, many of life's lessons were absorbed in the social world. Cultivating a socially acceptable appearance, developing gender-appropriate social skills, and mastering the art of money management were central among them. Through the encouragement of these behaviours, Star writers endorsed the internalization of white, heterosexual and middle-class values, and fuelled a sense that teenagers were a new and progressive breed. To be included in the coveted category young people needed to look, act and spend in a way different from that of adults, and similar to that of others in their age group.
Elements of teen culture took distinct, though interrelated, forms. The most visible expression was appearance. In contrast to the lack of acknowledgement given young Canadians in other aspects of The Star's early postwar writings, hints of distinction were present in discussions on appearance from the immediate onset of peace. The earliest examples were in the area of fashion and, not surprisingly, the target audience was female. Fashion writers readily acknowledged that young girls constituted a separate and distinct population. But there was little sense of difference between females of varying ages. In real terms, discussions on younger and older females were frequently interwoven, and images of maturity permeated writings that addressed the younger set separately. For example, in a 1946 piece entitled “For The Junior Miss,” readers learned of the work of Emily Wilkens, a designer who catered to the younger set. The romantic evening gowns, daring midriffs and ‘sparkling’ conversation dresses included in Wilkens’ line varied only slightly from adult themes of the day, most noticeably in terms of size. A photo layout that highlighted the “junior version of the bare shoulder” and a “practical daytime dress,” sent out a similar message. The distinguishing characteristic was size.

As the postwar 40s wore on, there was a clear shift in The Star's perspective on fashion for the young. Where earlier discussions had tended towards helping girls look and appear older, in later years the trend was reversed. The accent was on youthfulness. Writing in December of 1948, writer Marcelle Poirier endorsed this shift. While offerings for young girls followed some of the trends evidenced in adult fashion, Poirier was happy to report that there were enough differences to constitute a specific style. Dresses were longer, necklines were higher, shoulders were left unpadded, and decorative accents were highlighted. Poirier came out in full support of these changes, noting they were “youthful and charming”, “not too daring”, and accented
"youthful figures, without looking too old." Even Wilkens did a turnaround, lengthening skirts, softening shoulders and emphasizing pleats to keep "daughter looking young."

The move towards emphasizing youthfulness in fashion was accompanied by a more consistent use of the word teenager. Through this word the distinction between younger and older females was made stark, for both groups. "Do you want to feel as young in spirit as a teen-ager?" ran the text of an advertisement directed at adult women. Despite the assertion that youth could be recaptured, the underlying message was that adults could only hope to come close. Everyone knew that youthfulness could not, in fact, be recreated. This message was relayed to girls as well. A typical example comes by way of Gwen Robyns’ 1947 “Advice To Teen-Agers.” Arguing that there was “plenty of time ahead,” Robyns warned against the use of make-up, the wearing of earrings and the donning of "middle-aged colours." Teenagers, advised Robyns, should capitalize on the "glowing complexion and youthful vigour donated by Mother Nature." Youth would not last forever.

The accent on youthfulness, and increasing use of the word teenager, was also prevalent in *Star* discussions on the body and/or beauty. The notion that aging was a process to be feared and disdained was front and centre in these writings. Young people, again most often girls, were regularly reminded that they were experiencing a magical moment in time.

Attention, teen-agers! We’re warning you today that you won’t always remain in your teens and that the years are going to sneak up on you quicker than you think. You can’t start too soon to protect that appearance of youth that you have right now.

Echos of this critical tone are also present in Ann Williams-Heller’s ‘R For Slimness.” Assuring readers that body shapes were malleable, Williams-Heller supported her bid for a healthy
lifestyle through a disparagement of aging. The trick was to start early, at or about the age of eleven. Figure conscious girls should by that point be taking stock of the “heavy”, “clumsy” and “old” looking adults around them, Williams-Heller advised. A commonly recommended way to avoid this fate was to wear a girdle. In “Moulding The Teen Age Figure,” writer Trudy Jencks endorsed this measure for girls as young as fifteen. Riding the wave of this trend, girdle manufacturers, like the one shown here, came out with teen girdle lines.

Protecting and preserving one’s appearance was to start early, well before being ushered into the adult world. This preparation was directly linked to social development. As a young girl became versed in the arts of beauty, fashion and figure consciousness, she began to develop an allure commonly referred to as ‘chic’. Though this term was used most often in discussions on fashion, it is best understood as a total concept. To be chic was to be neat, orderly and well-presented. It was to possess carriage and poise; self-confidence and knowledge; the abilities to converse, entertain and make others feel at ease. Beautiful women were not necessarily chic. Plain women were often surprisingly so. In short, chic was an attitude. It was demonstrated through the presentation of self, and the determination to make necessary changes. This was the underlying premise of a 1946 article entitled “Sense of Symmetry.” Exercise could correct,
clothing could camouflage, diet did wonders and massage worked miracles, advised writer Hilda Sachs. At the very least, readers could achieve the “illusion of perfection.”

