

Good Housekeeping and Good Patriots: How the American Women's Magazine Industry Aided the War Effort during World War II

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Why Did Advertisers Seek to Influence Women During the War?

While going through some 1940s era issues of *Good Housekeeping*, I noticed that almost all advertising included suggestions as to how women should behave through the duration of the war. I wanted to learn if the American government or the companies producing the ads were the impetus for these war-time behavioral suggestions. I was able to identify that the American government was in fact affecting the change in advertising by offering tax-exempt status for magazine companies and the companies that advertised in the magazines in exchange for influencing behaviors for the good of the war effort through advertising.

Ways Magazine Advertisements Influenced Women

- They encouraged women to seek defense factory work
- They encouraged military service in the WAACs, WAVES, and Army Nurse Corps
- They provided information, such as recipes, that made adherence to food and materials rationing easier
- Many advertisements included a reminder to send care packages to troops
- Casual dating with soldiers was encouraged as a way to boost their morale
- Advertisements provided advice for women acting as head of their household while the men were away

“There is no doubt that magazines should be able to help in the important job of changing food preferences of American women to conform to the rapidly changing supplies.” – D.P. Hanson, *Woman's Day* Publisher



ORDERS OF THE DAY. Flight Officer Gabagan in the cockpit.

The duties of the Civil Air Patrol...
...is Flight Officer Gabagan ready to take off from an Eastern airport. Destination an Army secret. No...

...nd of
THE CIVIL AIR PATROL
...TE SHE...
...ever... it was the gracious
Gabagan. You used to
ntly... on the covers of
...ines... at
...patrol"
...smartest
...ield flying
...s Flight
Gabagan, and you find her in the cockpit
...of a CAP plane on Army missions.
Everything's changed now. Well, not quite everything. Her cigarette is still Camel. "I adore Camel's flavor and..."
... declares.