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Recipe for citizenship: Professionalization and power in World War I dietetics

Kathleen Marie Scott
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Recipe for Citizenship: Professionalization and Power in World War I Dietetics

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This dissertation Recipe for Citizenship: Gender, Professionalization, and Power in World War I Dietetics is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Approved by the Committee, May 2009

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This dissertation is an analysis of the professionalization tactics of white, native-born, Protestant, middle-class women who served with the U.S. armed forces as dietitians during World War I. Through the overlapping rubrics of maternalism, citizenship, and professionalism, I examine the ways in which dominant race, class, and gender ideologies inflected their quest for professionalization. I specifically examine the way hospital dietitians infused their expertise with rhetoric of race betterment and national security to acquire distinct status and authority in relation to other female medical/health practitioners. In this study, I locate the ideological origins of Public Law 36, 80th Congress, establishing the U.S. Women's Medical Specialist Corps, within the cultural sensibilities of American antebellum evangelical health reform movements. Public Law 80-36 (April 16, 1947) authorized Regular Army commissions for dietitians, physical therapists, and occupational therapists. I contend that dietetics, a central force in the rise of the home economics movement, also served as an important portal for women's access to higher education in science and medicine. Finally, I hold that military service was critical to the professionalization of women's labor and claims to citizenship in early twentieth century America. In other words, military service allowed native-born, Protestant, middle- and upper-class, white American women to mobilize, network, and expand the scope of their work, as well as leaven their access to professional resources and political power.
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INTRODUCTION

In 1920, Lenna F. Cooper, the first military dietetic supervisor and dean of Battle Creek Sanitarium School of Home Economics, reported: “Dating from a few months after the entrance of the United States into the war, there has been more of a demand for trained dietitians than the training schools can possibly meet. One college official recently stated that they had had at least six calls for every dietitian they were able to turn out.”¹ In this analysis, I examine white, native born, Protestant, middle-class, American dietitians whose influence transcended far more than just the kitchen. I contend that dietitians struggled for rank and respect in the U.S. armed forces as a means of generating professional credibility and claiming fuller expression of their citizenship. Though the scope of their power cannot be measured precisely, dietitians’ exerted profound and far-reaching influence not just upon patterns of twentieth century dietary habits – but, also on many aspects of U.S. public policy and American culture.

Dietetics, defined by the American Dietetic Association (ADA) as the study of diet in relation to health and disease, was a popular career in America for white, native-born, middle-class, Protestant women at the turn of the twentieth century.² Because dietetics blended several disciplines, accurate statistics for the number of women who worked and identified themselves as dietitians between 1880 and 1930 are difficult to pinpoint.³ When thirty-nine charter members organized the ADA in 1917, ninety-eight

³ Educational opportunities provide one gauge to examine the popularity of dietetics. In 1912, P. P. Claxton, a Bureau of Education Commissioner, asked Benjamin R. Andrews (assistant
people participated; four years later, ADA convention attendance increased to five hundred when members gathered at the fourth annual meeting in Chicago, Illinois. In 1922, Winifred Stuart Gibbs announced, "The hospital dietitian is winning through to medical and popular recognition!"5

ADA membership continued to rise as hospitals and their food departments expanded, creating more employment opportunities for dietitians. By 1957, the ADA reported a membership base of 12,000.7 A decade later, in 1967, E. Neige Todhunter, former ADA president from 1957–1958, commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of the ADA, noting, "In this twentieth century, nutrition developed in full stream. Its tributaries have flowed in from many areas of science and related fields: medicine, chemistry, anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, agriculture, and animal husbandry. These tributaries have their headwaters in history reaching back more than seven centuries."8 Despite the


popularity of dietetics, only three core histories have been published (by the ADA) for dietitians, by dietitians. Dietetics remains understudied by scholars of women’s history and absent from the overlapping ideological rubrics of maternalism, professionalization, and citizenship.\textsuperscript{9}

Before I contextualize dietetics within existing scholarship on maternalism, professionalism, and citizenship, a word on a few brief definitions. First, I employ maternalism as an ideology or a set of political strategies informed by race, class, and gender that idealized women’s place in the home while, at the same time, asserting their influence in the political arena. Second, I interpret professionalism as an ideology and process that advanced the “superiority” of middle-class, native-born, white, Protestant culture and gender systems.\textsuperscript{10} Third, I build on political scientist Kathleen Jones’s concept of citizenship as a membership model built upon white, male elitism.\textsuperscript{11}

In her 1990 book, \textit{Women and the Work of Benevolence: Morality, Politics, and Class in the 19th-Century United States}, Lori Ginzberg challenges maternalism as the major rationale for women’s political activism. Ginzberg demonstrates how reformers refashioned the ideology of benevolence from an analysis of “gender” and “femininity” to an ideology based upon “class” and “efficiency.”\textsuperscript{12} The transition or what she calls the “wrenching shift” from charity to social reform, began in the 1850s and was reinforced


\textsuperscript{11} “Identification of citizens and the definition of citizenship is derived from the representation of the behavior with particular race, gender, and class characteristics (white, male, elites) as the model of citizenship for all individuals.” See Kathleen Jones, “Citizenship in a Woman Friendly Polity,” \textit{Signs} 15, no. 4 (summer, 1990).

on corporate footing by the sanitary elite and the U.S. Sanitary Commission during the Civil War. The implementation of diet kitchens by Civil War nurses captures the spirit of this transition. Throughout the war, nurses incorporated diet as a crucial part of the medical treatment for their patients. They established diet kitchens in and around military hospitals, camps, and cantonments and prepared special diets for those suffering from disease, injury, or illness. They also ministered to soldiers at “Refreshment Saloons.” In Philadelphia, for example, women labored in the “Kitchen Apartment” of the Union Volunteer Refreshment Saloon; they recorded serving more than 800,000 soldiers and over 1,025,000 meals.

Several notable Civil War nursing leaders employed dietary methods in their care for the sick. Florence Nightingale came to the United States after conducting experimental diet kitchens during the Crimean War (1854–1856). When the U.S. Secretary of War called upon Nightingale to report on her statistics and methods at Scutari, she agreed to play an advisory role in the creation of the Women’s Central Relief Association, the forerunner of the Sanitary Commission. Similarly, Civil War nurse Sarah “Annie” Turner Wittenmyer, the first president of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) established special diet kitchens in her relief work in Iowa. According to the Third Annual Report of the U.S. Christian Commission of 1865, “First adopted in 1864 for the western branch of the army, these diet kitchens proved so

13 “By the 1870s and 1880s, the rhetoric and goals of reform had drastically altered," Ginzberg writes, “an entirely different context characterized post-war benevolence.” She examines the political tactics used by women in different social groups and different settings and looks at the ways they adapted their broad spectrum of reform efforts to suit a “new class-stratified and class-conscious society.” According to Ginzberg, the Civil War stripped away the language of benevolence and heightened the visibility and focus of women’s political reform efforts. See Ginzberg, Women and the Work of Benevolence, 104.
successful that in the following year, they were extended to the armies of the east.”

Civil War nurse Adelaide W. Smith also recalled her efforts with the diet kitchen at Bedloe’s (Liberty) Island: “The ladies of the Park Barracks Association ... somehow heard of my work, and a committee waited upon me with an invitation to accompany them ... they wished me to take charge of their ‘diet kitchen.’” Smith agreed, but only if she could operate the diet kitchen without interference from the Ladies of the Park Barracks Association. “This being volunteer work,” Smith recalled, “I wrote the next day, saying that I would take charge of the kitchen on one condition—namely, that I should have no interference or direction from any member of the Association. This they thought rather severe, but it was my ultimatum.” Nightingale, Wittenmyer, and Smith personified a new spirit of reform with new venues and strategies, supplanting charity with skilled expertise.

After the Civil War, the wheels of several important transformations were in motion. New forms of women’s political activism eroded the separate political culture for the sexes and marked a distinct shift away from the nineteenth-century doctrine of

18 Smith, Reminiscences of an Army Nurse During the Civil War, 33. 
19 In Habits of Compassion: Irish Catholic Nuns and the Origins of New York’s Welfare State, Maureen Fitzgerald analyzes the confrontations in welfare reform between Irish Catholic nuns and middle-class, Protestant women. It is worth noting that dietitians may have been one of many middle-class, white, native-born, Protestant female professional groups to proletarianize the work of Catholic nuns. For example, home economists credit the Children’s Aid Society (CAS) as the first organization to distribute “penny lunches” to children in poor New York City neighborhoods. They point to the CAS as the precursor of public lunch programs. The CAS targeted the “deplorable conditions of malnutrition” as the source of poverty and crime; children, they asserted, experienced “behavior problems, mental sluggishness, inattentiveness, etc., due to the lack of food.” At the turn of the century, dietitians campaigned for public lunch programs. Emma Smedley, the director of the Department of School Lunches at Philadelphia, was named one of eight officers at the 1917 ADA charter meeting in Cleveland. Dr. Mary deGarmo Bryan also “carried the flame” in the campaign for federal funding for public lunches. Bryan, a World War I dietitian, served as ADA president from 1920–1922; she is credited with the implementation of a $50 million federal program to provide school lunches in 25,000 communities. See Maureen Fitzgerald, Habits of Compassion: Irish Catholic Nuns and the Origins of New York’s Welfare State, 1830–1920. Urbana: University of Illinois, 2006. See also “Dr. Mary Bryan, Nutritionist and Ex-Columbia Professor Dies at 94,” New York Times, 3 Jun 1986, [n.p.].
Female reformers looked for answers through scientific strategies and institutional venues. That said, some white, native-born, middle-class, Protestant women adopted a maternalist approach that, in the name of motherhood, scientific advances must be shared with the “less fortunate”, such as the poor and working classes, non-dominant groups, immigrant families, and homeless children.

Maternalism shaped the political and cultural environment within which dietitians labored to professionalize. In other words, private responsibilities such as motherhood, and in this case cooking, became matters of public policy. In terms of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century America, historian Paula Baker argues that the U.S. government began to usurp the functions of the home and social policy increasingly became a matter of public policy. Urbanization and industrialization broke down political loyalties formerly sustained by community ties. By the 1870s, historian Robert Weibe

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22 Molly Ladd Taylor defines maternalism as a social movement and “a specific ideology whose adherents hold: (1) that there is a uniquely feminine value system based on care and nurturance; (2) that mothers perform a service to the state by raising citizen workers; (3) that women are united across class, race, and nation by their common capacity for motherhood and therefore share a responsibility for all the world’s children; and (4) that ideally men should earn a family wage to support their ‘dependent’ wives and children at home.” Linda Gordon defines the maternalist character in accordance with three basic tenets. They are 1) associated with “women’s interests with children’s interests” or those “who regarded domestic and family responsibilities and identities as essential to the vast majority of women and to the social order”; 2) those who “imagined themselves in a motherly role to support the poor ... as in need of moral and spiritual as well as economic help”; or 3) those who “believed that it was their work, experience, and/or socialization as mothers that made women uniquely able to lead certain kinds of reform campaigns and made others deserving of help.” See Linda Gordon, Pitted but Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 55, fn78; Seth Koven and Sonya Michel, “Womanly Duties: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of the Welfare State in France, Great Britain, and the United States, 1880–1920,” American Historical Review 95 (October 1990): 1076–1108, and Seth Koven and Sonya Michel, eds. Mothers of a New World: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States (New York: Routledge, 1993), 2; Taylor, Mother Work, 3.
argues, American society was in the process of shifting from a nation of "island communities" to a "unified society."  \(^\text{23}\)

It is important to distinguish "maternalism" as an ideology or a set of political strategies from turn-of-the-century women reformers who have been identified or categorized as "maternalists."  \(^\text{24}\) World War I hospital dietitians do not necessarily fit the standard definition of "maternalists" because they rarely used the language of motherhood or emphasized their differences as women to advance their goals. Rather, they used the language of national security and race betterment and identified as members of the medical profession, and they sided with predominately male physicians and military leaders.  \(^\text{25}\)

Military mobilization ignited an explosion of black and white, marginally middle-class women's activism at the turn of the twentieth century. And, to a degree, military mobilization has been overlooked as a factor in the rise of women's reform. Some locals feared the threat of disease, immorality, and intemperance posed by the establishment of military installations. Franklin Martin of the Council of National Defense asserted, "The triple alliance of alcohol, prostitution, and venereal disease is one

\(^{23}\) Like other members of the middle class, many of these women were the children of Civil War veterans, bound by common experiences and shared education, training, and expertise. Several historians have grappled with the complexity of the "new middle class." Robert Wiebe cites the emergence of a new middle class based upon "a new structure of loyalties to replace the decaying system of the nineteenth-century communities ... little noticed in the heat of the nineties, a new middle class was rapidly gathering strength." See Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877–1920*, 111–132.

\(^{24}\) I heed Joanne Goodwin's warning about using "maternalists" as a sweeping category to define women reformers (in contrast, for example, to "feminists") at the turn of the twentieth century. Joanne L. Goodwin, *Gender and the Politics of Welfare Reform: Mother's Pensions in Chicago, 1911–1929* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 7.

\(^{25}\) Maternalist legislation was not necessarily a long-term (or even a short-term) solution to "protect children and mothers and at the same time address the inequities and inefficiencies of an industrial and urban society." Rather, it exacerbated the problem. The absence of universal child care, as Sonya Michel demonstrates, injured poor mothers most severely because it stigmatized them as bad mothers and limited their ability to work outside the home. The logic of female "difference" (and women's biological capacity and presumed cultural responsibility for motherhood) remains one of the most common arguments against the full integration of women in the military today. See, for example, Katherine O'Beirne, *Women Who Have Made the World Worse: How Radical Feminist Assault is Ruining Our Schools, Families, Military, and Sports* (New York: Sentinel, 2006), 113–38.
of the most dangerous enemies behind the lines.”

The presence of racially integrated troops also fanned a fear of race suicide among some local whites. The mobilization of women in and around military installations directly influenced concrete political change. In terms of the 1921 Sheppard Towner Maternity and Infancy Act, for example, debates over child welfare and the placement of child welfare research stations were most heated in the agricultural regions where organized programs in domestic science/home economics and military mobilization converged.

Wartime mobilization also forced public discussion of the unique alcoves of specialization within the emerging female medical hierarchy. On the eve of U.S. involvement in World War I, military nurses worked a wide range of domestic reproductive labor in the hospital setting. Their occupational tools ranged from ether rags and surgical dressings to bedpans and broomsticks. Caps, capes, hosiery, and stripes indicated a vague female nursing hierarchy existed within the Army (1901) and Navy (1908) Nurse Corps. The hierarchy ranged from chief nurse, head nurse, surgical nurse, and ward/staff nurse to nurse’s aides. World War I created new dynamics. As Rosemary Stevens observes, “War required organization, streamlining of medical and hospital

28 The Sheppard Towner Maternity and Infant Protection Act (1921) was the first national policy to “tie cultural and gender role conformity to the social welfare.” The government appropriated $1.9 million of federal support to fund local infant welfare work; it “pledged to the mothers of the country all possible knowledge and reasonable assistance affecting their welfare in connection with all of the features of maternity and care of infants.” The act allowed the Children’s Bureau to handle administrative matters and created a new federal Board of Maternal and Infant Hygiene to implement its provisions. The act was repealed in 1929. See Gwendolyn Mink, The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917–1942 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 66–73.
services, the cooperation of different specialists, and the sharing of skills, medical records, and expertise. \(^{29}\) The female medical hierarchy (beyond nursing) emerged within this context. Struggles surfaced among and within circles of female health and medical practitioners for distinct status and power within and in relation to other female health and medical occupations. Female physicians, nurses, anesthetists, occupational therapists, reconstruction aides, and dietitians began seeking rank and recognition for their skills.

The military did not classify dietitians as medical practitioners. Rather, as employees of the civil service branch, they received a salary of fifty to sixty dollars per month. The first circular to specify the duties and status of military hospital dietitians (issued through the Office of the Surgeon General in March of 1919) clarified that the dietitian was responsible to the commanding officer of the hospital, but as a civilian employee and assistant to the mess officer. \(^{30}\)

In their letters to the surgeon general and their superiors, some dietitians called for uniforms, insignia, accoutrements, facilities, pay, rank, postage, war risk insurance, and veterans' benefits. Many of them resisted affiliation with canteen work, voluntary relief organizations, and hostess houses. Dietitians also complained about the lack of professional autonomy, control, and status as the key underlying problems during World War I. They repeatedly expressed frustration over failed attempts to generate respect and define their positions. One woman at Camp Travis noted: "I have been here two weeks as a dietitian, and I find my position a peculiar one. I supposed that when we were sworn in for the period of the war, we were members of the Army Nurse Corps. Now, I find that


we are listed as civilian employees with no military standing." Another dietitian stationed in South Carolina wrote: "The three months I spent at Camp Wadsworth were not as pleasant as they might have been because the status of the dietitian was so very uncertain. Part of the time I was under the chief nurse, and part of the time under a mess officer. There were no rules or regulations concerning me." That dietitians did not receive standardized uniforms also indicated low placement within the female medical hierarchy. According to ADA historian Mary Barber, "some wore the dress prescribed by the Red Cross or the YWCA; others wore the uniform of the hospital in which they trained; all were modestly—and inconveniently—long in sleeves and skirts." After enrollment with the American Red Cross, dietitians could also purchase a "Red Cross Dietitians Badge" for $1.50 from the national American Red Cross office in Washington, D.C. 32

Early twentieth century mechanisms of race, class, and gender (as well as the role of the state in the actively perpetuating and ascribing such mechanisms) manifested through a variety of (both obvious and subtle) ways that could not necessarily have been anticipated. 33 Native-born, Protestant, middle- and upper-class, white women established their own (cultural and scientific) claims to truth and connected dietary discourses with race, ethnicity, and culture. These overlapping connections played out in a variety of arenas (both everyday and institutional), such as "eugenic" better baby contests, controlled studies of human nutrition, U.S. public policy, and even through famous marketing icons that channeled "normative" standards of middle-class, native born Protestant, white womanhood, such as the seemingly innocuous image of "Betty

33 "While the practices associated with racial affiliations may vary quite widely," writes Jacqueline Stevens, "membership in a race depends on reiterations of exclusion and hierarchies that are epitomized in political societies." See Jacqueline Stevens, "Race and the State: Male-Order Brides and the Geographies of Race," *Theory & Event*, 2, no.3 (1998): 1-28.
Crocker” and her mythic African American marketing counterpoint “Aunt Jemima” on labels of ready-made pancake mix.

The contention here is that middle- and upper-class, native-born, white, Protestant dietitians could not (and did not) pursue professionalization without crafting their own forms of knowledge and their own taxonomies based upon that knowledge. Dietitians used their expertise to explicitly set themselves above and apart from other groups in the academy and the military. On a much smaller scale, some even set themselves apart in their own base hospital kitchens. For example, World War I dietitian at Base Hospital No. 51, Mary Taylor Huntgate Bennett (a 1915 University of Nebraska graduate) wrote: “Beside the student from Colgate who had enlisted in the hospital corps in order to drive an ambulance, sat an ex-acrobat from Ringling’s. The cooks who occupied the seats of honor included one handsome Italian, one East Side Jew, a Virginia Negro, and an Anglo-Saxon who had formerly labored in a Kentucky brewery. In addition, there were three German prisoners of war, one Russian, a little homeless waif adopted after his daily pilfering of our garbage cans, and three volatile chattering French women.”

African American women seized the opportunity to agitate for economic and racial equality as wartime demands tentatively disrupted the conventional social, racial, and economic hierarchies. In her 1989 analysis, Black Women In White, Darlene Clark Hine shows how African American nurses resisted overt discrimination by creating their own alliances, professional organizations, and training programs. But, when it came to early twentieth century “dietetic professionalization” per se, African American women encountered the deeply entrenched “Mammy” stereotype of African American women as

34 For more on discipline’s conceptual apparatuses and perspective dispersed throughout the social body, see Elizabeth Lunbeck, Psychiatric Persuasion: Knowledge, Gender, and Power in Modern America, (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 4-5.
domestics and cooks. African American women activists used domestic science education as a vehicle to promote economic opportunity and racial uplift. It is no coincidence, then, that some of the most prominent activists (such as Alice Dunbar Nelson, Lucy Laney, Nannie Helen Burroughs, Mary Talbert, and Mary McLeod Bethune) used domestic science education and vocational programs as a vehicle to promote opportunity and challenge racism and sexism. According to a 1910 New York Times editorial: “It is no worse for a woman to be outvoted by her maids, than for a man to suffer the same fate at the hands of his chauffeur and gardener.... That about the cook, however, is certainly very dreadful—or would be if it were not so amusing.” In terms of the military, where cooking was generally considered a degrading job, white dietitians and African American cooks shared equal status as civilian employees. Helen Christine Hoerle and Florence Salzberg noted that by 1919 a shift was taking place: “Most people have thought of cooks as ignorant, poorly paid women or else overworked mothers and housekeepers.... That idea is gradually dying and scientific cooks, or dietitians as they are technically called, are taking the place of the all too often slovenly cooks of other days.” Such remarks expose implicit racism and sexism and signal the extent to which African American women had to travel on the road to basic civil rights.

36 The significance of the Mammy figure (as an imaginary symbol of white male power in the Old South) has been the topic of several studies. The two sources that I found most useful are M.M. Manring’s 1998 analysis, Slave In A Box: The Strange Career of Aunt Jemima (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia) and K. Sue Jewell’s 1993 book, From Mammy to Miss America and Beyond: Cultural Images and the Shaping of U.S. Social Policy (New York: Routledge University Press).

37 According to historian Louise Newman, African American women’s advocacy of bourgeois respectability and conformity to norms of patriarchy, “was not so much evidence of their class conservatism, however, as it was of their commitment to taking responsibility for racial uplift.” According to Newman, “Racial uplift entailed self-help, racial solidarity with black men (rather than criticism of them), temperance, thrift, chastity, social purity, as well as acceptance of patriarchal authority.” See Louise Newman, White Women’s Rights: The Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 9.


African American domestic science programs expanded during the World War I era. Cooking was not (and is not) a synonym for dietetics. But, cooking was a vital point of emphasis in African American domestic science curriculums. The “Circular of Information for the Seventeenth Annual Session of the National Training School” from the 1925–1926 school year depicts a photograph of eight women in white dress uniforms with caps, working over individual cooking stations under the heading “Domestic Science Class.” The circular also advertised the architectural features of the Domestic Science Hall as one of eight main campus buildings. It housed the departments of Domestic Science and Home Economics and Practical Nursing. According to the circular, Domestic Science and Home Economics prepared women to become “teachers, home makers, field demonstrators, caterers, and domestics.”

Nannie Helen Burroughs’s National Trade and Professional School for Negro Girls (established in 1909) in Washington, D.C., was not an isolated phenomenon.

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40 Circular of Information for the Seventeenth Annual Session of the National Training School, 1925–1926, Nannie Helen Burroughs Manuscript Collection, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. The 1925-1926 circular was the earliest available in Burroughs’s manuscript collection.

41 Though organized by white, northern, Baptist missionaries, Spelman Seminary provides another example of African American women’s rising opportunities in domestic science. In 1917, through funds allocated from Mrs. John D. Rockefeller’s estate, Spelman erected the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Building. Memorial Hall, devoted entirely to the Home Economics Department, was built as a four-room model home with “a chemical laboratory, two thoroughly equipped domestic science kitchens, and a dining room.” According to the General Catalogue, “Cooking classes have always been a prominent feature of Spelman’s work.” At Spelman, dietetics was offered only through two courses intended for teacher training. The first, the “Elementary Course,” ranked with high school and required the same preparation for admission. The second, the “Normal Course,” required a four-year high school requisite and prepared students for a “professional diploma.” The Normal Course, structured as a survey of home economics, incorporated three elements: 1) institutional management; 2) home and social economics; and 3) dietetics. The Elementary Course was structured in four parts: 1) microbiology; 2) home nursing; 3) household management; and 4) dietetics. See 37th Annual Circular of Spelman Seminary for Women and Girls in Atlanta, Georgia for the Academic Year 1917–1918 (Atlanta: Spelman Messenger Office, 1918), 21, 23-24. Mary McLeod Bethune forged a brilliant, tripartite relationship between the African American community, domestic science, and the military in her 1904 establishment of The Daytona Beach Literary and Industrial School for Training Negro Girls in Daytona Beach, Florida. Her early curriculum included reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, cooking, cleaning, sewing, and religion. Bethune also established McLeod Hospital to train nurses. According to Alice Dunbar Nelson, “Bethune, who at Daytona, where her splendid school is situated, pushed forward the work of the Emergency Circle, Negro War Relief
It was also within this context of dietetic professionalization that African American, ethnic, and immigrant women became stigmatized as carriers of disease. In her community study of working-class African American Southern women, for example, historian Tera W. Hunter demonstrated how household workers resisted this stigma imposed upon them by white southerners as carriers of tuberculosis. While there may have been instances of interracial cooperation, professionalization within the white, native-born, Protestant, middle-class female medical hierarchy relied upon the exclusion and subordination of ethnic women and women of color. Dietitians specifically crafted their own journal articles that "scientifically" linked dietary habits and deficiency diseases with specific racial, ethnic, religious, and regional groups. Through the construction of dietary taxonomies, body/weight investigations, racial-ethnic food classifications, even religious, and regionally based food studies, dietitians' set a place for themselves in the banquet or pantheon of the medical profession. As I have mentioned, just because dietetic professionalism promoted the "superiority" of middle- and upper-class, native-born, white, Protestant womanhood, did not preclude African American women from exerting their own forms of influence. In one noteworthy study, Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired, Susan Smith shows how African American activists made the health of their community a matter of political interest, national well-being, and public policy. By linking African American urban and rural public health activism with the health of the nation, Smith demonstrates how African Americans

... Florida was organized into excellent working units, with a particular concentration on a Mutual Protection League for Working Girls. From this it was not far to a Union of Girls in Domestic Service, a byproduct of war conditions that might well be continued in every city and hamlet in the country." See Alice Dunbar Nelson, "Negro Women in War Work," in Emmett Scott, The American Negro in the World War (Washington, D.C. 1919), [n.p.] Domestic science later provided Bethune with an educational platform that blended civil rights and job training during World War II. It is plausible that Bethune is responsible for luring one of the first Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) training facilities to Daytona Beach.

engaged in the formation of the welfare state, not as recipients of aid, but as agents of social change. More important, she links this field of activism to the broader struggle for civil rights.43

The number of African American women who served in or with the military during World War I is not exactly clear. Despite training and education, many African American women during World War I faced hostility as they attempted to engage in “official” war work. As historian William Breen reminds us, African American women in Alabama and Mississippi were not permitted to do canteen work at railroad stations because they were not allowed to wear the canteen uniform.44 Historians Dorothy and Carl J. Schneider estimate that out of the 200,000 African American soldiers who served in Europe, most never saw an American black woman overseas. “During all the years of

43 See Susan Smith, Sick and Tired of Being Sick and Tired: Black Women’s Health Activism in America, 1890–1950 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 12–14. Historically, African Americans have used military service as a strategy for equal rights. During the Civil War, African American men linked their service with the Union Army as an assertion of their status as citizens. Similar arguments were made during World War I. Historian Bernard Nalty illustrates the inextricable connections between race and citizenship and contends that, “Despite the hangings of the Houston mutineers, some educated blacks believed that World War I afforded an opportunity to break the cycle of white discrimination, black violence, and white repression by demonstrating a willingness to fight for the United States ... [some] looked upon wartime military service as a vehicle for the betterment of the entire race.” To be sure, the presence of armed and uniformed African Americans posed a threat to the established social, racial, and economic hierarchies that privileged white men. See Bernard Nalty, Strength for the Fight: A History of Black Americans in the Military (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 107.

44 In 1943, Helen Louise Porter asserted in the Journal of Negro Education, “The majority of graduate dietitians of the Negro race ... feel that especially because of the expansion in the army there should be provision for the approved training of larger numbers of the Negro race.” But, the experiences of African American women in the medical specialties (outside nursing) await further historical analysis. Recently, scholars have started to investigate. For example, in her 2005 dissertation about African American women and dietetic professionalization at Tuskegee Institute, Laurita Mack Burley echoed Susan Smith by categorizing African Americans' dietetic professionalization as a project motivated less by intellectual pursuits than a desire for socioeconomic and political advancement. See William Breen, “Black Women in World War I: Mobilization and Reform in the South,” The Journal of Southern History 44, no. 3 (August 1978): 425; Helen Louise Porter, “Negro Women’s Opportunities in Dietetics,” Journal of Negro Education 12, no.1 (Winter 1943): 17; Laurita Mack Burley, “Reconceptualizing Profession: African American Women and Dietetics at Tuskegee Institute, 1936-1954.” Ph.D. diss., Georgia State University, 2005.
the war,” the Schneiders suggest, “only five or six succeeded” in serving overseas.45 But, the Schneiders’ estimate is artificially low and based primarily upon the most recognizable sources, notably Emmett Scott’s *The American Negro and the First World War* (1919) and Addie Hunton’s and Kathryn Johnson’s 1920 memoirs, *Two Colored Women with the Expeditionary Forces* (1920). *The Crisis* and other African American publications during the World War I years illustrate the mobilization of African American men and women on national and local efforts through their churches, clubs, and schools.

Some black and white women reformers lobbied for reform through the common experience of motherhood and engaged in comparable political tactics through clubs, associations, public health programs, and campaigns. There were, however, fundamental differences in terms of their approach grounded in their distinct experiences. The concept of a male breadwinner, for example, was central to white, middle-class, Protestant gender systems. But, for many African American families, the woman’s income was critical to survival.46 African Americans did not, as a group, argue against the concept of a male breadwinner.47 But, as Nannie Helen Burroughs asserted: “The Negro mother is doing it all. The women are carrying the burden … they have made possible all we have around us—church, home, school, and business.”48 As historian Linda Gordon has shown,

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employment generally meant good fortune for black women, whereas most middle- and upper-class white women interpreted employment as hard luck.\(^{49}\)

Linda Gordon demonstrates how black women health practitioners and reformers created private institutions primarily through private fund-raising and networking.\(^{50}\)

When it came to issues of public health during World War I, however, evidence suggests African American women were fairly successful in acquiring public funds. In Atlanta, Georgia, for example, the city contributed $2,400 as part of the “Blue Triangle” campaign for the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA chapter. African American women’s activism with military camps and installations typically earned modest financial support because city and military officials were concerned with prostitution and venereal disease as a matter of national security and race betterment. Military officials associated these “dangers” with African American communities.

Historian Karen Anderson rightly concludes that women of color have “not simply constructed their lives in reaction to pressure from others ... they actively shaped family relations, sexualities, work roles, and cultural activities reflecting their own

\(^{49}\) Speaking of employment and hard luck, Joanne Goodwin argued in her 1997 analysis of mothers’ pensions that it was a normal expectation for single mothers in Chicago to bring in a wage to complement stingy public stipends between 1911 and 1927. See Goodwin, Gender and the Politics of Welfare Reform, 7. In 1991, Linda Gordon articulated three areas of difference between black and white women’s activism. In her call for a racially integrated approach to welfare history, she points to the “universal” nature of black women’s reform in contrast to white women’s “supervised, means-tested orientation.” Second, she asserts black women had a different attitude toward working mothers than white women. There was less distance (and therefore less condescension) between black reformers and their subjects than white women and their subjects. Finally, she contends that black women employed different strategies to protect against sexual exploitation. Protecting black, working women from sexual exploitation was inseparable from racial uplift. Sexual respectability, Gordon argues, was linked to middle-class identity. Gordon argues that race, class, and gender were so intertwined with black women’s welfare activism and civil rights that blaming the victim only made matters worse. In other words, sexual exploitation was linked to male supremacy and racial domination, and racial domination was the source of black poverty. See Linda Gordon, “Black and White Visions of Welfare: Women’s Welfare Activism, 1890–1945,” The Journal of American History 78 (September 1991).

\(^{50}\) Since Gordon’s 1991 essay, scholars have raised more questions about African American women’s efforts to secure public funding for child care. Sonya Michel, for example, argues that African American women had less hope of securing public funds than white women so they did not necessarily pursue or engage in efforts to secure them. See Michel, Children’s Interests/Mother’s Rights, 34–46, 183.
visions and definitions of empowerment." African American women also linked domestic science to child welfare reform through the rhetoric of citizenship. In other words, reformers invoked the language of citizenship and racial uplift as a goal, but also as a fund-raising technique.

As female civilian employees, with no standardized uniform, and very little authority, dietitians occupied a relatively low place in the female medical hierarchy during World War I. The Office of the Surgeon General distinguished dietitians from kitchen workers on March 8, 1919, with Circular Letter No. 131, which said: "To place a dietitian on the same basis with cooks and maids is an injustice to her and a disadvantage to the hospital in which she is working." White, native-born, Protestant, middle-class dietitians elevated themselves above nurse’s aides, cooks, and kitchen employees by asserting a presumed Anglo-American cultural superiority over non-dominant groups.

The place of dietitians within the female medical hierarchy was puzzling. Some dietitians did not necessarily identify with nurses. Outsiders may have misinterpreted dietitians as nurses, but several dietitians resisted the affiliation. Some dietitians specialized in dietetics through home economics programs; others (including Lenna Cooper) specialized in dietetics through a background in nursing training programs. This occupational overlap caused further confusion over their roles and authority. To set

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52 At the Leonard Street Orphans Home in Atlanta, Georgia, one reporter praised 30 years of work by the home’s superintendent, May Chadwick from Northfield, Massachusetts: “Would it be an inspiration to walk through its light, airy rooms, see the children’s smiling faces, and catch the fine wholesome atmosphere of this real home for homeless children?” This particular orphanage was built on the same grounds used for encampment during Reconstruction by the Federal Army of Occupation. In one call for financial support, an anonymous proponent wrote, “In 1890, another ‘army’ began to occupy the old barracks and this second army ... has gradually captured the hearts of the people of Atlanta.” The orphanage was supported by the “Community Chest,” and advocates employed citizenship rhetoric to lobby for community support. In the Atlanta Constitution, Mrs. Turner Jones writes, “Citizenship is like the chain which is no stronger than its weakest link, or we cannot have weak links if we want a strong community.” Mrs. Turner Jones, “Miss Chadwick Is Superintendent of Leonard Street Orphans’ Home,” Atlanta Constitution, (October 1934) [n.p.].
themselves apart, white, native-born, Protestant, middle-class dietitians situated their expertise at "the point of honor," or the point of contact between the physician and the patient as a mark of distinction and a way to claim authority and power over nurses, nurse's aides, kitchen workers, and domestic servants. They catered to male physicians and claimed an alliance with the medical profession. It was precisely this self-proclaimed affiliation with the medical profession that distinguished dietetics from the broader field of home economics. One Boston dietitian wrote, "There must be maintained a definite, unequivocal position and a steady advance of the entire field." To achieve this, E. Grace McCullough asserted, "The point becomes the point of contact with the medical profession ... the point of honor, as the first feeding aid to the medical case after diagnosis." Dietitians sought to be considered medical professionals in their own right. At Drexel Institute, school officials reported on a more cooperative relationship between doctors, nurses, and dietitians in their 1919 course catalog: "It cannot be too strongly emphasized that this call for women as dietitians opens up to them practically a new field—a new profession. Women dietitians now take their rightful places in the service to mankind, their profession being affiliated with the doctor and the nurse."

By the time the United States entered World War I, dietitians were poised and ready to act. Anxious for autonomy (separate and apart from the burgeoning fields of nursing and home economics) Lenna F. Cooper (1875–1961), the chief architect of the military dietetic professionalization project and co-founder of the ADA, did not mince her words when she asserted that the birth of dietetics brought a "new member ... into the family of the medical professions in the United States." Dietitians' self-proclaimed

alliance with the medical profession is a salient part of this story. This alliance became one of the most significant points behind the creation of the ADA and dietitians’ departure from the American Home Economic Association. How did dietitians legitimize this claim? In contrast to the basic home economic triad (food, shelter, clothing), dietetics focused on food in relation to health and disease. In an era with no insulin for diabetes, no cure for influenza or tuberculosis, no penicillin for bacterial infection, diet was an important technology for medical treatment and the prevention of disease.

The State

Four scholars inform my understanding of the state. First, political scientist Cynthia Enloe defines the state as the central government’s laws, ideologies, and authority—and, by extension, the military sustains, polices, and enforces the state. “There is truth in the notion,” Enloe asserts, “that a state is not really a state without its own instrument of coercion.”

Jacqueline Stevens, the second influential person to influence my understanding of the state, digs a little deeper. She contends that the state clings to terms (such as ancestral ties or kinship, to race, gender, ethnicity, and nationality) in order to manage political majorities and minorities. She holds that the state does not harmlessly adopt, but inscribes, categories such as race, class, and gender. The third scholar to influence my understanding is the state (particularly the multifaceted nature) is

58 For Stevens, political societies create or fabricate membership practices through allegedly “natural” characteristics. “[T]he overlaying patterns of familial and political membership rules,” Stevens writes, “are the ones crucial to the reproductions of the nation, ethnicity, and race that in turn make possible these same intergenerational rules.” Marriage licenses and birth certificates, for example, are basic controls in the management of “reproducing” the state. German sociologist and economist Max Weber labels the state an “administrative organization” that controls the population within the nation’s borders through rules for inclusion and exclusion. But, Stevens is more concerned with the conditions within the state-nation as a “membership organization” in one form of a political society that actually creates majorities and minorities. See Jacqueline Stevens, Reproducing the State (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 9, 43, 4–5; I also benefited from Shannon Stimson’s review essay, “Rethinking the State: Perspectives on the Legibility and Reproduction of Political Societies,” Political Theory 28, no. 6 (December 2000): 822–834.
Margot Canaday. She integrates Weberian concepts of “administration” with Stevens’s notion of “membership” and points out that the state cannot be used as a general synonym for government. Canaday dissects the state through specific arenas such as politics, welfare, national security, and bureaucracy. She unites Weber’s ideas with Stevens’s concepts to define the state as both an “administrative organization” and a “membership organization.” I build on this framework with particular emphasis on national security. Because dietitians fought for rank and membership within the U.S. military officer corps, this interpretation makes the relationship between the officer corps and the state an important point of emphasis. Last, but not least, Samuel Huntington’s 1957 analysis of civil-military relations allowed me to better understand the relationship between the state and the military officer corps. Huntington takes the relationship between the officer corps and the state as his principal focus. He defines the state as, “the active directing element of society ... responsible for the allocation of resources among important values including military security. The social and economic relations between the military and the rest of society normally reflect the political relations between the officer corps and the state.” Huntington bridges professionalism and citizenship or as his title suggests, The Soldier and the State.

If (as Enloe suggests) the military sustains the laws, ideologies, and authority of the central government and (as Stevens suggests) race, gender, ethnicity, and nationality precludes state membership, then how does Huntington’s definition of the state as the “active directing element of society ... responsible for the allocation of resources among important values including military security” inform this analysis? A woman’s admission to the officer corps—an organization responsible for “protecting” the military security of

society—undermines the privatization of obligation and directly challenges established
group of people. Building on the definitions crafted by Enloe, Stevens, Canaday, and Huntington, I interpret the state as an organization with
membership predicated on race, class, gender, and sexuality. The military is the apparatus
used to control membership and police the laws and ideologies of the state. Military
service, then, is not simply a fixed "status" or "activity." It is a dynamic, discursive
signifier of citizenship.

Citizenship and Professionalism

Scholars have engaged in a series of debates about the meaning of citizenship.61
Most agree that citizenship is inherently raced, sexed, classed, and gendered. Political
scientist Ruth Lister notes the tremendous ambiguity of the term citizenship and points to
scholars' tendency to retreat to British sociologist T. H. Marshall's 1949 definition based
on a trinity of civil, political, and social rights.62 According to Marshall, "Citizenship is a
status bestowed on those who are full members of the community. All who possess the
status are equal with which the status is endowed." For Marshall, civil rights (such as
freedom of speech and association) emerged from classic liberal theory and were
established on the basic premise that citizens had a right to limit state power. Political

61 A number of political scientists, historians, and sociologists have analyzed the concept of
York: Vintage Books, 1945); Louis Hartz, The Liberal Tradition in America (New York, 1955);
Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem in American Democracy (New York:
Harper and Brothers, 1944 Reprint 1964); J. G. A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment:
Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition (Princeton, NJ: Princeton
University Press, 1975); Samuel P. Huntington, American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony
(New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981); James H. Kettner, The Development of American
Citizenship 1608–1870 (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1978); Michael
Walzer, Obligations: Essays on Disobedience, War, and Citizenship (Cambridge, MA: Harvard
University Press, 1970); Rogers M. Smith, Civic Ideals: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in U.S.
History (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997); Kenneth Karst, Law's Promise, Law's
Expression: Visions of Power in the Politics of Race, Gender, and Religion (New Haven, CT:
Yale University Press, 1993).

62 Ruth Lister, "Citizenship: Toward a Feminist Analysis," Feminist Review, No. 57 (Autumn
participation or the expansion of political rights (such as the right to vote, to serve the military, and to participate in jury duty) is the second yardstick of Marshall's measure of citizenship. In 1897, long before Marshall articulated this connection, suffrage activist Carrie Chapman Catt called this logic the only argument with the "merit of genuine originality." Catt explained, "It is the claim that the ballot is a privilege that must be paid for by military service. And, since as they say, women cannot and will not fight, they must renounce all claim to the ballot. No opponent of woman suffrage has yet appeared who has not made much of this argument ... an effort is being made to establish in remote customs an origin wherein to establish a military basis for modern American citizenship."63 Social rights, perhaps the most controversial tenet, or the right to economic welfare, is the final element in Marshall's concept of citizenship. Despite the endurance of his 1949 lecture, Marshall's formulation of the rights trinity fails to account specifically for gender and the ways in which women are situated differently from men in terms of their obligations to the state.

In the late twentieth century, debates about citizenship shifted from a discussion of rights to a discussion about obligations.64 This shift highlights an important paradox in the dynamic between gender and citizenship. The military cannot acknowledge women as essential to military identity because the civilian labor force would be jeopardized if war necessitated conscription. As Robert Westbrook points out in his analysis of World War II pinups, military leadership holds the idea of a woman with military rank as a central threat to a man's motivation to fight. In other words, the liberal state does not have a

64 Michael Walzer helped to inaugurate this shift with his 1970 collection of essays titled Obligations: Essays on Disobedience, War, and Citizenship. Fundamentally, Walzer contends that liberal society is bereft of political obligation. Walzer employs a Lockean concept of "liberal political theory" or a citizen's right to disobey or challenge the oppression imposed by rulers of the state. See Michael Walzer, Obligations: Essays on Disobedience, War, and Citizenship (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970), 3.
coherent argument for political obligation. Drawing on Michael Walzer’s critique of liberalism and the absence of political obligation within it, Westbrook argues that women were culturally “sketched” by wartime propagandists as “objects of obligation” worth fighting—and potentially dying for.

Building on Walzer, Westbrook argues that citizens are not obligated to risk their lives for the state, especially if the state has not held up its end of the bargain by protecting the citizens. So, wartime propagandists had to look beyond the “political” for alternative, private forms of inspiration. They appealed to universal moral values and private interests, notably families, wives, sweethearts, and children. Sanctioned by the government and even mimicked by American women themselves, pinups legitimized the sacrifice of service by depicting women’s bodies as private objects in need of protection. The obligation to serve in the nation’s defense, for example, confers the right for a citizen to bear arms. As Linda Kerber writes, “Citizenship is basic to all other claims which individuals make on the state, or the state makes upon them.”

Westbrook’s argument is also revealing in terms of naming practices. While stationed overseas, dietitians were frequently called “home sisters” instead of dietitians. Dietitians pointed out the common use of the term “home sisters” as opposed to their professional titles. This naming practice accentuates Westbrook’s argument about the privatization of obligation through concepts of family and female body protection. Protecting one’s “sister” from the evils of war was part of a larger ideological tradition invoked to inspire men to fight on behalf of the state. This pattern illustrates Westbrook’s argument about the privatization of obligation. Protecting white, American womanhood (or protecting one’s white, middle-class, sister, mother, sweetheart, or child) personified “the American way of life” and became a tactic used to inspire men to fight. As the ultimate objects of servicemen’s affections and inspirations, white American womanhood epitomized the reciprocal (and ultimate) reward for their military service. Robert B. Westbrook, “I Want a Girl Just Like the Girl That Married Henry James,” American Quarterly 42, no. 4 (December 1990): 587–614.