Brought within the reach of every female, chic was, in a sense, democratized. Coincident with this democratization grew an intolerance for the un-chic. Since all females were to be eternally engaged in the struggle to ‘accentuate the positive’, those who opted out were easy targets for criticism. “Every woman can stand improvement,” argued glamour guru Anita Colby in a 1948 piece, expressing bitterness towards unattractive females who did nothing to alter their appearance. “Girls who accept the fact that they are miserable Marys are doing themselves an injustice,” she declared. The group that made the most mistakes, and in greatest need of direction, were the young. Dishevelled hair-dos, slippery seams and uneven hems were appearance-detractors that, Colby maintained, could be easily corrected. This point was reinforced in Gwen Robyns’ “Advice To Teen-Agers.” Noting that neatness was essential to chic, Robyns reminded teenagers that chic was a necessary step toward success in the outside world. It was not all that important that you be beautiful, but it was crucial that you be neat, orderly and composed. Being chic and being successful went hand-in-hand.

For the essence of teen chic, Star contributors turned to Princess Margaret, the younger daughter of Canada’s King and Queen. Margaret began attracting the attention of Star writers in 1948, when she was 17-years-old. Dubbed “Britain’s no. 1 teen-ager”, Margaret’s allure was rooted in her willingness to break with tradition. In defiance of Royal trends, Margaret chose a designer that differed from that of the Queen mother and sister Elizabeth. This determination added to the princess’ appeal and, in one writer’s view, enabled her to create an image that was all her own.
While Princess Elizabeth has been strongly influenced in her choice of designs and colours by the Queen’s taste, Princess Margaret is much more individual and prefers clothes with a dash about them. Although quite often her frocks have a sophistication far beyond her 17 years, she wears them with a definite air and grace.21

Margaret had style, but she also had will. She insisted on defining herself.22 This otherwise positive message was tempered by the suggestion that young girls should follow in Margaret’s footsteps, mimicking her graceful and sophisticated style.23 The suggestion that this feat could be accomplished on the average clothing budget was an incredible leap, but it was the underlying message that was most important. Find a way to be different from adults, but do not be too different, attracting unwanted attention and/or disdain.

To cushion the way for young girls attempting to assert their independence through fashion, Star writers spoke directly to adults, encouraging them to allow some measure of difference. In a 1949 piece entitled “Ugly Duckling” writer Sarah Wentworth relayed this message by drawing on her own life’s experiences. Wentworth told how her unusually large physique had created social difficulties through her formative years. An insensitive mother had made the situation worse, forcing young Sarah to wear out-moded hair-dos and ill-fitted clothing. As Wentworth grew older, she worked diligently to educate her mother on the allure of chic. Her persistence paid off. Sarah’s mother began to accept newer styles and looks and Sarah blossomed socially.24 The “ugly duckling” became a statement on style.25 Again, we have the message of disciplined willfulness. Young girls should challenge the standards set by parents, but they should do so in a socially acceptable way, recognizing the parental right of veto.
In contrast to the wealth of materials written on girls' appearance, *The Star* published little on this topic as it related to boys. What did appear focused primarily on acne; where it originated, ways to control it, how to prevent it. In these highly clinical discussions the word 'he' or 'him' is used far more than 'she' or 'her', though the ailment was presented as a plague of both sexes. Most writers agreed that there was little that could be done in terms of cure. The bulk of information was on prevention, with a general consensus that acne was something you simply had to live through.

If you can nurse your child through a few unpleasant years you can be practically sure of recovery. And for both your sakes, don't lose your nerve. Keep bolstering morale by telling him that when he follows directions his complexion is much improved, that plenty of people with acne have been successful, found romance, married, had children, and outgrown acne ...²⁶

Acne was a medical condition over which teenagers, most often boys, had little control. With the grace of time, the condition would pass through its normal course and fade into an unpleasant memory.²⁷ This laissez faire attitude was the exact opposite of the message relayed to girls. Female beauty demanded constant vigilance if effects were to be negated and lasting happiness achieved.