While Westbrook emphasizes privatization of obligation in the context of liberalism, Linda K. Kerber examines the concept of obligation in terms of gender and American constitutional theory in her 1998 study, No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship. For Kerber, the unequal and gendered obligations of citizenship have made women vulnerable to public and private power. Through case studies over time, she demonstrates how women’s relationship to the state has been defined differently for women and for men. Kerber defines military service as a reciprocal obligation to the right of citizenship. “Military service,” writes Kerber, “has infused the concept of citizenship since its origins.” See Linda K. Kerber, No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies: Women and the Obligations of Citizenship (New York: Hill and Wang, 1998), 36, 236.
excused from the obligation to serve in the military excluded women from the corresponding rights of full citizenship.

If military service signifies citizenship, then women’s inability to be recognized as equals in the U.S. armed forces signifies inequality. In Cynthia Enloe’s 1983 book, *Does Khaki Become You? The Militarization of Women’s Lives*, she questions why the military cannot acknowledge women as full members of the military community. Enloe investigates the military’s reluctance to admit they rely and depend upon women and argues that the military must keep women at a distance from the military’s core identity in order to control them. The military depends on women to feed the troops, to wash their clothes, to act as recreational and sexual partners, and to inspire men in the field that their cause is related to their bravery and their ability to protect women and children. If the military gave women rank, they would become part of the military’s identity, and the state would lose their ability to exert power over them. For the military to acknowledge women (in this case, dietitians) as essential members of the military medical team and confer rank upon them would fundamentally undermine both the practical and ideological foundations required to wage war and motivate the citizenry to participate.

In *Creating G.I. Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women’s Army Corps During World War II*, Leisa Meyer analyzes the 1942 formation of the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) and the debates surrounding military officials’ efforts to sustain established racial and sexual hierarchies. Meyer carefully demonstrates how and why creating a space for women in the military fundamentally challenged race and gender power systems. According to Meyer, opponents interpreted a woman’s presence in the military as a direct threat to concepts of “home and family, privatized gender relationships within them, especially to the husband’s status as breadwinner and head of

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household. The military went to great lengths, according to Meyer, to construct a place for women in the military on their own terms (not by the terms of civilian legislators) without upsetting contemporary notions of “masculinity” and “femininity.” I am indebted to Meyer for establishing a complex analytical framework for the interpretation of women’s military service and women’s work within the military. Meyer places gender, race, and sexuality in the larger context of citizenship and illustrates how the presence of military women undermined racial, sexual, and gender hierarchies and the privatization of obligation.

Meyer’s arguments about the American public’s inability to reconcile the categories of “woman” and “soldier” leads me to a corollary point regarding the public’s inability to reconcile categories of “woman” and “professional.” As non-nurses, hospital dietitians walked a fine line as they attempted to establish themselves as medical professionals in the military. Dietitians posed a threat to the masculinity of the medical corps by expanding roles for women outside nursing. Meyer also notes that the medical department functioned as a separate entity with a separate structure and chain of command. Albeit separate from the line, difficulties in reconciling a woman in the military medical hierarchy—outside nursing—continued to swirl in public debates over women’s “proper” place during World War II.

Professionalism, an equally complex ideological system of patriarchy and domination, also shaped the cultural, intellectual, and political milieu in which dietitians were laboring. In 1982, when Joan Jacobs Brumberg and Nancy Tomes coauthored their synthesis about existing scholarship related to women in the professions, they began with a critique of scholars who failed to take into account the entrance of middle-class women into the professional milieu. Robert Wiebe, Burton Bledstein, and Christopher Lasch, for

69 Meyer, Creating G.I. Jane, 19.
example, use buzz words such as “the new middle class,” “culture of professionalism,”
and “the therapeutic state,” but fail to account for the significance of gender as a
definitive element in what constitutes a profession. Native-born, Protestant, middle-
class women’s moves to professionalize have generally been crafted as a story of
“retarded entry,” and their work has often been classified “semiprofessional.”

State power (manifested through institutions, and discourses) builds and
perpetuates the dominant race, class, and gender norms ascribed in professional ideology.
Therefore, conventional frameworks do not fully explain the significance of women’s
labor in the medical hierarchy. To paraphrase historian Barbara Melosh, sociological
and historical frameworks for professionalization lead to basic conclusions “that simply
legitimize professions as opposed to critically examining their structure and functions”; these formulations epitomize professional ideology itself. In the long run, I hold that
dietitians did not (and could not) attain professional status. Yet and still, they established
the conventional hallmarks of a profession. They formed a professional association to
articulate goals, police membership, and govern the acquisition and distribution of
knowledge. They identified their work as a full-time occupation responding to the needs
of the social structure. They established training schools with hospitals and affiliated their

70 Joan Jacobs Brumberg and Nancy Tomes, “Women In the Professions: A Research Agenda for
American Historians,” Reviews in American History 10, no. 2 (June 1892): 275–296; David
Rothman, The Discovery of the Asylum (Boston: Little Brown, 1971); Burton Bledstein, The
Culture of Professionalism: The Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in


72 Samuel Huntington defined a profession as a peculiar type of functional group with highly
specialized characteristics. In his 1957 analysis, The Soldier and the State: The Theory and
Politics of Civil Military Relations, Huntington identified the “professional character” of members
in the modern officer corps as men in pursuit of a “‘higher calling’ in the service of society.” He
distinguished the characteristics of a profession as 1) expertise, 2) responsibility, and 3)
corporateness. Huntington argued, “The modern officer corps is a professional body and the
modern military officer is a professional man.” Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press,
1985), 7. See also, Barbara Melosh, The Physician’s Hand: Work Culture and Conflict in

73 Melosh, The Physician’s Hand, 17.
work with the university system. All students had to meet numerous course requirements and engage in “student dietetic training” or “internships” with accredited medical institutions. These internships had to be approved by the ADA’s oversight committee on Professional Education. They also founded their own literary organ, the Journal of the American Dietetic Association. In addition to the structural hallmarks, they incorporated what sociologist Richard Hall referred to as “attitudinal” elements such as public service, sense of calling, self-regulation, and autonomy in their goals. Dietitians articulated a “higher calling” or the ethic of service as a matter of national security in their work.

But, if dietitians attained the professional benchmarks and enjoyed such popularity at the turn of the century, why did they fail to acquire rank and recognition in the military until after World War II? Cooper called for a separate corps for dietitians as

74 In 1943, Helen L. Porter published the first study about African American training and service opportunities in dietetics; her survey revealed that only one African American hospital (the Freedman’s Hospital in Washington, D.C.) offered an ADA accredited dietetic training course. Only four students were admitted each year. Her critique was important because, as she argued in 1943, “no study has been made concerning the opportunities for preparation for dietetics in both the Negro and white colleges and universities; opportunities for hospital training in dietetics; and the positions available for the Negro dietitian after the completion of her training.” Porter’s 1943 survey revealed, “five Negro institutions actually offer dietetics instruction sufficient to meet minimum requirements as set up by the ADA . . . the remainder of the colleges and universities primarily prepare for home economics and teaching.” She also sent fifty-six questionnaires to predominately land-grant institutions or “white universities that offer dietetics training in an attempt to secure information concerning Negro women.” In the five years leading up to 1943, Porter accounted for nine African American women, six of whom completed hospital training after graduation from college. See Helen L. Porter, “Negro Women’s Opportunities for Training and Service in the Field of Dietetics,” 16.


76 Beth Linker defines a medical “code of ethic” as “a narrative of how doctors codified their relationships with patients and other physicians to maintain a certain standard of moral decency and honesty.” Allied health professionals also developed their own codes alongside the medical profession. See Beth Linker, “The Business of Ethics: Gender, Medicine, and the Professional Codification of the American Physiotherapy Association, 1918–1935,” Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences, 60, no. 1 (2005).

77 The first women to attain commissioned rank in the U.S. armed forces were those appointed in the Medical Corps. On April 16, 1943, Congress authorized the admission of female doctors in the Medical Corps. Nurses gained relative rank in 1920. Physical therapists and dietitians attained relative rank in December of 1942. Nurses, physical therapists, and dietitians did not receive actual commissioned status until June of 1944. The Women’s Medical Specialist Corps, the Historical Division, Office of the Surgeon General, Army Service Forces, Washington, D.C. “The History of the Training of Medical Department Female Personnel, July 1, 1939–December 31,
early as July 1919. It was not until April 16, 1947, however, that her dream became a partial reality. President Harry S. Truman signed Public Law 36 establishing the Women's Medical Specialist Corps and authorizing Regular Army commissions for dietitians, physical therapists, and occupational therapists. If dietetics, as a career field, enjoyed such popularity during the first half of the twentieth century, why did it take so long to acquire full military status? How do we explain this paradox and how do we measure dietitians' cultural and political influence?

Dietitians exercised their power in ways that do not necessarily make sense in the context of standard historical or sociological professionalization frameworks. Three scholars in particular, Barbara Melosh (The Physician's Hand: Work Culture and Conflict in American Nursing), Elizabeth Lunbeck (The Psychiatric Persuasion: Knowledge, Gender, and Power in Modern America) and Allen Berube (Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War II) substantiate this contention. Melosh broke new ground by asserting conventional frameworks distort history because nursing "is not and cannot be a profession" because nurses are women. The hierarchal relationship between nurses and doctors precludes nursing professionalization because professions maintain their authority by controlling the division of labor related to their work. "I would argue, there can be no women's profession," writes Melosh. She situates nurses as workers and locates the significance of professions as exclusionary vehicles of dominant (white and male) class and culture.

Lunbeck analyzes the cultural authority of psychiatry through the programmatic spread of the discipline's perspective. She examines the early twentieth-century transformation of psychiatry as a discipline focused on insanity to one that penetrated

1944." College Park, Maryland, National Archives, Typescript, Accession No. 603/1, File No. 4–81 EA2, 845, C1.
78 Melosh, The Physician's Hand, 15.
everyday life in terms of normality. By looking at the categories and programs psychiatrists used to refashion the field, Lunbeck probes much deeper than the common sociological and historical narratives that have been used to describe professional development. She locates the power of the discipline, not in terms of social control, but at the intersection where "knowledge and power fostered the conditions conducive to the realization of both." Lunbeck employs Michel Foucault's concept of "disciplinary power" as a force (stronger than "juridical power") dispersed through the social body. In other words, Lunbeck does not measure the strength of psychiatry through institutions, but through the spread of psychiatry's perspective and the way early twentieth-century psychiatrists linked their specialty to everyday life in ways they could not predict.

Finally, Berube argues World War II marked a significant shift in military policy and procedure regarding gay and lesbian soldiers. By looking at the power dynamics between administrators, GIs, and the development of modern psychiatry, he tracks a shift in the military's attention from the sexual act (punishable by law) to homosexuality as a mental illness. What is most significant to this analysis is the way he proves the existence of psychiatry's cultural power and the military's ability to expand policies and procedures to maintain the sexual hierarchy and gendered obligations of citizenship. I employ Berube's methodology to examine the cultural power of dietetics by looking at the way dietitians negotiated their roles within three overlapping job categories — nursing, military cooking, and physicians. By analyzing their personal and professional interactions, I attempt to untangle the tactics dietitians used to expand their influence while, at the same time, draw tighter and more distinct boundaries around their work.

Melosh locates nurses at the top of a female working-class elite. Nurses employed job titles as signifiers of authority such as "chief" nurse, "head" nurse, and "staff" nurse. In the hospital industry and in the military, uniform accoutrements (the color of tights or hose, caps, aprons, insignia, stripes, and chevrons) also signified levels of authority within the nursing hierarchy. But, the female medical hierarchy at the turn of the century included more than nurses; the landscape comprised a vast array of occupational specialties ranging from physicians to reconstruction aides.

Women in the female medical hierarchy were also acutely cognizant of class. Despite education and training, class-based stratifications existed within the female medical hierarchy. Dietitians' status as civilian employees with the Service of Supply (not the Army or Navy Nurse Corps or the Medical Corps) technically precluded their official membership in the military medical hierarchy and created tension for dietitians trying to assert their authority. Dietitians selected for overseas duty were initially hand-picked by the chief nurses. According to a Red Cross memorandum: "In the early period the Chief Nurses of base hospital units organized for foreign-service under the Red Cross selected their own dietitians. In some instances these dietitians were already enrolled with the Red Cross. Others were enrolled after they were assigned to the Units."

Prominent nursing leaders (such as Clara D. Noyes, Dora E. Thompson, and Julia Stimson) supported the integration of dietitians in the female medical hierarchy. They were ordered to do so by Jane Delano, chairwoman of the National Committee of the Red Cross Nursing Service. In some cases, strong friendships developed. The relationship between Stimson and dietitian Rachel Watkins, for example, with Base Hospital No. 21 (Barnes Hospital, St. Louis, Missouri) aptly illustrates this point. In addition, the "non-

82 Melosh, The Physician's Hand, 10.
nursing” status of the dietitian and the “higher” status of the chief nurse reinforced mutual friendships. Less is known about the relationship between dietetic supervisor Lenna F. Cooper and Army Nurse Corps Superintendent Dora Thompson, but we do know they maintained desks in the same office space. Noyes, director of the World War I American Red Cross Bureau of Nursing Service, attempted to clarify the hazy status of the dietitian by issuing this statement related to equal pay for nurses and dietitians: “The dietitians are enrolled with the nursing staff and at the same salary of $50.00 per month.”\footnote{“Food and Nutrition Workers,” Records from the American Red Cross, 1917–1934, 330.5, Box 396, Gift Collection, National Archives.} This only led to more confusion. But, Jane Delano’s premonition from August of 1916 ultimately came true. Unless the dietitian served specifically and directly under the chief nurse, there might be “friction and difficulties.”\footnote{Circular from Jane Delano to Chief Nurses, “In Re To Dietitians for Base Hospital Units,” August 5, 1916. Records from the American Red Cross, 1917–1934, Box 396, 300.1, Gift Collection, National Archives.}

To be enrolled with the nursing staff did not necessarily imply she was a member of it. With the exception of the chief nurses, few (including the dietitians) seemed to understand her role. “The place of a dietitian in France,” said Caroline King of Base Hospital No. 116 (Bazoilles, France), “was a strange one.”\footnote{Caroline B. King, “Dietitians, Uncle Sam Needs You!” \textit{What’s New in Home Economics?} 8, no. 11 (1944): 10.} Throughout the war, dietitians commented on being caught between the overlapping territories of the nurses, mess sergeants, and physicians. Mary Pascoe Huddleson, a dietitian from overseas Base Hospitals Nos. 8, 117, and 214 stated: “The net result of all this was practically nil. For how could the dietitian supervise, lacking the authority to give orders? She could use wile and guile, persuading the mess sergeant to carry out her wishes—an energy wrecking,
energy dissipating procedure; or, she could finally seclude herself in some niche and
cook. Only thus could she be assured that at least the ‘light diets’ would be edible."87

Scholars of nursing history have noted that military nurses experienced more
success than any other group because they did not encroach on masculine job categories
or threaten normative ideas about gender. Nursing historian Susan Reverby asserts the
model of training for American nursing rested upon “the uneasy alliance among concepts
drawn from the sexual division of labor in the family, the authority structure of the
military and religious sisterhoods, and the link between her moral beliefs and medical
theories."88

In a general sense, dietetics differed from the field of nursing in terms of its
relative emphasis on physiological chemistry. According to ADA historian Mary Barber,
when charter members of the ADA gathered in Cleveland in 1917, they “pointed out that
the profession of dietetics was a new one as viewed in the light of science and that any
one engaged in a new or little understood profession must fight constantly against the
human train of abiding by the old until the new is irrevocably proved.”89 Dietitians may
have perceived the connection between moral beliefs and medical theory as the principal
hindrance that locked nurses into their place as caregivers or cooks rather than medical
professionals. By employing scientific rhetoric and aligning their work with medical
profession, they distanced themselves from nursing. In an era when prevention reigned
supreme over cure, dietitians called their laboratories “diet kitchens” and their technique,
“dieto-therapy.” They engaged in each element of Paula Baker’s definition for social

87 Katherine Manchester and Helen B. Gearin, “The Constituent Groups Before World War II,” in
The Army Medical Specialist Corps (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Surgeon General,
Department of Army, 1968).
88 Susan M. Reverby, Ordered to Care: The Dilemma of American Nursing, 1850–1945 (Boston:
89 Barber, History of the American Dietetic Association, 20.
science: “data collection, detached observation, and an emphasis on prevention.” But, they rarely invoked altruism or depicted their work as uniquely feminine in their own personal and professional writings.

Dietetics and Home Economics

Dietetics and home economics share a similar history. Seven of the original 1899 Lake Placid Conference participants were skilled in cookery: Maria Parloa, founder of the Boston Cooking School; Maria Daniell, Parloa’s protégé and manager of the Lake Placid Club; Anna Barrows, editor of the New England Kitchen Magazine; Louisa A. Nicholass of the State Normal School in Framingham, Massachusetts; Emily Huntington, founder of the Kitchen Garden method of teaching housekeeping to children; Alice Peloubet Norton, supervisor of domestic science in the Brookline, Massachusetts, public schools and member of the Department of Household Administration in the School of Education at the University of Chicago; and finally, Ellen Henrietta Swallow Richards, who is credited as the “mother of home economics.” She was an instructor of sanitary chemistry at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and launched her career with the Rumford New England Kitchen and the Boston School of Housekeeping. Richards took the New England Kitchen to the Chicago World’s Fair with the Massachusetts State Exhibit. Caroline Louisa Hunt, the first home economics professor (1903) at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, pointed to Richards (not Sarah Tyson Rorer) as the first dietitian. Hunt asserted, “It was largely through her influence that positions of

dignity for educated women in connection with the preparation of foods in institutions were created and the new profession of dietitian developed.92

Melville Louis Kossuth Dewey, the original Lake Placid host, graduated in 1870 from Alfred University (founded in 1836 by Seventh Day Baptists) in Aurora, New York. Two years later, in 1872, a young woman named Ella Eaton delivered her commencement address at Alfred before she embarked on her journey to Battle Creek, Michigan, to begin the Nursing and Hygiene Program at the Sanitarium. On February 22, 1879, she married the Battle Creek Sanitarium’s superintendent, John Harvey Kellogg (1852–1943). Together, they modeled a new institutional leader, Lenna F. Cooper, as the first military dietetic supervisor.

During World War I, dietitians and home economists worked together on many reform agendas. But, the war also brought differences between the organizations into sharp relief. Some home economists united with federal and state government agencies through the U.S. Food Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In this dissertation, I analyze this relationship through some of the debates between home economists, dietitians, and congressional leaders over the passage of the Smith-Hughes (1914) and Smith-Lever Acts (1917).

Again, the importance of dietitians’ alliance with the medical profession is visible in the way they talked about race. Dietitians invoked contemporary constructions of race/ethnicity and class to distance themselves (on the social and the professional hierarchy) from food workers, domestic servants, and cooks. Such occupations were understood to be the work of African American women and some immigrant women, notably the Irish during the early twentieth century. Through the science of eugenics and

92 Caroline Hunt, *The Life of Ellen Richards* (Boston: Whitcomb and Barrows, 1912), 228. Hunt was forced to resign only five years after her tenure at the University of Wisconsin. I will explain this controversy and the way it illustrates the tension in the process of professionalization in the next chapter.
the rhetoric of race betterment, native-born, middle-class dietitians carved their niche in the labor force by linking their work to the medical profession and pointing to the centrality of diet to racial betterment and positive eugenics. This tactic located or asserted their place on the social and economic hierarchy above other non-dominant groups including African American women, Irish American women, and Chinese American men.  

Applauding the “nearly successful” maternalist vision of Anglo-American female social policy reformers in pursuit of legislation to protect “soldiers and mothers” of the early twentieth century eschews the centrality of race in debates over public assistance in the United States. Such interpretations undermine the historical significance of a “social movement” that spread across most countries in Western Europe and subsequently took on a “particularly robust life” in America at the dawn of the twentieth century. Eugenics, defined as “study of the agencies under social control that may improve or impair the racial qualities of future generations, either physically or mentally,” garnered energetic support in early twentieth-century America because it linked citizenship, professionalization, and power with race, class, and gender.  

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Dietitians’ infused their professionalization project with the discourse of race betterment. One of the most notable American eugenicists, Charles B. Davenport (1866–1944), led the Eugenics Record Office (ERO) at Cold Spring Harbor, New York. The enterprise, defined by Davenport as a site for the “the science of the improvement of the human race by better breeding,” was financed by Mrs. E. H. Harriman, the railroad magnate widow and founder of the elite, white, Protestant women’s youth organization, the Junior League.\(^96\) During World War I, elite young women of the Junior League organized cooking classes and established the first Red Cross “diet kitchen” in the South.\(^97\) By the 1930s, the Junior League proved to be an influential force behind the enactment of sterilization legislation as a means of curbing “degenerate” procreation.\(^98\) One of their most lucrative fund-raising techniques, the publication of regional, high-society cookbooks, continues today.

Ella Eaton Kellogg was one of the first dietitians to interrogate issues of heredity during what Mark Haller has labeled “the first stage of the American eugenics movement” (1870–1905).\(^99\) In 1884, one year after British mathematician Francis Galton (1822–1911), the cousin of Charles Darwin, coined the term “eugenics,” Ella Eaton Kellogg launched a five-day conference at Battle Creek, Michigan, called the “Health and Heredity Normal Institute.” The conference served as a pilot program for a national education campaign to eradicate bad food, drink, and drugs from American homes.\(^100\) Thirty years later, the first annual Race Betterment Conference, funded by John Harvey Kellogg, M.D., convened on January 8, 1914, at the elegant Battle Creek Sanitarium in

Battle Creek, Michigan. Kellogg, a member of the Advisory Council of the American Eugenics Society, invited approximately four hundred men and women of “national prominence” to discuss matters of diet, household cleanliness, and “other phases of domestic economics.” The *Journal of Home Economics* reported the “official” purpose of the conference was to “assemble evidence as to the extent to which degenerative tendencies are actively at work in America and to promote agencies for race betterment.” Conference participants agreed on the importance of “making the ‘average’ American healthier, happier, and more efficient.” What they could not agree upon, however, was how to go about it. Some became infuriated with the conference emphasis upon heredity. Jacob Riis created a moment of tension when, on the platform in front of the audience at the First Race Betterment Conference in Battle Creek, he exclaimed: “The word has rung in my ears until I am sick of it. Heredity! Heredity! Heredity! There is just one heredity in all the world and that is ours—we are children of God.”

Dietitians were one of many groups (among social workers, home economists, physicians, biologists, and chemists) to engage in debate over the principles of eugenics (environmental control) as the necessary precursor to eugenics (genetic control). The debate did not sort smoothly or translate directly into professional alliances. They were unable to reach consensus on the issue, in part because the topic crystallized concerns over race, gender, occupational empowerment, and control. At the same time, the debates over race betterment drew professional boundaries clearer and tighter. For example, eugenicist Paul Popenoe, editor of the *Journal of Heredity*, charged reformers (specifically female social workers) active in infant mortality and baby saving as “a

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means of race *impairment* [italics added]. It is, from a strict biological viewpoint, often detrimental to the future of the race."\(^{103}\)

One of Popenoe's contemporaries, Ellen Richards (1842–1911), was known as the "engineer" of the "modern home economics movement."\(^{104}\) Richards trained in chemistry at Vassar College and Massachusetts Institute of Technology and neologized "euthenics" as a new "science of controllable environment," based upon scientific principles and methods in everyday life to enhance the human race.\(^{105}\) Advances in new agricultural breeding techniques espoused by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Food Administration further complicated the divide. At the Bureau of Chemistry, Chief Harvey W. Wiley did not specifically weigh in on the debate but he alluded to the importance of nurture, not nature, when he said, "Many students of economical and sanitary conditions are convinced that the principal cause of degeneracy is, after all, imperfect diet."\(^{106}\)

World War I reinforced eugenic discourse on several levels. The historian Bernard Nalty shows how, for the first time, the U.S. military during World War I reflected the racial and ethnic diversity of society. The military service of racial and ethnic men—armed, uniformed, and exercising the ultimate signifier of citizenship—threatened to destabilize dominant ideologies about Anglo-American masculinity and brought into question white men's ability to protect the nation and their families. Such concerns exacerbated fears about race suicide. African American club-women, as well as some notable black nationalists (such as W. E. B. Du Bois) also engaged in and

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manipulated dominant eugenicist teachings, discourses of degeneracy, and warnings against the pollution of black purity.\textsuperscript{107}

Wartime demands for healthy, young soldiers and fears over exhausting the reproductive pool of virile, healthy, white, American soldiers added fuel to the fire of eugenic discourse.\textsuperscript{108} Some eugenicists (notably Paul Popenoe) feared the consequences because nations sought to enlist the most physically able and fit young men to the battlefield, thereby leaving a vacuum to be filled by incompetent, sick, feeble, and elderly reproduction agents.

It is not altogether clear how or why the surgeon general specifically accepted Lenna Frances Cooper, a young white, middle-class nurse from Hutchinson, Kansas, as the first military dietetic supervisor. What is clear, however, is that Cooper’s affiliation with the Kellogg family and her distinct Seventh Day Adventist philosophies toward diet, race betterment, and sexual abstinence shaped her world-view. At the Battle Creek Sanitarium, Cooper presumably participated in the daily social routine known as “Hop on the Top” and/or “Sterilized Dancing” where ambulatory patients would gather in formation on the roof at the end of the day and march, with arms at their side, inhaling fresh air.\textsuperscript{109} Cooper also embodied a particular strain of white, native-born, middle-class, Protestant, American womanhood captured by a poem published in the \textit{New York World}:

\begin{quote}
Behold the Belle of Battle Creek, plump of form and pink of cheek

Her beauty is a type so rare, it causes comment everywhere

She needs no powder for her face, she needs no stays to give her grace

Her days with happiness are rife, the secret of her health and life
\end{quote}


Is pure food.\textsuperscript{110}

As Battle Creek's dean of Home Economics and Ella Eaton Kellogg's devoted friend, colleague, and caregiver to her estimated forty adopted children, Cooper infused her dietary expertise with her Seventh Day Adventist background along with distinct ideas about national security and race betterment.

In the first chapter, I locate dietetics as the heir to the antebellum health reform movements. Antebellum health reform in America emerged as part of a much broader response to the advent of an industrial capitalist economy. Incorporating the principles of diet, hydropathy, and physical exercise, the Women's Medical Specialist Corps (WMSC) was originally born in tandem with the rise of the ideology of femininity and within the context of growing evangelical sensibilities in antebellum America.\textsuperscript{111} I also outline the complex transmission of health reform ideas and practices into the Civil War by Sarah "Annie" Turner Wittenmyer (1827–1900) through her special diet kitchens. This approach is significant because several of the problems Wittenmyer encountered with her attempts to implement a national network of Civil War diet kitchens were also faced by Lenna Cooper during World War I. Yet, because of Wittenmyer's allegedly nonscientific, nonprofessional brand of activism, dietitians rarely acknowledged her as a force in their own histories. Rather, dietitians celebrate the contributions of Florence Nightingale. A careful analysis of Wittenmyer's activism is also relevant because she and Nightingale represent broader organizational conflicts between the U.S. Christian Commission and the U.S. Sanitary Commission. In terms of chronology, this chapter begins with the antebellum health reform movement and concludes with an analysis of three formal

\textsuperscript{110} Corson, \textit{The Cornflake Crusade}, 147.

\textsuperscript{111} The ideology of femininity incorporates three main ideas. First, that children required full time care and adult attention. Second, that women had an innate capacity to provide this care. Third, that domesticity would protect women from the "corruption" of the outside world and bring them status and power through their families. See Barbara Epstein, \textit{The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth Century America} (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1981), 81-83.
cooking schools located in Philadelphia, New York City, and Boston in the 1870s and 1880s. The creation of cooking schools in the late 1870s (notably in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia) linked women’s presumed, traditional responsibility in the kitchen to the science of food and looked to government bureaucracies as new institutional platforms for activism.

In her critical 1984 essay about women’s political culture and influence between 1780 and 1920, historian Paula Baker persuasively argues that women exerted political power long before they had rights as citizens. Baker attributes the government’s willingness to take on these challenges to the “transformation of liberalism in the early twentieth century” and the comfortable transmission of women’s activism to public policy.\textsuperscript{112} She asserts that transformation brought separate political cultures based on gender to an end and ushered in the “domestication of politics.” In other words, the type of women’s work that became the means to reform changed over time. Baker appropriately uses the Sanitary Commission and the nursing work of northern women such as Clara Barton and Dorothea Dix as examples of the transition away from the strategy of separate sphere ideology. She demonstrates how women’s tactics changed dramatically over the course of the nineteenth century and into the early decades of the twentieth. As I will show, cooking was—and still remains—a distinct form of cultural work. The cooking schools served as an important venue for Americanization efforts and as a critical bridge to twentieth-century dietetic professionalization efforts.

In 1915, at the eighth annual American Home Economics Association (AHEA) meeting in Seattle, Washington, Dr. Ruth Wheeler, department chair of Household Science at the University of Illinois, Urbana, announced, “Preventative dietetics shall be first assistant to eugenics in perfecting the race, and curative dietetics which shall to a

considerable extent replace what the medical association has called unnecessary and probably dangerous drugs, in remedying disorders of metabolism." In my second chapter, I analyze the work of dietitians in the context of white, native-born, Protestant, middle-class fears over "race suicide" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. I analyze the role of diet and the gendered power struggle in the relationships between advocates of euthenic and eugenic discourses. I also locate eugenics as a critical ideological foundation for the passage of the Smith Lever Act of 1914. This legislation provided federal funding for home economics programs at land grant colleges and universities. The debates among home economists, dietitians, and congressional leaders over the passage of this legislation illustrate a number of distinctions between the AHEA and the ADA. The competing discourses of eugenics and eugenics as well as the shifting alliances between dietitians and home economists, scientists, and physicians are the ties binding this chapter.

In my third chapter, I examine the rhetoric used by leaders of the military dietetic professionalization project to carve a place for themselves in the female medical hierarchy. I analyze the attempts of Lenna F. Cooper and ADA leaders to create an autonomous corps of dietitians, as well as their fight for rank, uniforms, entitlements, and benefits. I investigate the tension between three groups of overseas personnel—dietitians, nurses, and mess sergeants—and the troubles dietitians faced in trying to gain professional respect and autonomy with very little military support and very few supplies. Each competed for respect with (and often distanced themselves from) volunteer organizations such as the American Fund for the French Wounded (AFFW) and upper-class women serving overseas in hostess houses, canteens, and other relief organizations. I also explore and recover the experiences of wartime dietitians and the ways in which

their service launched them into a variety of professional positions with the U.S. government, academy, and food industry.

Finally, in my last chapter, I examine the expansion of dietetics during what Madeline Foss Mehlig called “the age of dietotherapy,” at the 1919 Chicago Dietitians’ Association in Madison, Wisconsin. Mehlig asserted: “Medical colleges are teaching future doctors dietetics, drugs are being superseded by proper foods, many diseases are cured through diet, hospitals are teaching patients what to eat, and infant mortality is being lowered through correction of malnutrition. Infant welfare associations, day nurseries, and special clinics are demanding dietitians for their staffs.” In this chapter, I show how several factors, notably dietitians military service, facilitated organization and networking of dietetic experts from all over the United States. Because of wartime mobilization, dietitians efficiently expanded their reforms through other arenas of dietary work throughout the 1920s. With keen attention to early twentieth century patterns of production and consumption, I measure the cultural impact of dietitians in the context of shifting dynamics between food, advertising, and mass culture. With particular emphasis on the role of dietitians in galvanizing postwar consumer culture and imposing new gender norms upon non-dominant groups, I highlight systems of acculturation and Americanization that played out through foodways. After the war, the ADA facilitated a number of studies specifically focused upon the dietary habits of racial, ethnic, and immigrant groups. I explain why and how these studies relate to larger themes of professionalization, citizenship, and power. Finally, this chapter concludes with the 1928 formation of the American Institute of Nutrition (AIN), cofounded by Cooper's World War I military colleague, Colonel John Murlin.

Dietitians secured an official niche in the military just as the war drew to a close. On November 11, 1918, Army Surgeon General William Gorgas appointed Cooper as the first dietetic supervisor. Her desk was in the office of Army Nurse Corps Superintendent Dora Thompson of Cold Springs Harbor, New York. Gorgas placed Cooper on the payroll as a clerk through the Service of Supply, Personnel Division, with a salary of sixty dollars a month.\textsuperscript{115} Her designation as a “clerk” was more than just a function of pragmatism. Wartime correspondence between Thompson and Colonel Carl R. Darnall of the Medical Corps refers to an 1882 Army regulation warning it would be a “contravention of the law” to place Cooper and the dietitians under a separate organizational category.\textsuperscript{116} The U.S. Army Service of Supply also employed thousands of clerks, stenographers, and translators with comparable salaries. The position was the first of its kind. Cooper left her employers and friends, Dr. John Harvey and Ella Eaton Kellogg of Battle Creek Sanitarium, so she could recruit, train, and assign all dietitians affiliated with the military for the duration of the war emergency. The following day, Americans across the nation woke up to news of the armistice.\textsuperscript{117} 

As a site of contest for power and authority over rank, benefits, and recognition, military service was a key strategy in the process of professionalizing women’s labor. If dietitians reconfigured their strategies by aligning their work with the officer corps, they also usurped the state responsibility for the “allocation of resources,” “important values,” and or “social imperatives.”\textsuperscript{118} Dietitians fighting for military status and rank spoke in terms of science and national security, but not in defense of motherhood per se. They

\textsuperscript{115} ADA Archival Files, ADA Foundation Library, Chicago, Ill.  
\textsuperscript{116} Office of the Surgeon General, War Department Memo, November 6, 1918, from Colonel Carl Darnall to Miss Dora E. Thompson.  
\textsuperscript{118} Huntington, \textit{The Soldier and the State}, 2.
invoked the language of military readiness, national security, and the health of the troops. By fighting for professional status in the U.S. armed forces, dietitians challenged two forms of dominance and expanded the scope of their reform efforts. They traversed two prominent bastions of masculinity—medicine and the military—and functioned within the confines of a rigid race, class, and sexual hierarchy that privileged white, male power. Dietitians found subtle (and some not so subtle) ways to exercise white, native born, Protestant, middle-class female power in their own arena.

The presence of a female military medical officer challenged the gender systems and power relations required to wage war. Their proclaimed alliance with the military medical officer corps was a direct challenge to the government’s militarization or exploitation of their labor.\textsuperscript{119} Their uniformed presence potentially threatened the existence of a voluntary reproductive workforce and destabilized the sexual iconography upon which citizenship discourse is based.\textsuperscript{120}

At the turn of the twentieth century, the U.S. Army Medical Corps was in the process of transforming into a core professional medical institution and a national forerunner in scientific research and technological advance. Military service facilitated the standardization of dietetics and allowed female dietitians to articulate their demands for equal treatment, respect, and recognition. Without the wartime opportunity to challenge the lack of commissioned (or relative rank) status and exact professional recognition in the military medical hierarchy, women would not have had legitimate claims to rank, pay, and veterans’ benefits.\textsuperscript{121} But, as I will show, the cultural power

\textsuperscript{119} Enloe defines militarization as a “process of female exploitation ... a technology by which women are used as auxiliaries to solve problems of manpower, availability, quality, health, morale, and readiness.” Cynthia Enloe, \textit{Does Khaki Become You?}, 9.

\textsuperscript{120} Kathleen Jones, “Citizenship in a Woman Friendly Polity,” \textit{Signs} 15, no. 4 (Summer 1990): 786.

exerted by dietitians cannot be measured entirely in terms of sequential steps toward regular rank or simply their fight for benefits, uniforms, and war risk insurance.

It is important not to press this argument too far; I do not imply professionalization took place without intense conflict and contradiction. The process was not static or absolute. Within the confines of World War I, however, dietitians linked their labor to the state—not primarily through the language of motherhood, but through the rhetoric of national security and race betterment. In so doing, dietitians aligned their labor to the military triumvirate of duty, honor, and country and whipped up the necessary ingredients in the recipe for citizenship.
CHAPTER ONE
ORIGINS OF THE U.S. WOMEN'S MEDICAL SPECIALIST CORPS

When the American Dietetic Association (ADA) compiled its fiftieth anniversary essay collection in 1967, the editors (Adelia M. Beeuwkes, E. Neige Todhunter, and Emma Seifrit Weigley) opened the anthology with Lenna F. Cooper's 1954 article, "Florence Nightingale's Contribution to Dietetics." In this essay, Cooper asserted: "The life of Florence Nightingale (1820–1910) has indeed been an inspiration to women of the past century. Not only did she open the door for professionally trained nurses in the hospital field, but for other professions as well.... It must be evident that Florence Nightingale's recognition of the importance of proper food and diets in the care of the sick gave great impetus to the development of this new profession which now in thirty-seven years has a membership of more than 10,000 in the United States." Cooper aligned American dietetic history with British nurse and statistician Florence Nightingale. Drawing upon her famous moniker, "lady with the lamp," Cooper opined that Nightingale was the "light unto our feet [and, a] great impetus to the development of this new profession." In the same anthology, World War I American Red Cross dietitian Mary P. Huddleson (former ADA president) honored another important figure in the history of dietetics; Huddleson celebrated Sarah Tyson Rorer (1849–1937) as "a great woman and our first dietitian." That the ADA carefully singled out Nightingale and Rorer as fixtures in their labor history sheds important light on the way mid-twentieth century dietitians wanted their story to be told and remembered.

123 Cooper, “Florence Nightingale’s Contribution to Dietetics,” Essays on History of Nutrition and Dietetics, 10.
This chapter is organized into three parts to reflect three critical stages in the development of dietetics over the course of the nineteenth century. First, I locate the origins of dietetics as an occupational field in the United States in the context of antebellum health reform. As I will show, antebellum health reform in America emerged as part of a much broader response to the advent of an industrial capital economy. Incorporating the principles of diet, hydropathy, and physical exercise, the Women’s Medical Specialist Corps (WMSC) was originally born in tandem with the rise of the ideology of femininity and within the context of growing evangelical sensibilities in antebellum America. Ideas about health reform were but a few of many individual responses to the confusion over the emergence of an industrial capital economy. One sensibility in particular, espoused by the prominent Presbyterian minister Sylvester Graham (1794–1851) during the first three decades of the nineteenth century, provided the ideological foundation for Seventh Day Adventists in the establishment of the Western Health Reform Institute. The Western Health Reform Institute was the physical and ideological predecessor of the Battle Creek Sanitarium where the first dietetic supervisor in the U.S. Army, Lenna F. Cooper, attended nurse training school (1901). An obscure, but nonetheless influential figure in the history of the “San,” Cooper guided the establishment and shaped the development of the Battle Creek Sanitarium School of Home Economics throughout the first half of the twentieth century.125

125 Lenna Frances Cooper was deeply influenced and shaped by the mentorship and friendship of John and Ella Kellogg. Before serving as the first dietetic supervisor in the U.S. Army, Cooper graduated from Battle Creek Sanitarium Nurse Training Program in 1901. After graduating from Drexel University in 1908, she returned as the dean of the Battle Creek Sanitarium School of Home Economics. One journalist, writing in the spring of 1930, said of Cooper, “The young women she has trained have gone out into hospitals and hotels and cafeterias as dietitians into colleges and schools as instructors.” In this chapter, I focus on the nineteenth-century origins of dietetics, but an analysis of Cooper’s career and activism throughout the twentieth century will be addressed in detail in chapter three. “Lenna Cooper is Called to New Position: U. of M. Food Director To Superintend Hospital Dietitians,” April 17, 1930, Unidentified Newspaper, Lenna Cooper Historical Files 16-369, Willard Library, Battle Creek, Michigan.
Second, I outline the complex transmission of health reform ideas and practices into the Civil War by Sarah "Annie" Turner Wittenmyer (1827–1900) through her special diet kitchens. This approach is significant because several of the problems Wittenmyer encountered with her attempts to implement a national network of Civil War diet kitchens were also faced by Lenna Cooper during World War I. A careful analysis of Wittenmyer's activism is also relevant because she and Nightingale represent broader organizational conflicts between the U.S. Christian Commission (USCC) and the U.S. Sanitary Commission (USSC).

Finally, I characterize the rise of American cooking schools as an important bridge for the professionalization of dietetics between the Civil War and World War I. In particular, I analyze the role of the Philadelphia New Century Club Cooking School and the New York City and Boston Cooking Schools in promoting dietetic professionalization. The rise of urban cooking schools has received scant attention from historians of the home economics movement. It is important to note that a vast majority of the original 1899 Lake Placid Conference participants were the leaders in scientific cookery and cooking school activism.¹²⁶ The Lake Placid Conferences, a series of ten conferences held at Lake Placid, Morningside, New York, from 1899 until 1908, shaped the field of home economics as a discipline of academic study.¹²⁷ In particular, I focus on Rorer and her Philadelphia New Century Club Cooking School because of her historical legacy with the American Dietetic Association and because Rorer distinctly elevated her work by catering to physicians and aligning her work with the medical profession. More broadly, however, I also demonstrate how cooking schools served as important harbingers of white, middle-class, native-born Protestant culture. As precursors to late

nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Americanization programs, cooking schools played critical roles in cultural reproduction and the transmission of white, middle-class, Protestant, gender norms in the formation of the welfare state. Or, as Fannie Farmer of the famous Boston Cooking-School put it in 1896, “Progress in civilization has been accompanied by progress in cookery.”

World War I dietitians aspiring for rank in the U.S. military rarely employed the language of motherhood as a political strategy to enhance their professional status during the war years. Rather, they aligned their work with military medical professionals and emphasized national security and race betterment as a rationale in their quest for professional respect and recognition. But, this argument does not exclude the importance of maternalism as a critical foundation and broad tradition of thinking employed by the generation of Anglo-American reformers that preceded World War I dietitians and launched urban cooking schools in the Northeast between 1876 and 1882. As I will show, Rorer was somewhat unusual in that she proactively aligned the Philadelphia Cooking School with the medical profession. This tactic resembles what historian Rima Apple calls the ideology of “scientific motherhood.” Apple defines “scientific motherhood” as a concept that retained the maternal role in the cult of domesticity, but increasingly stressed the importance of scientific or medical expertise, particularly in the domain of infant feeding. Similarly, Ella Eaton Kellogg and Sarah Tyson Rorer emphasized the science along with the artistry of cookery. In her most important work, an 1892 treatise titled Science in the Kitchen, Ella Eaton Kellogg argued, “No one thing over which we have

128 Central to the argument that cooking schools presaged Americanization programs is the premise that cooking was (and still remains) a distinct form of cultural work. Historian Maureen Fitzgerald defines cultural reproduction as “those activities, processes, and institutions through which a particular culture and group are reproduced.” Fitzgerald asserts, “[C]ultural reproduction entailed the cultural work evident in constructing large-scale charitable and educational systems capable of reproducing a particular culture even as it was contested externally and internally.” See Maureen Fitzgerald, Habits of Compassion: Irish Catholic Nuns and the Origins of New York’s Welfare System, 1830–1920 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 14–15.
control exerts so marked an influence upon our physical prosperity as the food we eat.... It should be studied as a science, to enable us to choose such materials as are best adapted to our needs under the varying circumstances of climate, growth, occupation and the numerous changing conditions of the human system.” Kellogg also retained white, middle-class, native-born, Protestant prescriptions for domesticity by framing cookery as an equally important art form. Cooking should also be studied “as an art,” Kellogg said, “that we may become so skilled in the preparation of articles selected so as to make them both appealing and healthful.” Rorer also clearly subscribed to the marriage of science and art through the notion of “scientific cookery” and claimed that Philadelphia physicians sought her out for specialized knowledge over food in relation to health and disease.129

ADA charter members and the dietitians who served during World War I emphasized their alliance with the medical profession and scientific community in order to gain professional respect and recognition. As aspiring professionals, they distanced themselves from the rhetoric of charity or benevolence and stressed their alliance with medical and scientific discourses. In the mid-twentieth century, when dietitians began crafting their organizational histories, they situated their past in the context of Florence Nightingale. By citing Nightingale as a predecessor in their professional histories, the

129 Ella Eaton Kellogg, Science in the Kitchen (Battle Creek, Michigan: Modern Medicine Publishing Co., 1892) 21–32; see also Rima Apple, Mothers and Medicine: A Social History of Infant Feeding, 1890–1950 (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987). As I will show, dietitians’ influence in the realm of child welfare continued well throughout the twentieth century. Shortly before his death, Senator Morris Sheppard, the principal sponsor behind the Sheppard Towner Maternity and Infancy Act, championed the first legislative push to secure military status for dietitians in 1939. S. 1615, 76th Congress, 1st Session, presented by Hon. Morris Sheppard, Chairman, Committee on Military Affairs, U.S. Senate, 27 Feb, 1939, A Bill, To authorize the appointment of female dietitians and female physiotherapy and occupational therapy aides in the Medical Department of the Army.
ADA aligned its work with the state and linked its history to the quasi-military status of the U.S. Sanitary Commission.\textsuperscript{130}

Commemorating the ADA’s fiftieth anniversary, leaders traced the work of their predecessors following a scientific timeline based predominantly on European medical discoveries. It is significant that Nightingale was affiliated with British hospitals and the South Kensington Training School. Several leaders in scientific cookery, including Juliet Corson (founder of the New York Cooking School) and Mary Welch (first superintendent of the first domestic economy course at Iowa State Agricultural College), traveled to the South Kensington School of Cookery to learn how to initiate their own programs in the United States.\textsuperscript{131} Cooper and Huddleson anchored the origins of American dietetics to the early twentieth-century history of science and medicine—specifically physiological chemistry and “newer” nutrition.\textsuperscript{132}

The ADA highlighted Nightingale’s influence in order to create tighter and clearer boundaries around its authority and control over food in the military hospital setting. Several factors necessitated the ADA’s embrace of Nightingale and her association with the U.S. Sanitary Commission. Dietitians aspiring for military status could not necessarily recognize the USCC as a guiding force in their history because of

\textsuperscript{130} It is important to note, however, that despite the attention the USSC has received as a quasi-military organization, evidence suggests that in some cases, Wittenmyer also received military support from hospital surgeons for her special diet kitchens. In 1895, she insisted, “There was no opposition to this work. Mr. Lincoln, Secretary Stanton, Surgeon General Barnes and Assistant Surgeon General Wood gave me their endorsement and all the aid I needed.” See Annie Wittenmyer, *Under the Guns: A Woman’s Reminiscences of the Civil War* (Boston: Stillings, 1895), 263.

\textsuperscript{131} Louisa Butler and her husband, Francis Galton, (the half-cousin of Charles Darwin) lived and worked in South Kensington for more than fifty years. Galton’s influence and the role of eugenics in dietetic professionalization will be analyzed in depth in the chapter to follow.

\textsuperscript{132} According to E. Neige Todhunter, Dean of Home Economics, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, “Dietetics and interest in diet trace back to the ancient Greeks and Romans…. Nutrition, on the other hand, is a twentieth century science; it could not arrive sooner because it has been dependent on the development of physiology and chemistry.” E. Neige Todhunter, “The Evolution of Nutrition Concepts – Perspectives and New Horizons,” Lenna Frances Cooper Memorial Lecture (1964), *Essays on the History of Nutrition and Dietetics*, eds. Adelia M. Beeuwkes, E. Neige Todhunter, Emma Seifrit Weigley, 12–13.
its reputation for being highly critical of the army ration, paid labor of women, and the authority of military medical officers. Perhaps most important, the alliance between the military and the USSC elevated the legitimacy and professional reputation of dietetics. Discipline and efficiency separated “good Samaritanism” from specialized, streamlined social science and from the white, masculine power inhered in this rhetoric.

Wittenmyer epitomized the mid-nineteenth-century white, native-born, middle-class, Protestant domestic female American ideal. She emphasized her voluntary work as a comfort to “homesick, hopelessly ill,” and she attempted to extend a mother’s hand with “home food and words of cheer.” In contrast, Nightingale sought to discipline nurses to emotionally separate from the patient at the St. Thomas’s Hospital Training School for Nurses.\textsuperscript{133} Nightingale implemented her model of nurse training at St. Thomas’s Hospital in London in 1860. She personified disciplined nurse training, medical progress, scientific advance, and European professionalism, and she exercised deference (but not servitude) to male medical authority.\textsuperscript{134} According to historian Susan Reverby, “Florence Nightingale never set foot on American soil, yet she profoundly influenced the model for the training of American nurses.”\textsuperscript{135} For twentieth-century leaders of the American Dietetic Association seeking entrance and acceptance to the wage for labor power exchange, as well as professional status, recognition, and respect, their professionalization project required more than the projection of a new female professional ideal. It required the fundamental reversal of hegemonic gender and economic systems.\textsuperscript{136}

Temples of the Holy Ghost

During World War I, 356 dietitians, 748 physical therapists, and 455 occupational therapists served as civilian employees with the U.S. Army. For important reasons that I will explain later, the Women’s Medical Specialist Corps (WMSC), established by Congress on April 16, 1947, was renamed the Army Medical Specialist Corps (AMSC) on August 9, 1955. According to the official 1968 military history of the AMSC, the history of the corps began during World War I, “when a small group of young dedicated women served in Army hospitals both in the United States and overseas as pioneers in their respective professions.” But, I believe the roots of dietetics, physical therapy, and occupational therapy are buried much deeper in the context of antebellum health reform sensibilities that materialized during the Second Great Awakening. The Second Great Awakening is a general term used by historians to describe complex antebellum religious and spiritual transformations brought about by the market revolution and Jacksonian democratic spirit. Prominent figures in dietetic history such as Sarah Tyson Rorer (raised in Buffalo) and Ella Eaton Kellogg (born in Alfred) had familial ties to the commercializing rural areas of western New York—popularly known as the Burned-Over District.

Gramsci (1891–1937) espoused the theory of cultural hegemony as a way to maintain the state in a capitalist society; “In its simplest use,” Williams writes, “it extends the notion of political predominance from relations between states to relations between social classes.” See Raymond Williams, Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society, Revised Edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 144–146.


139 Rorer was born in 1849 in Richboro, Pennsylvania, to Charles Tyson Heston and Elizabeth Sagers. Her father worked as a middle-class druggist or “manufacturing chemist” and moved the family to Buffalo, New York, when Rorer was a child. Women’s educational opportunities in Erie County expanded when more than thirty of East Aurora Academy’s male students left to fight for
“Having virtually disappeared from the canons of medicine during the early modern period,” write medical historians Elisabeth Meyer-Renschhausen and Albert Wirz, “dietetics returned in the early nineteenth century as part of a new nutritional physiology tied to scientific ‘animal production’ and generally, to a new, market-oriented agriculture.” This shift (from a society that cultivated much of its own food to a society comprised of wage-earning consumers of processed food) fostered a spate of dietary reform activism in antebellum America. In the three decades leading up to the U.S. Civil War, industrialization gradually changed the cultivation, production, and distribution of American agriculture and transformed the way Americans thought about pure and processed food. American dietetic history is grounded in a network of antebellum evangelical health reformers who opposed the excessive materialism and competitiveness of a growing food industry. Opposed to the manipulation and adulteration of food through processing and manufacture, the spirit of anticommmercialism in antebellum health reform may have provided one of many platforms for growing interest in early nineteenth-century dietetics. 

the union. The family income was sound enough to send Rorer to school just a few miles from Buffalo. Rorer studied astronomy, intellectual philosophy, and chemistry under graduates of Emma Willard’s Troy Academy. She met her husband, William Albert Rorer, in Philadelphia. The marriage produced two children and ended in separation at the height of her career. Mary Pascoe Huddleson, “Sarah Tyson Rorer: A Pioneer in Applied Nutrition,” Essays on the History of Nutrition and Dietetics, 281. See also unidentified memos, Don Dayer, Historian’s Office, Town of Aurora, New York. Born in Alfred, New York, on April 7, 1853, Ella Eaton Kellogg attended the local school and academy until she was sixteen and soon after, she entered Alfred University where she graduated in 1872 as “the youngest daughter of the University.” (Melville Dewey also graduated from Alfred University in 1870.) After three years of teaching in Harmony, New Jersey, she traveled with her sister from western New York to visit an aunt living in Battle Creek. When her sister became ill with typhoid fever, Dr. Kate Lindsay urged Ella to step in and assist nursing patients back to health. “It occurred to me,” said Dr. Kellogg, “that I should see that young woman and endeavor to enlist her in our work.” After the epidemic subsided, Dr. Kellogg approached Ella and told her about his intentions to start a new School of Hygiene and invited her to participate as a charter member of the school.

141 By the time the U.S. Congress passed the bill authorizing the creation of The Women’s Medical Specialist Corps in 1947, the commercial food industry and the military hospital system
Operating in the context of “new” nutrition, early twentieth-century hospital dietitians distanced themselves from a heritage premised upon the collective principles of health reform. Historian Harvey Green characterized the health activists of the 1830s and 1840s as a “coterie of health reformers—dietary faddists, water-cure specialists, animal magnetizers and electromagnetizers, and physical educators” who “shared in varying degrees an opposition to the established medical profession and held to the common conviction that American culture (ultimately world culture) needed their ministrations because the nation was declining.”

By the dawn of the early twentieth century, however, a significant reversal was well under way. Dietitians had aligned their work with the military medical profession and became critical agents of commercialized food production. At the first meeting of the American Dietetic Association held at the Hollenden Hotel in Cleveland, Ohio, companies in the food industry seized the opportunity to solicit the dietitians’ labor and fund their activities. At the meeting, held in October 1917, Jell-O, Royal Baking Powder, Mellin’s Food, Welch’s Grape Juice, Horlick’s Malted Milk, Fleischmann’s Yeast Company, and WearEver Aluminum set up exhibit displays. According to ADA Secretary Maude Perry, “Thanks to these firms, we had, with our dues, $200 remaining after expenses were paid.” Throughout the twentieth century, dietitians found some of the most promising employment possibilities within the food industry. For example, after relied heavily upon the labor of dietitians and their specialized knowledge over dietary allowances, rations, and nutrition. In 1946, the ADA passed a motion to protest a full-page advertisement in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* for a commercial dietetics course. The following year, the military established the WMSC. In 1947, the ADA polled 7,800 members; 3,462 responded. Approximately 86 percent of the association responses reported working in schools or hospitals; the remaining 14 percent reported working in a wide range of other activities with a median salary of approximately $3,000. Cassell, *Carry the Flame*, 154, 156.


143 Cassell, *Carry the Flame*, 15.
World War I, American Red Cross (ARC) dietitian Bertha Baldwin directed the Food Research department at the Hills Brothers Company, while ARC dietitian Marion E. Rouse worked in the Davis Baking Powder’s domestic science department in Hoboken, New Jersey. In 1930, the *Lincoln-State Journal* reported that ADA cofounder Lillian “Lulu” Graves also worked as a food consultant. The journalist explained: “A new food is to be placed on the market. Its health qualifications are to be nationally advertised. Miss Graves is consulted before the product is sold.”

Antebellum physiological theory and health reform had amorphous, widespread effects and provided the broad foundation for the three primary occupational fields that comprise the Women’s Medical Specialist Corps: dietetics, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. I locate the origins of the Women’s Medical Specialist Corps within the context of an ideological system articulated in the United States by the prominent Presbyterian minister Sylvester Graham (1794–1851) during the first three decades of the nineteenth century. In his late twenties, Graham was an outspoken temperance advocate and achieved notoriety as a lecturer on the “Science of Human Life” in health and disease. His ideas of a unified health reform movement remained nebulous, but he generally emphasized a regimen of clean living through a bland, plain diet and exercise and fresh air and warned against the dangers of stimulants such as alcohol, tobacco, coffee, tea, gravies, and spices. In his intellectual history of Graham’s ideas, historian Stephen Nissenbaum suggests that this “Grahamite” system, premised upon the idea that dietary and sexual stimulation led to debility, ushered in the development of a powerful bourgeois personality. Calling the Grahamite ideas a

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146 During World War I, physical therapists and occupational therapists were collectively labeled “Reconstruction Aides.”
“physiology of subsistence,” Nissenbaum concludes that Graham’s ideas formed the sexual ideology that came to characterize the Victorian age. Evangelical health reform sensibilities, and the “Grahamite” system in particular, may have been one of many cultural responses to larger economic shifts in a society coping with the dislocations brought about by the emergence of industrial capitalism in America. Emerging within the advent of an industrial capital economy, the “Grahamite” system may have offered one of many immediate personal solutions to societal changes that may have otherwise appeared inexplicable.

Over the course of two hundred years leading up to the U.S. Civil War, cooking (as well as many other aspects of women’s household labor) gradually lost traction as symbols of economic value. Historian Jeanne Boydston explains: “Population growth, land speculation, anxieties over property titles, the increasing familiarity of money in market relations—none of these fundamentally affected the economic role or importance of women’s domestic labor. What they did accomplish, however, was a widespread dissociation of wives and wives’ work from the symbols of economic value.” In her book, Home and Work, Boydston theorizes that gender is an essential prerequisite to the relationship between labor systems and capitalism in industrializing America. Specifically, Boydston situates the history of women’s unpaid domestic labor as a central force in the emergence of an industrialized society in the antebellum Northeast. The long journey toward the professionalization of American dietetics was particularly difficult because, like many other forms of unpaid domestic labor, cooking was not associated with the wage for labor power exchange. Boydston makes the convincing argument that the invisibility of women’s unpaid domestic labor was “a structural prerequisite to the

mystification of the wage” and that masculinity and femininity were key factors in the long process of capitalism.\textsuperscript{150}

As productive labor gradually moved outside the home with the rise of capitalism, a significant shift took place in terms of the nature of housework and the attitudes toward that work. This shift ushered in the ideology of femininity. According to historian Barbara Epstein, the central elements in the ideology of femininity included, first, that children required full-time, undivided adult attention; second, that women had a special, innate capacity to provide this care; and that domesticity protected women from the corruption of the outside world, bringing them status and power through their families.\textsuperscript{151} Women themselves, through guidebooks, recipe books, and prescriptive literature, became convinced of the importance of their role in the home and their responsibilities to their families. “The new liberalism,” Epstein writes, “made sense to people who were caught up in an expanding commercial system. In this situation, middle-class [Americans] might at least feel a new optimism and self-confidence, a new sense of their own power.”\textsuperscript{152}

\begin{footnote}{150}According to historian Jeanne Boydston, a dissertation about the professionalization of dietetics would be untenable without acknowledging the critical importance of the development of the wage standard. Cooking is central to the “reproduction of conditions necessary” for the creation of capital. Feeding the paid labor force (or an Army) is a prime example of the way gender systems inform and sustain economic systems. In other words, unpaid domestic labor (in this case, cooking) exists outside of the capitalist mode of production yet remains absolutely necessary for the maintenance and operation of that labor force. For Boydston, the keystone of this logic is the sheer invisibility of this form of unpaid domestic labor. She points to the “enormous importance” that wages had in determining the status of different forms of work in America and to the consequences for people (notably women) whose labor remained outside of this framework. This understanding also draws into question the rhetorical tendency to “conceive of the world as divided into two-sex-linked spheres, sometimes described as a dichotomy between ‘private’ and ‘public’, sometimes between ‘leisure’ and ‘labor’, sometimes between ‘home’ and ‘work’.” Boydston argues that this metaphor of sex-linked spheres closely paralleled the distinctions drawn by Karl H. Marx’s formulations of “productive” and “reproductive labor.” Boydston’s work leads me to believe the professionalization of dietetics would require the reversal of a deeply embedded and hegemonic gender system. See Boydston, \textit{Home and Work}, x, xiii, xiv, xv.\end{footnote}

\begin{footnote}{151}Barbara Epstein, \textit{The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth Century America} (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1981), 81.\end{footnote}

\begin{footnote}{152}Epstein, \textit{The Politics of Domesticity}, 83.\end{footnote}
that allowed people to mediate personal power in a society that ceased to make much sense to them.

“Hygiene” or certain codes of behavior regarding the health of their bodies and spirits gave early nineteenth-century Protestant families a vehicle to mediate certain forms of power and allowed them to play an active role in their lives and their salvation. The term “hygiene” was used as a general reference to describe a lifestyle of prevention and all things necessary for good health. Hygiene required obedience to certain rules of living. Historian James Whorton defines this term as a collective idea that sustained a larger “regimen or systematic code of behavior with respect to diet, exercise and evacuation, sleep and sex—all the habits (including cleanliness) that govern the well being of the body.”

New codes of behavior for good health included some specific assignments from some notable leaders in nineteenth-century American health reform. Evidenced by overlapping leadership in their associations, networks, and beliefs, dietary reform, hydropathy, and physical exercise endured as fundamental tenets in the health reform equation. For example, Nissenbaum contends that Graham left his clearest legacy with the principles of hydropathy or the water cure. Hydropathy, a therapeutic system based on the external application of cold water to various parts of the body, was originally devised by a Silesian named Vincent Priessnitz (1799–1851). It flourished as a popular therapeutic treatment in the United States during the mid-1850s. Joel Shew (1816–1855) and Russell Trall (1812–1877) were two of the most influential American hydropaths. Trall became editor of the Water Cure Journal in 1849 and advocated hydropathy, as well as diet, fresh air, rest, and physical exercise in his medical practice as some of the most important components of healthy living.

Physical exercise was also an important part of the behavioral codes for health reform. It is no coincidence that ninety percent of World War I physical therapists ultimately came from schools of physical education. 154 Many reformers, including John Harvey Kellogg, believed exercise aided digestion, controlled obesity, improved blood circulation, and induced deeper respiration. 155 Similarly, Diocletian Lewis (1823–1886), a prominent Boston temperance reformer and champion for physical education of women, authored a weighty tome promoting healthy eating habits titled, Talks about People’s Stomachs. 156 On December 23, 1873, Lewis offered a temperance lecture called “Our Girls” and articulated a “plan for change” at the Hillsboro Music Hall in Ohio. 157 Lewis’s “plan for change” included opposition to pharmaceutical drugs and the promotion of dress reform and physical exercise in public education. This approach culminated in what historian Barbara Epstein labels the final phase of the female evangelical tradition, the national temperance movement; she describes it as a “movement of social reform … religiously and morally inspired reform” that had its base in Protestant churches. Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) members used the language of home protection to engage in “proto-feminist” politics and later used home protection as a recurring discourse in their arguments for enfranchisement. 158

As part of her leadership with the WCTU, Ella Eaton Kellogg launched a national petition for dress reform in 1885. Kellogg believed dress reform was a critical component of health reform work. “Knowing that the fashion in woman’s dress which

154 Beth Linker, “Strength and Science: Gender, Physiotherapy, and Medicine in Early Twentieth Century America,” Journal of Women’s History 17, no. 3 (Fall 2005): 108.
156 Dio Lewis, Talks About People’s Stomachs (Boston: Fields, Osgood and Company, 1870).
158 For a discussion about “home protection and protofeminism,” see Barbara Epstein, The Politics of Domesticity, 128–137.
requires the constriction of the waist and compression of the trunk of the body, is one which not only deforms the body in a manner contrary to good taste, but results in serious sometimes irreparable injury to vital organs.”

Health reform linked diet, dress, and physiology to religion through the concept of the “body temple.” In her discussion on the history of nineteenth-century health reform sects, historian Susan Cayleff contends, “To varying degrees they stressed the ability of nature to heal when aided by changes in personal habits … and an increasingly critical evaluation of the allopathic management of disease.”

Finally, the question of diet was perhaps the most essential factor in health reform in terms of both physical and moral well-being. *Inner Hygiene*, as the title of James Whorton’s book suggests, had as much to do with internal spiritual purity as it did with the constriction of organs, intestinal health, and proper diet. Ellen Gould White, the Seventh Day Adventist “prophetess of health,” asserted: “Those who will not eat and drink from principle, will not be governed by principle in other things … the proper cooking of food is a most essential requirement. What branch of the education of a lady can be so important as this?” Historian Ronald Walters writes, “Mastery of the diet meant mastery of oneself and one’s destiny.” In other words, dietary reform was woven tightly into the concept of self-control. Mid-nineteenth-century health reform sects adhered to hygienic reform and, as Cayleff suggests, “promoted, with scriptural backing, a concept of religious salvation that included health as an integral part of it.”

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161 Ellen White, *Instruction Relating to the Principles of Healthful Living: Guidebook to a Healthy Lifestyle* (Battle Creek, MI: Medical Missionary Board, 1897), 77–79.
According to Nissenbaum, “Sylvester Graham wished to purge the souls of his generation by cleansing their debauched bodies. In his view, the source of the nation’s woes lay not in slavery but in diet.” Graham advocated a diet of vegetables, fresh fruits, and twelve-hour-old bread made with the whole of unbolted wheat. Graham preached in his Treatise on Bread and Bredmaking (1837) that bakers adulterated the bread and destroyed nutrients. Graham’s ideas endured throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. In the early 1860s, Dr. James Caleb Jackson (1814–1895), a Garrisonian abolitionist, introduced “Granula” as the first cold cereal breakfast food at the Dansville, New York, water cure facility—one of the most popular water cure institutions in middle nineteenth-century America. Jackson developed the Granula while in search of a food that could be preserved with the therapeutic properties of Graham’s bread. He began to manufacture a mixture of “Graham flour and water baked and pressed into thin sheets, broken up, ground into bite-size pieces, and finally, baked again.”

According to Nissenbaum, “The project might never have been revived except for the fact that a family of Seventh Day Adventists from Battle Creek, Michigan visited ‘Our Home’ for a time during 1864 in order to consult with Jackson and learn his methods.”

The endurance and transmission of Grahamite ideas and practices are particularly relevant to my dissertation because Graham’s ideas “were adopted, directly, and virtually intact, by the Seventh Day Adventists.” Seventh Day Adventism provided the religious foundation for the establishment of the Western Health Reform Institute, the predecessor

164 Nissenbaum, Sex, Diet, and Debility in Jacksonian America, 3.
166 Nissenbaum, Sex, Diet, and Debility in Jacksonian America, 152.
167 Nissenbaum, Sex, Diet, and Debility in Jacksonian America, 152.
168 Nissenbaum, Sex, Diet, and Debility in Jacksonian America, 4.
of the Battle Creek Sanitarium, in Battle Creek, Michigan. Historian Jayme Sokolow characterized the Battle Creek Sanitarium as nothing less than “a more modern and epic version of a Graham boardinghouse.” In 1865, James and Ellen White arranged a visiting lecture by Trall and organized the publication of six pamphlets titled *Health, or How to Live*. The pamphlets included reprints from the writings of Sylvester Graham, L. B. Coles, Russell Trall, James Caleb Jackson, Diocletian Lewis, and others. James and Ellen White, founders of the Western Health Reform Institute, primed twenty-four-year-old John Harvey Kellogg for the position of superintendent. Kellogg officially took over the Western Health Reform Institute on October 1, 1876. In 1905, when Dr. John Harvey and Ella Eaton Kellogg projected the Battle Creek Sanitarium School of Home Economics, Lerma Cooper, who later became the first dietetic supervisor in the military during World War I, was selected to manage it.

In 1878, J. H. Kellogg introduced a modified version of Jackson’s cereal grains and called his creation “Granola.” Jackson, who patented the idea, immediately took

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169 Jonathon Butler, “From Millerism to Seventh Day Adventism: Boundlessness to Consolidation,” *Church History* 55, no. 1 (March 1986): 50–64. The transition from evangelical Millerism after the 1844 Great Disappointment fostered the development of Adventism; Adventist scholasticism called for new law and new rules governing social and religious order. Seventh Day Adventists believed in the Second Coming of Christ and celebrated the Sabbath on Saturday. They also promoted strict attention to diet and vegetarianism. Adventism established a vast network of sanitariums and hospitals after an 1866 epidemic began to claim the lives of Adventist church leaders. This epidemic led to the establishment of the Western Health Reform Institute in Battle Creek and began to generate more awareness of health reform west of the Mississippi. Ellen Gould White (1827–1915) advocated dietary reform as one of many components of Seventh Day Adventist religious doctrine. White, an outspoken critic of the professional medical establishment, favored vegetarianism, opposed tobacco and coffee, and (later in life) became an advocate of hydropathy. For an analysis of Ellen White’s health reform philosophies, see Ronald Numbers, *The Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976).


Kellogg to court. Through Battle Creek Sanitarium’s experimental diet kitchens, the Kelloggs launched a uniquely American industry of cold breakfast cereals at the turn of the century. In the History of the American Dietetic Association, 1917–1959, Mary Barber acknowledged the influence of Battle Creek Sanitarium in the promotion of dietetics. “John Harvey Kellogg, M.D., the superintendent,” Barber wrote, “offered his patients as an important part of the treatment what he believed to be a scientific diet…. His service to the profession of dietetics was the school in which many successful dietitians were trained.”

The true origins of the Women’s Medical Specialist Corps comprising the fields of dietetics, physical therapy, and occupational therapy are deeply entwined with the advent of the industrial capital economy and the rise of the ideology of femininity. Evangelical health reform became a particularly significant venue for early nineteenth-century, middle-class, native-born Protestant women to mediate their power at a time when they had little choice but to accept their culturally proscribed roles as moral and physical guardians of their families. Augmented by domesticity and the ideology of femininity, the moral value of cooking (as well as other forms of household labor) slowly displaced the economic value of the work. This gradual shift in the value of women’s work (from economic to moral) contributed to the promotion of the ideology of domesticity and the rise of new sensibilities toward antebellum health reform. Ellen White captured this change when she said, “There is religion in good cooking.” The shift also had the adverse consequence of reducing the economic value of women’s household labor and thereby rendering it invisible.

Civil War Diet Kitchens

In her 1895 autobiography titled, *Under the Guns: A Woman’s Reminiscences of the Civil War*, Sarah “Annie” Turner Wittenmyer reflected, “No part of the army service was so defective, during the first two years of the [Civil] war, as the cooking department in the United States government hospitals.” At the hospital in Sedalia, Missouri, she observed: “On a dingy-looking wooden tray was a tin cup full of black, strong coffee; beside it was a leaden-looking tin platter, on which was a piece of fried fat bacon, swimming in its own grease, and a slice of bread. Could anything be more disgusting and injurious to fever-stricken and wounded patients?” 174 During the U.S. Civil War, Wittenmyer engaged in copious fund-raising campaigns, hospital tours, and speaking engagements to raise money, food, equipment, and support for soldiers, orphans, and widows. Wittenmyer’s interest in the welfare of soldiers began in April of 1861 when camps and hospitals were erected near her home in Keokuk, Iowa. That year, Wittenmyer became active in the local Soldiers Aid Society. 175 It is significant that Wittenmyer implemented a national system of diet kitchens during the Civil War, yet she remains absent from the histories of the ADA and the official histories of the Army Medical Specialist Corps.

The concept behind the Civil War diet kitchen was basic. Wittenmyer personally appointed “lady managers” to prepare special, individual diets based on the soldier’s illness or disease and the prescription of the ward surgeon. Depending on the patient load and availability of staff, some managers prepared the menus themselves. In other cases, they instructed cooks to prepare the food. Wittenmyer emphasized that dietary nurses only superintended the work and reinforced the notion that her women were not cooks.

175 Wittenmyer toured the Sedalia, Missouri, hospital where she found her younger brother, David, suffering from fever, dysentery, and typhoid. It is not clear precisely when she visited her ailing brother at Sedalia. We do know that she was aware of the poor sanitary conditions at Sedalia as early as 1861 based on a letter in her manuscript collection that refers to the experiences of a “gentleman” who toured the “dreadful conditions” that year. Wittenmyer Manuscript Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa.
The USCC supplement to the Army ration consisted of "delicacies" such as toast, chicken, soup, milk, tomatoes, jellies, tea, gruel, and vegetables. In one case, she organized the cultivation of a "sanitary potato patch" in Muscatine, Iowa, that resulted in the distribution of fifteen hundred bushels of potatoes for convalescing soldiers in St. Louis. "Everyone felt as much interest in the potato-field the women had planted as though it had been their own," she recalled.177

"The plan of a system for special diet kitchens came to me—it was in December of 1863," said Wittenmyer, "clearly and definitively, as a flash from the skies, like divine inspiration."178 Wittenmyer's diet kitchens were extremely popular among white, middle and upper class, Protestant women, particularly among those who lost husbands or children during the war. Reverend Bernice Ames, USCC secretary field agent in Philadelphia, wrote to Wittenmyer, "I learn that nothing in our work more interests the ladies than the diet kitchens."179 Another account also cited the existence of approximately one hundred diet kitchens in military hospitals with over two hundred women managers as of 1864.180 That year, a concerned missionary from the Army of the Ohio's General Field Hospital at Marietta, Georgia, had "more than 1,000 low diet patients" and warned Wittenmyer they could not "with our present accommodations supply all."181

The popularity of Wittenmyer's Civil War diet kitchens compel us to question why dietitians do not recognize her activism as a guiding force in the history of dietetics.

177 Wittenmyer, Under the Guns, 59–60.
178 Wittenmyer, Under the Guns, 260.
179 Bernice Ames to Annie Wittenmyer, March 3, 1865, Annie Wittenmyer Manuscript Collection, DMMS25, Box 8, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa.
181 Lou Vance to Annie Wittenmyer, September 7, 1864, Marietta, GA, Annie Wittenmyer Manuscript Collection, DM MS25, Box 5, Folder 2, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa. I believe a "low diet" (often used interchangeably with "light diet") meant a diet for laborers who did not perform work requiring high levels of physical energy.
Several important factors may have contributed to her absence. She did not have "scientific" education or training in military settings or cookery; second, she consistently questioned the motives of those who worked for wages. She was passionate about women's benevolent work and believed wages interfered with the authenticity of Christian missionary work. Though she was emphatic about deference to military surgeons, she frequently challenged their authority, and in some cases, forced their removal from their posts. Finally, though Wittenmyer claimed to have the support and cooperation of both organizations, the Christian Commission (rival to the Sanitary Commission) primarily sponsored her activism. The possible explanation for her absence in dietetic history may reside in the broader organizational conflict during the U.S. Civil War over resources, professionalization, and power between the USCC and the USSC. Agents of the USSC, writes historian Lori Ginzberg, operated with “a passion for efficiency, a commitment to discipline, and a sense of themselves and the class they represented.” By pointing to Florence Nightingale, Cooper distanced dietetic history from health and temperance reform movements and situated dietetics in a quasi-military, scientific, and corporate framework.

182 Historian Maureen Fitzgerald observes in the context of her study about Irish Catholic nuns that the logic of professionalization was inherently tied to paid labor. See Fitzgerald, Habits of Compassion, 217.

183 Wittenmyer declared, “Such carelessness on the part of the surgeon and brutality on the part of men charged with the care of the sick and wounded, were disgraceful!” In a separate case, she succeeded in the removal of the surgeon in charge at the large hospital in Madison, Indiana, for adulterating coffee grounds with logwood and selling the pure grounds for personal profit. Wittenmyer called this situation a “villainous record of cheatery ... he is cheating and starving the soldiers, and selling their good coffee, and giving them a little coffee mixed with logwood and other vile adulterations.” See Wittenmyer, Under the Guns, 172, 193, 197.

184 Throughout her autobiography, Wittenmyer repeatedly cites the Pittsburgh USCC as her most reliable source for kitchen supplies. “I was most generously sustained in this work by the Christian Commission, who turned all their supplies into these kitchens, and paid all the expenses of this service.” They sent her lumber to build the kitchens as well as the “largest ranges on the market.” See Wittenmyer, Under the Guns, 262–263.

Civil War military camps and cantonments figured as an expansive space for reform. Food historian Martin Bruegel said it well when he noted that, "Foodways figured prominently among the tools as well as the targets of reform ... the army exposed every generation of young men to new ways of organizing their daily routine." Like the power and subordination embedded in the discourse of domesticity, white women's presumed authority over the home and (by extension) over cooking carried similar potential for change. This concept, articulated by historian Susan Strasser in her 1982 analysis Never Done: A History of American Housework, operated as a form of "domestic feminism." USCC women gained access to large audiences for reform through USCC diet kitchens. Historian Cayleff makes the important point that by 1864, relatively late in the war, USCC reformers introduced a column called "Soldier's Department" in their journal, Herald of Health, formerly the Water Cure Journal. In this section, writers discussed topics such as, "Gymnastic Training for the Soldiers," "Value of Sanitary Measures in the Armies," "The Deadly Virtues of Army Rations," and "Drunkenness in the Army." USCC reformers believed they could whisper words of Jesus while addressing state institutional problems of diet, poor sanitation, filth, and moral decay.

Historian Jane E. Schultz observed that there was no greater site of conflict and no greater opportunity for women to demonstrate their superiority in the Civil War

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186 By analyzing the diet kitchen as an important, mid-nineteenth-century political space, the efficacy of "separate" sphere ideology in writing nineteenth-century U.S. women's history becomes suspect. I build on Leslie Reagan's notion of "public" and "private" as "dynamic, ambiguous, and interactive." Like Reagan, I also hesitate to employ separate sphere ideology because it only partially explains a fragment of the white, female population's experience and thereby eliminates women with different racial, ethnic, and working-class backgrounds as relevant historical players. See Leslie J. Reagan, When Abortion Was a Crime: Women, Medicine, and Law in the United States, 1867–1973 (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997), 2–3.


189 Susan E. Cayleff, Wash and Be Healed, 125.
hospital hierarchy than in matters and conflicts regarding food. Food was a lightning rod for conflict between medical personnel, surgeons, nurses, ward masters, convalescing soldiers, orderlies, cooks, and volunteers. Given this understanding, it is surprising that Wittenmyer was able to implement more than one hundred diet kitchens and organize the unpaid service of more than two hundred “lady managers” nationwide during the Civil War.

Wittenmyer personifies the overlapping relationships between evangelical religion and dietary reform and underscores women’s mid-nineteenth-century activism in the public and inherently political space of military hospitals. The USCC, headquartered in Philadelphia, took over Wittenmyer’s diet kitchen work in May of 1864 and, as historian Ruth Bordin asserts, Wittenmyer became a household name in America. According to Bordin, she became “nationally known for her soldier’s relief work during the Civil War, her association with Methodist philanthropic enterprises, and her editorship of the Christian Woman, a successful periodical published in Philadelphia.”

After the war, former General and U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant reportedly said of Wittenmyer, “No soldier on the firing line gave more heroic service than she rendered.” Despite the accolades from her contemporaries, Wittenmyer has not received much scholarly attention in her own right.

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191 It is particularly relevant that the Christian Commission was headquartered in Philadelphia. Wittenmyer’s influence may have later been contested within the local network of Philadelphia women’s club activism (specifically the New Century Club) and ultimately in the Philadelphia Cooking School initiated by Sarah Tyson Rorer. See Ruth A. Gallaher, “The Wittenmyer Diet Kitchens,” The Palimpsest 12, no. 9 (September 1931): n.p.
half of the nineteenth century as a State Sanitary Agent, USCC agent, and the first
president of the WCTU, encompassed a wide range of reforms. In 1874, her Chautauqua
peers in Cleveland, Ohio, elected her the first president of the WCTU. Five years later,
she was succeeded by Frances Willard. Though Wittenmyer and Willard embraced
separate leadership platforms, Bordin characterizes the relationship between Wittenmyer
and Willard as “close and tranquil.”

Described by historian Lori Ginzberg as “politically cautious,” Wittenmyer’s
leadership, grounded as it was in a belief in strong centralized authority, led to growing
animosity among WCTU members and pointed to competing visions for the future of the
organization. For the purposes of this dissertation, I illuminate the loyalties
Wittenmyer and Nightingale had respectively to Civil War relief organizations and male
military officials in Civil War hospitals. Wittenmyer and Nightingale personify the
thorny relationships and complex philosophical differences between the USCC and the
USSC. Their loyalties placed Wittenmyer and Nightingale in open and direct conflict
regarding soldiers’ relief and the management of sanitary (and, more specifically, dietary)
reform.

A number of organizational distinctions between the USCC and the USSC may
suggest why most professional dietitians embraced Nightingale, and by extension the
USSC, in ADA history. Ginzberg contends the “rivalry” between these two organizations
“was waged less over actual practices than over two conflicting styles and rhetoric of
benevolence.” The USSC was “state-linked benevolence on a large corporate scale,”

(September 1931): n.p. “A Great Work Done: Death of Mrs. Annie Wittenmyer, the
Philanthropist,” Davenport Democrat and Leader (February 3, 1900), 4. Additional Wittenmyer
materials and correspondence is housed in the Richardson–Sloane Special Collections Center,
Davenport Public Library, and the manuscript collections at the State Historical Society of Iowa,
Des Moines, Iowa.

195 Ruth Bordin, Frances Willard, 80.
196 Ginzberg, Women and the Work of Benevolence, 204.
197 Ginzberg, Women and the Work of Benevolence, 165.
writes Ginzberg. She also argues that the fusion of ideologies of gender and morality fostered nineteenth-century middle-class identity. Here Ginsberg juxtaposes two distinct concepts of gender (one, that the sexes are different; two, that the sexes are the same) as the schism between the middle and upper classes in the broader nineteenth-century social hierarchy.¹⁹⁸

In his analysis, *The Inner Civil War: Northern Intellectuals and the Crisis of the Union*, historian George Frederickson also draws a clear line between the two organizations. The USCC missionaries claimed their system “was not one which depended upon paid agents, but the ‘system adopted eighteen hundred years ago by our Lord,’” Frederickson says in his study. He argues that the elite Sanitary Commissioners, in contrast, were “contemptuous of the Christians because of their ‘sentimentality’ and amateurism, lack of emphasis on rules, systems, or organization.”¹⁹⁹

When female leaders of the Women’s Central Association in New York City, the forerunner to the USSC, approached a prominent group of local men for advice, the men responded by quickly sending a delegation to Washington, D.C. According to Frederickson, the delegation believed “that nothing could be accomplished without the official approval and a satisfactory working relationship with military authorities.” They sought military cooperation, support, and endorsement. President Abraham Lincoln approved the proposal in June 1861 and thereby officially established the USSC. The USSC conducted similar relief efforts and pursued similar goals to the USCC. It inspected sanitary conditions at military camps; offered a provision to nurses, hospitals, and ambulance services; and gathered medical and scientific data. Its standing commission included Rev. Dr. Henry Whitney Bellows, a Unitarian minister and

president of the Women’s Central Association of Relief (WCAR). Bellows served as president; Alexander Dallas Bache as vice president; George Templeton Strong as treasurer; and Frederick Law Olmsted as general secretary. Historian Judith Giesberg argues that USSC women aligned their work with the state to achieve greater access to political power. She believes the USSC “sisterhood” was built upon a national political culture based on an established network of local benevolent women. Despite their alignment with the male USSC leadership such as Bellows, Bache, Strong, and Olmstead, Giesberg contends that women in the USSC were able to retain gender as a central organizing principle.

Wittenmyer was also an influential figure in what her contemporaries called the Orphan Asylum Cause. On November 16, 1865, she founded the Iowa Soldiers’ Orphans’ Home at Camp Kinsman, a former Civil War camp in northeastern Davenport, Iowa. The first group of 150 children left orphaned by the Civil War arrived from Keokuk on the Keithsburg steamboat. Child welfare historian Sonya Michel tells us that Philadelphia Quakers inaugurated the earliest institutional child care, as an offshoot of spinning rooms, at the end of the eighteenth century. By the mid-nineteenth century, distinctions between most women’s child care responsibilities and cooking or “nourishing the family” were nearly inseparable as matters of the home. For many women of the Christian Commission, dietary relief work went hand in hand with child care or orphan charities. Civil War USCC missionary Mary Ribbon explained how they divided and delegated their responsibilities: “Mrs. Futton was there. She is now at the Contraband Camp. Miss Richardson is with her. The former has charge of the children and the latter the kitchen.

201 Michel, *Children’s Interests/Mothers’ Rights*, 20.
department. She appears very well satisfied.” What is most significant about Wittenmyer’s engagement in this avenue of reform is the way her activism for children and orphans years later transformed after the war into the debate over pensions. “As the day nursery movement stagnated,” writes Michel, “the idea of mothers’ pensions—government payments to mothers who lacked other means of support—rapidly moved into position as the predominant paradigm, in the field of child welfare.”

Several connections can be drawn between the post-Civil War campaign for mothers’ pensions and nurses’ pensions. Wittenmyer conceptualized nursing as a natural component of womanhood. Wittenmyer’s strong opposition to the paid labor of Civil War nurses fits within Michel’s observation that criticism of maternal employment and child care often shifted into approval for mothers’ pensions. Wittenmyer subscribed to the understanding that the USCC relied not upon the employment of workers, but on the devotion of missionaries. Paid labor, as opposed to benevolent volunteerism, marked one of the most fundamental differences between the two organizations. Sanitary Commissioners touted their quasi-military status and paid endorsement by government officials as a badge of honor and a symbol of science, discipline, and efficiency. In contrast, Wittenmyer, as an agent of the USCC, believed paid employment undermined women’s presumed natural or innate capabilities for caregiving and challenged the authenticity of their benevolence.

Wittenmyer’s characterization of the logic behind women’s paid labor may have informed her successful campaign to secure nurses’ pensions. The Army Nurse Pension Act was signed on August 5, 1892, as a “Special Act.” The pension, inspired by the Royal Pension Fund supporting British nurses, served practical purposes, but Wittenmyer also believed the act was a step forward toward “dignifying” the field of nursing. The

202 Mary Ribbon to Annie Wittenmyer, February 23, 1865, Annie Wittenmyer Manuscript Collection, DMMS 25, 29–5, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa.
203 Michel, Children’s Interests/Mothers’ Rights, 73.
pension worked as an incentive, advocates argued, to attract a larger pool of candidates to
the profession and therefore raise the quality of care.\textsuperscript{204} But, as a supplemental payment,
intended to substitute earnings of the absent male breadwinner, it also had the long-term
effect of reinforcing the notion that women alone could not support a household.
Furthermore, it reinforced the presumption that (like motherhood), as nursing historian
Susan Reverby suggests, nurses would be expected or “ordered to care” in a society that
did not place a financial value on caring (or placed a low financial value on such caring)
because it was not associated with an acquired skill, but rather with women’s “natural”
proclivities.\textsuperscript{205} In 1889, Wittenmyer became the national president of the Woman’s Relief
Corps and sought to construct homes for retired nurses and for the widows and mothers
of veterans.

Despite broader organizational conflicts, the USCC and the USSC shared a
number of similarities. Deference to authority in the form of hospital surgeons was one of
Wittenmyer’s cardinal rules. It was the guiding principle in the management of the diet
kitchens. Wittenmyer instructed: “Your work in the Kitchen is to assist the Surgeons in
giving comfort and restoration to languishing men, who are in need of carefully prepared
nutritious food … the order of the Surgeon in charge, is the law of the Kitchens, as it is of
all other hospital arrangements … Under the direction of the Surgeon in charge, it will be
your duty to prepare such articles of diet, and only such, as are ordered or approved by
the Surgeons … you will keep open to the inspection of the Surgeon in charge.”\textsuperscript{206}
USCC lady managers of the diet kitchens had to first seek permission from hospital surgeons to
simply visit the patients in the wards or “bring kind words and Christian sympathy and

\textsuperscript{204} “Good Work Well Begun: The National American Pension Fund for Nurses,” \textit{New York Times}
(December 1, 1891), 20.
\textsuperscript{205} Sonya Michel, \textit{Children’s Interests/Mothers’ Rights}, 73–77; Susan Reverby, \textit{Ordered to Care:}
\textsuperscript{206} Ruth A. Gallaher, “The Wittenmyer Diet Kitchens,” \textit{The Palimpsest} 12, no. 9 (September
solicitude” to the patients. Wittenmyer offered a ten-point instruction manual to the managers of the diet kitchens. The manual clearly and precisely instructed all lady managers to defer authority to the military ward surgeons. But, she also emphasized that the women she designated in charge of the diet kitchens carried the keys to the storerooms.207

Supply management was perhaps the clearest point of conflict between the USCC and the USSC. USCC agents seemed infuriated by the government's management and distribution of supplies. In 1862, for example, Wittenmyer said the USSC had not cooperated with the aid societies as “heartily as she could have wished,” but she had heard of no feeling on its part against Davenport [Iowa].208 In letter after letter in Wittenmyer’s manuscript collection, USCC volunteers corresponded with each other before mailing supply shipments and discussed safe passages and roads to transport packages without fear of government tampering or misappropriation. So, diet kitchen supply distribution and management had as much to do, if not more, with determining nutritious food for the patient as it did with procurement and making sure the materials got into the proper hands.209 The issue of diet kitchen management and supply transport and distribution underscored much more significant questions of gender conflict and medical professionalism. According to Frederickson, the USCC and the USSC held divergent views when it came to the distribution of supplies. “The full scope of the

207 Born on August 26, 1827, in Sandy Springs, Ohio, Wittenmyer relocated to Keokuk, Iowa, with her merchant husband, William Wittenmyer, and his eleven-year-old daughter, Sally Anne, in 1850. Despite her northern alliances and her work primarily on behalf of Union soldiers, I believe Wittenmyer subscribed to the classic notion of southern ladyhood described by Anne Firor Scott as a romanticized, mythic, ideal of “softness, purity, and spirituality” in need of male protection. Wittenmyer frequently employed the term “lady” and evidenced sympathy for the southern cause; she noted, “I, too, was linked by ties of blood to the people of the South, and the history of Kentucky was interlinked with the history of my ancestors.” Anne Firor Scott, The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics: 1830–1930 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 4, 7, 15; Wittenmyer, Under the Guns, 187, 261.


commissioners' definition of the disciplined society," writes Frederickson, "came out in their attitude toward the benevolent public ... the spontaneous benevolence of the American people ... [was] a great danger to the discipline of the army which it was their business to limit and control." Henry Bellows and other USSC leaders believed the Christian missionaries' haphazard distribution of supplies undermined military authority. Historian Jane Schultz has argued that women serving as nurses in the Civil War consistently eschewed "medical models of professionalism" as a form of protest against male authority. This form of protest flourished throughout the Civil War because nursing itself was in a transitional, pre-professional stage. According to Schultz, the creation of hospital training schools for nurses after the war reinforced women's position by placing nurses at the bottom of a hierarchy founded on obedience and discipline. 211

Frederickson contends that the Sanitary Commission attempted to discourage "good Samaritanism" by adopting the "much criticized policy of using paid agents rather than volunteers for its relief work." Wittenmyer was clearly opposed to this logic. Letters between Mary Dyer and Wittenmyer serve as a good illustration. In the spring of 1865, Dyer wrote to the USCC from West Pembroke, Florida, with this request: "I would like to get a situation as a nurse and being told that the Christian Commission department was the better place, I write to ask you to use your influence in my favor, to procure for me a situation." Dyer continued: "[A]lso, if you will be kind enough to notice my letter to write me some particulars as to wages, if females travel free & c." Wittenmyer responded, "The CC does not employ female nurses—only a limited number of ladies as

210 Frederickson, The Inner Civil War, 105–106.
212 Frederickson, The Inner Civil War, 106–107.
213 Mary H. Dyer to Mr. Whitney, March 7, 1865, Annie Wittenmyer Manuscript Collection, DMMS25, 19, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa.
missionaries and superintendents of the special diet kitchen work.”\textsuperscript{214} I emphasize Wittenmyer’s use of the term “female nurses” and the phrase “ladies as missionaries.” Dyer’s letter evoked an abrupt response from Wittenmyer, specifically in response to her question related to travel allowances and wages. Wittenmyer disqualified women inspired by potential economic incentive.