Through discussions on appearance came a not-so-subtle encouragement to delay the process of maturation. This was presented by *Star* writers as an opportunity to choose freely from a range of suitable personas and, in so doing, cultivate a personal style. Given the historic preoccupation with female beauty, it is not surprising that this should be of greater consequence to girls. But whether or not boys were targeted by *Star* writers directly, the fact that they were *not* expected to engage in beauty rituals and/or develop fashion consciousness was, of itself, a
developmental statement. While girls were learning the principles of beauty management, boys were developing a relative disinterest in their appearance. In both cases, the lesson was an important one. In a world structured by heterosexual expectations, the presentation of self was a primary identifier. Through this visible expression, society recognized one’s willingness to conform to masculine and feminine standards. But heterosexuality was only one aspect of the conformist platform. Assumptions of class and race were built into the model. To fully conform a young person needed money to purchase the necessary styles and products, time to devote to exercise and personal grooming, and a skin tone akin to that of the smiling white models who stared out at readers through *The Star’s* pages.  

A pleasing appearance was of little value in and of itself. Looking good was important because it increased one’s value in the dating market, the second area in which *Star* writers showed their support for delayed maturation.  

Beginning in 1947, writers began highlighting the importance of graduated dating structures. This development may bear some relation to the Canadian Youth Commission release of *Youth and Recreation.*  

Writers addressing the impact of dating on social development expressed views similar to those detailed in the 1946 report. In the following excerpt, the Commission offers its rationale for having explored attitudes in this area.

One of the chief interests of a young person between the age of 15 and 24 is in meeting members of the opposite sex, and this is, of course, in line with the needs of his or her development during these years. Through this means, adolescent attitudes are outgrown and mature behaviour patterns established.  

The educational value of dating lay in the opportunity it awarded for exposure and experimentation. If young people explored their options fully, experimenting with a range of
partners, the potential for making an appropriate marriage choice was high. This was the argument made by Francis Ford Strain in a 1946 publication entitled *Teen Days*. Early daters had a far better chance of being successful in marriage, advised Strain. Graduated dating structures kept these early daters on track, guiding them through the stages of emotional growth at a leisured and beneficial pace.32

Published in 1948, Kitte Trumell’s “Ready To Go Steady” offered clear support for the graduated dating structure proposed by Strain. Drawing on information obtained through the American Institute of Family Affairs, Trumell outlined the seven stages of maturation. At the first level children focussed on developing same-sex relationships and showed relatively little interest in the opposite sex. By the second level there was a “sneaking teen suspicion” that the other side had something to offer and mixed group activity was initiated. Double dating came soon after, followed closely by single dating. By the fifth stage a teenager was “ready to go steady”, and began moving through a succession of partners. Engagement marked the sixth stage and, finally, “the objective of all this experimenting” - marriage. To be successful, it was important to move through dating stages sequentially. If you missed a stage, you had to go back and “catch up.” Chances were you missed something. If you got stuck in a particular phase, you had to push yourself out of it. There were lessons ahead. If dating did not proceed at a “natural” pace, young people would be unable to form “a basis for comparison in [their] eventual choice of a marriage-mate,” warned Trumell.

While the structure of Trumell’s dating pyramid appears rigid, a measure of freedom was built into her model. This was reflected in two ways. The first was with respect to pace. Trumell had a great deal to say about the ordering of events, but little with respect to when they
should occur. The age at which young people were to become interested in the opposite sex was noted as between 10 and 14 for girls, and as late as 16 for boys. At the other end of the spectrum, the point of marriage, was the age of 22. There are no interim markers, suggesting young people were free to progress through the pyramid as required. Adding further to the flexibility of her model, Trumell highlighted the element of choice. Young people were free to ‘harvest’ dating experiences as they saw fit and ‘deviate’ if their partner was away at school or on vacation. In Trumell’s model young people were free to chart the pace and to make choices within a particular dating stage, but they could not disregard the structure as a whole.\textsuperscript{33}

Support for graduated dating structures like Trumell’s was shown in a variety of ways. In “Don’t Feel Like An ‘Ugly Duckling’ If You Haven’t A Date” writer Ralph Eckert acknowledged that it was difficult to get into the dating scene when you had not progressed through the crowd stage. Group membership allowed for the building of acquaintances, a preliminary requirement for induction into more structured forms of dating. Those who skipped this developmental step were likely to misread dating signs, rushing into the ‘going steady’ phase too quickly. Further, they were inclined to compound the problem by remaining with the same steady, instead of exploring a wide range of partners.\textsuperscript{34} Writer Gary Myers framed his support for graduated structures in a different way. In the following excerpt, directed at parents, Myers argues that there is safety in numbers.

Help him see that when he is in a group he need not worry about talking much or scarcely at all, that others who talk glibly are pleased to have good listeners; that when he centres his attention on himself and what he might say, he cannot be alert to what others are saying or doing and therefore can’t respond enthusiastically and pleasantly to them; that, on the contrary, he may then speak or act queerly.\textsuperscript{35}
In Myers' view, group involvement helped to structure personality which, in turn, increased one's value as a date. Learning how to respond and function within the group was central to the development of maturity.36

Parental opposition to liberal dating patterns was overcome in one of two ways. Some writers offered glowing commendations on enlightened parents who, recognizing the benefits of early dating, supported their children in these endeavours. Ann Alexander's “A Teen-Ager Entertains” offers a classic example. In February of 1947 Alexander shared her childrearing philosophy with Star readers. Recounting the details of her daughter's recent birthday party, Alexander emerged as a shining example of modern parenthood. Daughter Marge had helped plan the menu, assisted with meal preparation and, along with a friend, co-hosted the arrival of guests. The result, a sit-down dinner for eight, complete with tapered candles, floral arrangements, and a good natured father well-suited to the regal role of butler, was perfectly orchestrated. Several parent-sponsored rounds of spin-the-bottle, a kissing game, concluded the evening's festivities. But Marge was not a sophisticated young lady brushing up on her skills of etiquette. At thirteen years of age, she had only just entered the adolescent lifestage. To her progressively-minded parents, Marge was embarking upon her training in maturity. Adult-oriented activities, relayed through a controlled and structured environment, would guide Marge along this path. Well-intentioned parents were encouraged to adopt Alexander's philosophy and gently guide their children towards maturity.37

Parental opposition could also be overcome negatively, through the chastisement of parents. Writing early in 1948, Gladys Bevans highlighted the consequences for parents who
meddled in the dating lives of their children. Bevans warned not to set an arbitrary age at which daughters could begin dating, constructing a situation that could prove difficult to control.

Mothers and fathers sometimes go too far in sheltering their daughters or trying to keep them young. They set up a taboo about the other sex which is not conducive to simple, wholesome relationships. Boys and girls need each other’s companionship and when parents are too strict or arbitrary it’s liable to drive the whole matter underground ...

Parents who meddled in the dating lives of their children were thwarting a process of natural development and, in so doing, setting the conditions for “subterfuge and stealth.” Far better to make minor concessions and stay on the same side, counselled Bevans.38 This enlightened perspective co-existed with frequent admonishments on the dangers of boy-girl interaction.

While rarely acknowledged directly, the hazards of dating were decidedly sexual.39 “It’s My Life,” published in 1948, demonstrates this well. In this cautionary tale, presented through fiction, a young girl comes to recognize the need for self-regulation. Julie cannot understand why her father insists she be home by midnight whenever she dates Chet. After a particularly rousing battle, she decides to break curfew. Pleased by Julie’s decision to defy her father, Chet suggests taking a drive out to Tucker’s. Having heard some disparaging rumours about Tucker’s, a tavern with “cabins back in the pine grove”, Julie becomes anxious. Enamoured with Chet, and determined to assert her independence, she brushes her fears aside, rationalizing that what she has heard is “probably not true.” When they arrive at Tucker’s Chet reaches under his seat and pulls out a New York license plate, an insurance policy against the police patrols that keep track of the establishment’s clientele. Realizing that she was nearing “the point of no return,” Julie grows frantic, running off into the night. Father had been right all along.40
Dating carried its dangers, especially for girls, but the consequences of failing to date were also dangerous. Ill-formed and/or insufficient dating patterns could cause maladjustment in later life. This was the premise of “Memories Decide the Future.” In this work of fiction the protagonist, a once-married businesswoman, is faced with a dilemma common at war’s end. She must decide whether to pursue her career as a London fashion authority or take a second stab at marriage. Floundering aimlessly in search of the ‘right’ answer, Pamela laments her inability to respond instinctively. What stops her from flying into John’s arms and agreeing to be his wife? The answer lies in the past.

When prom time neared, and the girls were busy discussing their dates and dances, I boned for examinations and poohed their vanity as kid stuff. Perhaps those early memories etched themselves more deeply than I realized, and way down deep, I’m just terribly unsure of myself.

Pamela was dealing with the repercussions of having traded academics for sociability. She had spent too much time studying and not enough on learning how to be a woman. Lacking balance, she made inappropriate life choices. This cautionary tale worked just as well in reverse. Parents who made poor decisions on behalf of their children did so because of their own warped sociability and the resulting unhappy memories.