Food has historically been a cultural source of comfort and conflict. The topic of food also went straight to the heart of organizational disputes over authority and control within and among Civil War networks of volunteer reformers, paid civilians, Army personnel, and Army medical authorities. The Civil War military hospital was plagued by controversies over hierarchy, rank, and authority. One lady manager asked Wittenmyer to personally visit to assess the situation at Chattanooga’s General Field Hospital. She sought help to resolve conflicts in the diet kitchen. The lady manager complained: “I am much perplexed ... the want of supplies has worked very much against us and I fear will result fatally ... the Kitchen has already been partially taken out of my control, a man being appointed to have a general superintendence of all the Kitchens, and purchase and distribution ... we have suspected him of wanting to take all control out of my hands. But I suppose as an object is the good of the Soldier we need not be jealous of a little authority.”\textsuperscript{215}

World War I American Red Cross dietitians grappled with similar personnel and supply problems as the Civil War diet kitchen lady managers. Military support was not always reliable and, in some cases, tense relationships developed between the medical staff and the women working in the diet kitchens; Mary Ribbon, for example, reported to Wittenmyer on relations at the Nashville, Tennessee, Post Hospital diet kitchen: “The Dr.

\textsuperscript{214} Mary H. Dyer to Mr. Whitney, March 7, 1865, Annie Wittenmyer Manuscript Collection, DMMS25, 19, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa.
\textsuperscript{215} Sophia Wright to Annie Wittenmyer, September 4, 1864, Annie Wittenmyer Manuscript Collection, DMMS 25, Box 5, Folder 3, 10–7, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa.
is very kind to us ... [but] Our Steward I think is opposed to us and this makes some
things very trying. But, instead of entering any complaints I am trying what virtue there is
in 'working wires' [and] 'soft soaping.' You know the many ways of managing these
men [original underline].\(^216\)

In the diet kitchens, female USCC volunteers levied accusations of improper and
immoral behavior against one another. At the end of the summer of 1864, Sophia Wright
tattled on her coworker and expressed sheer disgust over the other woman volunteering in
the diet kitchen. "It becomes my painful duty," Wright wrote to Wittenmyer, "to inform
you that Miss Shepard does not exert a good moral influence among the soldiers. My
influence is thus crippled ... this is a severe trial to me."\(^217\) This problem was common
enough for Wittenmyer to condemn gossip or "evil speaking and intermeddling."
Wittenmyer made it clear in a ten-point circular titled "Instructions to Managers of
Special Diet Kitchens" that she considered gossip to be an unacceptable behavior in a
hospital situation.\(^218\)

Reformers linked alcohol abuse to the degradation of morals, poor public health,
and the breakdown of the family, and most agreed that alcohol fueled prostitution, as
well. Whether or not alcohol consumption led to higher rates of prostitution, the southern
women's historian Drew Gilpin Faust confirms that prostitution was a reality of military
life during the Civil War. Faust concludes, "Commercial sex is an almost inevitable
accompaniment to any army." In June of 1862, Nightingale gave a speech at the London
meeting of the Congres de Bienfaisance about "Army Sanitary Administration and Its
Reform under the late Lord Herbert." She linked the lack of organized recreation to the

\(^{216}\) Mary Ribbon to Annie Wittenmyer, February 23, 1865, Annie Wittenmyer Manuscript
Collection, DMMS 25, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa.
\(^{217}\) Sophia Wright to Annie Wittenmyer, August 29, 1864, Annie Wittenmyer Manuscript
Collection, DMMS 25, Box 5, Folder 3, 10-7, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa.
\(^{218}\) Ruth A. Gallaher, "The Wittenmyer Diet Kitchens," *The Palimpsest* 12, no. 9 (September
proliferation of prostitution and the spread of venereal disease. Nightingale called for government regulation of prostitution through the creation of government-sponsored "soldiers' days rooms and institutes." Nightingale said: "Governments can prevent this open infamous trading as they do with other open infamous trading, they can prevent open temptations to vice as they can prevent open temptations to crime. They have shown that the men's barracks can be made more of a home."\textsuperscript{219} By crediting a celebrated war hero and statesman with this system, Nightingale emphasized the importance of the home as a model for social control, but exhibited deference to patriarchy and military discipline by pointing to Lord Herbert for adopting this method.

The alleged association between the military culture and immorality also fueled widespread conjecture about women affiliated with the military in secular capacities. Civil War nurses did not enjoy much respect. In a letter to Wittenmyer from Mattie A. Senard in the summer of 1861, Senard confirmed: "I have frequently thought of going as nurse, or in some capacity, that I could be of assistance to our wounded and suffering soldiers. One thing alone has prevented—the opinion is general hire, that ladies are not respected there, unless accompanied by some male relative."\textsuperscript{220} Women interested in USCC service often had to seek the endorsement of a reputable male leader within the organization to secure a position. Based on Wittenmyer's correspondence, a clear preponderance of Civil War soldiers' widows emphatically lobbied local leaders with the hope of securing a place with the USCC. The Secretary of the Philadelphia USCC branch, Rev. Lemuel Moss referred Emily Rose, a Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania,


\textsuperscript{220} Mattie A. Senard to Annie Wittenmyer, August 9, 1861 or 1862. Annie Wittenmyer Manuscript Collection, DMMS25, 19, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa.
widow directly to Wittenmyer. Rose emphatically wrote to Rev. Moss looking for work: “I am ready to go anywhere—do anything—in the prison, in the hospital, on the battlefield, to give water, to bind up wounded, whisper of Jesus. I am fearless, he has led me safely thro’ many dangers and trials. Should a bullet find my heart, He has no more work for me here.”

During World War I, local civilians, soldiers, and military officials frequently called dietitians “home sisters.” As I mentioned, family metaphors transferred easily to naming practices. Familial naming practices (such as the use of “sister”) may also have been adopted from the presence of Catholic sisters on the battlefields. Family naming practices were standard within the USCC during the Civil War. This practice also allowed religious women to distance themselves from the alleged promiscuity and negative reputations of female camp followers. In their effort to curb moral and physical decay, USCC members attempted to domesticate the battlefield. They characterized themselves as part of a family in “God’s home” on earth. The USCC served as the go-between for the home and the front. Its letterhead, inscribed with a dove carrying a letter, was marked with an epigram stating: “The USCC sends this as the soldier’s messenger to his home. Let it hasten to those who wait for tidings.”

Wittenmyer repeatedly emphasized the importance of meals for soldiers to enhance their physical recovery, but equally important she advocated special food and diets as a morale boost and a form of social control by reminding them of home.

221 Some single, unmarried women sought work with the USCC in pursuit of new companions. Faust concludes in her analysis of women of the slaveholding South, “The boundaries where military encampments intersected with civilian settlements became frenetic scenes of courtship as young women strived to occupy their present and secure their future.” Volunteers were not limited to never-married women. My research suggests a preponderance of widowed women in particular sought work with the USCC. Emily Rose to Lemuel Moss, Annie Wittenmyer Manuscript Collection. SHSI, Des Moines, Iowa. See also Epstein, Politics of Domesticity, 100, 102.

222 Sarah Annie Turner Wittenmyer Manuscript Collections, boxes and folders throughout, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa.
For USCC missionaries, alcohol was an exasperating problem in Civil War camps. In their letters to each other, they evidenced an impressive knowledge of government supply routes, both to protect the distribution of their own supplies for their designated missionaries, and (I believe) to engage in covert removal of alcohol from the camps. In his book *Civil War Pharmacy*, historian Michael Flannery concludes, "A major problem was—predictably enough—with 'stimulants' or alcohol.” Missionaries perceived men’s intemperance as one of the greatest threats to the victimization, abuse, and abandonment of women and children (and by extension, the family unit). According to Epstein: “Men who drank spent money on liquor that should have been spent on the home ... time that men spent in the saloons was that much time away from home. Crusaders and other temperance advocates believed that alcohol was addictive and debilitating and that it impoverished families by destroying men’s ability to work.” If intemperance impoverished a family, it was equally detrimental to the nation. Just as the saloon of the 1870s symbolized the exclusion of women and children from men’s lives, so, too, did the military camp. Military service excused men from daily family responsibilities and allowed them to enter a world presumably bereft of women’s moral influence.

For Wittenmyer, the proof was in the pudding. She reflected on the magnitude of her special diet kitchen work by outlining the amount of food in rations issued from sixteen special diet kitchens for February of 1865. She celebrated the invitation she received from Surgeon General Joseph Barnes, who, according to Wittenmyer, was so "enthusiastic about her plan for special diet kitchens that he appointed a commission of United States army surgeons to consider it, with the view of adopting it and ingrafting it upon the United States general hospital system.” Wittenmyer was invited by Surgeon General Barnes to meet with the committee, who listened and offered her “great respect.”

According to Wittenmyer, the committee adopted her plan for special diet kitchens as a part of the regular United States hospital system. As she later noted: "It is the verdict of history that this system of special diet kitchens saved thousands of lives. During the last eighteen months of the war, over two million rations were issued monthly from this long line of special diet kitchens, established, many of them, under the guns."\(^\text{224}\)

Despite Wittenmyer's significance to the history of dietetics, specifically American military dietetics, ADA leaders do not embrace her legacy. It is particularly important to think about why ADA historians have credited Nightingale as the "lamp" unto their feet. In order to promote the status of dietitians as medical and scientific professionals, Cooper aligned the history of dietetics with Nightingale, the "lamp" unto their feet, and by association, the Civil War activism of the United States Sanitary Commission. By doing so, she minimized the rich legacy of the nineteenth-century antebellum health and temperance reform movements that ultimately shaped the foundations for women's labor in the fields of dietetics, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. As I will show, early twentieth-century dietitians sided with the military medical arena as a critical professionalization strategy. This logic gains even more currency in the context of Paula Baker's argument that "quasi-professional" women devalued the voluntary work of their predecessors and "substantive functions of the home blended into the government bureaucracy"—in this case, the military. Only through this lens—or, under this lamp—do we begin to see why activists such as Wittenmyer remain absent in official ADA histories and the official history of the Women's Medical Specialist Corps.\(^\text{225}\)

\(^{224}\) Wittenmyer, *Under the Guns*, 267.

American Cooking Schools

The development of cooking schools in the post-Reconstruction era in the urban Northeast provided a critical bridge in the history and continuum of dietetic professionalization. Organized between 1876 and 1882, cooking schools in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston emerged in the context of significant change brought about by rapid industrialization, urbanization, immigration, and the growth of poor, urban neighborhoods in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In this section, I emphasize how cooking schools were directly related and intertwined with the emergence of a middle class and the ideology of domesticity. As I will show, cooking school leaders maneuvered within discourses of domesticity to assert power in public and political ways. Perhaps most important, the cooking schools in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston marshaled by white, middle- and upper-class, native-born, Protestant women, imposed a culturally specific gender system on nondominant groups to sustain their place in the social hierarchy. The practice of cooking for middle- and upper-class, native-born, Protestant women was—in many ways—a performance of femininity that conveyed a host of cultural and political meanings in a society that excluded their "formal" status as citizens. In other words, as Linda Gordon observes, "The feminist analysis of political power has shown that it cannot be measured strictly by legal rights." 226

To that end, it is important to clarify domesticity as a critical framework for an analysis of American cooking schools. By the late nineteenth century, a wide range of

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literary blueprints for domesticity existed. Whether focused upon recipes, child care, or housework, prescriptive literature was bound to the set of ideas that women should as mothers guide, nurture, and care for their families. This logic aligned social traits to precepts of women's "work" in the home as a "natural" way of being. In his analysis of the antebellum revivals (1827–1834) in Rochester, New York, historian Paul Johnson emphasizes the impact of religion on nineteenth-century society and the ways in which Protestant revivals seemed to soften the blow and ease the confusion of capitalist expansion. The rise of the nineteenth-century ideology of domesticity, which incorporated family food management (though was not synonymous with it) and exhortations to sobriety, was deeply embedded or intertwined with the emergence of a distinct working class. For more than thirty years, U.S. women's historians have analyzed the ideology of domesticity and the ambiguity of a women's sphere among Protestant, native-born, middle-class, New England women. In her critical 1975 essay, Carroll Smith Rosenberg underscored the duality of domesticity. Constantly in flux,

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227 Prescriptive literature as a genre is difficult to define. By invoking the term "prescriptive literature," I point to the particular brand of antebellum popular literature, defined by Nancy Cott as written by both male and female authors and "consisting of advice books, sermons, novels, essays, stories, and poems, advocating and reiterating women's certain, limited role. That was to be wives and mothers, to nurture and maintain their families, to provide religious example and inspiration, and to affect the world around by exercising private, moral influence. The literature of domesticity promulgated a Janus-faced conception of women's roles: it looked back, explicitly conservative in its attachment to a traditional understanding of woman's place; while it proposed transforming, even millennial results." See Nancy F. Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: Woman's Sphere in New England, 1780–1835* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, Revised Edition, 1997), 8.


domesticity was employed by women to gain power; and it was also used against women as a mechanism of control.\textsuperscript{231}

In 1981, the historians Estelle Freedman and Barbara Epstein made two particularly lasting contributions to our understanding of domesticity and reform in nineteenth-century America. In *Their Sisters' Keepers: Women's Prison Reform in America, 1830–1930*, Freedman emphasized gender solidarity among white, middle-class, nineteenth-century women prison reformers. Freedman argued that female prison reformers (the "keepers") used the rhetoric of moral authority and their superiority as women to control the labor of redemption for "fallen" women. In *The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth Century America*, Epstein shifted the spotlight to the conflicts evangelical religion caused between women and men. Epstein argued that white, middle-class, Protestant women pitted themselves against male culture as they attempted to uphold religious and moral standards by shutting down saloons.

Epstein categorized the Woman's Crusades (1873–1875) as the third phase of nineteenth-century women's religious activism. Female domesticity, as Epstein suggested, emerged as an ideology in the midst of the uneven transition from an agrarian economy to the development of commercial and industrial capitalism.\textsuperscript{232} By looking at domesticity through the framework of evangelical religion, Epstein concluded that white, middle-class, native-born, Protestant women developed a new level of dependence upon men; dominant discourses of domesticity inaugurated new levels of conflict between men and women and exacerbated antagonism among women. It was, as Epstein argued, this


“muted conflict” that shaped women’s culture and consciousness regarding their position as dependents in the social structure and redefined gender and class.\(^{233}\)

The dominant (or white, middle-class, native-born, Protestant) ideology of domesticity also relied upon and, at the same time, redefined racial ideologies. As an important tool for “cultural work,” nonwhite women manipulated discourses of food and cooking to gain economic, social, and cultural power. More recently, in her book *Building Houses Out of Chicken Legs: Black Women, Food, and Power*, Psyche A. Williams-Forson illustrates how African American women have historically drawn upon the association between gender and food (specifically chicken) as a source of income for their families, as an influential form of cultural work, and as a source of power.\(^{234}\) As I will show in the chapter to follow, dietitians used the language of physiological chemistry to establish a professional female “pecking order” and played a proactive role in the perpetuation of a racial caste system.

Cooking schools emerged in the midst of what historian Barbara Epstein labeled “phase four” (the temperance movement) of nineteenth-century women’s religious activism. Cooking school superintendents linked their work to temperance and broader national concerns. Drawing upon the work of anthropologist Mary Douglas, historian John Kassen affirms, “the rituals that different cultures assign to the human body allow it to serve as a symbol for society at large. The ways people feed their physical bodies express larger concerns about the needs and perils of the social body.”\(^{235}\) For example, in 1886, the same year she began her column in *Table Talk*, Sarah Tyson Rorer, the founder of the Philadelphia Cooking School, claimed in her *Philadelphia Cook Book* that poor dietary habits, bad cooking, and unscientific feeding were the causes of “two thirds of all


the intemperance.” Ellen Richards later echoed this sentiment in 1906 when she asserted, “Drunkenness often prevails where food is bad and cooking is poor.”

Cooking school leaders linked poverty to diet and intemperance, but also to drug use and crime. “‘Tis too often the ill-fed stomach that induces the man to the dram shop, and the woman to chloral and opium,” Rorer asserted. “It is, as a rule, illy fed people who fill our prisons.”

During this time, the economic function of the family was also in flux, as the nature of the home changed from a site of production to a site of consumption. Industrialization offered working-class white, African American, and ethnic/immigrant women wider employment opportunities in factories and industry instead of service positions in middle- and upper-class homes. We know from the work of M. M. Manring that the “servant problem” in American history was a reflection of the regularity with which hired help came and went at the turn of the twentieth century—not necessarily an indicator of a servant shortage. The “servant problem” also meant that middle- and upper-class, native-born, white women had to find the means and ways to manage their own housework. Historian Sarah Stage has pointed to the creation of the National Household Economics Association (NHEA) by a group of middle-class clubwomen at the 1893 Columbian Exposition. This organization was formed specifically to combat the “servant problem.” In Christine Stansell’s chapter on domestic service in *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789–1860*, she contends that the cult of domesticity

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has always been historically incompatible with the demands of Victorian housekeeping. Tensions between immigrant working-class servants and their American-born bourgeois employers were nothing new. The Society for the Encouragement of Faithful Domestic Servants, for example, formed in New York City around 1828 and preceded organizations like the NEAH.\footnote{See Christine Stansell, \textit{City of Women: Sex and Class in New York City, 1789–1860} (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987) 155–168.}

It is also important to note that after the Civil War, white, middle-class, native-born, Protestant women who were able to afford hiring domestic servants found themselves on equal political footing as their domestic employees. In her book, \textit{White Women’s Rights: The Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States}, Louise Newman demonstrates the ways in which white women’s social identities had to be reconstituted to reflect the changing relationship between “woman” and “the Negro.”\footnote{See \textit{The Gender Politics of Catherine Beecher,”} in Louise Newman, \textit{White Women’s Rights: The Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 74–79. In her 2004 essay about wartime migration and emancipation in the upper Midwest, Leslie Schwalm writes, “Revealing a deep-seated belief in a racially ordered society, many Midwestern whites assumed that any possibility of black gains in the region would impinge upon white status and citizenship.” See Leslie Schwalm, “Overrun with Free Negroes”: Emancipation and Wartime Migration in the Upper Midwest, \textit{Civil War History}, vol. L, no. 2 (2004): 145–171.} White, middle-class, native-born, Protestant women may have felt the sting of exclusion from universal white male suffrage and the added indignity from the passage of the Fourteenth (1868) and Fifteenth (1870) Amendments that appeared to promise political equality for African American men.\footnote{For a comprehensive economic, political, social, and ideological overview of this era, see Eric Foner, \textit{A Short History of Reconstruction, 1863–1877} (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1988).} In other words, the new realities of emancipation (1863–1865) and the expansion of the electorate may have influenced white, native-born, Protestant women to distinguish themselves from nonwhite women, as well as racial and ethnic men who could claim citizenship status. White, middle-class, native-born, Protestant women did not just retreat from racial justice—they reconfigured and repositioned themselves on the social hierarchy in other ways. In post-reconstruction America, one such way white,
middle- and upper-class, native-born, Protestant women separated themselves from their cooks and servants was by arming themselves with knowledge of new scientific developments and technologies in the kitchen. Scientific cookery allowed white, middle- and upper-class, native-born, Protestant women to lay claim to a certain level of authority from which nonwhite women—and, in most cases, even male heads of households—were excluded.  

ADA historians credit French gastronomy professor Pierre Blot (1818–1874) with the inspiration behind the creation of American cooking schools. In the early 1870s, Blot arrived in America and presented cooking lectures for middle- and upper-class families based on his *Handbook of Practical Cookery for Ladies and Professional Cooks*. According to one account, Blot may have been instrumental in assisting Juliet Corson with the free training school sponsored by the Women’s Education and Industrial Society. Blot was also influential in the creation of the Philadelphia Women’s Club in 1878. According to Rorer, Blot inspired her cousins Mary Coggins, Eliza Turner, and Lucretia Blankenburg on his Eastern Seaboard lecture tour. Together, they initiated the new Century Cooking School. The cousins “had money of their own and minds which they knew how to use,” said Rorer, but, “it was a business enterprise” under the arm of the New Century Club. “I joined the first class,” said Rorer, and constituted two practical

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244 Miscellaneous accounts also reveal cases where white, middle-class, native-born, Protestant men were invited to participate in cooking lessons, particularly lessons on the chafing dish. That men were invited to participate in chafing dish lessons, demonstrates how some cooking teachers reinforced Protestant gender systems and upheld notion of the breadwinner in the male head of household. Chafing dishes, mounted over a heating device, were used to serve food from the table.  
lessons a week for three months and a course of twenty-four demonstrated lectures.”

The historians of the ADA credit Blot with creation of the American cooking schools, but there were also a host of significant economic, political, and cultural forces at work in America that led to their establishment and to the politicization of cooking in the urban Northeast.

In the last three decades of the nineteenth century, domestic ideologies allowed white, middle-class, native-born, Protestant women to stake legitimate authority over cookery. Juliet Corson, the founder of the New York Cooking School, said in 1893 at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago, “The woman seemed naturally to perform the culinary office, she is fitted for it in all ages and countries and should comprehend its mysteries for that reason; if other women were needed—modern medical and sanitary science show how entirely by its agency she can mold the mental and physical condition of humanity.”

Cooking school leaders maneuvered within discourses of domesticity to assert power in public and political ways. The Boston, New York City, and Philadelphia cooking schools reflect the elasticity of domesticity to encompass a variety of reform. Women’s presumed authority in the kitchen supported the pursuit of their education on matters related to food. After all, who could argue that women should not be educated about food at a time when dominant-gender ideologies assigned women to the food preparation and management for the family? More important, this presumption (that it was part and parcel of a woman’s “natural” responsibility to nourish the family) was also a key ingredient in the transmission of culture. In other words, simply put, cooking was central to the larger schism over what culture in particular would be reproduced.

Corson’s activism with the Women’s Education and Industrial Society of New York led to the 1876 establishment of the New York Cooking School at Corson’s home on St. Mark’s Place in Brooklyn. The creation of the cooking school was not entirely new or unique to New York City. Just three years earlier, a group of prominent women formed a Diet Kitchen Association in collaboration with the DeWilt Dispensary to secure nourishing food for destitute families. The New York Cooking School catered to wide audiences; courses were designed to accommodate women in all social classes. Corson’s popular cooking school textbook was organized according to social class with instructions for “artisans” and “ladies.” She identified the artisans as the “young daughters of working people.” She taught working-class, ethnic, and immigrant women and children how to purchase and prepare healthy food. Middle- and upper-class women could also send their domestic servants to attend courses in practical housekeeping and cookery. But, her lessons were not necessarily accepted by those forced to participate by their employers. For example, she mimicked the petulant tone of one particular woman “who sat with her nose in the air and a general air of protest about her whole body.” The student told Corson, “I don’t believe in none of your nonsense. I’m here because of the missus. The likes of ye can’t teach me nothin.”


"More than any other ethnic group," writes Judith Walzer Leavitt, "Irish born young single women frequently came to the United States alone." The majority of these women became employed as domestic laborers in the Northeast urban centers. Domestic service was "universally" understood as a socially inferior position that placed them in vulnerable, precarious, and dependent situations. Leavitt makes a valuable point when she suggests that domestic labor, at the end of the nineteenth century, entailed "alienating class, ethnic, religious, and gendered divisions as women from one cultural milieu came to work and live in the homes of families from another." The demands of domestic service levied extreme hardship—particularly for single Irish mothers employed as domestics. Cooking schools, launched by native-born, middle- and upper-class, Protestant women in the urban Northeast, provided one remedy for the larger schism or tension over cultural reproduction during a wave of substantial immigration.


253 Irish American domestic servants may have welcomed what Maureen Fitzgerald calls "the revolving door" policy in which Irish Catholic nuns cared for the children of poor parents on a temporary basis until they were financially equipped to care for them on their own. Fitzgerald posits the Protestant "institutional" model and the Catholic "family plan" as two distinct and competing systems of child care. The institutional model espoused by Protestant reformers reflected the notion that poverty was a moral problem rooted in particular cultures. She also argues that native-born Protestant women modeled their child welfare work upon Catholic convent life. Fitzgerald writes, "American Protestant women's dependence on convent life as a model for settlements was at the same time substantial and almost unconscious." On a separate, though not unrelated point, this may also explain the system imposed by Annie Wittenmyer in her campaign for orphans. In 1853, Wittenmyer opened a free children's school at Eleventh and Main streets in Keokuk. She would not have been immune to the substantial presence of Catholic charities; the history of southeast Iowa is deeply entwined with Catholicism dating to Bishop Mathias Loras (1839, Loras College, est.) and the creation of Abbey of New Mellaray. Bruce Mahan, *The Palimpsest*, vol. 3, no. 9 (September 1922). See Maureen Fitzgerald, *Habits of Compassion: Irish
The Artisans, Plain Cooks, Ladies, and Children’s curriculums signal an early phase of Americanization efforts. In The Wages of Motherhood: Inequality in the Welfare State, 1917–1942, Gwendolyn Mink reminds us, “Central to the reformers’ definition of healthy development was the degree and speed of the child’s assimilation of the conventions of ‘American’ society. The reformers identified mothers as crucial to child welfare, developing a policy template to inspire a ‘higher,’ more ‘American’ quality of motherhood.” Mink focuses on child welfare policies; her ideas behind the politics of race and nation in the construction of the welfare state have informed my understanding of Americanization. As I noted in my introduction, World War I dietitians aspiring for rank and recognition as medical professionals did not necessarily subscribe to maternalist rhetoric, but their predecessors in the cooking schools seemed to embrace it. Cooking school leaders advanced culturally specific goals that fit comfortably within Molly Ladd Taylor’s analysis of child welfare work. According to Taylor, “Anglo American reformers believed they could protect children from what they considered patriarchal abuse and injustice by modernizing immigrant families and ‘helping’ them adjust to “American” culture. She suggests that they hoped to curb patriarchal power by replacing it with the maternal authority of the state. Taylor correctly points out that “cooking was one of the most demanding household chores in the early twentieth century, and one of the most important, for gastrointestinal diseases were a major cause of infant death, especially in summer.”

254 Mink, The Wages of Motherhood, 5.
255 Taylor, Mother Work, 5. –
256 Taylor, Mother Work, 27. Settlement houses also implemented diet kitchens as a way to promote cultural conformity and healthy “American” eating habits. For a brief discussion of the diet kitchen at Hull House in Chicago, see Jean Bethke Elshtain, Jane Addams and the Dream of American Democracy (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 141.
The historian Karen Anderson has demonstrated how white reformers launched substantial efforts to Americanize and “civilize” Native Americans through what she calls a process of “gender specific acculturation.” According to Anderson, “‘Civilized womanhood’...would hold special attractions for Indian women, promising to relieve them of the drudgery and degradation whites associated with Native American gender systems.” In other words, Anderson argues that white, middle- and upper-class, native-born, Protestant reformers interpreted Native American gender roles as the primary source of poverty. Cooking lessons were therefore central to the revision of nondominant gender systems. At the Carlisle Indian Industrial School at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, founded in 1879, cooking lessons were employed as one method of “civilizing” Native Americans and imposing Protestant, American gender roles that (as Anderson concludes) embraced monogamy, domesticity, and dependence on men.\footnote{See Anderson, Changing Woman, 37–39.} For example, during the winter of 1882, Corson took her methods into the “government training school.” Upon return from the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, Corson reported, “For a week I had lived in Carlisle Barracks in the midst of those red sons and daughters of the forest.” The school’s founder and superintendent, Captain Henry Richard Pratt (1840–1924), celebrated Corson’s efforts when he reported that one female inmate wrote in a letter, “I will teach my people how to make an omelet.”\footnote{“Hints for the Household: Miss Corson Visits the Indians at Carlisle Barracks, An Indian Training School and Indian School of Cookery—How the women are educated—Teaching the girls housework,” New York Times, (29 January 1882), 9. The Richard Henry Pratt Papers (WA-MSS-S1174) are located at Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.} Upper- and middle-class, native-born, Protestant women could also attend Corson’s classes. In 1885, Corson noted that some of her pupils were “many ladies of our most prominent families.”\footnote{Sarah Tyson Rorer, “Early Dietetics,” Essays on the History of Nutrition and Dietetics, eds. Adelia Beuwekes, E. Neige Todhunter, Emma Stiefrit Weigley, 216. More often than not, ethnic and immigrant domestic servants seemed to express defiance to the imposition of white, native-born, Protestant, middle-class ideology of domesticity. For example, regional historian Sandra Lee Barney reminds us in her analysis of gender, class, and medicine in Appalachia at the turn of the}
The cooking schools’ imposition of dominant gender ideology was not always subtle. While nourishing the body may have been the schools’ principal objective, they also addressed other targets of reform, some of which caused internal and external disagreements. Temperance was an important concern for leaders of the cooking schools, but was not necessarily the only concern. At the New York Cooking School, Corson focused less on temperance and more on economizing healthy meals for low-income families. For those in the food industry, specifically canning, Corson’s lessons may have been unwelcome because of the industry’s ability to capitalize on high immigration rates and the urban poor. 260 In August of 1877, shortly after the beginning of the Great Railroad Strike, Corson published for free circulation fifty thousand copies of a pamphlet titled *Fifteen Cent Dinners for Working Men’s Families*. When the U.S. military intervened to quell the strike, according to one 1879 editorial published in *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*, Corson was “repeatedly threatened and warned to desist from either circulating it or speaking in public by political demagogues and socialists who inflamed the minds of the working men by assuring them that the author was in league with the capitalists, and if they listened to her, and learned how to live better on less money, employers would immediately reduce their wages.” 261 According to the article, this logic defied the “common sense of the laboring-man” and the threats did not stop her from

twentieth century, that new medical and scientific theories imposed by the middle and professional classes were not always accepted by farmers and laypeople of the mountain communities. See Sandra Lee Barney, *Authorized to Heal: Gender, Class, and the Transformation of Medicine in Appalachia, 1880–1930*, (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 6–7. As I will show in the chapter to follow, the turn of the twentieth century was a time of fundamental revolution of the epistemological basis of chemistry and medicine. Leavitt characterizes the period of sweeping scientific changes as “one of the most exciting and dramatic periods of all medical history.” She asserts, “At the end of the nineteenth century, medical scientists had come to accept germ theory, a new theory of disease causation, brought to medicine from basic science research.” See Judith Walzer Leavitt, *Typhoid Mary: Captive to the Public’s Health* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 6.

260 One of the most outspoken organizations opposed to the Pure Food and Drug Law of 1906 was the Western Packers’ Canned Goods Association under the presidency of A. C. Fraser of Wisconsin. See Wiley, *An Autobiography*, 212.

exposing the "abundance of food" and "wasteful extravagance" in this country. For three months, Corson surveyed and collected the retail prices of food from across the United States and quoted them in the second edition of her 1879 *Cooking School Text Book and Housekeeper's Guide to Cookery and Kitchen Management.*

In Philadelphia, the cooking school began there with roots planted firmly in the temperance movement. Sarah Tyson Rorer, hailed by the ADA as America's first dietitian, moved to Philadelphia in 1870 to attend lectures at the Women's Medical College. She noted that Juliet Corson was not particularly well received by the "Quaker element" of the Philadelphia community. Her reasons for noting this are not entirely clear: It may have been the role of Philadelphia as a haven of temperance activism and Corson's lack of emphasis on temperance. Rorer, who led the Philadelphia Cooking School for more than twenty-five years, advocated temperance, but she also emphasized that her school started as a *business enterprise.* She legitimized her work by aligning with the male physicians and the medical community. In other words, she personified a critical shift in the commercialization of cooking as a skill, or commodity, affixed to wage labor. Rorer frequently used the language of scientific cookery and her utility to physicians to legitimize her own status and promote her business. She emphasized her alliance with physicians in Philadelphia's medical community. "One day," Rorer recalled, "Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, Dr. William Pepper, Dr. Sinclair, and Dr. Thomas Morton called upon me and offered financial if I would start a kitchen where physicians could send a prescription and get in return food well prepared for special diseases."
In 1893, the Presbyterian Hospital hired Martha Byerly, an 1892 graduate of the Philadelphia Cooking School, to oversee a new hospital diet kitchen and gave her the title Superintendent of Diet. Culinary historian Jean Robbins of Virginia Culinary Thymes points to Byerly’s position as a signal of a “new field of employment—hospital dietetics.”\(^{265}\) By 1901, five thousand students had trained at the Philadelphia Cooking School.\(^{266}\) At the time of her death, the ADA publicly honored Rorer as “a great woman and our first dietitian.”\(^{267}\)

Rorer, who followed in her father’s footsteps as a “dispenser of drugs,” emerged on the scene in the 1870s at a time when Philadelphia dominated American medicine with its famous hospital and medical school, the distinguished College of Physicians, and unsurpassed libraries, clinical facilities, and institutional equipment. After two years of teaching classes in cookery, Rorer established the Philadelphia Cooking School where she offered courses in cooking and chemistry and classes for the preparation of meals for both the sick and well. The ADA credits Rorer as “a true scientist” who “made her craft a fine art” and became America’s first dietitian. What is most significant about Rorer—and what set her apart from Corson and the leaders of the Boston Cooking School—was her characterization of cookery as a commodity and her pronounced alliance with the medical establishment. She reflected: “The New Century Club had opened a school of cookery (1878) under the care of a Miss Devereaux, a pupil of Miss Sweeney, a pastry cook in Boston.... A number of physicians in Philadelphia asked me to withdraw from the Club and start an independent school. I did, and the first year I enrolled seventy-four practice pupils, I gave four demonstration lectures during the week, with audiences ranging from


1,000 to 5,000 ... I named the school the Philadelphia School. It continued for twenty-five years.  

In 1903, the doors to the Philadelphia Cooking School closed. At that time, Drexel Institute of Technology (modeled after a similar program offered at Pratt Institute in New York City) offered a domestic science program for women with a two-year requirement in college certification. In 1906, Ella Eaton Kellogg urged Lenna Cooper to move to Philadelphia to attend the Drexel domestic science program under the tutelage of Miss Helen Spring. Cooper graduated in 1908. In 1918, Drexel's president, Hollis Godfrey—perhaps inspired by his own daughter's activism in dietetics at Drexel—began advertising the government's great need for trained dietitians: “The Army's need for trained dietitians is urgent and time is short in which to enroll. To help supply them, in cooperation with the U.S. War Department, Drexel has prepared special training courses.”

Over the course of her career, Rorer published more than sixteen books and traveled on national lecture circuits to fairs, preparatory schools, universities, and colleges. She was a founder of the Pennsylvania Chautauqua and traveled extensively on the national Chautauqua circuit. In 1893, more than 250,000 visitors came to see her “Corn Kitchen” at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. In 1904, she presented demonstrations at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis. On October 15, 1933, the New York Herald Tribune reported, “her name was better known in most

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268 Isabel Bevier, The Home Economics Movement (Boston: Whitcomb & Barrows, 1906), 51.
American homes than those of presidents, statesmen, and generals."^272 But, she died destitute on December 27, 1937, at the age of eighty-eight in Colebrook, Pennsylvania. As I will show in the chapters to follow, by the time of her death in 1937, the practice of cookery had been fully woven into the fabric of the modern American state through federally funded home economics programs (as well as private universities and colleges) across the country. According to Mary Pascoe Huddleson, Rorer "had to face her closing years nearly blind, very lame, and in sadly straightened circumstances, aided only by a small pension she received from the ADA."^273

The third important cooking school in the Northeast, the Boston Cooking School, best illustrates the ways white, native-born, Protestant, middle-class reformers used diet and nutrition to address social reform. Established by Boston’s Industrial Committee of the Women’s Education Association in 1879, the Boston Cooking School was created “not only to show the poor how to comfort their families by the physical consolation of whole sale and economical food, but—to begin a moral reform that should somewhat—even from the beginning, towards destroying all forms of intemperance."^274 Mary C. Lincoln was appointed principal. A subcommittee rented the kitchen and large dining room in the “Old Sailor’s Home,” No. 39, on North Bennett Street in Boston.

Sarah Hooper, the first chair of the Boston Industrial Committee of the Women’s Education Association, inaugurated the Boston Cooking School. It became one of the first incorporated cooking schools in America. The Boston Women’s Education Association conceptualized the school with the mission to form further standing

^274 The First Annual Report of the Boston Cooking School (Boston: Press of Mills, Knight, & Co., 1884), 1–7. The publication of the “first” report dates to 1884, but other accounts show the school was in operation as early as 1877 when, according to Lenna Cooper, it graduated the first student, Maria Parloa. See Lenna F. Cooper, “The Dietitian and her Profession,” Journal of the American Dietetic Association 14, no. 10 (1938): 752.
committees on “industrial, intellectual, aesthetic, moral, and physical education.”

Advocates of the school believed “better education of women should be understood in the broadest sense.” In the second year of operation, the school offered 225 practice lessons and special lessons in “sickroom cookery” for nurses employed with Boston hospitals. In the first report of the Boston Cooking School, President Hooper paid respect to Ellen Richards for providing free lecture courses and field trips to the MIT Women’s Laboratory to study the chemistry of cooking. She also praised a Dr. Merrit for presentations on anatomy and chemistry.275 And so, the Boston Cooking School blended women’s education in science with the spirit of social reform. Lenna Cooper confirmed the Boston Cooking School as one of the first centers of scientific cookery. Decades later, she reminisced that “interest in scientific food preparation began in the late 1870s with the opening of the Boston Cooking School which graduated its first student, Maria Parloa, in 1877 [original italics].”276

On May 23, 1877, Parloa addressed audiences at the Tremont Temple in Boston; her lecture circuit also included stops in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Auburndale, Massachusetts. The following year, her interest in the relationship between food and health led her overseas to visit schools in England and France. By 1879, she became a recognized speaker with the Women’s Educational Association in Boston and a regular on the Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle.277 In 1894, the best-known leader of the Boston Cooking School, Fannie Merrit Farmer (1857–1915), took charge. When the Boston Cooking School became incorporated in 1883, it became independent of the

276 Lenna Cooper, “The Dietitian and Her Profession,” Journal of the American Dietetic Association 14, no. 10 (1938): 752.
277 Very little is known about Parloa’s childhood except that she was orphaned and made her way by working and living as a cook in New Hampshire hotels and summer resorts. After attending the Maine Central Institute in Pittsfield in 1871 to earn her teacher’s certificate, she taught five winter seasons in Mandarin, Florida, the winter home of Harriet Beecher Stowe. See Isabel Bevier and Susannah Usher, The Home Economics Movement, Part I (Boston: Whitcomb and Barrows, 1912), 48.
Women's Educational Association. Then, in 1902, Simmons College appropriated the Boston Cooking School into its domestic science curriculum.\textsuperscript{278}

Cooking school leaders worked with students from a broad spectrum of economic classes; they worked across broad geographic regions, in urban and rural settings, reaching people with different strategies, religious affiliations, and political ideologies. Parloa, Corson, and Rorer had many female contemporaries. One of the most notable was Ellen Richards. Richards's notoriety as the founder of the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) and "mother of home economics" is measured in part by the success of the Lake Placid Conferences. The Lake Placid Conferences, a series of ten annual fall conferences held at Lake Placid, Morningside, New York, from 1899–1908, played a critical role in the creation and development of higher education in home economics. It is critical that the 1899 participants of the Lake Placid Conferences called for state legislatures to give home economics "the same practical encouragement which they now give to agriculture and the mechanic arts in state schools and colleges."\textsuperscript{279}

The Boston Cooking School was incorporated into the Simmons College curriculum in 1903, and by 1904 the Drexel program in Normal Domestic Science essentially displaced the Philadelphia Cooking School. Evidence is inconclusive regarding the closing of Juliet Corson's New York Cooking School, but her legacy for land grant domestic economy programs is clear: Mary Beaumont Dudley Welch (1841–1923) attended Corson's New York Cooking School, and then she sailed for London to attend the South Kensington School of Cookery. When she returned to the plains, Welch initiated the first course in domestic economy in 1875 at the Iowa Agricultural College in Ames and employed Corson's textbook as the basis for her curriculum. In 1885, Corson

\textsuperscript{278} Isabel Bevier and Susannah Usher, \textit{The Home Economics Movement, Part I}, 50.
\textsuperscript{279} Lake Placid Conference on Home Economics: Proceedings of the First Annual Conference (Lake Placid, New York, 1899), 7. The impact of the Smith-Lever and the Smith-Hughes Acts for women in home economics and, specifically dietetics, will be discussed in the chapter to follow.
began lobbying Commissioner of Education John Eaton for assistance with local and regional market supplies and prices so she could adapt her methods to the southern and western portions of the country. Corson asserted, "In consequence of marked social changes attendant on the Civil War, a radical alteration is taking place in this department." Eaton agreed and issued a Department of Education circular to the heads of educational institutions across the country. Rorer, who mentioned that she "had rather drifted away from Miss Corson," conceded that Corson "succeeded partly, but her health broke down, and for the last few years of her life she taught from an invalid's chair." 280

Conclusion

Cooper situated dietetic history in the context of Nightingale and her alliance with the USSC; she embraced Nightingale as the "lamp unto the feet" of the dietetic profession. Civil War tensions between the marginally middle-class members of the USCC and the predominately male, upper-class leadership of the USSC preceded similar tensions that would surface during World War I between elite volunteer organizations such as the American Fund for the French Wounded (AFFW), the Red Cross, and, more specifically, the embryonic ADA. However, the way Cooper and other dietetic leaders fashioned the history of dietetics is not the only reason why this occupational field remains absent from U.S. women's history.

Sarah Stage and Virginia Vincenti have described the history of home economics as a process of evolution from Catherine Beecher's concept of Victorian domesticity to the creation of the formal movement championed by "the mother of home economics," Ellen Richards. 281 This narrative has partially obscured complex developments and

281 Sarah Stage and Virginia Vincenti, eds., Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession, 2
tensions within and among critical players in the professionalization of dietetics and home economics.\textsuperscript{282} This general characterization (from Beecher to Richards) has rendered invisible a vast network of women with alternative approaches to higher education and the professionalization of women. When Lenna Cooper was asked who she thought founded home economics, she had a radically different interpretation. "I am sometimes called the Dean," said Cooper, "but the 'Mother' of home economics is without a doubt Ella Eaton Kellogg.\textsuperscript{283}

Historian Margaret W. Rossiter is perhaps one of the most prolific writers on the history of twentieth-century U.S. women in science.\textsuperscript{284} In her groundbreaking 1982 book, \textit{Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940}, Rossiter traces in rich detail women's participation in science from the "beginning to the recent past." She attributes the historical obscurity of women's scientific work as an intentional

\textsuperscript{282} One of the most controversial points of conflicts among dietitians, nutritionists, and home economists was the controversy over the human protein requirement. Kellogg, Rorer, and Cooper agreed that protein was the most indigestible element of the human diet and advocated a low-protein diet. Cooper wrote, "In 1917, there was warfare not only in Europe, but also among our scientific organizations where the adherents of the low protein ration for the normal standard were in opposition to those who believed in the high protein standard." See Lenna Cooper, "The Dietitian and Her Profession," \textit{Journal of the American Dietetic Association} 14, no. 10 (December 1938), 753. This topic ignited tremendous scholarly debate between the followers of Wilbur Atwater and the followers of Henry Sherman. See discussions of the pellagra orphanage experiment and the prison experiment written by Mary Farrar Goldberger, "Dr. Joseph Goldberger: His Wife's Recollections," \textit{Essays on the History of Nutrition and Dietetics} (Chicago: American Dietetic Association), 284–287.