While much of The Star’s dating material targeted parents, some writers spoke directly to young people. Janet Gray’s “Teen-Agers Go Dancing” is a typical example. Anticipating a heavy round of social activity over the 1948 holiday season, Gray offered some helpful hints. As host, it was a boy’s responsibility to lead his date to the table, assist her with her coat, pull out her chair, and order on her behalf. The girl was to resist the temptation to barge ahead, refrain from addressing the waiter directly and, under no circumstances, refresh her makeup in
If they were attending a dance, the boy was to arrange for transportation, ensure that his date's dance card was full and, if possible, provide her with a corsage. The girl was to look her best, "talk of things that interested boys," and appear as though she was having a good time, even if she was not. That these reminders were deemed necessary bespeaks some measure of confusion, for both boys and girls. This is by no means surprising. This was a generation that had witnessed women in non-traditional wartime roles and, in many cases, lived without a male presence in the household. Adapting to gendered standards of behaviour was no easy task.

"Are You In The Know?", an advertising campaign run by Kotex Sanitary Napkins, was another source of dating information for young people, or more particularly young girls. Presented in quiz form, Kotex advertisements allowed girls to test their level of dating knowledge. How should a couple approach the dance floor? What should you do if your dance is being cut-in on? Who should pick up a dropped fork when on a dinner date? When was it appropriate to ask a boy out? These are some of the questions Kotex identified as of concern to young girls. Though the structure of the ads emphasized an element of choice, they were designed with a specific response in mind. The example on the following page is typical. Kotex girls prepared their responses early, well before an uncomfortable situation arose. Confident and self-assured, they could relax while on a social outing. Gray emphasized this very point in "Teen-Agers Go Dancing." "If you’re in the know before you go," there was no need to worry once you were there, she promised. Such acknowledgements make it clear that dating was about much more than a fun night out. As they went to dinner parties, entertained guests,
attended formals and entered pseudo-monogamous relationships, young people grew more mature and, by extension, less dependent.

The more serious side of dating culture was overshadowed by a contrasting image of fun-filled days and exciting nights. When they were not brushing up on etiquette, teenagers could be found lounging on the beach, riding rollercoasters, perfecting their tennis game, sharing music with friends, or whizzing by on a bicycle. Teenagers, both male and female, were doing fun things with fun people, in direct contrast to the experience of young Canadians through war. A number of advertising campaigns were built around this theme. Pepsi-Cola offers a high profile example. Pepsi drew heavily on the concept of carefree youth when promoting its
product. In one example, teenager Ardyth Mackenzie is shown having “Fun In Mount Royal.” The accompanying photograph expresses this well: smiling couples drinking Pepsi and making the most of what life had to offer. A carefree tone is also present in the following excerpt, which appeared under the caption “Rink Party.”

Energetic young Canadians take to skates for an evening of thrills and spills. After a few more spins they’ll take time out to rest and relax with a sparkling Pepsi-Cola. For Pepsi’s lively flavour is a treat anytime, anywhere.

There is no sense that these skaters are troubled or self-conscious. They thrill, spill, spin and sparkle their way through life, free from the restrictions of adult responsibility.

By 1950 Star writers were presenting the social experience of being young in two ways: as a time of learning and as a time for fun. Both required money. This interrelated factor was glaringly evident in discussions on money management, where the principle of delayed maturation was also present. “No one is born with an appreciation of the value of money or a ready-made ability to spend it well,” advised one writer, who went on to provide a graduated list of expenditures. Children under the age of 6 squandered their money on things like candy, ice cream and crayons. Between 6 and 9 the list expanded to include movies, magazines and “box-top” offers. Over the next few years interests turned to sports equipment, games, comics and club membership fees. By the age of 13, expenditures would be socially motivated. Dating expenses, clothing, cosmetics, jewellery, phonograph records, soft drinks and school activities were among the expected purchases. In this hierarchy we see a graduated development that culminated in more social purchases during the teen years.
While the importance of managing and spending wisely arose often in female-related materials of other sorts, discussions focussing solely on the subject of managing money were, near exclusively, male. In articles bearing titles like “Teach Your Child To Spend Money wisely,” “Allowance For Child Is Wise,” and “Spending Money,” it was boys who were at the centre. One writer argued that financial training would prove useful on the day a boy was “called upon to know how to handle money”, an indirect reference to the day he would wed and assume the responsibilities of manhood. In another example, a writer highlighted the importance of teaching the value of “father’s hard-earned dollars.” Writers Graham and Wackerbarth were more direct. Allowances should be issued on the same day, and in the same amount, each week - “just like dad’s salary.” In each of these examples, both the prospect of manhood and the assumption of prosperity loomed large. When positioned against The Star’s adult-centred materials, which stressed the middle-class male provider role, this emphasis seemed warranted. As budding breadwinners, male offspring would be expected to provide for and protect their families. There was little sense that women, through necessity or desire, would take on this role in the future, or had done so in the past.