\textsuperscript{283} See Berenice Bryant Lowe, \textit{Tales of Battle Creek}, (Battle Creek: Albert T. and Louise B. Miller Foundation, 1976); Elizabeth Neumeyer, "Mother": Ella Eaton Kellogg (Battle Creek: Heritage Battle Creek, 2001), 4.

“camouflage” by both men and women. My dissertation benefits from Rossiter’s work on several levels, but I depart from her interpretative framework in fundamental ways.

One of the most fundamental differences in my approach relates to the political and professional strategies employed by dietitians. Rossiter constructs a hard line by categorizing the professional posture of women scientists into two camps. On one hand, she describes the “idealistic, liberal to radical, and often confrontational strategy of demanding that society reject all stereotypes and work for the feminist goal of full equality.” She characterizes the other camp as adopting a “less strident and more conservative and ‘realistic’ tactic of accepting the prevailing inequality and sexual stereotypes but using them for short-term gains such as establishing areas of ‘women’s work’ for women.” She puts Ellen Richards in the second category.\(^{285}\) This framework fragments and obscures the visibility of other women (specifically dietitians) who were organizing within women’s networks, but also collaborating with male scientific and medical personalities to effectuate political change and enhance their professional prestige. According to Rossiter, “In terms, therefore, of nineteenth century stereotypes or rhetorical idealizations, a woman scientist was a contradiction in terms ... women scientists were thus caught between two almost mutually exclusive stereotypes.”\(^{286}\) This tendency explains precisely why dietitians remain historically invisible. By shining light into the crevices of seemingly opposite strategies, dietitians slide into view.\(^{287}\)

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\(^{286}\) Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940*, xv.

\(^{287}\) The occupational category of “dietitian” is noted twice in Rossiter’s study. I focus less on dietitians’ attempts to gain respect in the American Chemical Society and more on their activism in the American Dietetic Association. Rossiter focuses heavily on women in chemistry but measures the scientific work of dietitians in the context of “nutritionist” or “biochemists.” She places their work in the context of the American Chemical Society. Many of the women she details (Abby Marlatt, Ruth Okey, Agnes Fay Morgan) are registered in the World War I ARC Dietitians Enrollment Book. Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America*, 200–203. I also depart from Rossiter’s rationale that the absence of women scientists from our historical memory is a result of an intentional “camouflage.” She explains the significance of two “independent” trends between 1820 and 1920. The first trend, she contends, was the rise of higher education and expanded employment for middle-class, white women; the second was the growth, bureaucratization, and
It is important to briefly comment upon the shift in vocabulary from scientific cookery to dietetics at the turn of the twentieth century because it illustrates an important trend in professionalization. As Burton Bledstein notes in his 1976 book, *The Culture of Professionalism*, professionalization entails the transformation of occupational practice. It is identified by a shift from “distributing a commodity” to “offering a service based upon acquired skill.” Bledstein opens his study with an example about the professionalization of mortuary science. He explains how undertakers severed their alliances with cabinetmakers, enhanced their prestige by changing their occupational titles (from undertaker to mortician), and joined forces with physicians. A mortician self-identified as a “doctor of grief,” writes Bledstein. This “culture of professionalism” also shaped the transition from women’s work in cookery to the service-acquired skill and science of dietetics. That dietitians claim Sarah Tyson Rorer as American’s “first” dietitian is directly related to her alliance with the Philadelphia medical community and the ADA’s effort to legitimize and professionalize their occupation.

In the next chapter, I examine the opportunities in higher education for women in home economics on the eve of America’s entrance into World War I. I analyze the impact of federal funding for home economics at land grant colleges and universities through the Smith Lever (1914) and the Smith-Hughes (1917) Acts. Also, I examine the rise of educational opportunities for women in home economics within the context of “newer professionalization of science and technology in America. It is clear these trends are absolutely critical to the history of white, Protestant, middle-class, and elite progressive-era dietitians. But, this vantage point of independent trends, combined with heavy emphasis on women’s relation to men and delayed entry to their professional organizations, may also explain why dietetics remains invisible today. This approach may also suggest why the American Dietetic Association fails to make an appearance in her study. The tendency to characterize “women scientists” in terms of a constant struggle for acceptance by male professional organizations distacts the inquiry and obstructs the visibility of work performed by women within their own reform networks. Where women’s labor in dietetics (and, more broadly, food and nutrition) is historically concerned, these two trends are inseparable from, and deeply connected to, dominant gender ideologies and the political activism of mid-nineteenth century evangelical women.

nutrition” and scientific discoveries that were beginning to change the fundamental knowledge base of medicine and the applied sciences, specifically physiological chemistry. The debates among home economists, dietitians, and congressional leaders over the passage of this legislation illustrate a number of distinctions between the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) and the American Dietetic Association (ADA). As I will show, one of the most salient distinctions between the AHEA and the ADA was the controversial debate over the adoption of euthenic versus eugenic discourses. As I will show, dietitians aspiring for professional recognition in the years leading up to World War I drew from a broad foundation of discourses over environmental and hereditarian reform.
CHAPTER TWO
PERFECTING THE RACE

When the Journal of Home Economics reported on the success of the first annual Race Betterment Conference in 1914, the editors characterized the spirit of the conference in terms of two key terms: eugenics and eugenics. They proclaimed, "The latter word [eugenics] ... was heard as frequently in the conference deliberations as that newer definition of the science of being well born—eugenics." Quoting Mrs. Melville Dewey [Annie Godfrey Dewey] of the American Home Economics Association [AHEA], the editors wrote: "Euthenics is ... the preliminary science on which eugenics must be based; it seeks to emphasize the immediate duty of man to better his conditions by availing himself of knowledge already at hand which shall tend to increase health and happiness. He must apply this knowledge under conditions—which he can either create or modify. Euthenics is to be developed through sanitary science, through education, and through relating science and education to life."289 The Journal of Home Economics explicitly endorsed the race betterment work of home economists when the editors explained: "Mrs. Richards strongly urged the education of all women in the principles of sanitary science, as the key to race progress in the twentieth century.... However far the science of eugenics may carry the race towards perfection, unless it's sister science, eugenics, goes hand in hand, the race will certainly deteriorate as surely as it has in the past."290

This chapter is framed by three basic arguments. First, I contend that eugenics, neologized by Ellen Richards in 1910 as the "science of the controllable environment,"

played a crucial role in the professionalization of dietetics and home economics.\textsuperscript{291}

Reaching beyond professionalization, I also argue that eugenics was an important intellectual foundation for the overlapping relationships between the rubrics of maternalism and citizenship in early twentieth-century U.S. white, native-born, Protestant, middle- and upper-class women's politics. Remarkably, little historical analysis has been published about eugenics, least of all about the decades between 1910 and 1930 when eugenics experienced a crest of influence and energy. Though few (if any) have seriously analyzed the significance of eugenics, some scholars are beginning to take interest in questions about gender, sexuality, and eugenics.\textsuperscript{292} Others, notably historians of science and technology, have written about nature and nurture through the

\textsuperscript{291} Ellen Richards, \textit{Euthenics: The Science of the Controllable Environment—A Plea for Better Living Conditions as a First Step Toward Higher Efficiency} (Boston: Whitcomb and Barrows, 1910), viii. Of the very few to look at eugenics, particularly in the case of Vassar's Euthenics Institute, most suggest it was not successful. See “The Disappointing First Thrust of Euthenics” in Elizabeth A. Daniels's \textit{Bridges to the World}, Henry Noble MacCracken and Vassar College (Clinton Corners, NY: College Avenue Press, Clinton Corners, 1994).

\textsuperscript{292} In 1988, Nicole Hahn Rafter introduced the multigenerational “family studies genre” as an important product of the American eugenics movement; Rafter was also one of the first to identify the gendered nature of eugenic fieldwork as “women's work” in science. Historian Amy Sue Bix takes issue with Rafter's conclusions regarding the training of female eugenic field workers and demonstrates how many women employed by the Eugenic Records Office actually challenged the validity and efficacy of their own “scientific” findings. In 2001, Wendy Kline analyzed American eugenics through gender and female sexuality. Kline positions eugenics, specifically in relation to the regulation of fertility, as an appealing scientific solution embraced by the white, middle-class because of their concerns over “moral disorder” and their declining birth rate. Kline points to the 1930s as the time when eugenicists—responding, in part, to the economic impact of the Great Depression on American families—redirected their campaigns from negative to positive eugenics. Some examples of negative eugenic practices included voluntary and involuntary sterilization, segregation of the “unfit,” immigration restriction, marriage restriction, and euthanasia. Advocates of positive eugenics, on the other hand, sought to increase the reproduction of the genetically advantaged through fitter family and better baby contests, marriage, and family counseling. In 2007, Laura Lovett challenged Kline's periodization of the shift from negative to positive eugenics on the grounds that statistical evidence (particularly declining birth rates) does not adequately represent the influence of positive eugenics within the eugenics movement writ large. Lovett writes: “The popularity of eugenics education and contests during the 1920s demonstrates that the shift to positive eugenics occurred earlier than Kline suggests and was considered worthwhile. Early efforts by [Paul] Popenoe, Irving Fisher, and the American Eugenics Society, and especially the fitter family contests mark the shift to positive eugenics and family oriented eugenics in the United States.” See Nicole Hahn Rafter, \textit{White Trash: The Eugenic Family Studies, 1877–1919} (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1988); Amy Sue Bix, “Experiences and Voices of Eugenics Field Workers: ‘Women's Work’ in Biology,” \textit{Social Studies of Science} (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, vol. 27 (1997): 625–668; Wendy Kline, \textit{Building A Better Race}, 2001; Laura L. Lovett, \textit{Conceiving the Future: Pronatalism, Reproduction, and the Family in the United States, 1890–1938} (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 9–10.
context of hereditarian and environmental reform. However, most have not probed deep
enough to examine (or, sought to account for) the significance of gender in the
professional power struggle that ensued (notably over child welfare) between advocates
of eugenics and euthenics. That historians have overlooked the significance of euthenics
for early twentieth-century maternalist politics and the emergence of the welfare state is
surprising. It is also remarkable that historians who have specifically examined eugenics,
gender, and sexuality have not interrogated the broader significance of euthenics as a
gendered companion discourse to eugenic thought. In early twentieth-century America,
euthenics was frequently characterized as the “sister science” to eugenics. With the
exception of one historical essay written in 1974 by home economist Emma Seifret
Weigley and passing mention of euthenics in various articles and texts, few have
seriously analyzed the significance of the term.

My second argument builds upon the first. What is important about Richards’s book 
*Euthenics: The Science of Controllable Environment – A Plea For Better Living*

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293 In Weigley’s article, “It Might Have Been Euthenics: The Lake Placid Conferences and the Home Economics Movement,” she paid little attention to the evolution of euthenics as a concept. Instead, she traced the naming of her field from domestic economy to home economics. In her essay, Weigley did more to dismiss the term than she did to analyze it. She wrote, “Ellen Richards and a few others used the word euthenics in subsequent reports and writings, but the word never became popular and home economics continued to be the most commonly used expression.” My research points in the opposite direction. See Emma Seifret Weigley, “It Might Have Been Euthenics: The Lake Placid Conferences and the Home Economics Movement,” *American Quarterly* 26, no.1 (March 1974): 79–96. Weigley was born in Reading, Pennsylvania, received her bachelor’s degree from Albright College, her master’s degree from Drexel Institute of Technology, and her Ph.D. from New York University. She worked as a dietitian, instructor of nursing students, college instructor, and public health nutritionist. (Weigley also coedited the *Essays in Nutrition and Dieterics* with her colleagues Adelia Beeuwkes and E. Neige Todhunter.)

294 In her analysis, *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women’s Colleges From Their Nineteenth Century Beginnings to the 1930s*, Helen L. Horowitz briefly examines euthenics as it was instituted at Vassar College. See Helen Horowitz, *Alma Mater: Design and Experience in the Women’s Colleges From Their Nineteenth Century Beginnings to the 1930s*, Second Edition (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 295–302, 319. Of the few others to address the concept of euthenics, most have either accepted Weigley’s essay as the standard interpretation or have framed euthenics as an oppositional strategy to eugenics. The latter was the case in 1996 when historian Sarah Stage asserted, “Richards meant to challenge Francis Galton’s eugenics, which emphasized social control through breeding.” Sarah Stage, “Ellen Richards and the Social Significance of the Home Economics Movement,” *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession*, Sarah Stage and Virginia Vincenti, eds., 27.
Conditions as a First Step Toward Higher Efficiency, first released in 1910 and rereleased in 1912, is not just the extent of its popularity, but the fact that the book outlined a model for federal support for the promotion of home economics programs (both practical and, later, academic) and presented the government with the template officials would later use to implement home economics education legislation.\textsuperscript{295} It was, as her title suggests, a "plea" for legislation to promote better living conditions. Richards outlined three principal avenues: 1) sanitary science, 2) education, and 3) relating science and education to life. "To the women of America," Richards asserted, "has come an opportunity to put their education, the power of their detailed work, and any initiative they may possess at the service of the state."\textsuperscript{296} As I will show, Richards's euthenic model for federal support materialized, in part, with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. "The housewife has no station," Richards explained, "to which she may carry her trials, like the experiment stations which have been provided for the farmer. Here is another opportunity for the capitalist to hasten the time when the State will supply these."\textsuperscript{297}

By suggesting that euthenics was a fairly popular term in early twentieth-century America and an important intellectual foundation for maternalism, professionalization, and citizenship, does not imply that the concept was adopted by the poor, ethnic/immigrant, and working-class men, women, and children it was imposed upon. Rather, euthenics was one important discourse employed by white, middle- and upper-class, native-born, Protestant women, and the early twentieth-century intellectual


\textsuperscript{296} Ellen Richards, \textit{Euthenics: The Science of the Controllable Environment} (Boston: Whitcomb and Barrows, 1910), ix, 11.

\textsuperscript{297} Ellen Richards, \textit{Euthenics: The Science of the Controllable Environment} (Boston: Whitcomb and Barrows, 1910), 53.
wellspring for assimilation efforts directed at nondominant cultures. (This topic will also be addressed in my final chapter, I show how dietitians used diet to construct a scientifically based racial/ethnic hierarchy throughout the twenties.) Educated and armed with the modern rhetoric of science and efficiency, dietitians clearly engaged in assimilation efforts through a number of tactics promoting “American” food ways and analyzing dietary patterns of nondominant groups. White, native-born, Protestant, middle- and upper-class dietitians advanced culturally specific gender ideologies through cooking. By looking carefully at the relationship between diet and assimilation efforts, particular strands of nativism, white supremacy, and scientific racism running through the very core of the early twentieth-century home economics movement become visible. Despite their attempts to assimilate nondominant groups through “American” dietary customs, foodways constituted an important symbol of racial and ethnic resistance to Americanization and cultural empowerment.

As I have shown in the previous chapter, the emergence of cooking schools in the late nineteenth-century urban Northeast signaled a unique phase of white, middle- and upper-class, Protestant women’s public activism in scientific cookery. The cooking schools empowered white, middle- and upper-class, native-born, Protestant female reformers and provided a forum to consolidate a new discourse within the ideology of femininity that established them as Anglo-Saxon agents of race progress and civilization.

In his 1904 book, The History of Education in the United States, Edwin Dexter linked the importance of the cooking schools to the development of home economics. Building on that premise, Dexter argued that cooking schools “have been in no small degree the makers of public sentiment.” More specifically, in her 1959 history of the American Dietetic Association, Mary Barber asserted that cooking schools of the nineteenth

298 Edwin G. Dexter, The History of Education in the United States (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1904), 44. Regarding the shaping of “public sentiment,” I find utility in Michel Foucault’s framework of disciplinary power.
century, as well as the Battle Creek Sanitarium, “seemed to have been the precursors to the dietitian’s profession.”

Late-nineteenth-century cooking schools presaged state-mandated assimilation efforts inherent in the contours of the Smith-Lever Act. In large part, the “public sentiment” that Dexter referred to, facilitated the passage of the Smith-Lever Act, which, in large part, launched what many historians refer to as the rise of the home economics movement. That Iowa State Agricultural College, Simmons College, and Drexel University (among others) appropriated the ideas espoused by the leaders of the New York City, Boston, and Philadelphia cooking schools in their curriculums illustrates an important shift or transformation in the institutionalization of the ideology of domesticity. The “ordinary” act of cooking (as well as other forms of women’s reproductive labor) eventually became extraordinary educational subjects for legitimate inquiry.

Finally, the third argument framing this chapter is based on the fact that new scientific evidence regarding diet and nutrition complicated or problematized the place of the dietitian within eugenics and eugenic alliances. If eugenics was the key to “race progress” as the editors of the Journal of Home Economics suggested in the spring of 1914, dietitians had to move quickly to renegotiate their professional alliances with the advent of the “newer knowledge of nutrition.” In the summer of 1917, Lenna Cooper, director of the Training School of the Battle Creek Sanitarium, wrote to Lillian “Lulu” Graves, supervisor of dietitians at Cleveland’s Lakeside Hospital, to explore the possibilities of service to the state during wartime and service to the hospitals at home. Together, they formulated a plan for a conference and distributed an invitation that read: “Now that our national crisis [World War I] requires conservation on every hand, it

seems highly important that the feeding of as many people as possible be placed in the hands of women who are trained and especially fitted to feed them in the best possible manner. This conference of dietitians promises to be a most important one; first, for the dietitians who come together to discuss the food problems of the day; second, for the hospitals and institutions with which they are affiliated.\textsuperscript{301}

Though many dietitians maintained membership in both organizations, it is significant that dietitians officially broke away from the American Home Economics Association and created their own professional organization. The first annual meeting of the American Dietetic Association was held at the Royal Palace Hotel in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on September 26–27, 1918. It was held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Hospital Association. In large part, this shift occurred because science of “newer” nutrition propelled or solidified their labor and research within the eugenics platform. As I will show, early twentieth-century scientific discoveries and developments reshaped key alliances for dietitians and forced them to reconsider and reconstitute their relationships with their “brothers” in eugenics.\textsuperscript{302}

\textsuperscript{301} Barber, \textit{History of the American Dietetic Association}, 19.

\textsuperscript{302} My understanding of early twentieth-century eugenic thought is informed by a rich historiography of secondary sources beginning with the appearance of Mark Haller’s 1963 analysis, \textit{Eugenics: Hereditarian Attitudes in American Thought}. Haller first offered a comprehensive history of eugenics in the United States; Haller argued that eugenics sustained an integral part of the “age of reform” and supported the most conservative elements in American society. Donald MacKenzie suggests that eugenics had more to do with self-promoting economic interests and professionalization than it did with race. MacKenzie analyzed the relationship between the emergence of a professional middle class that staked its claims to expertise on scientific theory and method in Britain. MacKenzie argued, “Eugenic ideas [in Britain] were put forward as a legitimization of the social position of the professional middle class, and as an argument for its enhancement.” In contrast to Germany and the United States, MacKenzie situates the British eugenics movement primarily in the context of class-based concerns; he notes that (unlike Germany and America) racism was an incidental byproduct of British eugenics thought. In 1985, Daniel J. Kevles suggested the eugenics movement in America was distinct from the movement in Britain because it was infused with particular strains of nativism, racism, and white supremacy. Kevles also demonstrated how eugenics promoted the development of statistics, intelligence testing, human genetics, and population testing. He links eugenics dogma to the racially charged mental tests employed by military officials during World War I. Kevles characterizes the two strands of eugenic thought in the United States as “mainline” and “reform” eugenics. Mainline eugenics crested in the 1930s through the advocacy of Charles Davenport and Madison Grant, who believed that most humans were controlled by single genes. Kevles described
Nostalgic Modernism

Before I elaborate on the primary arguments of this chapter, it is important to reflect upon an overarching sensibility in which dietitians labored to professionalize. In her recent book, *Conceiving the Future: Pronatalism, Reproduction, and the Family in the United States*, historian Laura Lovett effectively argues that from 1890 until 1930 nostalgic idealizations of motherhood, the family, and the home were used to construct and legitimate political agendas and social policies concerning reproduction. I appropriate Lovett's concept of nostalgic modernism because it is a useful tool that brackets the culture and context in which early twentieth-century dietitians were laboring to professionalize. Further, I also will attempt to show how euthenics and eugenics factored into this overarching sensibility.

In so many ways, early twentieth-century dietitians were emblematic of nostalgic modernism. They embraced the possibilities of social change, but their ideas about the future of American society were grounded in an idealized image of the American family and the American past. Drawing on Michael Kammen and others, Lovett contends that emphasis on various strains of modernism has overshadowed “the fact that in the United States early twentieth century modernists were influenced by a profoundly nostalgic

culture.” Dietitians embraced normative Protestant gender ideals or dominant cultural 
Protestant gender norms in the home and expressed deference to white patriarchy, while 
at the same time, moving their labor into modern educational, medical, and military 
institutions.

Nostalgic modernism is particularly evident in the way Progressive Era reformers 
talked about the “spirit of the old home” and white, middle-class, Protestant gender 
norms within families and the larger society. In his address delivered before the National 
Congress of Mothers in Boston in the spring of 1913, Franklin K. Mathiews, the Chief 
Scout Librarian from the Boy Scouts of America, claimed, “In the truest sense, the father 
should be head over his own household, tremendously concerned in all its welfare.” 
Mathiews commented on the way the home in the “old days” was “the centre of our life, 
industrially, educationally, religiously, socially, and recreationally.” He continued, “I 
have no notion that we can bring back the old home, but I am sure we can resurrect its 
spirit.” For Lenna Cooper, the first dietetic supervisor in the U.S. Army, the idea of 
resurrecting the spirit of the “old home” required more than just new approaches in 
religious and moral instruction. It required the education of women and the belief that 
they should have the knowledge of early twentieth-century foodstuffs and purchasing 
techniques. She explained: “A hundred years ago, women belonged to the class of 
producers ... almost every article used in the home, particularly in country homes, was 
either raised on the farm or home-made. The situation is very much changed at the 

303 Lovett, Conceiving the Future, 3, 9–11.
304 One of the most common complaints was the ineffectiveness of the U.S. Census Bureau. For 
example, one reporter on Mrs. de Garmo’s criticism by noting because of “the 
worthlessness of the census of 1910 and the need of a baby census as groundwork to build up the 
efficiency of the home, the school, and the world. She gave the lamentable fact that in New York 
there are fifteen thousand babies who neither see nor feel; in St. Louis, 600 defective infants, these 
awful results coming from the neglect and indifference of parents, teachers, and law-makers.” 
“Prize Baby of State is Chosen—Mrs. De Garmo’s Address,” Unidentified News clipping, [n.d.], 
MS 1879 Mrs. Frank De Garmo Papers, Box 2, Folder 14, Special Collections, University of 
Tennessee, Knoxville.
(August 1913): 436.
present time in that by far, the majority of the household products are manufactured
outside the home." In other words, for Cooper, the effort to resurrect the spirit of "old
home" and keep in step with the changes and challenges of twentieth-century society
required better education for wives and mothers. She wanted them to understand how to
govern the kitchen and learn how to be conscientious consumers. She argued, "Since all
of her food products must be brought in from the outside ... it is reasonable for her to
have knowledge of how, when, and where these things are prepared." Flora Rose
(1874–1959), nutritionist and Martha Van Rensselaer's successor as the head of the New
York State College of Home Economics, addressed the historical significance of the
home economics movement in her 1949 essay, "A Room of Their Own." She suggested it
"gave concrete expression to growing concern over dislocations occurring in the home
and its failure to keep abreast with the community in a world of rapid physical
change." The transformation of the home from a center of production to consumption,

306 Lenna Cooper, How to Cut Food Costs, (Battle Creek, MI: Good Health Publishing Company, 1917), 89–90.
307 Here it is worth reiterating the complexity of the term "home." According to historian Sarah
Stage, "To say that 'home' was (and continues to be) a heavily loaded term is certainly an
understatement." Stage summarizes the home in the nineteenth century as a representation of "an
entire constellation of values and beliefs, a sentimentalized but nevertheless potent response to the
threat to traditional patterns of living imposed by urban industrialism." See Sarah Stage, "Ellen
Richards and the Social Significance of the Home Economics Movement," Sarah Stage and
Virginia Vincenti, eds., Rethinking the Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession,
30. It is important to emphasize that the idea of women's responsibility to the home was
frequently employed and reinforced by early twentieth-century dietitians to promote and
legitimize their work. The concept of women's roles in the home over food preparation was also
clearly used as a rationale for women to engage in broader spheres of action. For example, Lenna
Cooper asserted, "The mother is responsible for what is fed to her family, and if she does not
prepare the dishes, she should feel responsible for the quality and sanitary condition of the food
which she provides." Taking it a step further, Cooper explained, "It is true that the individual
woman can do little to remedy things which affect a whole community or nation since these are
matters which can be adjusted only through legislative bodies. It would seem, however, that a
woman's influence should be felt in legislative assemblies." See Cooper, How to Cut Food Costs,
89–90, 93–94.
308 Flora Rose, "A Room of Their Own," Journal of Home Economics 41, no. 9 (November 1949):
511.
suffused with the nostalgic spirit of the "old home," factored into the legislative drive for better education and training of women and mothers in the early twentieth century.

The education of women was a particular source of controversy for Progressive Era, Protestant reformers within aspiring professional classes. In their quest for respect and status, dietitians' pursuit of higher education and hospital training for their career was a keystone in their professionalization project. And, the pursuit of women's higher education became one of many allegations used against them as a factor in the midst of fear over white race degeneracy. We know from the work of Elaine Tyler May, that eugenic-minded physicians began to "consider that infertility among affluent American born was one of the factors that was contributing to race suicide." She also explains that men were typically blamed for sterility associated with venereal disease, while women were targeted for an alleged reluctance toward motherhood. May writes, "Education, careers, contraception, and abortion were presumably the follies that led to

309 The intersection of nostalgic modernism and Americanization is also evident in the way dietitians discussed culinary history and promoted American holiday traditions and national pastimes through foodways. In one of her presentations, World War I ARC dietitian and ADA President Mary de Garmo Bryan (the daughter of Mary Eloise de Garmo) explained how Christopher Columbus sought a shorter route to the Indies for a number of reasons, but emphasized his pursuit of "rare and valuable spices which did much to make foods palatable in an age when there was no refrigeration." She credited Sarah Hale (the editor of The Ladies Magazine in 1828 and later of the Godey's Lady's Book) with the adoption of the last Thursday in November as the date for a national Thanksgiving. She recalled the first Thanksgiving held by the survivors of the Massachusetts Bay Colony to celebrate the "bountiful harvest following the first hard winter during which many of their number had perished of starvation and scurvy." See Mary de Garmo Bryan Typescript, "The Nutrition Story," Mrs. Frank de Garmo Papers, Box 4, Folder 18, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Much later, in 1963, Emma Seifrit Weigley wrote an article titled, "Food in the Days of the Declaration of Independence," in which she differentiated between the frontier diet, the farm diet, the city diet, the plantation diet, the colonial college diet, and the colonial Army diet. See Emma Seifrit Weigley, "Food in the Days of the Declaration of Independence," Adelia Beeuwkes, E. Neige Todhunter, Emma S. Weigley, eds., Essays on the History of Nutrition and Dietetics (Chicago: American Dietetic Association, 1967), 151-156. In their writings, dietitians also charted the history of dietary deficiency diseases over time (such as scurvy, beriberi, rickets, sprue, pellagra, pernicious anemia, and resistance to infectious diseases) from antiquity to major eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century political events, military battles, and economic hard times.
childlessness,” and that “Physicians believed that much of the sterility was due to ‘failures of volition’ in American women.”

Historians generally characterize mainline eugenics in the U.S. in terms of “positive” eugenics and “negative” eugenics. The better baby contests provide one example of positive eugenics; in other words, they illustrate the trend or the effort to coerce and educate “worthy,” white, middle-and upper-class, native born Americans to reproduce. Negative eugenics, on the other hand, emphasized the possibility of preventing the poor (particularly poor, racial/ethnic groups) from reproduction by scientific intervention. Compulsory sterilization constitutes the most obvious example of negative eugenics. It was a practice that took place, in many – if not most - cases without the patient’s knowledge or permission and it was a practice that the U.S. Supreme Court declared constitutional in 1927. According to May, “The movement for compulsory sterilization began at the turn of the century [and was] directed against the poor. Because the wealthy could usually avoid state institutions and rarely needed them to turn to public agencies for assistance, they more easily protected their private lives from state intervention. The poor were vulnerable not only because they were more likely to come into contact with coercive state institutions, but because their very poverty marked them as ‘unfit.’” As I will show in my final chapter (with the case of the Vanderbilt Prenatal Nutrition Study), this logic continued to resonate throughout the twentieth century.

In this chapter, I interpret early twentieth-century debates over eugenics and euthenics as gendered power struggles over the education, techniques, and finances (both public and private) used to reinstate class- and race-based cultural dominance.

311 See May, Barren in the Promised Land, 96-97.
312 I believe the euthenics and eugenics controversy illustrates clear class distinctions and highlights clear economic tensions between aspiring professional middle-class women and elite, upper-class women. It seems to me that middle-class reformers more comfortably identified with
Grounded in beliefs about white supremacy and the widely perceived threats of Anglo-American race suicide, the rubrics of eugenics and eugenics legitimated a wide variety of professional positions. In order to understand concretely the significance of these overlapping discourses to the professionalization of dietetics and the ways in which it provided an intellectual basis for racial discourses for early twentieth-century white, native-born, Protestant, middle-class women’s politics, it is important to first provide some background on the origins of the terms and an analysis of the cultural and historical context in which they were employed.

The Sister Science

In her 1910 study, *Euthenics: The Science of Controllable Environment—A Plea For Better Living Conditions as a First Step Toward Higher Efficiency*, Richards emphasized the immediate opportunities of eugenics and claimed that eugenics was the necessary foundation for eugenics. Richards defined eugenics as, “the term proposed for eugenics, while upper-class women endorsed eugenics. For example, that the widow of the railroad magnate and entrepreneur, Mrs. Mary Harriman of New York City, funded the creation of the Eugenics Record Office underscores this point. In terms of regional and class affiliations, it also comes as no surprise that elite Southern, native-born, Protestant, white women (like Mary Eloise de Garmo who will be analyzed later) may have easily sided with the logic of eugenists for two reasons. First, because eugenics and the presence of the African American female “mammy” figure as caretaker of children and the family cook in elite Southern home did not sync with the logic of eugenics. The presence of an African American “mammy” may have challenged the notion that the panacea of white race suicide or degeneration was less a factor of “nurture” and more a eugenic factor of “nature.” Second, white, upper class and elite, native born, Protestant, Southern women may have been influenced by the horrid “success” of reproductive engineering in times of slavery.

Historian Wendy Kline said it succinctly when she noted, “Though the meaning varied from person to person, the common eugenic vision of ‘building a better race,’ was implicitly racist.” See Wendy Kline, *Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001), 5. According to historian Laura Lovett, some factors that contributed to this perceived threat of race suicide at the turn of the twentieth century included higher rates of women working outside the home, rising divorce rates, falling birth rates among the white, native-born population, high immigration rates, and increasing urbanization. See Laura Lovett, *Conceiving the Future*, 7. See also Elaine Tyler May, *Barren in the Promised Land: Childless Americans and the Pursuit of Happiness* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 44.
the preliminary science on which Eugenics must be based." 314 On the other hand, eugenics defined by British statistician Francis Galton in 1883, was understood as "the study of agencies under social control that may improve or impair the racial qualities of future generations, either physically or mentally." 315 According to Richards’s biographer, home economist Caroline Hunt, Richards devoted the last thirty years of her life to the promotion of euthenics. Hunt maintained: "[Richards] came in the course of time to be prominently identified with the Home Economics movement. But, this was only a part of the great, absorbing interest of her life, which included bettering of the conditions in the community, in the school, in the factory, as well as in the home. This larger and more inclusive interest, though neither named nor defined until shortly before her death, early took full possession of her powers, and the last thirty years of her life were given to developing the science of the controllable environment for which she coined the name 'Euthenics.'" 316 As I will show, euthenics enjoyed fairly common usage throughout the first half of the twentieth century. 317

316 Hunt, The Life of Ellen H. Richards, 172. Caroline Hunt was a controversial figure in her own right. She piloted the UW-Madison Department of Home Economics for three years (1905–1908.) Dean Harry L. Russell selected Abby L. Marlatt to replace Hunt in 1909 because of rapid national growth and popularity of home economics on the rise and student enrollment at University of Wisconsin, Madison, in decline. Marlatt, with "sturdy build, determined air, and strong will to fight for convictions," transformed the University of Wisconsin, Madison Home Economics program and marshaled it to national prominence. She received the wire from Russell after she successfully launched the domestic economy department at Utah State Agricultural College in Logan, Utah, and the home economics program at the Manual Training High School in Providence, Rhode Island. Marlatt answered Russell's call and moved to Madison. From 1909 to 1939, Marlatt brought national recognition to the University. Marlatt laughed when she noted school authorities, after all her hard work, decided on "manual training instead of domestic science." Because of Marlatt, Wisconsin pioneered the first department in research and nutrition under Dr. Amy Daniels, the first university nursery school of the country, the first to teach the chemistry of textiles, the first to offer courses in methods of home economics extension, the first
In her book *Euthenics* (published by Boston's Whitcomb and Barrows Publishing Company in 1910 and 1912), Richards advocated the promotion of euthenics through sanitary science and education and by relating science and education to life. Specifically, she believed that women's access to education in sanitary science was one of the most promising avenues of reform. Richards interpreted women's education in euthenics as a keystone of "race progress" in early twentieth-century America. Respectively, advocates of euthenics and eugenics engaged in fierce literary contestations in professional journals and in cantankerous debate at the 1914 Race Betterment Conference. Jacob Riis, for example, exclaimed, "The word has rung in my ears until I am sick of it. Heredity! Heredity! Heredity! There is just one heredity in all the world and that is ours—we are children of God."318 Such debates, over the primacy and legitimacy of their approaches, boiled over into public discourses through the gendered rhetoric of nature and nurture. Eugenicists frowned upon childless women who engaged in "dysgenic" activities that included almost anything that challenged time honored gender arrangements, such as "remaining single, pursuing jobs or careers, [or] going to college..."319

A substantial amount of sibling rivalry or professional antagonism over nature and nurture surfaced among Progressive Era reformers.320 Many turn-of-the-twentieth-

to introduce a course in family relationship. Finally, Marlatt's program became the first to offer a master's degree in housing and the first to introduce the course. Claribel Adams, "Abby L. Marlatt—Pioneer," *Practical Home Economics* (September 1939), 241.

317 Since 1974, when dietitian Emma Siefrt Weigley perpetuated her own vision of home economics history, "It Might Have Been Euthenics," her essay has not been challenged. Despite the lack of analysis given to euthenics by Stage, Vincenti, and Nerad, I consider Sarah Stage and Virginia Vincenti, eds., *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession* and Maresi Nerad, *The Academic Kitchen: A Social History of Gender Stratification at the University of California, Berkeley* two of the most influential contemporary histories about gender and professionalization in home economics.


320 Historian Wendy Kline defines Progressive ideology as "a widespread and varied response to the multitude of changes brought by industrial capitalism and urban growth in the late nineteenth century. What drew these reformers together—from labor activists to club women—was the desire
century middle-class, native-born, Protestant home economists subscribed to the idea that euthenics (environmental reform) was critical, if not fundamental, to eugenic goals. One writer asserted in a 1916 child welfare manual for mothers: “There is hope even in the darkness through the sister study of eugenics, which is known as Euthenics. Euthenics deals with race improvement through environment.” Hard-line eugenicists Paul Popenoe and Roswell Johnson acknowledged this tension when they wrote in their 1918 book *Applied Eugenics*: “How foolish, then, is the antagonism between the two forces! For the two parties to engage in mutual scorn and recrimination would be no more absurd than for eugenics and euthenics to be put in opposition to each other.” A number of other influential figures also weighed in on the early twentieth-century distinctions. David Starr Jordan, for example, articulated the difference between the terms as the difference between being well born and being well brought up. He explained, “Being well born is one thing. Being well brought up is another. Euthenics is the name for being well brought up, and refers to a child that has the most made of it compared to its highest possibility, man or woman. It is a matter of greatest importance, but it is a different thing than eugenics, because we have no evidence whatever that any result of good bringing up is inherited…. The difference between being well born and well brought up was defined by Galton in these two words—nature and nurture.”


of the race. It is the easy path, but cannot achieve the desired result. There is no hope of racial purification in any environment which does not mean selection of the germ. Before I elaborate on the significance of germ selection in the early twentieth-century debate over eugenics and euthenics, I draw upon a useful 1998 essay written by historian Kathy Cooke about the scientific origins of the early twentieth-century concepts of hereditarian and environmental reform. While she does not employ the term euthenics, Cooke captures its essence and explains how “a complex understanding of hereditary mechanisms, as well as a practical desire to further Progressive Era social goals, helped to mold eugenic concerns and encouraged reformers, especially those with agricultural backgrounds, to make environmental reform a viable ally to hereditary reform.”

Drawing on neo-Lamarckian theory, some early twentieth-century reformers believed that environmental factors could, in fact, change heredity. Diet (characterized

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324 The Groundwork of Eugenics, p. 20 as quoted in James A. Field, “The Progress of Eugenics,” The Quarterly Journal of Economics 26, no. 1 (November 1911): 30. See also Karl Pearson, “The Statistical Study of Dietaries,” Biometrika 9, no. 4 (October 1913), 530–533; D. Noel Paton charged Pearson (Francis Galton’s protégé) with being “entirely unable to grasp the fundamental fact that the physical development of the individual depends largely on conditions of past life. To co-relate it with the special constituents of the food which he habitually eats will require not only an enormous series of studies, but a full investigation of the character of the various food stuffs and the mode of cooking.” D. Noel Paton, “The Statistical Study of Dietaries, a reply to Professor Karl Pearson,” Biometrika 10: No 1 (April 1914), 169–172. But, Karl Pearson got the last word in this argument by claiming that “no safe conclusions with regard to dietaries can be drawn until a reasonable anthropometric survey accompanies the record of dietaries, and the whole is reduced with adequate statistical knowledge.” Karl Pearson, “The Statistical Study of Dietaries. A Rejoinder,” Biometrika 10, no. 1 (April 1914), 174.


326 Born in 1744, Jean-Baptiste Lamarck has been considered a pioneer in the philosophical study of evolution. He is best known for his theory published in 1809: “Changes in the animal’s surroundings are responded to by changes in its habits.” His classic example is the neck of a giraffe. For generation after generation, giraffes’ physical characteristics adapted by stretching their necks to get the leaves from the treetops, he believed. Hard-line eugenicists, such as Paul Popenoe, opposed Lamarckian thought and believed it should be “thrown out.” Popenoe asserted: “The Lamarckian doctrine is now held by persons who have either lacked training in the
as an environmental factor) was, perhaps, one of the single most effective (and controversial) tools in this logic. Writing from Paris in 1904, for example, Armand Gautier explained in his book *Diet and Dietetics*, “Food is perhaps sufficient to transform the wolf and wild cat, some of the most dangerous carnivorous animals, into the domestic dog and cat. If diet acts thus on the development of organs, and character, it is impossible to deny that it also modifies races.” Drawing on the early nineteenth-century work of French naturalist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, Gautier reasoned that external forces shaped the body’s internal conditions. This idea was advanced in American popular and prescriptive literature, as well. In her 1916 child welfare handbook for parents and teachers, Caroline Benedict Burrell wrote, “It is one of the interesting developments of today, that we realize the great effect of food on the body and mind.” Burrell offered practical instructions to mothers. She advocated slow mastication; she also warned against overfeeding, underfeeding, eating between meals, and feeding children meat. She even linked behavioral concerns to a child’s diet. “How many children have been punished for naughtiness, when their moral systems are not so much to blame, as their physical?” Burrell asked, “Or, indeed, when they themselves are not so much to blame as evaluation of evidence, or have never examined critically the assumptions on which they proceed. Medical men and breeders of plants or animals are to a large extent believers in Lamarckism, but the evidence, if any, on which they rely is always susceptible of explanation in a more reasonable way.” Paul Popenoe, *Applied Eugenics*, (New York: MacMillan, 1918), 37–38. See also Kathy J. Cooke, “The Limits of Heredity, Nature and Nurture in American Eugenics Before 1915,” *Journal of the History of Biology* 31, no. 2 (June 1998): 266; George Stocking, Jr., “Lamarckianism in American Social Science: 1890–1915,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 23, no. 2 (April–June 1962): 239–256; M. J. S. Hodge, “Lamarck’s Science of Living Bodies,” *The British Journal for the History of Science* 5, no. 4 (December 1971): 323–352; See also L. C. Dunn, *A Short History of Genetics: The Development of Some Main Lines of Thought 1864–1939* (San Francisco: McGraw-Hill, 1965), 47–48.


their careless, ignorant parents!" In her book *Euthenics*, Richards argued that proper diet was, second only to clean air, the most important element for good health, and she quoted Professor Stanley G. Hall who said: "The necessity of judicious, wholesome food is paramount ... you can educate a long time by externals and accomplish as much as good feeding will accomplish by itself. Children must be supplied with plenty of nutritious food if they are to develop healthily either in mind or body."

The terms euthenics and eugenics became so controversial that they warranted clarification in the *American Journal of Sociology* from one of the most extreme eugenicists, Roswell H. Johnson from the University of Pittsburgh. "This youthful term, 'eugenics,' has raced along a rapid and muddy course," said Johnson. "So it goes, a good word has been marred and blurred beyond recognition. Is there a natural, clear-cut line dividing the field of eugenics from that splendidly large, though vaguely bounded, field of activity for improved human environment, now known as euthenics?" Johnson believed there was. In 1914, Johnson reiterated the basic argument presented by many eugenicists at the time when he pointed to the "germ-plasm" as the definitive hereditary factor between eugenics and euthenics. By pointing to the germ-plasm, Johnson definitively advocated that germ selection marked the dividing line between eugenics and euthenics. In the theoretical ring of this dynamic contest over the mechanisms of evolutionary change stood, in one corner, advocates of German cytologist August

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332 In the winter of 1999, science and technology historian George Cook from the University of Toronto, linked the turn-of-the-century debate among evolutionary scientists to the creation of programmatic experimental institutions (i.e., Cold Spring Harbor) used to test inheritance. He demonstrates how ideas about inheritance were soon eclipsed by Mendelian and chromosomal genetics. See George Cook, "Neo-Lamarckian Experimentalism in America: Origins and Consequences," *The Quarterly Review of Biology* 74, no. 4 (December 1999): 417–437.
Weismann and his theory of continuity of the germ-plasm. In the other, stood Henry Fairfield Osborn along with other neo-Lamarckians and advocates of Herbert Spencer.\(^{333}\)

Advocates of the Weismann theory generally believed that the state was wasting time and money attempting to uplift “poor stock” through education, legislation, and sanitary science. Charles B. Davenport echoed this logic when he wrote in 1910: “Vastly more effective than ten million dollars to charity, would be ten millions to Eugenics. He, who, by such a gift should redeem mankind from vice, imbecility and suffering would be the world’s wisest philanthropist.”\(^{334}\) Mary Averell Harriman, the widow of railroad magnate Edward H. Harriman and founder of the Junior League, financed the creation of the Eugenics Record Office (ERO) in Cold Spring Harbor, New York. The ERO was officially established on October 1, 1900.

Roswell Johnson justified the idea of the germ-plasm by explaining, for example, how the cleft palate is a germinal characteristic.\(^{335}\) He also explained how a child at birth

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\(^{333}\) Johnson was referring to the theory of continuity of the germ-plasm, articulated shortly after the death of Charles Darwin in 1882 by August Weismann (1834–1914). Weismann, a professor at the University of Freiberg, Germany, led many scientists to abandon the idea that the body produced germ cells. Instead, he reasoned that germ cells produced the body. One reviewer of Weismann’s “theory of descent” wrote in 1883, “Next to the works of Darwin, Wallace, and Fritz Muller, the present essay of Weismann’s, which appeared in Germany several years since, is perhaps the most important contribution to the doctrine of evolution.” Weismann undermined (but did not squelch) neo-Lamarckian ideas by arguing that a molecular basis distinguished the soma (body tissue) from the germ-plasm (reproductive tissue). It was not the soma, but the germ-plasm, that held the hereditary key to evolution. Weismann’s theory was held in a degree of sanctity by many geneticists, but it was not universally accepted. In 1908, the Kansas Academy of Science published a paper written by biology and geology professor L. C. Wooster from the State Normal School at Emporia. Wooster argued that Weismann’s germ theory was untenable because “nutriment and oxygen must flow in a steady stream into the living cell, energy must be continually liberated for the activities of the protoplasm, and useless matter must be continuously excreted or the cell will die.” See “Review: Weismann’s Studies in the Theory of Descent,” The American Naturalist 17, no. 10 (October 1883): 1024–1026; Leo W. Buss, “Evolution, Development, and the Units of Selection,” Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of America 80, no. 5 [Part 1: Biological Sciences] (March 1983): 1387–1391; L. C. Wooster, “The Germ-Plasm Hypothesis of Weismann Untenable,” Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science 22 (December 1908–January 1909): 339.


\(^{335}\) At the beginning of the twentieth century, Weismann’s views were absorbed by degeneracy theorists who embraced negative eugenics as their favored model.... Adherents of the new field of genetics were ambivalent about eugenics. Most basic scientists—including William Bateson in
could have certain inborn characteristics that were not necessarily germinal. To illustrate this point, he used the example of a newborn with above normal weight because of superior prenatal nutrition. He then offered a subtle hint to euthenic advocates; attempting to keep them from further encroaching on the eugenic domain, Johnson quipped, “Therefore efforts to improve these non-germinal, inborn characteristics of the coming child through better care of the mother are not in the field of eugenics, if we adhere to Galton’s original definition, but in the field of eugenics.”

Four years later, in their influential 1918 tome, Applied Eugenics, Popenoe and Johnson dedicated the entirety of their final chapter to the distinctions between eugenics and euthenics. The authors wrote: “The entire field of race betterment and social improvement is divided between eugenics, which considers only germinal or heritable characteristics in the race, and euthenics, which deals with improvement in the individual and his environment, of course no sharp line can be drawn between the two spheres, each one having many indirect effects on the other. It is important to note, however, that any change in the individual during his prenatal life is euthenic, not eugenic. Therefore, contrary to the popular idea of the case, the ‘Better Babies’ movement, the agitation for proper care of expectant mothers, and the like are not directly a part of eugenics. The moment of conception is the point at which eugenics gives place to euthenics. Eugenics is therefore the fundamental method of human progress, euthenics is the secondary one.”

Their statement was a direct literary response to Richards’s assertion: “Euthenics precedes eugenics, developing better men now, and thus inevitably creating a better race of men in Great Britain and Thomas Hunt Morgan in the United States—shunned eugenics as vulgar and an unproductive field for research.


the future. Euthenics is the term proposed for the preliminary science on which Eugenics must be based."338

*Applied Eugenics* was published seven years after Richards’s death. It may have appeared that Poponoe and Johnson got the last word by arguing that eugenics was the fundamental method of human progress. But, Richards’s concept of eugenics factored into a wide variety of early twentieth-century child welfare reforms and, in particular, led to an expansion of opportunities in higher education for native-born, Protestant, middle-class, white women. Moreover, eugenics was remarkably persistent in academic and scientific circles of higher education. In December 1941, Carl E. Seashore from the University of Iowa reflected on the utility of eugenics in the context of child welfare. Commenting on the creation of the University of Iowa Child Welfare Research Station charter, Seashore explained how eugenics (as a “coordinate” term to eugenics) would have been the most appropriate word for their charter. But, as Seashore explained, advocates of the Child Welfare Research Station “fell back on the easily understood term child welfare and gave it new connotation by centering it on scientific research” because they had to win the approval of the people and the legislature. In his 1941 essay, he asserted, “Now that child welfare or child development is a well established movement both theoretical and practical, I would again advocate the use of the single technical word to denote scientific procedures within this great area.”339 Seashore’s 1941 call for a revival of the term eugenics evidently prompted further discussion over wider use of the term. “Since then,” Seashore wrote in May of 1942, “question as to its origin has been raised, so I wrote to Dr. C. B. Davenport, who was one of the first American advocates of its use to make a statement on the subject.” Davenport responded to Seashore’s query. Davenport confirmed: “You may recall, that in June 1910, Mrs. E. H. Harriman

announced her plan to start the Eugenics Record Office and the newspapers made a good
deal of it at the time. Mrs. Ellen H. Richards, soon thereafter prepared a small book
entitled, ‘Euthenics’ (with a subtitle, ‘The Science of the Controllable Environment’) and
sometime later a course in Euthenics was given at Vassar. So far as I know, Mrs.
Richards was the first to use this term.”

Analyzing the role of diet in the early twentieth-century discourses of eugenics
and euthenics is an extremely difficult task because of the complexity and variety of
changing scientific ideas about the relationship between food to health, disease,
environment, and heredity. Perhaps the most heated debate between euthenics and
eugenics played out through discussions over child welfare reform. It is of critical
importance to note that the parlance of euthenics and eugenics coincided with the
establishment of the U.S. Children’s Bureau. On April 2, 1912, President William
Howard Taft signed the act of Congress creating the bureau within the Department of
Commerce and Labor. According to historian Robyn Muncy, the Children’s Bureau
became the first official “female stronghold” in the federal government. One of the

341 Lillian Wald employed the rhetoric of the “baby crop” to justify her arguments for federal
support of child welfare initiatives. This was the same rhetoric used by de Garmo and Kellogg.
“Wald is purported to have retorted: ‘If the Government can have a department to take such an
interest in what is happening to the cotton crop, why can’t it have a bureau to look after the
nation’s child crop?’” For a concise history of the origins and activities of the U.S. Children’s
Bureau, see Robyn Muncy, Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890–1935 (New
York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 38–65. The terms of the act and the scope of the bureau
were officially outlined by the Department of Commerce and Labor: “The act establishing the
bureau provides that it shall investigate and report upon all matters related to the welfare of
children, and child life among all classes of our people, and shall especially investigate the
questions of infant mortality, the birth rate, orphanage, juvenile courts, desertion, dangerous
occupations, accidents and diseases of children, employment and legislation affecting children in
the several states and territories.” “The Children’s Bureau, Department of Commerce and Labor,”
62nd Congress, first session, S. Report., No. 141. The first permanent nutrition position in the U.S.
Children’s Bureau was established in 1936 in connection with the administration of grants-in-aid
to states for health services to mothers and children. Given the long history of dietetic activism
with prenatal nutrition from the early days of cod liver oil prescriptions for rickets, Mary Barber
thought it was only fitting that an ADA representative serve on the Children’s Bureau Advisory
Committee for Maternal and Child Health and Crippled Children’s Services. Barber, History of the
bureau's first initiatives was the creation of a series of pamphlets dealing with the home care of children, including one pamphlet on prenatal care.

In her first report to the Secretary of Labor, Julia Lathrop (Children's Bureau Chief) noted the wide range of correspondence that included direct appeals for information regarding "children's health contests" and "diet lists" for children of all ages.342 Many years later, in February of 1957, Dr. Helen Hunscher, the Dean of Home Economics at Western Reserve University, deduced what researchers were just beginning to evidence at the turn of the twentieth century: "In the beginning of the life cycle, heredity and speed of development are predominant. Questions of child development and nutrition are inseparable." To demonstrate the long history of studies about the relationship between child development and diet, she opened her essay with a statement made fifty years earlier by Russell Chittenden.343 She pointed to studies conducted in Australia that revealed a consistent correlation between a mother's ability to secrete milk and her maternal diet previous to and during pregnancy. Hunscher cited the longitudinal research studies in progress at various child research centers and clinics. She specifically pointed to the work at the Merrill-Palmer School, Harvard University, the Children's Fund of Michigan (under Dr. Icie Macy Hoobler), and the University of Colorado School of Medicine.344


343 Russell Chittenden (1856–1943) is significant to this study because several dietitians trained under him and celebrated his work while he served as professor of physiological chemistry at Yale University from 1882 until 1922. Between 1898 and 1922, he directed the Sheffield Scientific School.

Euthenics, and specifically concerns about the role of diet in child welfare reform, stabilized a variety of early twentieth-century “maternalist” politics. In May of 1914, sociologist William Dealey from Clark University defined child welfare as a synthesis of those “modern movements in social reform which relate to child problems.” Dealey labeled nine overlapping “euthenic movements”: infant mortality, somatic hygiene, mental hygiene, cottage system (or placing out) for dependent children, neglected children, child labor, delinquent children, recreation, and school extension. Diet and nutrition figured prominently within each of these categories. For example, it was relevant to the prevention of infant mortality in the context of pure milk campaigns and prenatal nutrition education. It was relevant to somatic hygiene through the concept of school lunches. Reformers had long argued the impact of diet on character, juvenile delinquency, and mental hygiene. If eugenics (true to Galton’s formulation) aimed to produce genetically better children, then, Dealey argued, “eugenics is essentially a child-welfare movement.” He also argued that eugenics was primarily relevant to the child before conception, while euthenics was a matter of environmental adjustment after conception.

Prenatal nutrition engaged the attention of a variety of reformers, and it constituted one of the most common arguments linking dietetics to euthenics and eugenics and to matters of the state. Because of the vitamin content of milk and the

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345 Linda Gordon defines the maternalist character as a type of people who, in accordance with three basic tenets, are 1) associated “women’s interests with children’s interests” or those “who regarded domestic and family responsibilities and identities as essential to the vast majority of women and to the social order”; 2) those who “imagined themselves in a motherly role to support the poor ... as in need of moral and spiritual as well as economic help”; 3) those who “believed that it was their work, experience, and/or socialization as mothers that made women uniquely able to lead certain kinds of reform campaigns and made others deserving of help.” See Linda Gordon, Pitied but Not Entitled: Single Mothers and the History of Welfare (New York: The Free Press, 1994), 55, fn 78.


347 Rima Apple, Janet Golden, and Jacqueline Wolf have contributed to my understanding of the historical trends in infant feeding and prenatal nutrition. In 1987, Rima Apple analyzed how and
number of digestive enzymes, J. H. Kellogg called milk the “product of maternal providence” and “the most remarkable of all foods known to man.”

Professor Irving Fisher characterized the health of the mother as a matter of public concern when he said: “It should be recognized that a mother is a public functionary. She is the instrument for the pre-natal nurture of the next generation.”

Richards, in fact, asserted child welfare was not necessarily a matter of parental concern, but state concern, when she explained: “In the social republic, the child as a future citizen is an asset of the state, not the property of its parents. Hence, its welfare is a direct concern of the state. Preventative medicine is, in this sense, truly State Medicine, and means protection of people from their own ignorance.”


350 Richards, Euthenics, 133.
were formed, curriculums were devised, and committees were created. Extracurricular collegiate “Euthenics Clubs” were also established.\textsuperscript{351} Given that Richards graduated from Vassar in 1870, it is fitting that a Euthenics Institute was formed there in 1924. In the wake of increasing criticism toward women’s entrance in higher education, Vassar embraced the term euthenics and launched a curriculum based upon it. It was formed for “the girl who is fundamentally interested in the improvement of the race and who realizes the tremendous contribution which modern science has to make to that through its effect on the environment.”\textsuperscript{352} Through a generous endowment from Vassar alumna Minnie Cumnock Blodgett, the Vassar trustees established the Division of Euthenics in 1924. (Blodgett, a personal friend of Julia Lathrop, served as an ARC dietitian during World War I.) They named another World War I ARC dietitian, Dr. Annie Louise MacLeod, as the director.\textsuperscript{353} The Vassar board of trustees must have appreciated the significance of nutrition and dietetics to their euthenics program. Having just served two years (1924–1926) as president of the American Dietetic Association, Dr. Ruth Wheeler returned in 1926 to Poughkeepsie as a professor of nutrition and physiology. She became the chair of the Division of Euthenics in 1928 and remained there until her retirement in 1944.\textsuperscript{354} Under Wheeler’s leadership, in the 1930–1931 academic year, trustees debated the

\textsuperscript{351} School of Human Ecology: A Centennial Celebration, Student Extra-curricular Activities, University of Wisconsin–Madison Archives. It is difficult to say exactly how long euthenics clubs remained active in terms of national trends, but it is clear that the Euthenics Club at the University of Wisconsin–Madison continued into the second half of the twentieth century as evidenced by a 1962 photograph in the Badger Yearbook featuring a group of white, female undergraduate home economics students. See School of Human Ecology: A Centennial Celebration, Steenbock Iconography, Series 14/2, Box 201, “Home economics groups—student orgs” (Folder 3).

\textsuperscript{352} MacLeod expressed the ultimate aim of the euthenics program at Vassar when she said their goal was to “produce college women who will be better citizens, better wives, better mothers, from better knowledge of their own lives, the environment [in] which they are placed, and the possibility of improving the environment for the betterment of the individual.” Annie Louise MacLeod, “Euthenics at Vassar,” Journal of Home Economics 18, no. 3 (March 1926): 119, 122.


establishment of a “Euthenics Department” on the grounds that, among other things, there was a general dissatisfaction in the “lack of race improvement.” Though it may have been the only college to officially implement a Euthenics Institute, Vassar was not the only organization to use the term.

That the Association of Collegiate Alumnae created a Committee on Euthenics signals the extent to which the concept factored into discussions about higher education for women. As an active consultant to the association, Richards took particular interest in promoting graduate studies for women through the rubric of eugenics. According to one tribute written after her death, “All through the life of the Association, nearly thirty years, she lavished thought and interest upon its efforts.” In this tribute (written on letterhead from the Office of the Dean of Women from the University of Chicago) the author stated, “Her last work in this direction for the Association was as a chairman of the Committee on Euthenics whose aim was to suggest immediate and practicable ways of increasing the efficiency of the present human race.”

Euthenics and the Smith-Lever Act of 1914

The second argument in this chapter is based on the idea that competing discourses over eugenics and eugenics played a critical role in the timing and passage of the Smith-Lever (Agricultural Extension) Act. Asbury Frank Lever of South Carolina

356 “Office of the Dean of Women, University of Chicago, Mrs. Richards’ Relation to the Association of Collegiate Alumnae,” Ellen Richards Collection, [n.d.] Box 1, “Biography and Tributes” Folder. Smith College Special Collections, Northampton, MA.
357 According to ADA historian Jo Anne Cassell, “By 1900, courses in nutrition and dietetics were being taught in many colleges and universities across the nation, and the profession drew many women who wished to access higher education.” See Jo Anne Cassell, *Carry the Flame,* 9. Dr. Benjamin Andrews collected the first national organized study of home economics; Andrews determined that between 1870 and 1880 three colleges had home economics departments (Illinois, Iowa, and Kansas). Between 1880 and 1890, he determined there were five colleges with home economics departments (Iowa, Kansas, Oregon, South Dakota, Columbia University; Illinois had dropped the course). By 1900, fifteen colleges offered work in home economics, and fifteen years
and Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia introduced the Smith-Lever Act to Congress in September of 1913. Signed into law at the White House by President Woodrow Wilson on May 8, 1914, the Smith-Lever Act, as dietitian Mary Barber explained, "opened the way for a nation-wide program of home demonstration work, extension workers were demanding more scientific facts in nutrition and other phases of home economics." The Act was a significant cornerstone in the foundation of home economics. It carried home economics outside the classroom and provided federal funds to any state or county with farm and home demonstration agents. Historian Harvey Levenstein characterizes the significance of the Act in its transfer of responsibility for home economics extension work from farmers' bureaus and state extension offices to land grant college and university home economics departments. In her analysis *The Academic Kitchen*, Maresi Nerad emphasizes the purpose of Smith-Lever Act in terms of diffusing useful and practical information related to agriculture and home economics and to encourage their application.

It is clear that the years leading up to the Smith-Lever Act (specifically between 1909 and 1912) were pivotal for the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) and for the burgeoning field of dietetics. Richards claimed the field of home economics was entering the "dawn of a new era." And, dietetics was clearly a significant part. In later, the figure reached ninety-six, nearly half of which were added in the year 1913. Dr. Benjamin Andrews, *Home Economics Teacher Training*, Columbia University Bulletin No. 350, p. 11.


359 Signed by President Woodrow Wilson on May 8, 1914, the Smith-Lever Act authorized cooperative extension work between the land grant colleges and the USDA. It made provisions for extension agents to provide instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture and home economics to people who did not attend college. It is named for the congressmen who introduced it: Senator Hoke Smith of Georgia and Representative A. F. Lever of South Carolina. The first director of the Division of Extension Work was B. A. Calgary.

360 Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 96.

1909, the AHEA published its first issue of the *Journal of Home Economics*. With the journal's first publication, dietetics staked a prominent place in its literary discussions. The editors made special mention of the fact that dietetics held great promise and opportunity for professional women when they wrote: "We publish in this issue three articles bearing on the work of the professional dietitian. Each of these articles in one way or another emphasizes the opportunity for useful service that is open to the professional dietitian ... if we mistake not, the professional dietitian has one of the most useful and promising fields open to workers in home economics, and students who are considering the choice of a specialized line of work may well take into account the opportunities for service in this particular field."\(^{362}\) One physician noted, "This field of dietetics seems to be especially within the sphere of woman; to offer the capable broader scope than anyone may have hitherto realized, and as the demand certainly exists we may reasonably expect the supply to be forthcoming."\(^{363}\)

The first issue of the AHEA journal was based primarily on a collection of papers presented at the AHEA conference held at Lake Placid, New York, in July 1909. The conference had an attendance five times larger than the first one held eleven years earlier. Having just graduated from Drexel University in 1908, Lenna Cooper traveled to Lake Placid as a representative of Battle Creek Sanitarium to discuss the role of institutional management through home economics at the conference. Mary Hinman Abel, an outspoken advocate of community kitchens, announced that the "problems of institutional management are growing apace in this country."\(^{364}\) The alleged states’ failure to

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adequately accommodate and effectively reinstate a sense of order may have inspired home economists in deciding that it was time to give their work institutional expression. Dietitians played an important part in this transition and carved a niche for themselves under the framework of institutional management through the concept of group feeding. "In the call for teachers of domestic science and other branches of home economics, we must not lose sight of the fact that there is an urgent call for trained directors of commissary departments in hospitals, college dormitories and other institutions, for visiting experts who can go into needy quarters of our cities and instruct individual families and in general for the person who can furnish a balanced and practical judgment based upon specialized knowledge of food and nutrition in its application to the family and the institutional dietary." 365

We know from the work of James Trent Jr. that eugenic thought fueled the institutionalization and custodial segregation of the mentally disabled. In 1994, Trent pointed to the role of institutional superintendents as the central force in facilitating this trend in the context of broader themes in American culture, such as race, immigration, and crime. In Trent's analysis, he showed how superintendents adopted the methods of physiological education espoused by Edward Seguin and challenged the capacity of families and schools to adequately care for children with mental disabilities. 366 Trent characterizes the superintendents' efforts to cloister, define, and control the behavior of the mentally disabled as a way to carve a niche for their occupational specialty, exert their own professional power, and demonstrate their prestige. Similarly, dietitians crafted the discipline of institutional management within the field of home economics as a professionalization strategy. First, they had to justify the parallels between feeding a

single family and feeding large groups. They pointed to the application of institutional management techniques in terms of the standardization of labor for the single-family home. "But, the small householder, although debarred from direct imitation from methods employed in a hospital or hotel, has warrant for growing interest in the usages of large institutions and ways of meeting their problems."367 The development of institutional management required a call for tighter regulations, more practical experience, and better scientific education for students interested in the institutional aspects of home economists. Florence Corbett from Columbia University Teachers College argued, "The institutional field is too important, there is too much at stake in the institution, to admit the employment of women admitted therein not prepared to carry full responsibility, the present training afforded is not adequate ..."368 In her conference presentation about the future plans for Cornell University to implement an institutional management program, Flora Swartz Rose asserted, "Training for institutional management presents a complex problem, for it necessitates a range of practical experience built upon a thoroughly scientific foundation ... the student specializing in institutional management will gain first hand knowledge of economics, physiology, and psychology of feeding large numbers."369

Reflecting on the success of the Smith-Lever Act in 1925, A. C. True from the U.S. Department of Agriculture claimed: "This extraordinary complex organization of this system of popular education for farming people has been carried on for the past ten years.

367 Todhunter and Betty Sparling asserted, "[N]utrition and dietetics are not synonymous." They recommended that all home economics departments use these names with the meanings attributed to each by Professor Mary Swartz Rose. Differentiating between nutrition and dietetics, Rose asserted, "Nutrition deals with the scientific laws governing the food requirements of human beings for maintenance, growth, activity, reproduction, and lactation; dietetics deals with the practical application of these laws to individuals or groups in health and also in sickness." E. Neige Todhunter and Betty Lee Sparling, "Nutrition Courses in Land-Grant Colleges," Journal of Home Economics 28, no. 10 (December 1936): 670.
years with remarkably little friction, is stronger today than ever before and has produced results of great economic and social value...The farm women have had greater recognition and help from the extension service than from any other agency. In the counties and at the agricultural colleges are more than a thousand women trained in home economics who are devoting themselves to the interests of farm homes. Their work deals not only with food, diet, clothing, household equipment, but also with child-care, health, family budgets and expenditures, recreation and social activities.\footnote{Philip A. Grant Jr. “Senator Hoke Smith, Southern Congressman, and Agricultural Education, 1914–1917,” \\textit{Agricultural History} 60, no. 2 (Spring 1986): 111–122. See also, A. C. True, “The Services of American Agricultural Colleges,” \\textit{Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science} 117, The Agricultural Situation in the United States (January 1925): 88–93.}

That Richards’s concept of eugenics may have provided a model for the Smith-Lever Act sheds some new light on historical trends related to eugenics as a national movement. Historian Edward Larson, for example, argues that the early twentieth-century eugenic movement lagged behind the North because eugenics theoretically challenged dominant southern ideas about the family and parental rights. With emphasis on southern racial demographics and southern education, Larson points out that by the time South Carolina and Georgia enacted sterilization laws, northern states were beginning to abandon them. However, belated eugenic activism on behalf of Georgia and South Carolina, in particular, may have had more to do with the extension of eutherics than the delay of eugenics. That Hoke Smith (D-GA) and Asbury Lever (D-SC) were the primary sponsors of the Smith-Lever Act—and represented two of the last southern states to adopt sterilization laws—illustrates their commitment to the popularization and dissemination of education related to Richards’s notion of the “science of the controllable environment.”

By analyzing the phenomenon of better baby and fitter family contests in the context of the debates between nature (eugenics) and nurture (eutherics), we begin to see...
insights to regional and ideological currents in the history of “controlled” reproduction in America. In her recent book, *Conceiving the Future: Pronatalism, Reproduction, and the Family in the United States, 1890–1938*, Laura Lovett credits Florence Sherbon and Mary Watts with the orchestration of the first “Fitter Family” contest in 1920 at the Kansas State Fair. She argues that this idea was born out of their success with the 1911 better baby contest held at the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines. Lovett differentiates between the two contests by suggesting that better baby contests had been developed as part of the U.S. Children’s Bureau campaign against infant mortality, whereas fitter family contests were developed as part of the popular education campaigns of the American eugenics movement. 

Lovett also acknowledges the publicity of similar contests organized by the *Women’s Home Magazine*. Noting the sudden popularity of the better baby contests, Lovett writes, “In fact, in 1913, the *Women’s Home Companion* reported that their Better Babies Bureau examined more than 150,000 babies during that fair season alone.” The manuscript collection of Mary de Garmo at the University of Tennessee (Knoxville) includes a news clipping she saved titled “Better Babies: Each Year We Raise Better Cattle, Better Corn, Better Fruit, Better Flowers—Why Not Better Babies?” The article, published by the *Women’s Home Companion*, praised the work of two women: Mrs. Mary Watts of Audubon, Iowa, member of the Council of the Iowa Congress of Mothers and superintendent of the Babies’ Health Department of the Iowa State Fair, and Dr. Margaret Vaupel Clark, a practicing physician who was active in the “better babies” campaign. According to the author, “Mrs. Watts conceived the idea of a campaign for

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better babies.” But, written in de Garmo’s cursive across the top of the article was the assertion, “False Claims by Mrs. Watts!”

Born in Covington, Kentucky, Mary Eloise de Garmo (1865–1953) wanted to be remembered as the “originator of the idea,” and she frequently signed her name with this statement written behind it. She wrote a number of letters to Anna Steese Richardson of the Women’s Home Companion Better Babies Bureau attempting to correct the record and draw attention to her early activism in Shreveport, Louisiana, and St. Louis, Missouri. She also had physicians submit their testimonies to verify her status as the originator of the idea. In 1914, Richardson responded to de Garmo’s letters by suggesting the phenomenon of the better baby contests had become so popular that the matter was beyond her control. Richardson notified de Garmo that the contests had run into the hundreds that year, and they had given up all idea of writing special stories about any one contest. “We would have nothing else in the magazine,” Richardson noted. Lovett may be correct in suggesting the better babies and fitter families contests were emblematic of the trend toward positive eugenics. But, de Garmo’s activism begs the reconsideration of several assumptions regarding the popularity of better baby contests in the context of women’s activism and the emerging welfare state.

Mary Eloise de Garmo had a long history of child welfare activism as the founder of the Shreveport Training School for Girls, founding president of the Mother’s Union (forerunner of the Parent-Teacher organization), and president of the Louisiana branch of the National Congress of Mothers. She emphatically agitated for better roads and public school improvements. At the 1908 Louisiana State Fair she called for the creation of a

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374 Mrs. Frank de Garmo Papers, MS-1879, Box 2, Folder 14, Special Collections Library, University of Tennessee, Knoxville.
model school, model road, and a model home to compliment the model farm exhibits. In 1920, she chaired the Americanization Department in the Women’s Chamber of Commerce for the city of St. Louis, Missouri, where she called for a higher “standard” for foreign-born immigrants before they could be naturalized as Americans. She proposed citizenship classes and the organization of centers where American women could teach them cooking, dressmaking, millinery, and home economics.

Mary Eloise de Garmo personifies several important overlapping themes in early twentieth-century Progressive reform. First, that Mary Eloise de Garmo claimed to be the founder of the “First Eugenic Better Babies Contest” at the Louisiana State Fair in 1908 in Shreveport challenges the assumption that the southern eugenics movement lagged behind the North. As de Garmo saw it, the movement commenced with her activism. And, she specifically included the term “eugenic” in the title of her better baby contests. Based on the evidence in her collection, it could be argued that she was instrumental in advancing the eugenics movement before it gained momentum and popularity in the North.\(^{375}\) Her activism forces us to reconsider some leading assumptions about the regional and intellectual origins of the better baby contests. Better baby contests may not have uniquely originated as part of the U.S. Children’s Bureau campaign against infant mortality, as historian Laura Lovett has argued. Neither did fitter family contests

\(^{375}\) Fifty babies entered the contest under the mental and physical scrutiny of four physicians, T. P. Lloyd, E. B. Hands, J. C. Willis, and J. M. Bodenheimer. According to the Louisiana State Fair Program of 1922, the contests were not designed to be “spectacular.” Rather, the real purpose was to “serve parents and children ... it determines whether or not the child may have some hidden fault, which may be corrected by medical or surgical science. It likewise stimulates better care and attention of babies.” See Program, “Purpose of the Contest,” State Fair of Louisiana, October 19–29, 1922. Mrs. Frank de Garmo Papers, MS 1879, Better Babies Folder, Special Collections, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. For more information about the popularization of eugenics and the transition from better baby contests to fitter family contests, see Steve Selden, “Transforming Better Babies into Fitter Families: Archival Resources and the History of American Eugenics Movement, 1908–1930,” Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society 149, no. 2 (June 2005): 199–225.
necessarily originate as part of the popular education campaigns of the American eugenics movement.³⁷⁶

Third and finally, it is clear that de Garmo’s daughter, Mary de Garmo Bryan effectively perpetuated her mother’s version of Protestant, native born, middle- and upper-class, white womanhood. In 1908, the same year as the first Louisiana State Fair’s Better Babies Contest, de Garmo wrote to her friend Mrs. E. Weeks and noted that she would not have time to for a personal visit. De Garmo explained, “I find that the placing of my daughter in school probably in Washington University has occupied all of my time.”³⁷⁷ Her daughter and namesake, Mary de Garmo Bryan (1891–1986), earned her A.B. at Washington University in 1912. Not long after her 1913 graduation from Columbia University with her A.M. degree, she chaired the Home Economics Department at Agnes Scott College (1913–1916) and worked as an instructor of dietetics at the University of Illinois (1916–1917). At that time, she was appointed a civilian employee in the U.S. Army Medical Department at a salary of $720 per year and reported to Fort McPherson, Georgia. She joined Base Hospital 1114 (an orthopedic hospital) and served overseas at Beau Desert (near Merignac) France during World War I as an American Red Cross dietitian. After returning from the war and graduating from Washington University Medical College in 1920, Mary de Garmo Bryan—the daughter of Mary Eloise de Garmo—led the American Dietetic Association as president from 1920 until 1922.³⁷⁸

³⁷⁷ Letter from Mary Eloise de Garmo to E. Weeks, St. Louis, Missouri, September 12, 1908, Mary De Garmo Collection, Box 1, Folder 18, University of Tennessee Special Collections Library, Knoxville, Tennessee.
³⁷⁸ Folder titled “Mary de Garmo Bryan – ADA” in the Mary de Garmo Collection, University of Tennessee Special Collections Library, Knoxville, Tennessee. In 1931, she earned a Ph.D. in chemistry from Columbia University. Dr. Bryan chaired the department of institutional management of Columbia University Teachers College from 1934 until 1951. She also developed a $50 million federally sponsored program to provide school lunches in 25,000 communities in the
Before I continue, it is important to take a moment to reflect on the connections between state agricultural fairs and the rhetoric used by de Garmo and others in drawing attention to their causes. At the 1908 Louisiana State Fair de Garmo called for the creation of a model school, model road, and a model home to compliment the model farm exhibits. In 1908, de Garmo—then president of the Shreveport Parent Teacher Association—interrogated the Louisiana State Fair Executive Board with the question: “Which do you consider of more importance to the State of Louisiana—your children or your hogs?” She continued, “Well, you see I have been studying the printed forms you issue to the farmers and our citizens and I find that you outline specific requirements for the health, weight, and measurement of horses, cattle, and hogs, but nowhere could I find anything of a similar nature as to the qualifications of children that would make them eligible to prizes for perfection if they too were competently judged.” One board member dismissed de Garmo’s criticisms by suggesting “beauty” contests for children already existed in the state of Louisiana. Then, she responded with a story about the winner of such a beauty contest. She talked about the appearance of a child with blond, curly locks and big, blue eyes and noted how “Old Aunt Susan—a fond Negro mammy” wheeled her up to the judges’ stand. This particular child that de Garmo spoke of unanimously won the beauty contest prize. De Garmo said the contest had one major flaw—the baby was never taken out of her carriage. When a bystander expressed interest in seeing the baby’s “little pink toes,” Susan allegedly became indignant. A scuffle ensued as one woman pulled back the baby’s lace and silk dress and revealed a shocking truth: “Then we saw why the child had been left in the buggy—she was a hopeless cripple,” de Garmo

United States. It is interesting to note, floating in a miscellaneous file under her name at the Eskind Biomedical Library, she wrote, “The Army Library has Florence Nightingale’s ‘Cooking for Troops in Camp and Field’ published by the Army of Virginia—have not been able to trace her connection with the confederate cause. Any suggestions?” Biographical File, Mary De Garmo Bryan, Eskind Biomedical Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.
explained to the Board [original italics]. "Now! I ask you, Gentlemen, would you award a prize to a hog, with crippled legs?"

Harriet Harper won the 1913 championship of the Louisiana State Fair Better Babies Contest. Young Harriet captured the blue ribbon and "loving cup" trophy. She also won a trip with her parents to San Francisco to attend the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition. At the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, J. H. Kellogg's Race Betterment Foundation hosted an elaborate exhibit showcasing their evidence of the extent to which degenerative tendencies were actively at work in America and endorsed certain agencies for race betterment. The exhibit, located on one of the principal avenues in the Palace of Education, attracted nationwide attention and thousands of visitors. That de Garmo's 1913 prizewinner, Harriet Harper, and Kellogg's Race Betterment Foundation both had sustained a presence at the Panama Pacific International Exposition underscores historian Garland Allen's point that eugenics in the United States was not monolithic or highly organized along national lines. Rather, it was a flexible discourse employed by many groups with various agendas and goals.

380 Lillian Winter Michelson, "Mary Eloise De Garmo," July 1951 Typescript, Box 1, Folder 18, (Statement of Origins of Better Babies Contests, 1908), University of Tennessee Special Collections Library, Knoxville, Tennessee.

381 *Official Proceedings of the Second National Conference on Race Betterment*, (Battle Creek, MI: The Race Betterment Foundation, 1915), frontispiece, 145. At the Second Annual Race Betterment Conference held August 4–8, 1915, in San Francisco in conjunction with the Panama Pacific Exposition, the Race Betterment Foundation promoted eugenics and eugenics as the two principal intellectual foundations of the race betterment movement. The exhibit advertised their effort as one in which they sought to: "Create a new and superior race thru EUTHENICS, or Personal and Public Hygiene and EUGENICS, or race hygiene." The advertisements suggested the application of eugenics would prevent "1,000,000 premature deaths, 2,000,000 lives rendered perpetually useless by sickness, and save 200,000 infant lives (two-thirds of the baby crop). Eugenics, on the other hand, when intelligently and universally applied would in a few centuries practically wipe out idiocy, insanity, imbecility, and epilepsy and a score of other hereditary disorders and create a race of HUMAN THOROUGHBREDS such as the world has never seen."

382 Allen contends a number of organizations (including the American Breeders Association, the American Eugenics Society, the Eugenics Research Association, the Galton Society, the Institute of Family Relations, and the Race Betterment Foundation) played important roles in the promotion of eugenics. Allen suggests the Eugenics Record Office led by Charles Davenport attempted to coordinate and control agencies nationwide, but their efforts generally proved unsuccessful. Garland E. Allen, "The Eugenics Record Office at Cold Springs Harbor 1910–1940: An Essay in Institutional History," *Ostiris* 2, 2nd series (1986): 227.
The Southern Sociological Congress, National Congress of Mothers, and the Parent Teacher Association endorsed the work of de Garmo, and Dr. J. H. Kellogg's conference included representatives from a number of government agencies, charitable institutions, and centers of higher education. 383

Reverend Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis, a prominent Congregational minister from Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, New York, and a disciple of Henry Ward Beecher, initially proposed the idea for the initial 1914 National Conference on Race Betterment to J. H. Kellogg. 384 According to the report of the conference secretary, Emily Robbins, Kellogg then consulted with Professor Irving Fisher of Yale University; Dr. Charles Davenport, director of the Carnegie Station for Experimental Evolution; and with others interested in hygiene and eugenics. A central committee was formed, and the Battle Creek Sanitarium was chosen as the meeting place. The official tally of conference registrants numbered over four hundred. While Mrs. Anna Steese Richardson of the Women's Home Companion Better Babies Bureau was not able to attend, Dr. Lydia Allen DeVilbiss presented at the conference on her behalf. One of the most popular events held in connection with the conference was the "Mental and Physical Perfection Contests."

(Presumably labeled such to appease conference participants and sidestep the controversy


over the popularization of eugenics.) According to the conference proceedings, the Mental and Physical Perfection Contests “attracted wide attention, not only in Battle Creek, but throughout the State and the Nation. Several thousand school children and about six hundred babies were tested as to their mental and physical efficiency.” The Better Babies Bureau of the Women’s Home Companion provided the contest scorecards. At the final session of the conference, prizes were awarded to the children scoring highest in each group from six months to nineteen years. According to the conference secretary’s report, educational literature was distributed on the subjects of “Suggestions to Mothers about the Care of Babies and Young Children,” and “Feeding of School Children.”

At the First National Conference on Race Betterment, Kellogg posed a question using the rhetoric of human “livestock” similar to the one de Garmo had used with the Louisiana State Fair Executive Board six years earlier. Kellogg opened his presentation with the question: “We have wonderful new races of horses, cows, and pigs. Why should we not have a new and improved race of men?” He argued: “The United States Government has supplied every farmer in the United States many times over with literature telling how to raise the best crops, how to produce the fattest pigs and the finest horses and cattle. How much more important that not only every farmer, but every family should be instructed in the principles of right living—how to produce strong, sane, healthy and efficient human beings!” After summarizing the statistics offered by numerous writers on the possible causes of race degeneracy, Kellogg concluded, “As

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386 Robyn Muncy notes how legend has it that this language of human livestock or federal appropriations to support the country’s “baby crop” was also used by Lillian Wald and Florence Kelley in their arguments for the 1912 creation of the Children’s Bureau in the Department of Commerce and Labor. See Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform*, 38–39. John Harvey Kellogg, “Needed—A New Human Race,” *First National Conference on Race Betterment Proceedings*, (Battle Creek, MI: 1914), 431.
regards the causes of race degeneracy, opinions are divided. In general, two great causes are in operation—heredity and environment. 387

Early twentieth-century discussions over the “two great causes” of race degeneracy intersected broader commentaries about gender and early twentieth-century professionalization. To better illustrate this relationship in the context of eugenics and eugenics, I turn to an example based upon an influential 1911 essay titled “The Progress of Eugenics,” written by James A. Field from the University of Chicago. Field compiled summaries and reviews of what he considered some of the most controversial and influential books on the subject of “popular” eugenics. Field charged Dr. Caleb W. Saleebey, author of Parenthood and Race Culture, with nothing short of “pretension” and sheer failure. He explained how Saleebey would face opposition from critics of the Karl Pearson school, particularly on matters related to racial degeneracy and alcohol. Field asserted, “Dr. Saleebey has many of the qualifications of a successful popularizer. But, his attempt at a systematic treatise failed.”

Field’s second target, The Family and the Nation, written in 1909 by William and Catherine Whetham, reviewed the principles of heredity and variation and warned against the threat of decreased birth rates among white, middle-class, British families as a menace to racial quality. Field explained that the broadest lesson in the Whetham’s book resided in the concern that so long as the family size declined in certain lines of descent, so too, would the nation. Assaulting their credibility, Field wrote, “Their whole book, may be described, partly in commendation and partly in censure, as amateur…. In biology, and the social sciences, so far as appears, they speak with no authority. Judged

as an original scientific contribution, they speak with no special authority." I draw special attention to Field’s criticism of Saleeby and Whetham to illustrate the heated literary contestations between eugenicists and advocates of eugenics. Moreover, I point out this particular criticism because Ellen Richards repeatedly quoted Saleeby and Whetham at length throughout her book on eugenics.

What is particularly remarkable about the debates over environmental and hereditary reform where dietetics is concerned is the fact that new scientific developments would propel or solidify the importance of proper nutrition as a critical factor in the eugenics platform. Julian Huxley, writing for the *Eugenics Review* in 1936, noted, “Recent work has shown that vitamins and other accessory food factors have physical and mental effects far transcending what we originally thought possible.” By the time Faith Williams of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics published her 1941 essay, “Nutrition in a Eugenics Program,” in the *Journal of Heredity*, biochemists established that diet was no longer a simple matter of eugenics, nurture, or environmental reform. With the discoveries of protein, minerals, and vitamins, the “hard” scientific evidence of proper nutrition seemed to transcend questions about diet as it related to being well born or well brought up. According to Williams, nutrition posed a different issue than other environmental factors such as education, housing, or recreational opportunities. Williams asserted, “[R]esearch in the field of biochemistry has proceeded so far that we now have a very definite knowledge about the relation of diets and physical growth in childhood.”

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since 1910 and on vitamin requirements since 1912. But, for the most part, she explained how much of the evidence for the importance of diet came from experiments undertaken during World War I. She noted that the need for "more exact knowledge of the degree of human dependence on vitamins and minerals was dramatically demonstrated during the last war when deficiencies in the diets of many European children resulted in actual deformity." She also pointed to the work of Joseph Goldberger, Lafayette Mendel, Elmer McCullom, Henry Sherman, and Harry Steenbock and their associates, noting that their work in the United States on the "dietary functions of calcium, phosphorous, and iron in combination with the vitamins has been aided by the work of European scientists." I will address the broader scientific and economic impact of World War I on scientific developments in diet and nutrition in the chapter to follow.

A Mother’s Influence

Diet has been used as a critical tool for the assimilation of nondominant groups in early twentieth-century America. As historian Hasia Diner has argued, food was as much a motivating factor in decisions to immigrate as it was an indicator of cultural conformity, acceptance, or non-acceptance by native-born, white Americans. Historian Gwendolyn Mink perhaps said it best when she asserted, "The mother’s influence over family values and family life made her assimilation key to the successful cultural and political integration of future citizens." White, middle- and upper-class, native-born, Protestant women’s presumed authority over the home, and specifically, the kitchen provided them with a unique space to pass on or facilitate cultural reproduction. A number of scholars have addressed the significance of cultural reproduction to

393 Mink, The Wages of Motherhood, 35.
maternalist politics and the creation of the welfare state. Historian Maureen Fitzgerald, for example, locates motherhood as the key site of Protestant intervention for the eradication of poverty, dependency, delinquency, and even alcoholism. She writes, “Because they viewed poverty in the nineteenth century, as today, as a moral problem with roots in particular cultures, Protestant reformers believed that the best strategy for eradicating it was to intervene in motherhood so as to alter the reproduction of moral traits associated with poverty.”

Because foodways played such a vital part in shaping ethnic identity and community, diet was the quintessential target for native-born, middle- and upper-class, Protestant, white, Progressive Era reformers. To that end, dietetic professionalization was inherently bound to cultural reproduction and early twentieth-century Americanization efforts. In my final chapter, I analyze how these sensibilities manifested through ADA sponsored studies that specifically examined the dietary habits of racial and ethnic immigrant communities. I will also demonstrate how and why the ADA sponsored studies of the 1920s allowed dietitians to construct a racial/ethnic hierarchy based on their scientific data and observations.

Before dietitians began using science to calculate and tabulate scientific dietary studies of non-dominant groups, they intervened on motherhood through the concept of the visiting dietitian. Some New York City social “innovators” decided to take information about cooking, sanitation, food purchasing, and preparation directly to the tenements of the immigrant and ethnic poor to effectuate reform. In 1909 Winifred Stuart Gibbs emphasized the economic incentive for the city in sending visiting dietitians into the tenements. According to Gibbs, the New York Association for Improvement of the Condition of the Poor was already “sending a visiting dietitian into the tenement homes ... to face conditions squarely in each home, to formulate a course of instruction that shall be preventative of further bad conditions if possible, and remedial of present ones if

394 Fitzgerald, Habits of Compassion, 4.
necessary.” Ellen Richards also pointed to this practice as a signal of progress.

Emphasizing the importance of setting a good example, Richards said: “The Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor, New York City, not only sends bread to fill hungry stomach, but now sends a wise and sympathetic worker to help women understand food and money values, which means a permanent help. And, it no longer simply says to the tired, worried woman who has had no education stimulus along the line of cleanliness … but sends in women to make the house an example, an exhibit of clean conditions if you will. Example is stronger than precept.” Gibbs asked her readers, “Is it not worth the city’s while to teach economic housekeeping so that the families which make up the municipal fabric may contribute clean, healthy citizens to the country’s upbringing?” In some ways, this strategy of disseminating practical lessons through the example of visiting dietitians presaged the role of the home economics extension worker that was later made possible by the funding of the Smith-Lever Act.

As I mentioned earlier, notably under the leadership of ADA president Mary de Garmo Bryan, dietitians turned their attention to studies of the dietary patterns of various racial and ethnic groups throughout the 1920s. According to ADA historian Mary Barber, five hundred members attended the fourth annual ADA convention in Chicago in 1921 where some of the topics addressed at the convention included, “Human Engineering;

395 Winifred Stuart Gibbs, “The Economic Value of the Visiting Dietitian,” *Journal of Home Economics* 1, no.1 (February 1909): 71. This practice of individually going from home to home to distribute knowledge, conduct surveys, and gather information continued throughout the first half of the twentieth century. For example, the diets, methods of living, and physical condition of the Sioux Indians of the Crow Creek Reservation, Fort Thompson, South Dakota, interested Jessie Anderson Stene and Lydia Roberts from the University of Chicago’s Department of Home Economics in 1928. Stene and Roberts published their findings in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*. They asserted, “It is generally believed that the American Indian is gradually dying off and that in a few more generations this race will be practically extinct.” They believed that Native Americans teetered on the brink of extinction because of the change from “natural, outdoor, nomadic life” to “one of restricted physical exertion and of indoor housing on the reservations.” Stene and Roberts pointed to the change in diet “from such domestication” as the fundamental cause of their deterioration. See Jessie Anderson Stene and Lydia Roberts, “A Nutrition Study on an Indian Reservation,” *The Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 3, no. 4 (March 1928): 215.