The lack of recognition given girls in discussions focussing on the subject of money management should not be misconstrued. Teenage girls were spending money. Lots of it. When one looks outside writings on money management this becomes apparent. In “Teen-Agers Take A Bow,” girls were encouraged to try a “brand new liquid lipstick,” designed for those who wished to remain “kissable.” They learned also of fashion magazines, and how to study them carefully so as to choose styles and cuts accordingly. In another example, aimed at those about to enter university, girls received advice on what to include in their campus wardrobe. Belts,
purses, hats and "a modest fur" were essential.\textsuperscript{58} The purchasing power of young girls is further highlighted in the previously noted Kotex campaign. Kotex counselled teenagers on such things as choosing the right perfume, whether or not to buy a birthday gift for their "beau's" mother, and how to budget for the purchase of "a good mink."\textsuperscript{59} Through these examples we see that young girls who had the money and the time to worry about such things were also of interest to \textit{Star} writers. Given the avalanche of materials of this sort, it might even be argued that they were of greater interest. But advice with respect to managing money was presented differently, as a means through which girls could enhance their standing with wage-earners of the future.

The ironic twist to \textit{Star} discussions on money management is that responsibility should be learned through spending. Though there were some encouragements to engage in employment, most writers felt differently.\textsuperscript{60} "Children should not be asked to take too heavy responsibilities before they are prepared for them," advised one writer, oblivious to the fact that there were many families who were not in a position to choose.\textsuperscript{61} Expanding on this theme, a concerned contributor offered the following words of caution.

... don't forfeit too much of his recreational periods for the opportunity of making a few extra dollars. He can earn money when he is an adult, but youth is the time for his development in sports and social-confidence, and he may never recapture it.\textsuperscript{62}

Even when writers were critical of irresponsible behaviours spawned by excess spending power, work was not the solution.\textsuperscript{63} Parents might consider monitoring spending patterns more closely, restricting the amount of payouts or issuing allowances at shorter intervals, but they should not expect young people to sacrifice social development for the material benefit of money.\textsuperscript{64} An assumption of prosperity was built into this argument. \textit{Star} writers expected that parents would
be in a position to provide allowances, enabling children to purchase items, such as the bike shown here, without ever having worked.65

Encouraged to focus on their social development, teenagers worked to master the battery of consumer preferences that would ensure their induction into an age-specific group of peers. This imperative, which would not reach its full zenith until the 1950s, was gaining ground in The Star's early postwar writings.66 Fads might seem foolish, parents were told in a 1949 piece, “but keeping up with the rest of the crowd is very important in young fry’s life.”67 Writers Lillian Graham and Marjorie Wackerbarth concurred, counselling parents to keep allowances in line with “youngsters in the same group.”68 The writer of the following excerpt framed the argument more forcefully.
Every child, from the time he starts to school, is entitled to an allowance. It is as necessary to his mental and emotional well-being as nutritious food is to his body. With it, he can hold up his head with his fellows, and be one of the gang.⁶⁹

Armed with the financial means by which to maintain group association, young people made decisions, they were told, that would earlier have been made by adults.⁷⁰ Some chose to buy clothing, cosmetics and phonograph records. Others financed dates or saved for a shiny new bike. All learned that spending was an important aspect of adult life and, in the final analysis, the key to social approval. This was just as true for those who, unable to purchase the badges of teenhood, remained on the fringes of teen culture.⁷¹

The increase in *Star* materials on social development after the war presents an interesting contradiction. Young people were free to fashion their appearance, make decisions with respect to dating and, within limits, manage their own money. But they were not free to chart the pace of growth. Their development was stalled in a number of ways. In discussions on appearance, which focussed most heavily on girls, there was a ready endorsement of more youthful standards of appearance and a general disparagement of aging. A more positive approach was taken with dating. Young people were enticed to prolong this lifestage through the promise of fun and the assurance of success in marriage. The coercion evidenced through money management was more direct. Despite the rhetoric of control and responsibility, young people were confined to a peer-driven range of products, and subject to the watchful eye of parents. These constraints can be interpreted in a number of ways. *Star* writers, quite clearly, saw them as a measure of progress. Released from the demands of adult responsibility, young Canadians were able to mature at a gradual pace. But freedom came at a high price. In contrast to the adult status
awarded wartime counterparts, young people were closely monitored and heavily circumscribed after the war. The irony is that in the face of such controls they should see themselves as more free. *The Star Weekly* was among the instruments of popular culture that helped to create this illusion.
NOTES


2. For an example in which younger and older females are addressed simultaneously see Sandra Lea, “Glamour Wears Long Frocks,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (5 January 1946) Section #2: 11.