Principles of Salesmanship; and Dietary Customs of Syrians, Romanians, Italians, Negroes, and Mountain Whites." The keynote speaker at the 1921 convention was University of Chicago Sociology Professor Sophenisba Breckinridge, who talked about "foreign-born families or those not yet adjusted to American life and modern housekeeping according to American standards of living." Specific studies of dietary patterns took place around the country. Students at the Teachers' College of Columbia University surveyed dietary habits of racial groups in New York City. In Detroit, dietitians examined the dietary patterns of Syrians and Romanians. And, in the South, they studied the dietary patterns of African American and Appalachian white communities. Under Bryan's presidency, the ADA selected Lucy Gillette to chair the newly established "Social Service Section." At the 1924 ADA convention in Swampscott, Massachusetts, dietitian Gertrude Gates Mudge explained that when the Social Service Section of the ADA launched the series of studies three years earlier to analyze the dietary habits of different nationalities in certain large cities, the goal of the survey was, "to secure a better understanding of foreign dietaries and to interpret the data thus secured for the use of nutrition and social workers." In part, this may explain why ADA historian Jo Anne Cassell noted that the Social Service Section experienced difficulty in defining its role within the field of dietetics. According to Cassell, the results of their findings and surveys were of particular use to the growing fields of nutrition and social work, but of less practical use to the work of dietitians themselves.

398 Cassell, Carry the Flame, 33.
399 According to Mudge, "The first study was made in Italian homes and was reported in The Journal of Home Economics in April, 1923. The next study was of Polish dietary habits and was published in the Bulletin of the American Dietetic Association, April, 1924. The final study was devoted to the Negro dietary." See Gertrude Gates Mudge, "A Comparative Study of Italian, Polish, and Negro Dietaries," The Journal of the American Dietetic Association 1, no. 1 (June 1925): 166–173.
Dietary studies of specific racial and ethnic groups, as well as studies about the
dietaries of schools, public institutions, and insane asylums, did not emerge in a vacuum.
Nor were dietary studies of particular racial/ethnic, gendered, regional, and economic
groups entirely unique by the time Mary de Garmo Bryan served as ADA President. In
the late nineteenth century, scientists and statisticians began analyzing regional trends in
food production, consumption, and availability from all sectors of society including poor
and rich, rural and urban, strong and weak, and sick and well.400 Beyond the broad
explanations of the social, cultural, and economic factors that have generally
characterized the Progressive Era and the factors that sustained professionalization efforts
at the turn of the century, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly why dietitians engaged in
formal studies of the dietary patterns of nondominant groups with particular ambition in
the years after World War I. That the ADA launched a formal Social Service Committee
to investigate the dietary patterns of various racial groups and ethnicities, defies any
singular explanation. It may have had as much to do with the complex forces of
professionalization as it did with the processes of cultural collision ushered by
immigration and urbanization. It may have had as much to do with the expansion of
educational opportunities for white, middle-class, native-born Protestant women in
colleges and universities, transforming ideas about sexuality and reproduction, as it did
with the (theoretically equal) legal footing extended by the Nineteenth Amendment. What
is clear, however, is that dietitians reasserted their professional and cultural elitism

400 Mary Roberts Smith, “Almshouse Women: A Study of Two Hundred and Twenty-Eight
Women in the City and County Almshouse of San Francisco,” Publications of the American
Statistical Association 4, no. 31 (September 1895): 219–262; H. A. Pratt and R. D. Milner,
“Dietary Studies at the Government Hospital for the Insane,” Washington, D.C. USDA, Office of
Experiment Stations Bulletin No. 150 (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C.,
705–708; Institute for Colored Youth at Cheyney, “Applied Domestic Science Daily Menus for
the School Year and a Dietary Study for October,” (Philadelphia: E. A. Wright Press, 1909).
through the science of food and, in so doing, performed their own version of modern American femininity, professionalism, and citizenship.

Further complicating the social, cultural, and economic changes taking place at this time was the fact that significant and complex developments in science and technology, specifically related to the science of food and nutrition, presented constant challenges to the growing field of dietetics. Dr. Ruth Wheeler observed in 1915, "Preventative dietetics will be the first assistant to eugenics in perfecting the race and curative dietetics which shall to a considerable extent replace what the Medical Association has called unnecessary and probably dangerous drugs." That same year, scientists were working hard to understand the functions and concepts of basal metabolism, protein, and amino acids. They were beginning to analyze and isolate the lack of specific vitamins in dietary deficiency diseases. In her 1915 article, Wheeler advocated "preventative" dietetics and "curative" dietetics in curbing problems such as hypo- and hyperacidity, gastric and duodenal ulcers, as well as tuberculosis, diabetes mellitus, and gout.

Two years later, in 1917, Lillian "Lulu" Graves, a dietitian at Lakeside Hospital in Cleveland and cofounder of the ADA, published an important work in the realm of American dietetics. Reviewed, edited, and endorsed by Lafayette Mendel of the Sheffield Scientific School at Yale University, Graves's monograph *Modern Dietetics: Feeding the*

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401 Dr. Ruth Wheeler, "Recent Contributions to the Foundations of Dietetics," *Journal of Home Economics*, November 1915:469. Wheeler made this statement as a nutrition instructor at the University of Illinois (1912–1918). After the working at the University of Illinois, she initiated a home economics program at Goucher College in Maryland. In 1921, she was appointed professor and head of the new department of nutrition at the University Hospital of the State University of Iowa. She returned to Vassar as a faculty member to develop the Euthenics Institute. Wheeler was an 1899 graduate of Vassar. She then taught science in high school for six years in her hometown of Saratoga Springs, New York. She also taught chemistry at Pratt Institute (1905–1911) and furthered her studies by attending summer programs at the University of Chicago in 1904 and 1905. She entered the physiological chemistry and nutrition program at Yale where she received her Ph.D. in 1913. Wheeler served as president of the ADA in 1925. Her sister claimed Wheeler was the first person to report studies of infants' diet at home economics meetings. Todhunter Biographical Files, "Ruth Wheeler (1877–1948) Biographical Notes From the History of Nutrition," Eskind Biomedical Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.
Sick and Well was based upon eight essays written in a series for a monthly journal called The Modern Hospital. Mendel introduced Graves’s monograph with a revealing quote from Jonathon Pereia’s 1843 Treatise on Food and Diet. He raised the point that Pereia’s statement deserves almost the same emphasis today as at the time of its first publication. Pereia’s quote as it was stated in Graves’s book read: “It will, I think, be generally admitted that an accurate acquaintance with the quantity and quality of food necessary to the maintenance of human health and life, under different circumstances, is a matter of great interest to everyone; but it is more especially so to statesmen, magistrates, naval and military officers, physicians and surgeons, governors of hospitals and other public institutions, and the guardians of the poor. To them are intrusted the care and supervision of the inhabitants of prisons, ships, garrisons, armies, asylums, hospitals, and poor houses, and on their knowledge or ignorance depends the health or disease—the life or death—of a considerable portion of the community.” That Graves’s 1917 monograph received the endorsement of Mendel is particularly significant. Mendel was a student of Russell Chittenden (1856–1943). Chittenden studied at Germany’s University of Heidelberg from 1878 to 1879 and earned his doctorate at Yale University in 1880. Known as one of the first American professors of physiological chemistry, Chittenden established Yale’s Sheffield School of Science and published one of the great nutrition “classics,” titled The Nutrition of Man (1907), in which he reported on his experiments with “proteid” and addressed the problem of what kinds of foods are necessary to produce and maintain a healthy animal body.

Conclusion

How and why did women’s work in dietetics expand and multiply during a time characterized by historian Robyn Muncy as a period of disintegration and collapse?

"After 1924," Muncy claims, the dominion “actually contracted; and finally in the mid 1930s the dominion crumbled.” But, between 1928 and 1939, ADA membership climbed from twelve hundred to nearly four thousand, and association activities expanded exponentially. In 1928, ADA leadership gathered for the eleventh annual convention in Washington, D.C. The President and Mrs. Coolidge received the ADA leadership in the Blue Room at the White House. They received special tours of Walter Reed General Hospital and Johns Hopkins Hospital. They dined at the Grace Dodge Hotel. A number of distinguished scientists were among the honored guests, including Lafayette Mendel of Yale University; Malcolm T. MacEachern from the American College of Surgeons; Joseph Goldberger from the U.S. Public Health Service; Joseph P. Doane, director of Philadelphia General Hospital; William Mallory from George Washington University; Mary Swartz Rose from Columbia University Teacher’s College; and Frances Stern from the Food Clinic, Boston Dispensary. In 1929, at the twelfth annual meeting in Detroit, Michigan, the ADA tabulated the largest conference registration to date. The following year, at the annual convention in 1930, ADA leadership enjoyed lunch with Lady Eaton of the most successful Canadian-based department store, T. Eaton Co., as their social “high spot.” The ADA leadership also presented a code of ethics, upped the registration fees, and established a committee to begin recording the organization’s history.

By analyzing euthenics (or, the “science of the controllable environment”) as a gendered companion discourse to eugenic thought, we begin to see how euthenics nourished the roots of maternalism and citizenship in early twentieth-century U.S. white, native-born, Protestant, middle- and upper-class women’s politics. By accounting for the

403 Muncy, Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform, 1890–1935, xvi–xvii.
significance of gender in the professional power struggle that ensued (notably over child welfare) between advocates of eugenics and eugenics, we begin to see how the “ordinary” act of cooking (as well as other forms of women’s reproductive labor) eventually became extraordinary educational subjects for legitimate inquiry. In early twentieth-century America, eugenics was frequently characterized as the “sister science” to eugenics.\(^{404}\) I have attempted to demonstrate how Richards’s book *Euthenics* captured a particular gendered, professional ideology and outlined a model for federal support for the promotion of home economics programs (both practical and, later, academic) and presented the government with the template officials would later use to implement home economics education legislation.\(^{405}\) Richards’s eutheic model for federal support materialized, in part, with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914.

In the early twentieth century, white, native-born, Protestant, middle- and upper-class dietitians advanced culturally specific gender ideologies through cooking. The relationship between diet and assimilation efforts reveals particular strands of nativism, white supremacy, and scientific racism running through the core of the early twentieth-century home economics movement. Finally, new scientific evidence regarding diet and

\(^{404}\) In Weigley’s article, “It Might Have Been Euthenics: The Lake Placid Conferences and the Home Economics Movement,” she paid little attention to the evolution or analysis of eugenics as a concept. Instead, she traced the naming and evolution of her field from domestic economy to home economics. In her essay, Weigley did more to dismiss the term than she did to analyze it. She wrote, “Ellen Richards and a few others used the word eugenics in subsequent reports and writings, but the word never became popular and home economics continued to be the most commonly used expression.” My research points in the opposite direction. See Emma Seifret Weigley, “It Might Have Been Euthenics: The Lake Placid Conferences and the Home Economics Movement,” *American Quarterly* 26, no.1 (March 1974): 79–96. Weigley was born in Reading, Pennsylvania, received her bachelor’s degree from Albright College, her master’s degree from Drexel Institute of Technology, and her Ph.D. from New York University. She worked as a dietitian, instructor of nursing students, college instructor, and public health nutritionist. (Weigley also coedited the *Essays in Nutrition and Dietetics* with her colleagues Adelia Beeuwkes and E. Neige Todhunter.)

nutrition complicated or problematized the place of the dietitian within euthenic and eugenic alliances. If euthenics was the key to “race progress,” as the editors of the *Journal of Home Economics* suggested in the spring of 1914, dietitians had to move quickly to renegotiate their professional alliances with the advent of the “newer knowledge of nutrition.”

Constantly in flux, euthenic and eugenic discourses served as critical rationales for dietetic professionalization throughout the twentieth century. Dietitians aligned themselves with the medical and scientific professions and heralded therapeutic and scientific progress over human rights, which brings us back to one of the fundamental arguments in this dissertation. Maternalism shaped the political and cultural environment in which dietitians labored to professionalize but it did not necessarily indicate that dietitians were maternalists. For dietitians, the ideology of maternalism appeared to be secondary to medical progress. “Those in authority,” said Agnes Fay Morgan from the University of California, “with whom the dietitian has mostly to deal are scientifically trained medical men. They understand the language and respect the achievements of science, and are moved to acquiescence in its teachings as they are moved by no other force. Medicine can move forward only as fast as the laboratory scientist moves ahead of it.” She continued, “The dietitian must speak the language and practice the suspended judgment of the scientists whose findings she is using practically before she can hope to be counted among those who rank with officers in the medical army.”

The alliance between dietitians and physicians underscores the fact that dietitians did not necessarily fit the standard definition of maternalists. Rather, they engaged in the gestalt of race betterment through the overlapping discourses of euthenics.

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408 See footnote 22 in my introduction.
and eugenics. That dietitians endorsed or collaborated in the use of “expendable,” low-income human subjects as guinea pigs for their research complicates the logic of maternalism that seems to drive much of the scholarship about gender and the emergence of the welfare state.

Cultural elitism and scientific racism, tempered by a sturdy alliance with scientifically trained medical men, was a paramount strategy in dietitians’ professionalization efforts. But, as I will show, the military service of dietitians in World War I refined their relationships with the medical profession, led to the establishment of a professional organization, bonded a national network of leaders in their field, and provided another critical avenue for developments and practices in institutional feeding. Their World War I military service leavened the importance of dietetics, particularly in relation to the state, and provided dietitians with another important ingredient in the recipe for citizenship. Drawing on her own experiences in World War I, Mary Northrop, the dietitian at New York City’s Montefiore Hospital, emphasized, “The hospital is a military organization whose primary object is the care of the patient, an end which experience has shown to be better served if considerable formality and a strict system of rank are observed.” In the next chapter, I analyze the military service of dietitians who served with the U.S. Army through the American Red Cross during World War I. I specifically examine the experiences of dietitians serving during the war and the attempts made by Lenna Cooper and ADA leaders to create an autonomous corps of dietitians, as well as their fight for rank, respect, uniforms, entitlements, and benefits. As I will show, by the time the United States entered World War I, dietitians were poised, ready to act, and anxious for professional autonomy. By aligning their work with the military bureaucracy and articulating their claims as veterans, dietitians forced military officials to

begin a public discussion about the inclusion of women in the medical hierarchy; they forced military officials to begin thinking about their official “place” and demanded their own professional autonomy. In so doing, they whipped up the necessary ingredients in the recipe for citizenship.
CHAPTER THREE
COMPETING FOR RANK AND RELIEF

“It would require an Act of Parliament to sanction the introduction of a trained
dietitian ... [nor] would [the British] know what it means. So, she is the ‘Home Sister,’”
reported chief nurse Carrie Hall of Base Hospital No. 57 (Paris) in her letter to American
Red Cross (ARC) Headquarters (Washington, D.C.). Hall’s reference to the obscure
status of Base Hospital No. 57’s dietitian, Mary Pascoe Huddleston, reflects a problem
that plagued nearly all civilian contract dietitians serving with the military during World
War I. Few understood what exactly she did and few understood the niche she occupied
in the military medical hierarchy. The dietitian reported to the chief nurse of her
respective hospital, but she was not necessarily a nurse. She was required to take an oath,
but she was not an official member of the military. It was an issue that found succinct
expression through the simple words of Caroline B. King, a dietitian stationed in
Bazeilles, France, at Base Hospital No. 116. King commented, “The place of a dietitian
in France in 1918 was a strange one.”
The statements of Hall, Huddleston, and King
suggest that by the time the United States entered World War I, dietitians were little
known and less understood in the common parlance of war. In Rouen, France, the British
commander leafed through the Base Hospital No. 9 roster and read it out loud before his
formation: “Dietitian? What kind of creature is that?” The anomalous status of Huddleston
and King is indicative of a larger protracted struggle for power and authority in the
politically charged site of the military kitchen.

Throughout the World War I era, Americans became obsessed with food. A
puzzled Thomas H. Dickinson inquired in the spring of 1918, “What is the meaning of

410 Dock, et al., History of American Red Cross Nursing, 1383.

A year later, Professor Benjamin Hibbard observed, “Never before in the history of war, has the food question played so large a part as in the present world war.”\footnote{Benjamin H. Hibbard, Effects of the Great War Upon Agriculture in the United States and Great Britain, No. 11 of Preliminary Economic Studies of the War, Division of Economics and History, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (New York: Oxford University Press, 1919), preface.} It was within this milieu that widespread concern over an impending wartime food crisis prompted the ARC to establish a Committee and Dietitian Service on December 12, 1916. The committee, comprised of 20 educated, mostly single, middle-class, native-born, Protestant white women organized and planned for the integration of trained, dietetic experts, between the ages of 23 and 50. To qualify for membership in the ARC Dietitian Service, the candidates had to be graduates of a four-year home economics program. They were also required to complete a dietetic training course or have experience in dietetic hospital work. They had to be trained and conversant with the production, distribution, preparation, conservation, and consumption of food for service in Army base hospitals. Committee members from across the nation (backed by institutional affiliations with hospitals, colleges, and universities) volunteered their expertise to clarify the role and elevate the status of the dietitian.

Home economists, food specialists, dietitians, and nutritionists also played an important role during the war within the Food Conservation Division, a subsidiary of the
U.S. Food Administration under the leadership of Herbert Hoover. Such positions, however, were largely based in the spirit of volunteerism. Appointed by Hoover, Stanford University President Ray Lyman Wilbur consulted with two women chiefs of the Home Conservation Division: Sarah Field Splint, editor of *Today's Housewife*, and Martha Van Rensselaer of Cornell University’s School of Home Economics. Other prominent leaders within the fields of dietetics, nutrition, and home economics to serve the Home Conservation Division included Flora Rose (Cornell University), Katherine Blunt (University of Chicago), Isabel Bevier (University of Illinois), Abby Marlatt (University of Wisconsin), Mary Pennington (U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Food Administration), and Dr. Mary Swartz Rose. Rose served as deputy director of conservation in the Food Administration.\footnote{Rose, a student of Dr. Lafayette Mendel and longtime member on the editorial board for the *Journal of Nutrition*, was appointed in 1940 to serve as one of a group of five advisers on nutrition on the Council of National Defense during World War II. She died the following year. When she graciously accepted the 1939 award from the Associated Grocery Manufacturers of America, Inc., an enormous business, she said the AGMA “deals with the very substance of life and the fate of the race.... Nutrition is the fundamental social problem of our time.” See H. C. Sherman, “Mary Swartz Rose, 1874–1941,” *Journal of Biological Chemistry* 140, no. 3:687–688; and AMGA Award Luncheon, October 31, 1939, Waldorf-Astoria, New York, Biographical File: Mary Swartz Rose, Eskind Biomedical Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. I think it is particularly significant that Dr. Mendel (Rose’s mentor) first called for a “food commission” in 1916 when he wrote, “All great countries ought to have a central authority, a food commission, which should concern itself exclusively with the far reaching questions of the well-being of the people.... It is necessary that not only the hygienists, in the narrower sense, take up the struggle for betterment, but that also the great army of men, who are truly humane in their hearts, shall take their places beside us.” See Lafayette Mendel, *Changes in the Food Supply and Their Relation to Nutrition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1916), 60–61.}

In this chapter, I examine the rhetoric used specifically by leaders of the military dietetic professionalization project to create an official place for themselves in the female medical hierarchy. I analyze the attempts of Lenna Cooper and ADA leaders to create an autonomous corps of dietitians, as well as their fight for rank, uniforms, entitlements, and benefits. In her July 29, 1919, report, “Suggestions concerning dietitians’ service in the medical department of the Army,” Cooper advised: First, a separate military corps be established for dietitians in the Army. Second, she recommended that officials create a
military training school for Army dietitians. Finally, she requested that a permanent position for a supervising dietitian be created in the office of the Surgeon General.\footnote{Burness G. Wenberg, M.S., R.D., “Lenna Frances Cooper,” Unpublished Typescript, March 16, 1990, Willard Library, Battle Creek, Michigan.}

Dietitians charted a revealing (though not absolute) course to professionalize through their service in the American Red Cross (ARC) and a proactive quest for official military status. As one of many occupational groups to serve in the Great War, hospital dietitians sought to be considered medical professionals in their own right. This contrasted with the more than 10,000 nurses serving with the Army and Navy Nurse Corps, stationed overseas in hospitals throughout France. An estimated 200 women also served as telephone operators ("Hello Girls") through the Army Signal Corps.\footnote{Dorothy and Carl J. Schneider, Into the Breach: American Women Overseas in World War I (New York: Viking Press, 1991), 12.} Some 13,000 Yeoman (females) employed with the U.S. Navy in home front administrative capacities.

In addition, tens of thousands of women and girls (in Europe and the United States) volunteered with the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Knights of Columbus, Young Women’s and Young Men’s Christian Associations and many other secular, religious, and military organizations.\footnote{Margaret Vining and Barton C. Hacker, “From Camp Follower to Lady in Uniform: Women, Social Class and Military Institutions Before 1920,” Contemporary European History 10, no. 3 (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2001): 361.}

That military service is a signifier of citizenship and an important vehicle for professionalization is the principal argument upon which this dissertation rests.\footnote{Ilene Rose Feinman, Citizenship Rites: Feminist Soldiers and Feminist Antimilitarists (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 1.} The Great War provided dietitians the opportunity to standardize their labor, advance their goals, and facilitate the integration of military ethos in their occupation. The military as an organization also provided medical officials with an unprecedented opportunity to create a national “health inventory” for investigation, observation, and confirmation of...
scientific data. Finally, as Dr. Lafayette Mendel (professor of physiological chemistry in the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University) observed in 1916, World War I afforded the unique opportunity to study the “relation of the food supply to unexpected and territorial conditions.” The professionalization of dietitians serving with the Army points to one of many instrumental vehicles for economic equity. Military service afforded dietitians with the foundation to articulate their demands for equal treatment, respect, and recognition. Without the wartime opportunity to challenge the lack of commissioned status and exact professional recognition in the military medical hierarchy, dietitians would not have had legitimate claims to rank, pay, and veterans’ benefits. By aligning their professional goals with the military, dietetic leaders anchored their quest for control over their profession to fundamental rights of citizenship. By establishing a presence with (but, not officially in) the military, they gained financial independence and a degree of occupational legitimacy. They forced federal discussion and government recognition of their roles. By incorporating the military ethos of responsibility, expertise, and corporateness—in the name of national security, military readiness, and effectiveness—they confronted militarization by resisting the exploitation of their labor. Finally, in pursuit of commissioned status and veteran benefits, dietitians

420 In this case, Mendel explained, “From the standpoint of Germany, the situation is unique in view of the exclusion of food normally obtained in large amounts from abroad. Russia, America, and other countries have hitherto furnished wheat, rice, butter, lard, eggs, and many other foods, along with cruder feeds which in turn were applied to animal production. These sources have been threatened or entirely cut off.” See Mendel, Changes in the Food Supply and Their Relation To Nutrition, 46.
422 Throughout this dissertation, I have emphasized that maternalism, a top-down ideology that idealized women’s place in the home, was not necessarily the premier rationale for the professionalization and advancement of women. According to my research, the spirit of national security and race betterment seemed to transcend or trump the logic of maternalism. As one writer put it, “The prospects are that the American soldier will be the most ‘protected’ and best cared for individual that the world has ever seen, and that there will be protection and care left over for at least a part of the civil population.” See Elizabeth Robinson Scovil, “Notes from the Medical
articulated their claims to equality in the broader national discussion of citizenship.\textsuperscript{423}

Throughout this chapter, I analyze the tension between three groups of overseas personnel—dietitians, nurses, and mess sergeants—and the troubles dietitians faced in trying to gain professional respect and autonomy with very little military support and very few supplies. In her letter to the Surgeon General, dietitian Jeannette Martner insisted, “The co-operation needed so badly, especially abroad where the food problem was such a difficult one and was not what it should have been, the nurses objecting to taking orders from a civilian employee … We feel that we should be on par with the other woman workers and have the same privileges. I am not voicing my own opinion only but that of many of the girls in this service. Is there any hope of their being a real [A]rmy dietitian corps?”\textsuperscript{424} What remains absent in existing scholarship on women and professionalization are the competing quests to professionalize within the multifaceted female medical hierarchy. The landscape of the female medical hierarchy, comprised of physicians, anesthetists, chief nurses, staff nurses, nurse’s aides, head dietitians, staff/hospital dietitians, physical and occupational therapists or reconstruction aides, homeopaths, osteopaths, canteen workers, ambulance drivers, and a host of other workers and volunteers was ripe with competition and struggle in the quest for resources, occupational respect, and power during the war. To date, few have yet to address the competitive moves to professionalize within the female medical hierarchy.\textsuperscript{425}
As dietitians competed for respect, they also distanced themselves from volunteer organizations such as the American Fund for the French Wounded (AFFW) and upper-class women serving overseas in hostess houses, canteens, and other relief organizations. The AFFW, an elite, volunteer relief organization, competed with the ARC for members, recruits, resources, and prestige. Gertrude Atherton, a prominent early twentieth-century literary figure, served overseas in France during World War I for Le Bien Etre du Blessé (the American Fund for the French Wounded). Atherton personified a strong-willed, outspoken denizen with a keen sense of class awareness.\textsuperscript{426} Her editorials to the \textit{New York Times} during World War I clearly illustrate a degree of class conflict between women who volunteered under the auspices of the AFFW and the dietitians serving with the subsidiary of the U.S. Food Administration within the U.S. Department of Agriculture. World War I hospital dietitians, in contrast, formed alliances with physicians and the military medical bureaucracy. Only one overseas unit, Dietitian Unit No. 1, comprised of 24 dietitians were deployed to France without an affiliation with a medical unit. See Barber, \textit{History of the American Dietetic Association, 1917–1959}, 201. Canteen workers, ambulance drivers, and others stationed overseas in unofficial medical support capacities during World War I provided medical care and comfort to soldiers. Additionally, throughout World War I, nurses and dietitians were brought in to medical colleges to teach Navy men ("pharmacist mates" or "hospital apprentices") how to care for the sick and wounded aboard ship. Photographic evidence also shows that dietitians taught Army men how to properly handle and prepare foods at Pratt Institute. In his letter to his nurse-instructor, one young man said, "There is not one thing that I have been asked to do ... that I can’t do better than it is usually done. On my first case I prepared and administered hypodermics, did charting, took temperature, pulse, and respiration, gave alcohol sponges, baths, care of the mouth and teeth, used hot water bags and ice caps, and cooked certain forms of diet." See Willard Connely, "How Bluejackets Are Taught at the University of Minnesota," \textit{The American Journal of Nursing} 18, no. 8 (May 1918): 633. Throughout the war, dietitians also worked in a variety of stateside venues beyond hospital settings. For example, dietitians prepared balanced meals for the day laborers of the Woman’s Land Army. Affiliated with the U.S. Employment Service and the U.S. Food Administration, Barnard College played an influential role in recruitment for the Woman’s Land Army. See Margaret Rossiter, \textit{Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940}, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 120–121; and Penny Martelet, "The Woman’s Land Army, World War I," in \textit{Clio Was a Woman: Studies in the History of American Women}, eds. Mabel Deutrich and Virginia Purdy (Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1980), 136–146. The Women’s Agricultural Camp, or the "Bedford Unit," is one example of this type of experiment; women organized to till the abandoned fields and work the farms. Barnard students, graduates of the Manhattan Trade School, and women from seasonal trades supplied the labor while a Barnard professor chaperoned their operation. (The correlation between food, strength, and efficiency constituted one of many topics studied by dietitians). Students from the Household Arts Department of Teachers College prepared their meals. Seven chauffeurs took them from farm to farm. See Harriet Stanton Blatch, \textit{Mobilizing Woman Power} (New York: Women’s Press, 1918), 168.\textsuperscript{426} I am grateful to independent researcher Michele Morgan for her assistance with the extensive Gertrude Atherton Collection housed at the Bancroft Library at the University of California Berkeley.
ARC. Some dietitians stationed overseas crossed back and forth with organizational loyalty. Class was a definitive factor in the process of professionalization and the competition for resources, recruits, respect, and relief.

The Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) and the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America (NSCDA), founded in 1890 and 1891, respectively, among other white, female, patriotic associations celebrate their womanhood in connection with whiteness or genealogical heritage, and nation building. Admission or membership required evidence of military pedigree. Membership also acknowledged the long commitment and history of dedication to the social needs of male military veterans. By celebrating their relationship to the founding military fathers, white, Protestant, native-born, middle- and upper-class American women organized around patriotism, whiteness, womanhood, and military pedigree. Their native-born, white, patriotic pedigree linked white women to each other and supported gendered notions of professionalization and American citizenship. Organizations like the DAR, NSCDA, and others cemented the exclusive bond of white American sisterhood as auxiliaries to their men in war. Female patriotic organizations tied whiteness and gender to military pedigree in ways that money could never replace. In an era of shifting economic, social, cultural, industrial, and racial paradigms, military pedigree was one solemn bond uniting womanhood, whiteness, and nation building.

Some scholars have examined the ways in which World War I service provided unprecedented personal opportunity, but few have focused on the impact of the war in terms of the professionalization of women's labor. Ultimately, Lenna Frances Cooper, the first dietitian supervisor to officially serve with the U.S. Army, believed the service of military dietitians would lead to the establishment of the dietitian as a permanent factor in all Army hospitals and civilian hospitals. She was right—but not in the way she may have imagined. Dietetics as a distinct career field for women crested during the World War I
era then gradually lost momentum by the mid-twentieth century as women were ushered toward institutional menu planning and kitchen positions in administration. As new developments in science and technology emerged over the course of the twentieth century, the rise of the pharmaceutical industry also played an important role in the decline of diet therapy.

The experience of military dietitians was fraught with constant struggle and confusion over language, rhetoric, knowledge, and professional territory. Dietitians studied the importance of diet on some of the most prominent health concerns of the day including anemia, tuberculosis, constipation, scurvy, rachitis, gastric-ulcer problems, diabetes, obesity, nephritis, typhoid, rheumatism, gout, and hyperacidity. Regular hospital diets were distributed in liquid, light, soft, and general forms.

World War I forced public discussion and acknowledgment of the female medical hierarchy. Military officials and the medical officers began to recognize and discuss the service of women in the medical arena beyond nursing. From physiotherapy to anesthesia, from homeopathy to dietetics, the war situation led military officials to answer to (if not simply to begin to organize and acknowledge) the unique alcoves of specialization. The architectural structure of the female medical hierarchy was constructed through debates over rank, uniforms, social status, respect, war-risk insurance, and, even postage. When dietitians rushed up to call during World War I, they recognized the inequities in rank, pay, benefits, and “civilian status.” Dietitians forced both the Army Medical Department and the military as a core American institution, to recognize the specialization of women’s work by the education, training, skills, and specialties of female medical hierarchy. World War I dietitian Jeannette Martner of Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, wrote to the Army Surgeon General, M. W. Ireland, in Washington, D.C., on June 1, 1919: “If Army dietitians are still to be classed as civilian employees, I would not consider reappointment. When we went abroad in the fall of
1917, we were not allowed insurance, we were obligated to pay postage on all mail sent—
were not even allowed to take liberty bonds. No service record was kept for me and with
the exception of our first issue of clothes, I furnished all of my own, the chief nurse
informing us that she had no orders to furnish dietitians the necessary clothing. When we
reached New York on our return after eighteen months service we were not required to
take a physical examination, although many of us needed medical attention as badly as
the nurses. This last of course we felt very keenly.427

Official military rosters reveal an intense confusion over naming practices and
occupational classification in the female medical hierarchy. “All of this sounds mixed
up,” wrote Laura Joy Hawley about the lack of cooperation and the level of confusion,
“and it is very mixed up … but so is the whole situation.”428 Very little uniformity exists
in the official records from general hospitals and base hospitals. Some dietitians are listed
as “non-enlisted personnel,” some are categorized as “civilians,” others are lumped into
the nurse rosters with asterisks denoting their status as dietitians. One decorated Iowa
nurse with “three chevrons” stationed at Brest referred to nurse’s aides as “casual
nurses.” In a newspaper clipping from May of 1919, Maude Wilkins explained
“laughingly” with three chevrons on her sleeve, that casual nurses were “those [girls]
with no home.”429 Historian Kimberly Jensen explains that casual nurses were transient
women who “were not assigned to a specific post but served at various locations when
needed.”430

427 Jeannette Martner to Army Surgeon General William Ireland, letter dated June 1, 1919. Gift
Collection, American Red Cross, National Archives, College Park.
428 Dock, et al., History of American Red Cross Nursing, 1418.
429 “Iowa Nurse Has Three Chevrons: Miss Maude Wilkins Is Home From Long Service
Overseas,” Unidentified Newspaper, May 4, 1919, pg. 12–13. Dorothy Ashby Collection, Iowa
Women’s Archives, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. YWCA Greater Des Moines, Folder 1.
430 Kimberly Jensen, Mobilizing Minerva: American Women in the First World War (Urbana, IL:
University of Illinois Press, 2008), 127.
In her 2008 analysis, *Mobilizing Minerva: American Women in the First World War*, Jensen builds extensively upon Judith Hicks Steihm’s formulation of the protector and the protected. The major themes identified in Jensen’s recent study pivot on American women serving in the Great War and their campaigns for civic equality and antiviolence activism. Jensen also articulates specific connections between suffrage activism and military service in the Great War. Examining the ways in which three groups of American women (physicians, nurses, and women-at-arms) challenged the traditional gender bargain of men as protectors and women as the protected, Jensen contends that women campaigned for the right to define their service to the state and to redefine the military in ways that would protect women from violence.  

Soldiers with the British Expeditionary Forces called American dietitians “home sisters.” The term “sister” during the World War I era, a common reference to single women, may have also been used as a more general reference to facilitate the notion of a military family on the front to an anxious American public. The connotations of “sisterhood” relayed notions of piety, purity, and chastity and countered fears of single women in the military workplace. To be sure, critics of women’s military service believed a military camp posed more danger than dance halls and other urban commercial amusements. Most important, however, is the fact that “home sister” evoked the notion of the Army as a family and the sister as the object of protection, not the object of sexual desire. “The domesticating impulse was manifested in the Army,” writes historian Susan Zeiger. “The official view of women’s work was an assurance to parents that their sons were being well-cared for. Selling the war to an uneasy American public was also a major concern of the Wilson administration, and a sanitized, safe, and homelike war was far

easier to sell."\(^{432}\) The notion of the *Army as a family* was fraught with difficulty. Further complicating the notion of a woman serving with the military were the contradictions an unmarried woman in the Army posed to the family unit. In an era of declining birth rates and rising divorce rates, she was professionally beholden to the soldier as a dietitian, not necessarily as a mother for her own family unit.

Why did ARC, civilian, contract dietitians want to serve during World War I? They joined for a number of reasons. Some joined to gain autonomy and financial independence.\(^{433}\) Others sought to exercise their patriotism. For most women who served in the Great War, overseas service was an exciting, unparalleled, personal adventure and professional opportunity.\(^{434}\) Many were intrigued by the possibilities of travel. Upon return from her service in France as a World War I ARC dietitian, Laura Joy Hawley exalted, "I have returned an older woman and a younger girl!"\(^{435}\) For most of the women who served, the Great War was unequivocally their most significant experience as women, as professionals, and as aspiring American citizens. For others, such as World War I dietitian Georgia Finley from Indianapolis, Indiana, who was slightly older than her counterparts, it was a dangerous decision to be weighed carefully with friends and family.

Regardless of the factors that motivated them to serve, dietitians stationed in foreign countries during World War I formed the strong and unequivocal bonds of sisterhood. This bond among women stationed overseas found expression in the personal letters, scrapbooks, and diaries. In their memoirs, dietitians disclosed their consumption


\(^{433}\) According to a circular dated October 28, 1918, enrolled American Red Cross dietitians would not be compensated unless they served on "active duty." See Records of the American Red Cross, 1917–1934. Gift Collection, Box 466, Series 494.1, ARC 700, RG 200, National Archives, College Park, MD.


\(^{435}\) No Title, *The Evening Sun*, (Baltimore, MD), Thursday, April 25, 1918.
patterns, sexuality, and identities in the midst of a new and emerging mass culture. The letters of ARC dietitian Marjorie Hulsizer Copher, for example, reveal her passion for travel, adventure, couture, and consumption in the fashion mecca of Paris. Her Simmons College classmate, Anne Upham, wrote in a letter, "... we find ourselves in quite a metropolis with movies, vaudeville, grand opera, and numerous other entertainments, and cathedrals, monasteries, museums..."436 Copher, nicknamed "Schlitz" by her Simmons classmates, rode the "metropolitan" subway through the streets of Paris in search of the latest couture. She shopped in the Au Bon Marche, a local department store, characterized as "an old and reliable house" on the rue du Bac "patronized by persons of moderate means" for trousseau (table) linens.437 She also frequented the bustling local Parisian markets for fresh vegetables and fresh bread. She cites on occasion "ripping weather" and taking "hikes with the girls twice a week or so."438 Copher embraced her autonomy and freedom; life in Paris as a young, single woman offered her much more than the inertia of her quaint hometown of Flemington, New Jersey.

As I explained in the previous chapter, several factors contributed to the formation of the ADA as a separate and distinct professional organization. But, two factors contributed to the final breaking point. The first factor was the war itself. Leaders of the AHEA, busy with organization on the local level for the war effort, cancelled their annual national meeting of 1917. "This is a source of great regret ..." one home economist wrote in the June 1917 issue of the Journal of Home Economics. They justified the cancellation of the annual meeting because the war emergency required "immediate help in food conservation ... extended to both city and country women." In the absence of this

gathering, Cooper and Graves seized the opportunity to “bring dietitians of the country to come together ... and to meet with the scientific research workers” to formally establish the ADA.\footnote{439}

When the United States entered the war, dietitians were poised and ready to serve. Reflecting on her service in World War I, Huddleson wrote: “The stimulus of war hurried the need for a national organization of dietitians. America for the first time was forced to conserve food for an Army that grew, like a giant mushroom, almost overnight.”\footnote{440} In September of 1917, through the ARC Dietetic Service, trained, female dietitians began doing their own work in Army camps and cantonments in the United States. Nine months later, the first two ARC dietitians set sail to serve overseas with the British Expeditionary Forces. On October 18, 1917, leaders from within the ARC Dietetic Service chartered the first national dietetic organization, the ADA. Under the leadership of Lenna Frances Cooper and Lulu Graves (both members of the ARC Dietetics Service Committee) ninety-eight, white, educated, native-born, middle- and upper-class dietitians gathered at the Hollenden Hotel in Cleveland, Ohio.

I believe the second factor contributing to the formation of the ADA as a distinct professional organization was less obvious. That the ADA was created and organized just six months after the passage of the Smith-Hughes (Vocational Education) Act of 1917 indicates a degree of tension or conflict among and within the aspiring professional circles of home economists and dietitians. The Smith-Hughes Act allocated federal funds for the teaching of agriculture and vocational education in public schools; it subsidized both full- and part-time training in domestic science and manual, industrial, and agricultural arts. In short, the legislation provided young men with opportunities in

Some home economists praised the passage of the Smith-Hughes Act; Mary Schneck-Woolman, for example, who served as the Chair for the Simmons College Home Economics Program and as a textile specialist through the Emergency Fund of the U.S. Department of Agriculture from 1917 to 1919, actively lobbied for the legislation. She encouraged readers of the *Journal of Home Economics* to apply pressure to their House and Senate leaders. Writing in the spring of 1916, Schneck Woolman argued that the work of the "cook, housemaid, the dietitian, institution manager and household decorator" would be enhanced by the proposed legislation.  

But, not all dietitians agreed with Schneck-Woolman's assessment. Some interpreted the act as a threat to their professional core of identity and their professional advancement. Agnes Fay Morgan, for example, from the College of Agriculture at the University of California (Berkeley), warned Elva George of the ARC Dietitian Bureau in December of 1918 that agricultural colleges did not necessarily "adapt ... easily" to the training of dietitians and suggested that collegiate agricultural training, intended for bettering the conditions of the rural home, "only incidentally" touched on the more

442 Mary Schneck-Woolman, "The Smith Hughes Bill, H.R. 457 (New Number H.R. 11250 S. 703)," *The Journal of Home Economics*, May 1916:242. Morgan was keenly aware of the political activism of Simmons College home economics chair, Mary Schneck-Woolman. As a child, Schneck-Woolman attended a Quaker Friends school in Philadelphia. She earned her bachelor of science degree at Columbia University, followed by graduate work in economics at Harvard University. After a five-year tour across America and in England, she developed keen interest in the study of textiles. On her tour, she visited several textile mills and studied the conditions of textile workers. After two years with the University of Pennsylvania, she returned to New York City as a professor of "Domestic Art" at Columbia Teacher's College. In 1902, through the support of city social and philanthropic workers, she organized the Manhattan Trade School. In home economics circles, Schneck-Woolman's activism was well known. The Manhattan Trade School preceded the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education by two years and the Smith-Hughes Act by fifteen. Her textile textbook, *Sewing Course*, printed in four editions; and, she was well known as an authority on sewings and textiles through her scholarship in ladies' magazines and popular periodicals. In 1911, Schneck-Woolman organized the Campfire Girls; a year later she went to Boston where she pioneered work at the Women's Educational and Industrial Union and taught at Simmons College. From 1917–1919, she worked as a textile specialist under the Emergency Fund of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
fundamental concerns of the “professional” dietitian. Similarly, Abby Marlatt reportedly laughed in disgust when she heard that after all of her hard work to bring national acclaim and prestige to the University of Wisconsin–Madison Home Economics Program, her department was categorized as “manual training instead of domestic science.” Edna White reminded readers of the *Journal of Home Economics*: “The Smith-Hughes Act has opened the way for remarkable development in vocational education in this country. There are, however, certain limitations which this law has imposed upon vocational home economics, due to the fact that, in the act, home economics is included in that section which sets up the standard for trade and industrial education.”

The Smith-Hughes Act played an important role in the expansion of educational opportunities for African American women. Writing in her analysis of the late

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443 For a more detailed analysis of Dr. Agnes Fay Morgan, see Maresi Nerad’s chapter “Institution Builder: Agnes Fay Morgan,” in her analysis *The Academic Kitchen: A Social History of Gender Stratification at the University of California, Berkeley* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), 73-88.


446 Senator Hoke Smith and Congressman Dudley M. Hughes of Georgia introduced the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. It provided federal funds for vocational education below college level and set aside $7.2 million annually for the promotion of vocational education in agriculture, trade, industrial education, and home economics. The program was ministered by the Federal Board for Vocational Education. See M. D. Mobley, “A Review of Federal Vocational-Education Legislation, 1862–1963,” *Theory into Practice*, 3: No. 5, The New Look In Vocational Education (December 1964), 167. I think it is significant that Hoke Smith’s mother was a first cousin to the religious maverick, Mary Baker Eddy. This connection may, in part, reveal the cultural and religious sensibilities that shaped his upbringing and worldview. In addition, his belief system towards women’s access to higher education may have been influenced by his wife Marion “Birdie” Cobb. “Birdie” was the daughter of Thomas R. R. Cobb, who was widely known for his 1858 pro-slavery treatise, *An Inquiry into the Law of Slavery*. He served as a Confederate officer and was killed at the Battle of Fredericksburg during the U.S. Civil War. Birdie’s mother, Marion Lumpkin, was the daughter of Georgia’s Supreme Court Justice, Joseph Henry Lumpkin. When T. R. R. Cobb’s daughter, Lucy, died at a young age from scarlet fever, he founded the Lucy Cobb Institute for Females in Athens, Georgia, in 1858 in her memory. The Lucy Cobb Institute remained an exclusive, private girl’s school until it closed in 1931. This may explain why, in part, Senator Smith upheld such strong ideals toward motherhood, femininity, and southern ladyhood. He emphatically expressed in 1908 that, “You cannot lead a man to the true conception of spiritual truths, or to any faith in you as a spiritual leader, if you are content to see the man’s mother in
nineteenth- and early twentieth-century watershed in education for African Americans, historian Glenda Gilmore points out that the privileges of southern ladyhood were clearly not extended to African American women. Dietetic professionalization inherently nourished the offensive and increasingly prevalent "Mammy" stereotypes and later, the perverse commercialized images of "Aunt Jemima." 447 One writer commented, "Scientific cooks, or dietitians, as they are technically called, are taking the place of the slovenly cook of other days." 448 This symbolism of the southern Mammy figure emerged in tandem with the rise of new educational opportunities for African American women.

The significance of military service to the professionalization project of white, middle- and upper-class, native-born, Protestant dietitians cannot be fully understood or examined without placing it in context of the status of nondominant women and women of color. Historian Evelyn Higginbotham confirms that at the beginning of the twentieth century, domestic science courses began to appear in the curriculum of public schools, colleges, and technical institutes across the nation. The first generation of educated African Americans born in freedom had completed college and had developed their own ideas about education. Colleges and universities withdrew from ecclesiastical and...
denominational control. Predominately northern, white, middle- and upper-class authors of prescriptive literature emphasized what Gilmore calls an "evangelically driven ethos of usefulness." This ethos, as Gilmore argues, forced African American women to negotiate public space without the cloak of chivalry.