12. Trudy Jencks, “Moulding The Teen Age Figure,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (20 August 1949) Section #2: 10.


17. For a discussion on the pressures fuelled by this perspective, for females of all ages, see Beth Bailey, *From Front Porch To Back Seat: Courtship in Twentieth-Century America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1988) 70-73.


28. Only when highlighting the exotic nature of other cultures, a tendency that arose most often in the picture section, would representations beyond that of whiteness appear. See Anonymous, “Costumes Vary Greatly From Nation To Nation,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (2 July 1949) Picture Section: 19; Anonymous, “There Are Gorgeous Costumes In A Balinese

29. For a classic example of this link see Antoinette Donnelly, “Return Of The Natural Look,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (7 May 1949) Section #2: 12.


31. Ibid., 17


40. Hugh B. Cave, “It’s My Life,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (13 November 1948) Section #2: 10; For a discussion on the extent to which young girls were held responsible for the sexuality of both sexes, and the significance of the term “point of no return”, see Beth Bailey, *From Front Porch To Back Seat*, 90-96.


42. For just one example see Garry Cleveland Myers, “Parents! Exercise Self-Control,” *The Star Weekly Magazine* (23 July 1949) Section #2: 8.
43. For a discussion on the gendered etiquette of dating see Beth Bailey, *From Front Porch To Back Seat*, 108-118.


71. For a period discussion on the link between consumption and peer group approval see David Reisman, *The Lonely Crowd* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950) 66-82.
EPILOGUE

In October of 1948 The Toronto Daily Star, The Star Weekly's parent publication, reported on an interesting pair of newlyweds. Marlene was fourteen and her husband, Martin, was just seventeen. "A schoolgirl only a week ago," Marlene beamed with pride as she informed readers of her plans to "stay at home and be a housewife." This representation alerts us to The Star Weekly's limitations and the extent to which the magazine was able to selectively manufacture its vision of reality. Married teenagers, working youth, and young people from a variety of racial, religious, sexual and/or ethnic identities were not part of this reality. Still, there is something to be learned from the images contained within The Star's pages. In the immediate aftermath of war, Star writers expressed little concern with respect to the development of Canada's young. By 1950 young Canadians were front and centre. The emerging perspective held that young people were entitled to a period of relative freedom; a chance to explore, experiment and learn within their world; a time to be carefree. We live with this legacy today. It is important that we understand how it came to be.

The dramatic shift in The Star's representation of young Canadians through the late 1940s gains meaning in and through its relation to the Second World War. Young people assumed a range of adult responsibilities between 1939 and 1945. They entered the workforce, played a significant role in the harvesting of Canada's crops and, in some cases, found their way onto the battlefield. On a less visible scale, they laboured in the home, acted as surrogate parents, and kept the homefires burning. They were responsible, mature, and accountable for their actions. This adult status may explain the absence of discussions on young Canadians in
The Star through the early years of peace. This is difficult to see in the magazine itself since the act of absorption erases all evidence. To establish the theory’s legitimacy we must look outside The Star, to external sources such as the Canadian Youth Commission. The Commission, highly visible and well-respected, openly acknowledged both the adult status of young Canadians, and the extent to which they moved freely in the adult world. It is unlikely that this status changed suddenly in peace.

The theory of conflated age lines is further supported through the work of Doug Owram. While Owram does not tie this merger to the war itself, he offers compelling evidence on the indifference to precise chronological age through the late 1940s. Owram points to the smaller numbers of young Canadians, a consequence of low birth rates during the depression. Fewer young people made it difficult to kickstart a resumption of the ‘youth culture’ that had taken root through the 1920s, before being interrupted by depression and war. It would take swelling numbers of baby boomers, the widespread acceptance of education to the age of 16, and the introduction of television to set these wheels in motion. Not until 1954 would the numbers of Canadians between the ages of 14 and 17 in school exceed the number who were not. Television, the cohesive force that would unite young people across barriers of land, class and custom, did not make its debut in Canada until 1952. Rock ‘n’ roll, the pride of teen culture, reached its heydey in the mid-1950s. Hence, there was little to differentiate young Canadians from their adult counterparts through the late 1940s until broader developments brought them to the fore.

As the postwar 40s wore on, and the ‘honeymoon’ period of unbridled optimism began to wane, concerns with respect to the mental state of adult Canadians surfaced. By 1947, Star
writers were arguing that a rising tide of social problems was undermining the framework of a stable and prosperous peacetime Canada. Coincident with this concern came a heightened interest in ensuring the construction of well-balanced citizens and, not surprisingly, a focus on those about to assume the responsibilities of adulthood. In what way(s) were they being effected by the exigencies of the modern postwar world? What were the long term costs? More importantly, how could they be avoided? An extended period through which learning could take place, both in the classroom and in the wider social world, was *The Star's* answer. If young people matured over a longer period of time, they would be less likely to follow in the footsteps of wayward parents.

The belief that young people were the key to a better world was not new. This sentiment had prevailed in varying degrees throughout the 20th century. But there were extenuating circumstances after the Second World War. Two catastrophic events made the construction of well-balanced citizens appear critical to *Star* writers. The first was the holocaust. The assembly-line murder of hundreds of thousands of Jews, and the complicit acts of the German people, were horrific reminders of the potential for mass psychosis. An entire nation had, it seemed, gone mad. This raised doubts about the human condition and its inherent potential for evil.\(^4\) Second was the atomic bomb. When coupled with the horrors of the holocaust, the potential for nuclear annihilation seemed all too real. If there were people willing to go to the limits of human decency, was anyone truly safe?\(^5\)

As the harbingers of modernity and the next generation of world leaders, young Canadians needed to develop traits that would emphasize their humanitarian tendencies. A longer period of formal education would, *Star* writers suggested, achieve this end. Within the
confines of the education system young people would learn how to defend democratic principles peacefully. In so doing they would internalize a spirit of cooperation and, on a more practical level, build a heightened respect for family values. These essentials stressed responsibility to the wider social order. This might be interpreted as an attempt to recapture the spirit of unity The Star felt was slipping away in peace. If young people developed a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities, Canadians would hold the same values and strive for the same goals, working together as they had done through war.

*The Star’s* message of responsibility co-existed with a contrasting representation, internalized through the informal realm of sociability. Here young people learned that they should be wholly self-absorbed, preoccupied with the pace of their self-development, and continually engaged in the pursuit of fun. They were to be happy-go-lucky and, for the most part, unencumbered by adult responsibility. The teenager was the embodiment of this ideal. By 1950 *Star* writers were remarkably consistent in their representation of this image. With few exceptions, teenagers were white. They circulated in a carefree world where their biggest worries were whether they made the school track team and whom to date on Saturday night. They lived in democratic families with breadwinner fathers and homemaker mothers, had their own rooms, managed their own money and, in theory, made their own decisions. Most importantly, they were thirsty to experience all that life had to offer.

Few young people were in a position to enter *The Star’s* teenage world of chaperoned dinner parties and high school proms. The barriers of class, race, and culture were far too strong. But as a concept, the teen image had widespread relevance. It helped to distinguish younger from older segments of the population and, in so doing, legitimated the perception that young
people should be free to pursue age-graded aims. There are hints of displaced anxiety embedded in this image. In a world that was becoming increasingly more complex, and increasingly more dangerous, a lifestage unencumbered by adult responsibility had psychic value. It was symbolic of prosperity, progress and peace. It was, in short, why the war had been fought.

*The Star Weekly* is one small piece in a very large puzzle. It does not tell the whole story, nor does it tell a balanced story. But it does tell a story. And it told it to a large number of Canadians. Moreover, it told it under the guise of science, bringing the views of leading health professionals into more than 900,000 English-speaking homes each week by the late 1940s. It told it through educators, who argued schools played a central role in instilling essential values. It told it through the mouths of experts, who assured that young people should be embroiled in a dating culture and continually engaged in the pursuit of fun. Did readers listen? It is impossible to say. Their response would, one might expect, be tied to the circumstances, custom, and realm of possibility within any given family. Could the family afford to offer freedoms of this sort? Was there a school in close range? Were suitable dating prospects available? Were there cultural barriers? Did the young person oppose the reinterpretation of what it meant to be 'free'?

This thesis raises more questions than it answers. We have no way of knowing how the images contained within *The Star*’s pages were received. Oral histories would go a long way towards unearthing the full breadth of postwar experiences and determining the extent to which they contrasted with *The Star*’s postwar ideal. A comparison with the opinions expressed in Canadian Youth Commission documents would also prove useful. So too would research into Canadian publications that were more commonly accepted as magazines and, in time, contrasting
studies with American publications. But whatever the outcome of these investigations might be, *The Star* alerts us to one very important point. Through the war and during its immediate aftermath, young people, though not all and not equally, were invested with responsibility. They rose to the occasion. By 1950, magazines like *The Star* were drawing young people into a web of dependence, insisting that they could not function without continuous guidance and direction. When positioned against the backdrop of history, it seems young people may be as independent as they are expected and/or allowed to be.
NOTES


BIBLIOGRAPHY


*Star Weekly Magazine.* All issues between May 1945 and December 1950.