In 1940, Ellis Knox praised the passage of the agricultural extension bills. "The federal government has shown a new liberality and interest through the passage of the Smith-Lever Act (1914) and Smith-Hughes Act (1917)," wrote Knox in his 1940 study "Secondary Education for Negroes." But, in reality, the long-term consequences for African American women were less sanguine. The programs institutionalized discriminatory ideals about race and gender because they financed vocational education and domestic servant training. Glenda Gilmore asserts, "Despite black women's clever use of industrial education, the overall system was gendered in ways that disadvantaged women." The land grant college system was, as historian Rosalind Rosenberg argues, coeducational by necessity, not by design. Yet, it reinforced differences in men's and women's curricula after black women had battled for years for equal consideration in coeducation, and it drew money away from women's teacher-training programs.

449 Reflecting on Nannie Burroughs desire to withdraw her National Training School from Baptist control, Kelly Miller argued, "The University of Chicago chafed under Baptist authority; Vanderbilt pulled out from under the Methodists; Hampton, Atlanta, Fisk, and Meharry threw off the yoke of denominational rulership. If Miss Burroughs chafes under too tight a Baptist harness she is but repeating the experience of great institutions of all denominations." Typescript, Kelly Miller, February 23, 1928, Washington, D.C., Nannie Helen Burroughs Collection, Box 310, National Trade and Professional School Controversy Over Status of National Training School, Folder 2, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.
451 Ellis O. Knox, "Historical Sketch of Secondary Education for Negroes," The Negro Adolescent and His Education 9, no. 3 (July 1940): 440–453.
Resourceful African American activists, such as Lucy Laney, Nannie Helen Burroughs, Charlotte Hawkins Brown, Addie Hunton, and Mary McLeod Bethune expanded educational opportunities for African American women in domestic science.  

Though formed under the auspices of industrial and vocational work, several predominately black institutions shifted their emphasis of African American women’s education (specifically related to cooking) to a more scientific and academic framework. In one of the very few analyses to date specifically about African American women and the professionalization of dietetics, Laurita Mack Burley’s dissertation titled “Reconceptualizing Profession: African American Women and Dietetics at Tuskegee Institute, 1936–1954” analyzes the model by which Tuskegee faculty members transformed an industrial, paternalistic educational program into one that met the professional criteria of the nearly all-white, highly feminized ADA.  

Though their status on the social hierarchy remained low, the Great War opened a window of opportunity for African American women (as it did on a much greater scale for white women). In Winston-Salem, North Carolina, for example, a young woman described by local draft officials as a “ginger-caked, negro” allegedly confronted the local draft board with hostility for not allocating dependent allowances for her family.  

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453 Gilmore, Gender and Jim Crow, 140–141.  
after her husband was drafted for military service. More broadly, in a 1926 issue of the Spelman Messenger, Annie Goldsby reflected on the rise in employment opportunities for women during wartime. She believed the Great War offered to “increase respect for woman and offer her greater opportunities ... women have been able to receive the wonderful advantages of education, we find she has prepared and is still preparing herself in order that she may be able to fill any place that a man fills. Today we find woman filling her place in industry, in ministry, in professions, and in all walks of life.

African American women who desired to “officially” serve in the Great War faced tremendous odds. In 1943, in the Journal of Negro Education, Carroll L. Miller criticized the American Red Cross for failing to live up to its leadership responsibilities during the Great War and failing to publicize the work of Negro auxiliaries. “Take the problem of Negro nurses,” Miller argued. “It is true that official sanction for the use of Negro nurses had to come from the War Department, but the American Red Cross did not press for the utilization of the services of nurses from this group, in spite of the fact that it issued urgent calls for nurses.... Thus, the ‘Greatest Mother in the World’ seems to have treated her Negro children with indifference.” That the American Red Cross failed to take a proactive stance against racial injustices did not preclude African American women from creating their own venues and initiatives to support the war effort. In Jacksonville, Florida, for example, “Miss White,” the Negro State chairwoman and Florida state organizer for the Women’s Committee, promoted food conservation work and implemented a “Liberty Kitchen” in the basement of an African American high

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455 Report: Local Exemption Board for the City of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, RG 163, National Archives, Southeastern Division, Morrow, Georgia.
school. This is only one of many examples of African American women’s work in food conservation during the war effort.

African American women also participated actively in the support of their troops at home. The War Work Council of the Young Women’s Christian Association provided $400.60 for the creation of fifteen continental hostess houses for African American soldiers. Staffed by African American women, the hostess houses offered “a bit of home in the camps.” In large part, the biracial cooperation and community support for the establishment of the hostess houses was grounded in a deep-seeded fear about the proliferation of venereal disease. The creation of home-like, organized, recreational facilities, or hostess houses, underscored a common concern during the Great War over the proliferation of venereal disease and illicit sexual relations in and around military installations. Raymond Fosdick, the Chairman of the World War I Commission on Training Camp Activities, reasoned that the lack of recreational outlets in the past led to rampant alcohol abuse and prostitute solicitation by soldiers. Fosdick explained how much of their efforts to establish a positive environment for soldiers with healthy recreational outlets relied upon the coordinated efforts of the YMCA, Knights of Columbus, the Jewish Board for Welfare Work, and the university extension system. At Camp Meade, for example, Fosdick praised the hostess house as a “comfortable house ... in pleasant surroundings” with a huge fireplace with facilities for women visitors, relatives, and friends. The house intended to keep up the “contentment and morale of the troops.” Additionally, Fosdick noted the commission had inaugurated a “take the soldier home to dinner” movement so that the soldiers could be reacquainted with the home environment.

The creation of hostess houses and the concern over the character and morality of the troops illustrates the extent to which military officials—though not necessarily resolved on their understanding or positions on eugenics and euthenics—forged middle ground on the issue. The transmission of venereal disease added steam to the efficacy of the euthenics arguments years after the death of Ellen Richards. We see this through the creation of the hostess houses and the recreational facilities provided for the American doughboys. Yet, at the same time, the war itself fueled the fire of concern over race degeneration. One writer, trying to make sense of the appropriate category for venereal disease, explained that venereal disease interested the eugenicists as it affected sterility and the marriage rates, whereas “the euthenist is interested in venereal disease as it affects the entire field of sex hygiene.” The onset of war exacerbated fears and threatened to wipe out hereditary traits of those selected for military service. Some argued that venereal disease, a byproduct of war (specifically syphilis which was inimical to heredity), rendered marriage an abomination and child-bearing a social danger. “War produces deplorable artificial selection,” said John Harvey Kellogg’s brother, Vernon. Vernon Kellogg, a professor of physiology at Stanford University, believed there was no aspect of environment that could be more important than the inheritance of traits. He cautioned his readers, “Every death in war means the death of a man physically superior to at least some other one man retained in the civil population.” However concerned he was about curbing race degeneration, Vernon Kellogg advocated the concept of \textit{positive} eugenics or education as the only answer to race betterment. According to Vernon Kellogg, “Race betterment or sexual improvement of the rank and file of the race in physical and mental quality can only be accomplished through positive hygiene and positive eugenics…. But, positive hygiene and positive eugenics can be brought about in

\footnote{460 "In the Periodicals," \textit{The Journal of Social Hygiene} 1, no. 1 (December 1914): 158.}
the human race only through education."\textsuperscript{461} Vernon Kellogg believed state intervention (marriage licenses, etc.) could only do so much to advance the eugenic cause. Rather, as he argued, education about sex in relation to eugenics began in the home through the parents. Children should be taught that their gender was sacred to their person. In other words, Kellogg believed that mothers needed to instill the idea of womanhood as a spiritual, mental, and physical transformation. While fathers needed to teach their boys the "substance made in the testicles" was a magical formula carried through blood like electricity to the brain, spinal cord, and muscles and absolutely sacred to his person and his manhood.\textsuperscript{462}

It is difficult to ascertain the extent to which dietitians serving with the military were engaged with the dietary treatment of venereal diseases, but it can be said with certainty that World War I officials considered the problem paramount to national security, military readiness, and part of the broader discourse of race betterment.\textsuperscript{463} As Garnet Isabel Pelton, R.N., warned in 1917, "The two great racial poisons are alcohol and venereal disease."\textsuperscript{464}

Dr. Rupert Blue, Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service, announced in a January 1914 telegram that control of venereal disease constituted the "most important sanitary problem now confronting public-health authorities of the United States."\textsuperscript{465} We know from the work of historian Allan Brandt that venereal disease encompassed social fears about class, race, ethnicity, and in particular, sexuality and the family. "Venereal disease," Brandt writes, "in its social constructions—has been used


\textsuperscript{462} Vernon L. Kellogg, "The Bionomics of War," \textit{The Journal of Social Hygiene}, 74.

\textsuperscript{463} Dorothy Davidson, "Diet during the Treatment of Venereal Diseases," \textit{The American Journal of Nursing} 38, no. 4, Section 1 (April 1938): 438–440.

\textsuperscript{464} Garnet Isabel Pelton, R.N., "Events of the Day," \textit{American Journal of Nursing} 17, no. 5 (February 1917): 430.

during the last century to express these anxieties." 466 Citing turn-of-the-century changes in terms of a growing tendency toward later marriages, smaller family size, the rise of divorce rates, and the increasing numbers of women entering higher education and the workplace as some of the changes in American family life, Brandt explains how and why critics charged that the American family “in a flight of selfishness” had failed its ultimate responsibility—the “reproduction of the race.” 467

Discussions about the reproduction of the race and concerns over the transmission of venereal disease continued to resonate within the debates between eugenics and eugenics throughout the war years. Irving Fisher lamented: “The real tragedy of the European conflict is a eugenic tragedy. When this European War broke out, it nearly broke my heart—as I do not doubt it did many others who have no active part in this great conflict—because I saw that it meant the destruction of the fathers of the next generation, those who would have been naturally the parents of a large fraction if not a majority of the next generation, but will not now be able to because they will have been killed off by this war, and they are the fittest people, the medically selected males of Europe.” 468 Fears over deterioration of the Anglo-Saxon race (as well as the Anglo-Saxon family unit) nurtured serious concerns over military efficiency. One nurse, calling for greater interagency and community cooperation during the war to publicize the problem of venereal disease, asserted: “Typhoid carriers are not permitted to remain at large and handle our food and contaminate our water supply. Why should the carrier of syphilis? It is therefore, a function of the doctor, the clinic, the employer and the health

466 Brandt, No Magic Bullet, 6.
467 Brandt, No Magic Bullet, 7.
department, to cooperate in the control of food handlers and other classes that may be particularly a menace.”

Combat in the Kitchen

Lenna Frances Cooper, described by personal acquaintances as “soft spoken, kind, and considerate, and warm,” was the chief architect behind the professionalization of dietitians in the military and the preeminent leader in their quest for military status. Born in 1875, on a farm near Hutchinson, Kansas, to Simeon and Nancy (Carrothers) Cooper, Cooper graduated from nurses training at Battle Creek, Michigan. She attended one of the earliest programs in dietetics “to prepare for government positions” at Drexel Institute in Philadelphia. Cooper found a friend, mentor, and countenance in Ella Eaton Kellogg, the wife of John Harvey Kellogg. In her influential 1892 book, aptly titled, Science in the Kitchen: Principles of Healthful Cookery, Ella Kellogg noted the “large opportunities for observation, research, and experience” available through the patients at the Sanitarium Hospital. With her institutional experience in feeding large groups at the sanitarium and her dietetic training for government positions at Drexel, Cooper returned to Battle Creek ready to initiate the first “Food Service Training Program” at Fort Custer during World War I. Cooper “early recognized that practical experience in an army hospital was desirable” and arranged with the commanding officer and dietitian at Fort Custer for selected students of Battle Creek College to receive a four-month training course at that hospital. This, according to Mary de Garmo Bryan, was the first student dietitian course for Army dietitians. Reflecting on her World War I initiatives, Cooper stated, “one of the toughest parts of the job was maintaining working relations between

470 Mary de Garmo Bryan, “Vignettes of a World War I Dietitian,” Mary Donnell deGarmo Papers, Box 3, Folder 20, Typescript, 1966, University of Tennessee Special Collections, Knoxville, TN.
the doctors and the officers. Frequently, they did not get along well... The relationships between doctors, mess sergeants, nurses, and dietitians was a continual source of debate and conflict.

Cooper extolled a bold and sophisticated program for the professionalization of dietetics in the military arena to increase recognition, pay, and status. She tried to secure military standing for dietitians by employing several different tactics. She criticized military officials for paying dietitians serving in Army camps and cantonments the same wages as civilian dietitians. Initially, Cooper sought to incorporate dietitians in the newly established Army Division of Food and Nutrition under the leadership of Major John Murlin. But, military officials did not take dietitians very seriously. Cooper received mixed messages from the officers. Major Philip A. Shaffer (1881–1960), recorded as her “Army chief,” gave Cooper the broad assignment of “improving food for soldiers.” According to an unofficial memo in May of 1918, he commented, “The ration as it reaches the men does not provide sufficient food, nor is it of the character best suited to existing conditions.” On the other hand, some medical officers did not view dietitians as critical members of the military medical team. Although Murlin acknowledged the inadequacy of the situation, he distanced himself from the debate over military status for dietitians. In a letter dated March 15, 1918, Murlin cautiously answered Cooper:

“Whatever you do along this line, you should be careful to make it clear that the matter has not originated with myself. In other words, I am not requesting that dietitians be

472 Philip A. Shaffer Papers, Bernard Becker Medical Library, Washington University School of Medicine.
473 Army dietitians did not receive full military status until Public Law 80-36. This law, titled the Army-Navy Nurse Act of 1947, established the Army Nurse Corps and the Women’s Medical Specialist Corps in the Regular Army. Dietitians, physical therapists, and occupational therapists did not receive permanent military status until the passage of this law. See Ann M. Ritchie Hartwick, The Army Medical Specialist Corps, 45th Commemorative (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1993), 24. For information on this law as it relates to Army nurses, see Mary T. Sarnecky, History of the Army Nurse Corps (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).
brought under [the Division of Food and Nutrition] where I think they belong. I feel with you that matters are not satisfactory either to the dietitians or to the Army officials....”

When her attempts failed with Murlin and the Army Division of Food and Nutrition, Cooper persisted. She explicitly called for the establishment of a dietetics corps, and if the Army would not agree to establish one, she, at the very least, wanted her dietitians to have status equal to the Army nurse. On behalf of the dietitians she represented, she wrote to the Surgeon General on July 29, 1919, with the following recommendations: “One of two things be brought about, first that a separate corps be maintained for dietitians with a competent supervising dietitian at the head, this corps to be a section of the Personnel Division. Or, secondly ... that the corps, with a competent supervising dietitian at the head, be made a sub-section of the Army Nurse Corps, with all the attending privileges. The first arrangement would be much more satisfactory.”

Cooper’s experience and her 1917 bestseller, *How to Cut Food Costs*, enhanced her reputation as an accredited expert in food consumption patterns. In this book, she asserted two primary objectives. First, she wanted to provide housewives and others with information about purchasing the best foods at the lowest cost. Second, she introduced the concept of a “balanced ration” for the maintenance of maximum health and strength. In her personal record books, Cooper also recorded her criticisms of the methods of operation in the Division of Food and Nutrition, still under the leadership of Murlin. She noted that Murlin was responsible for the “over consumption of food in Army 3633 calories....” Scrawled between mathematical equations, handwritten drawings, and chemical compounds, she computed “over waste” in Murlin’s program for Army food consumption in her personal record books and logs. This notation

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475 July 29, 1919, Lenna F. Cooper to Surgeon General Memorandum. National Archives
underscored her argument in *How to Cut Food Costs* that, "The greatest waste of money in American kitchens comes from an uneconomical selection of food materials."  

It was not until 1901 and 1908 respectively, that the Army and Navy authorized the establishment of the U.S. Army and Navy Nurse Corps. Just before declaration of the Spanish-American War, the Nurses Alumna Association met in its first convention and voted to offer its services to the war effort. In the first three months of the Cuban campaign, typhoid fever killed nearly 800 men, and the hospital corps recognized its inability to handle such epidemics. On May 10, 1898, Army Surgeon General George Sternberg accepted about one thousand applications from the civilian nurses of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Sternberg called upon Washington socialite Anita Newcomb McGee, M.D., (1864–1940) of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, to choose graduate nurses for military service and place them under Army contract at a salary of $30 a month. By the time the United States entered World War I, the Nurse Corps only had approximately 400 members on active duty with the Army and 150 on active duty with the Navy. By the end, 21,480 Army nurses and 1,500 Navy nurses served in the war.  

To alleviate the severe nursing shortage created by the war, military officials entertained the possibility of including nonprofessional women or nursing aides as staff within military hospitals. The strain of the nursing shortage made it even more difficult to delineate professional boundaries between nurses, dietitians, and nurse’s aides. That some nurses specialized as dietitians further complicated occupational categories. The debate became the subject of frequent and anxious concern among nursing leaders as well as male physicians. Dr. S. S. Goldwater, the director of Mount Sinai Hospital, expressed his concerns about the steady flow of civilian women into Army hospitals. In the spring

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of 1918, Goldwater warned, “For a year, the country has been scoured for [nurse] graduates … many of the nurses who have enrolled with the army and navy have been drawn from institutions.” Goldwater feared the shortage would continue to drain pupils from civilian institutions and would also lead to the deterioration of professional nursing standards and requirements. He asserted: “Two extremely perilous proposals so far have been made … first is that the established requirements for admission to the training schools be lowered or suspended. The second is, that the Army add to its payroll a sufficient number of ‘practical’ nurses or attendants. Such women, without full professional qualifications have a perfectly proper place in the scheme of civilian life … but, the government can ill afford to accept them as nurses, not only because of the bad effect that their acceptance would have on the morale of the medical and nursing departments, but because their position that their service in the army would give them, the claims that it would enable them to make after the war. Goldwater’s judicious point regarding the claims military service would enable them to make after the war underscores the significance of military service in the process of professionalization.

Wartime service has historically provided nurses with exceptional professional autonomy and control over life and death decisions. Goldwater’s concern over claims that could potentially be made by nurse’s aides and “unprofessional women” stem from this situation unique to military nursing service.

The service of dietitians, a fairly new specialization in the military arena, caused tension for nurses also attempting to elevate their professional status. Some chief nurses valued the skill of the dietitians. Despite the fact that dietitians held bachelor of science degrees in home economics and additional training through dietetic internships, many nurses interpreted their status as a step above dietitians on the professional hierarchy. In

reality, head dietitians and staff dietitians throughout the war were often responsible for the janitorial assignments, domestic service, and hard manual labor. One anonymous dietitian stationed at Letterman Hospital in San Francisco confirmed this sentiment when she wrote, “I have been assigned to the diet kitchen in the officers’ ward, and have been disappointed in finding much manual work to be done by dietitian.”

Another cited her responsibility to “keep” the women’s quarters, which consisted of seven huts, nine tents, and seven alwyns, or portables, and the bathhouses. Without clear job requirements, duty assignments, shift hours, or clear chain of command, many dietitians had to define their own role and responsibilities. Another dietitian, Margaret MacPhayden, stationed at the orthopedic Base Hospital No. 9 (Chateauroux) complained to the director of the ARC Dietitian Service: “There seems to be a vague idea of what we are really here for. The chief nurse, I am sorry to say, has not been of much assistance, thinking at first, apparently, that I did not ‘belong’ because I was a ‘civilian.’ This going as a ‘civilian’ is a strange arrangement and very disagreeable. I was able to take my place and to hold my own after I came here, but a younger and less experienced person would have been completely discouraged … There is another matter I wish to know about—they are asking officers, enlisted men and nurses to take out insurance. I wished to do so but was told that I could not, as I was a ‘civilian.’”

The issue of nonprofessional civilian women in the labor force reverberated among leaders of the Committee on Nursing of the General Medical Board of the Council of National Defense. This committee (comprised by women such as Jane Delano of the Red Cross and Dora E. Thompson of the Army Nurse Corps) grappled with recruitment, educational standards, and entrance requirements for both civilian and military nurses. “One of the first questions confronting the committee,” writes retired Army nurse and historian Mary T. Sarnecky, “focused on

the advisability of using nurse's aides to assist trained nurses versus using trained nurses exclusively to provide care.\textsuperscript{483}

Generally, the relationships between nurses and dietitians fared better than the relationships between the dietitian and the male military personnel. We know, for example, from the memoirs of Julia Stimson, chief nurse of Base Hospital No. 21, the Washington University unit from St. Louis, Missouri, that she developed a friendship with the base hospital's dietitian, Rachel Watkins. Stimson, the first superintendent of Army nurses, joined the staff of homeopaths at Washington University as the director of social service at the Children's Hospital. Standing at nearly six feet tall, Stimson joined the community of women at Vassar College at the age of 16 and graduated in the class of 1901. It was under the leadership of Stimson that the Walter Reed General Hospital incorporated the first Dietetic Training Program on October 2, 1922. The program consisted of a six-month training course for dietetic and physical therapy students at Walter Reed General Hospital, but the program was short lived. On June 29, 1933, the training courses were discontinued due to the National Economy Act.\textsuperscript{484} It is difficult to ascertain precisely why Stimson sympathized with the professional cause of dietitians. Maybe it was her close relationship with dietitian Rachel Watkins. Perhaps she understood the significance of the 1909 establishment of the Vassar College Sanders Chemistry Laboratory and understood the impact of her Vassar colleague, Ellen S. Richards. In April of 1918, Stimson was appointed chief nurse of the American Red Cross in France. Seven months later, she was called back to organize and direct the American Expeditionary Force Army nursing service. I believe it was, in part, due to her

advocacy and influence as the dean of the Army School of Nursing, that dietetics was
incorporated in the curriculum and agenda at Walter Reed General Hospital after the war.

For women serving both overseas and on the home front during the Great War, the
standardization of military dietetics was especially difficult, simply because very little
uniformity existed from assignment to assignment. Without a clear chain of command and
the power to enforce orders, the nature of dietetic work differed from unit to unit. For the most part, it depended upon the individual relationships between the dietitians and
mess sergeants, mess officers, and medical personnel. Caroline B. King, stationed at the Bazoilles, discovered the key to success was in the ability to adapt to being the "cook, scullery maid, kitchen police, scrub woman, advisor, bookkeeper, confidante, and at many times, the comforter." Some dietitians managed the laundry and tended the nurses' quarters. Some designed the meals for the officers' mess. Some served high tea and cakes. Some prepared specific diets for the sick. "I don't know of any two dietitians over here doing the same thing ... each problem is unique," wrote Laura Joy Hawley, a young dietitian stationed with the Army hospital at St. Nazaire.

In December of 1918, Marjorie Hulsizer transferred from a British Expeditionary Force hospital unit to a large (1,000-bed) American Base Hospital (No. 57) in Paris. Despite a personality clash with the mess officer, Hulsizer reported positively about her relationships and experiences. "On the whole," Hulsizer reported, "... my experience in France was free from friction ... with the B.E.F. I had been running things absolutely on my own.... At No. 57 ... the mess officer was most difficult to get along with ... I had a little talk with him 'man to man' and after that, we got along splendidly."  

Others had exceptional professional responsibilities with military hospital diet kitchens and patients' dining halls. Mary A. Foley, for example, was one of the World War I era dietitians to serve at the Fort Riley, Kansas, base hospital in the continental United States. After gaining her dietetic experience at the Mayo Institute in Rochester, Minnesota, Foley received credit for being the first dietitian to be issued full charge of the kitchens in a large hospital facility. As the "Commanding Dietitian," she had seven other professional dietitians under her supervision. Fort Riley was one of three critical stateside training camps for World War I medical officers. The Medical Officers Training Camp at Fort Riley remained in existence longer than the three other camps. On her Midwest inspection tour, Cooper visited the 3,000-bed hospital at Fort Riley equipped with seventeen "widely scattered" messes. She arrived at Fort Riley after a five-hour trip from Kansas City on the bitter-cold afternoon of January 22, 1918. In her unofficial report, Cooper cited "splendid cooperation" between the Foley and the base hospital staff, which she attributed to Foley's "good training." Writing about Foley's situation at Fort Riley, Cooper noted, "dietitians have displaced mess sergeants in some of the smaller messes ... M.O. (Medical Officer) and C.O. (Commanding Officer) have backed them in discipline." In grading the dietitians under Foley, Cooper rated the dietitians as "fair" or "not efficient." She also noted that one young dietitian named Miss Harrington was "too young" and "liked the men."

Regardless of their location or assignment throughout the war, one problem remained constant. That was the relationships and power struggles between dietitians and the kitchen staff, mess officers, and mess sergeants. Foley noted: "It was rather amusing to notice the number of mess sergeants who took it upon themselves to visit us.... They inspected the kitchens, questioned our cooks. But they gradually began to change their attitude to us." By analyzing the letters and memoirs written by World War I dietitians, some of the tensions between dietitians and male military personnel can be discerned.
Much of the antagonism may have been grounded in the civilian notion of a kitchen as an occupational place for women. Low-ranking enlisted military men, patients, and even prisoners of war were often assigned to duties in the kitchen. Male military personnel may have been somewhat threatened by their presence in a stereotypically female occupational designation or the historically gendered character of cooking.

In many cases, dietitians had difficulty generating respect from the mess sergeants. They also had difficulty commanding respect for the relatively unknown “title” of dietitian. They sought to be understood as scientifically trained professionals in their own right. In her effort to impart scientific knowledge and training in the mess hall, the dietitian roiled confusion over who actually held authority of the kitchen. Mess sergeants, for example, resented dietitians and often refused to take orders from them. One dietitian wrote, “The immediate carrying out of these duties would have been absolutely impossible unless one could have succeeded in having these individuals remain more or less in a comatose condition.”

Similarly, Caroline B. King said, “I had to forgive the mess officer, placate the mess sergeant, and see to it that our soldier boys in the wards had food of the right sort and enough of it to keep them nourished and happy.”

In a majority of cases, the most rewarding element of service was providing for the soldiers. “I enjoyed working with the American soldiers,” Hulsizer reflected. “They are the most considerate, thoughtful, intelligent, and easily taught boys I have ever seen.” Similarly, Margaret Knight could not forget the image in her memory of “that

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487 It is also important to note that World War I food distribution and handling remained a predominately male domain in the mess hall. Food and rations were central to morale, stamina, and sustenance. Mess halls required around the clock surveillance, kitchen police, and protection. 488 Dock, et al., History of American Red Cross Nursing, 1404. 489 King, “Dietitians, Uncle Sam Needs You,” What’s New In Home Economics, 31. 490 Dock, et al., History of American Red Cross Nursing, 1384.
long line of wounded and sick men standing patiently in the mud and rain waiting for their meals."

"Heavy Odds": Science, Technology, and Supplies Overseas

The war instigated significant change in household and kitchen technologies. According to historian Ruth Schwartz Cohen, "Twentieth century household technology consists of not one, but eight, interlocking technological systems: the systems that supply us with food, clothing, health care, transportation, water, gas, electricity, and petroleum products."\(^{491}\) The war years encompassed dramatic advances, restrictions, as well as changes in each of these systems; new developments in machinery changed the way food was prepared. These interlocking systems also existed under greater strain in the war zones. Dr. Lafayette Mendel emphasized three interlocking systems in 1916, when he pointed supplies of food energy, supplies of mechanical energy, and lines of transport; "A comprehensive consideration of any one of these factors such as the food supply" he said, "can not be completely dissociated from its relation to others."\(^{492}\) Specifically, Mary Barber observed, "Overseas food was an uncertain commodity...Hospitals that were on a direct railroad line had food supplies sent up on the ammunition trains. If the track ahead was clear, the trains would go on without stopping to unload the hospital supplies. Then for days, the menus would be composed of canned salmon, canned beef, corn and tomatoes, sugar, cornmeal, coffee, and canned milk."\(^{493}\)

Significant technological changes also took place on the home-front during the war years. The introduction of the electric range in 1914, for example, began to replace the woodburning, coal, and gas stoves in middle class homes across America with the


twist of a knob; for many, this was a welcome change from the coal stoves, in particular, which had to be physically loaded, required extensive cleaning, and generated imprecise cooking temperatures.\(^{494}\) Citing an increase in American spending from $162 million to $930 million between 1909 and 1929, Katherine Parkin argues in her 2006 study of gender roles and food advertising, that the most significant change in American eating habits was the widespread adoption of canned goods.\(^{495}\) Similarly, Harvey Levenstein confirms, “Capital investment in the manufacturing segment of the food industry more than tripled from 1914 to 1929, and almost quadrupled in the modern processing sectors such as canning.”\(^{496}\) In terms of scientific developments, dietitians stationed overseas left at a critical crossroads in medical and scientific research. Some important developments included the isolation of Vitamin B in 1911 by Casamir Funk. Elmer McCullom determined that the absence of Vitamin A led to deterioration of vision and stunted growth in 1912. McCullom also revealed a direct link between beri beri and the absence of Vitamin B. According to Harvey Levenstein, “From then on research and discovery accelerated rapidly.” While stationed overseas dietitians had very little access to the latest technological or scientific news in their field. Nor did communication about dietitians achievements in the field transfer easily to those interested at home. Bertha N. Baldwin stationed at Base Hospital No. 101 noted, “From a general point of view the work was most satisfactory and useful for the very sick and wounded although it never reached the scientific basis found in the States.”\(^{497}\)

Availability of supplies and the lack of technology on the front also complicated the nature of overseas dietetic work during the Great War. Despite the lessons learned in


\(^{496}\) Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 152.

the Cuban campaign (notably the embalmed beef scandal), food was purchased in bulk and without sound nutritional basis for its selection. Rain put out the fires of the stovepipes in the field, garbage pails were used as mixing bowls, fence posts were used to mash potatoes, and bottles were used as rolling pins. Caroline King felt hampered by the poor quality of materials at Base Hospital No. 116 located at Bazoilles sur Meusein approximately 30 miles from the battle lines in the advanced sector. She explicitly commented on the "rubbery" canned foods and the lack of basic necessities for light and special diets. "Supplies continued to harass me," she wrote. "And, in addition to poor quality, the supply was exceedingly limited." Without basic supplies such as eggs, cornstarch, gelatin, junket, cocoa, and broths, King was unable to fully put her dietetic training into practice. Mary Pascoe Huddleson also cited working against "heavy odds" because of poor mess equipment and one Army range for 450 men. Despite the technological advances, cooking remained a hot, arduous, physical task. For example, frozen meat arrived daily at Bazoilles sur Meusein at 11:00 in the morning. Dietitians were responsible for grinding the frozen meat by hand and preparing the food for the 11:45 meal.

Dietitians faced difficulty negotiating their work into the domain of the kitchen and mess hall. The Army Medical Corps categorized dietitians with other civilian female laboratory technicians, stenographers, or secretaries. They earned comparable salaries of approximately $50.00 to $60.00 a month. Recommendations made by dietitians for rations, supplies and equipment often fell on deaf ears. Gertrude Palmer of Base Hospital No. 46 complained, "I was allowed none of the many other duties ascribed to the dietitian... by Paragraph 1 in the Circular No. 27... when the commanding officer refused...

to allow me even the administration of the diet kitchen unmolested by the mess officer, I asked...through proper channels for transfer, but heard nothing of it.500

When Mary Pascoe Huddleson (from Base Hospitals No. 117 and No. 8) returned from France in 1919, the New York Association of Dietitians invited her to speak about her service. It was at this meeting that Huddleson first learned about the nutritive value of vitamin C. The Army Cooks Manual of 1910 and 1916 listed tomatoes as only a “seasoning component” devoid of nutritive value in the ration. In her presentation to the New York Association of Dietitians, Huddleson joked about the overwhelming supply of canned tomatoes, “For variety,” she explained, “we’d have ‘corned willie,’ macaroni and tomatoes on Monday, followed by tomatoes and macaroni, and ‘corned willie’ on Tuesday. I had never known there were so many canned tomatoes in the world!” After her presentation, she explained that an uncomfortable stillness and hush allegedly covered the room. Then, a “tall, impressive-looking woman” stood up in the back of the room and said, “Miss Pascoe, those tomatoes were included in the ration because of their vitamin C content.” Huddleson reflected, “I shall never forget my shame and dismay! And so, I learned about vitamin C from her, for I had no opportunity to learn about the birth of vitamin C during my service in France.” Without proper equipment and without access to the latest news in research, dietitians frequently had to reassert their own status as medical professionals. Baldwin reasserted the status of the dietitian in the military medical hierarchy when she asserted, “The purpose of establishing these diet kitchens functioning exclusively under the medical and surgical department is to provide special food for the sick. They should not be diverted from this purpose and become canteens.”501

Working in the same conditions as the nurses, and in most cases, living with the nurses, dietitians faced the same austere conditions of daily life everyone else faced while

500 Dock, et al., History of American Red Cross Nursing. 1404.
stationed overseas. Some dietitians worked within the sounds of battle. More familiar with the sterile conditions of the scientific laboratory or hospital setting, some struggled to just to keep themselves clean. Mary Lindsley, of Green Village, New Jersey, left her position as house director and business manager of the Illinois Training School for Nursing to serve overseas with the unit from the Northwestern University Medical School located in Evanston, Illinois. She commented explicitly on bathing in the bitter cold, unrelenting winter season in a long, rectangular, metal hut. Again, conditions differed from unit to unit. But, in Camiers at Base Hospital No. 12, the conditions were especially austere and primitive. The bathhouse at No. 12 contained just one source of warmth; it was an open fire located in the middle of the hut to heat their water. She remembered “tramping” through rain and slush in rubber boots and a heavy trench coat, at her appointed time, only to find icicles projecting off the bathtub.502

This is not to say dietitians—notably those who worked collaboratively with the ARC and the AFFW—did not experience the “royal” treatment on occasion. Bertha Baldwin noted the details of her stay at Hotel Bellevue—“the best one of the two” in Salis de Bearn. She wrote, “The hotel is a joy—like the best Swiss Hotels. Most of the domestiques have been here for years and are interested in you. My room is on the second (floor) with entresol facing east and south with a view of the mountains. Adjoining is the dressing room with running hot and cold water, most comfortable bed, easy chair, chaise de longue. Our petit déjeuner is beautifully served, there is always a boîullette in the bed at eight and the in the morning when I come in from my bath, my night dress is always laid over the radiator to be warm, a pot of tilleul awaits me at bedtime to make me sleep—all the little nice things are done which make one so comfortable. I just snuggle down and luxuriate and contrast it with the hospitals up in the lines. The country around Salis is hilly and really charming, mostly covered with

vineyards which were rich in color when I first came. And off to the south and east loom the peaks of the Pyrenees..."503

Competing for Relief

World War I ushered unprecedented opportunity for female networking among women's volunteer and professional organizations. Some of the brightest stars in the constellation of women's relief organizations included the National Consumers League, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the Young Woman's Christian Association, Le Bien-Être du Blessé (American Fund for the French Wounded), and the American Red Cross. World War I catapulted women's labor and organization into the realm of national service. Many organizations emerged in support of many different causes. The Unified War Relief, American Ambulance Hospital, Vacation War Relief, Homeless Belgian Children, American Girls' Aide, The Fatherless of France, Secours National Fund, Siberian Regiments Ambulances, Polish Victims Fund, American Jewish Relief, and War Babies Cradle are only a few of the volunteer organizations.504 "It [the war] provided the definitive boost," writes Gwendolyn Mink, "to the maternalist policy drive."505 Caring for American soldiers fell in line with women's traditional roles as caregivers, but military dietetic work was slightly different. As I will demonstrate, the leaders of these organizations carved a wedge in the architecture of the federal government far beyond the scope of maternalist policy and child welfare.

In the fall of 1917, muckraker Ida M. Tarbell, the publicity chair for the Woman's Committee, proudly reported more than 1,814 counties across the nation were

503 Letter from Bertha Baldwin to Anna Tracy titled "Private Correspondence, Salis de Bearn," Bertha Baldwin Collection, MSS 0-12, Box 137, Florida State University Libraries, Special Collections.
already organized in thirty-one states under the auspices of the Woman's Committee of
the National Council of Defense.506 At the time, Tarbell was a leading and recognizable
force in investigative American journalism. She urged all state organizers for the
Woman's Committee to aspire for "real corporation and fellowship."507 Despite her
persuasive calls for collaboration, the burgeoning of patriotic women's clubs and
organizations during World War I era gave rise to organizational pandemonium. The
Woman's Committee of the Council of National Defense, chaired by Dr. Anna Howard
Shaw, served as a clearinghouse for all war-related work and "the marshalling of woman
power of the country" outside the domain of the ARC. Beginning in 1917, thousands of
letters from women looking for work, both paid or volunteer, poured into the Woman's
Committee headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The Woman's Committee was one of many female voluntary organizations in
competition with the ARC for recruits and financial resources. Women with education or
background in nutrition, dietetics, food conservation, or food production became
definitive players in the war effort. The appropriate venue to maximize their
contributions was a source of consternation for leaders of the various volunteer
organizations. Support for the Woman's Committee fostered new anxieties among ARC
leaders about the availability of potential recruits, respect, and resources. Leaders of the
ARC initially expressed dismay with the creation of the Woman's Committee and
suggested that women should not be lured away from the necessary work of helping
provide the troops with the comforts and necessities of those stationed overseas. Shaw
responded, "The Woman's Committee is in every way sympathetic to the aims and
purposes of the American Red Cross ... in every community where the Woman's

506 Ida M. Tarbell, "News Letter No. 9," Publicity Department of the Woman's Committee of the
Council of National Defense, November 17, 1918. Cora Call Whitley Papers, University of Iowa,
Iowa Women’s Archives, Iowa City, Iowa. Folder 1 or 2.
507 Ida M. Tarbell, "Circular No. 71," November 27, 1917, Cora Whitley Papers, Iowa Women’s
Archives, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA.
Committee is represented, it hopes to see, also, a Red Cross organization, the two cooperating in the greatest harmony for the common welfare."

Tension over competition for recruits was high, but there was also tension over donations and resources between relief organizations and factions. In 1918, Laura Joy Hawley wrote, "There was more or less friction and a good deal of feeling on the part of the Red Cross that Mme. D'Andigne's work was too slow in being organized." The relationship between the ARC Dietetics Service Branch and the charitable society Le Bien-Être du Blessé or American Fund for the French Wounded (AFFW) highlights the significance of race, class, and gender in competition among aspiring "professional" and "volunteer" war relief organizations. Novelist Gertrude Atherton wrote, "There is no question of Le Bien Etre du Blesse being absorbed by the American Red Cross, as it is French, not an American war relief organization; not in the same class at all ... bear in mind, that my efforts must go on unceasingly until the end of the war with no prospect of aid from the Red Cross.... When the daily letter from [the treasurer] ceases I am as uneasy as if on the verge of personal bankruptcy."508

It was popular at this time, for American tourists, intellectuals, and upper class socialites to venture to Paris in the spirit of patriotism.509 Notable literary figures such as Dorothy Canfield, Ernest Hemingway, Willa Cather, Ezra Pound, E. E. Cummings, and William Faulkner, for example, also traveled to France. Gertrude Stein served on the Paris Board of Administrators for the AFFW; Stein maintained responsibility for the organization's Motor Transport Service.510 Edith Wharton, also a prominent literary figure of the time, ventured to France to support the war effort where she managed the

“sweet rosy checked sisters” and the care of three hundred young Flemish girl refugees in Paris. Wharton also claimed responsibility for Lodging-Houses of the American Hostels, Food-Distribution Bureaus, and the American Convalescent Home at Grosley. The Hospital Dispensary of the ARC Bureau of Tuberculosis at Yerres was named in her honor, The Edith Wharton Sanatorium.

At the time of World War I, the name Gertrude Atherton was recognizable to an exceptional number of American and foreign audiences. Her close friend, Carl Van Vechten, cited Edith Wharton as Atherton’s “staid literary rival” and suggested it was Wharton who lit the fire of competition in the California novelist. Atherton’s biographer, Emily Wortis Leider confirms: “[Atherton] threw herself into fund-raising for Le Bien-Être du Blessé without stint. Moved by genuine fervor, she responded to the additional spur of competition with Edith Wharton, whose efforts on behalf of orphans, destitute women, and tubercular soldiers had already won her the cross of the Legion of Honor.” Van Vechten also took frequent jabs at Wharton in Atherton’s defense. For example, he explicitly noted that Wharton simply lacked Atherton’s “glamour and vitality.” She used her experiences and travels throughout Europe during the Great War as a signature theme. Her experience as a volunteer in the war effort marked a significant shift in her literary career.

On January 23, 1918, Atherton, the president of the American faction of AFFW, called for the service of “certified” dietitians to join her organization and her cause. According to Hawley, AFFW was a charitable society led by the “exceedingly erratic and

511 April 17, 1918, Letter from Mabel Boardman (Ritz Hotel, Paris) to her mother. Papers of Mabel Boardman, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Box 8, Folder 1918–1919.
512 Letter from Edith Wharton to Mabel Boardman, April, 19, 1918. Papers of Mabel Boardman, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Box 8, Folder 1918–1919. See also Dock, A History of American Red Cross Nursing, 1461.
513 See footnote 17 in Julie Prebel, American Literature 76, no. 2 (June 2004, Duke University Press).
515 See footnote 17 in Julie Prebel, American Literature 76, no. 2, June 2004.
altogether charming” Rhode Island philanthropist Madeline Ives Goddard.\textsuperscript{516} Goddard attended nurses’ training at Rhode Island Hospital and served as a volunteer in the Spanish-American War. After her marriage to a socially prominent Frenchman, Goddard (known by her married name as Marquise d’Andigné) launched the charitable relief society at the request of the French Ministry of War in May of 1916. According to one account, the AFFW was a “French society and never an American Charity although it [ad]ministered large gifts from America.”\textsuperscript{517}

In her 1917 publication, \textit{The Living Present}, Atherton sensationalized the death of soldiers due to “rigid military food system of the most conservative country in the world.” She advocated simplicity and humanitarianism when she articulated the goals of the organization: “The object of Le Bien-Être du Blessé is to provide delicacies for dietary kitchens of the hospitals in the War Zones. The articles supplied ... are very simple: condensed milk, sugar, cocoa, Franco-American soups, chocolate, sweet biscuits, jams, preserves, prunes, tea. Thousands of lives have been saved by Bien-Être during the past year; for men who are past caring, or wish only for the release of death, have been coaxed back to life by a bit of jam on the tip of a biscuit, or a teaspoonful of chicken soup.”\textsuperscript{518}

In a subsequent \textit{New York Times} editorial, Atherton wrote, “I want four certified dietitians to go to France to take charge of the dietary kitchens built for Le Bien-Être du Blessé by the French Government in the new large military hospitals near the front ... Mme. D’Andigné cables that the need is imperative.”\textsuperscript{519} Atherton became affiliated with the work of Marquise d’Andigné during her position as a war correspondent for the

\textsuperscript{517} Ida Clyde Clarke, \textit{American Women and the World War} (New York: D. Appleton and Company), 1918.
Delineator and the New York Times. She worked on behalf of AFFW from 1916 to 1919.

By the time the United States entered the war, Atherton was widely known as an accomplished writer, journalist, and novelist. Her works generally garnered mixed and extreme reviews of scorn or praise. She had an attentive American and European audience of women who identified with Atherton's characters and exciting adventures, glimmers of hope, inspiration, and independence for single, divorced, or widowed women. On the other hand, the common literary theme, recognized in nearly all of her works, challenged the "sacred American fictional tradition ... that drab, homely women became withered spinsters." One editorialist said that Atherton "thrived on adverse criticism" and that she "shocked sedate San Franciscans by her novels." One critic compared her to the British writer George Meredith, who in 1859 had his first major novel, The Ordeal of Richard Feverel, banned and deemed "immoral." Edward Francis Harkins wrote: "More than any living writer I can think of, her wit reminds me of Mr. George Meredith—though superficially, it lacks the mannerisms which occasionally obscure the calm spaces of that great wisdom. Real wit flashes out of the conquering mind, as real laughter ripples from a full happy heart, like wine out of a bottle." Harkins continued to drive the knife even deeper when he said, "Frankly, we discover nothing in Mrs. Atherton to warrant crowning her with the laurels worn by George Eliot.... Yes, Mrs. Atherton is 'unequal,' indeed. Inequality—if that be the word—is prominent in her intellectual make-up." Hawkins disparaged Atherton's choice to "exploit the romance of juvenile age of the far West" and discredit through "sharp comments" of Anglo-American society. His harsh literary critique morphed into a blatant attack on her person. He noted that despite

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520 Joseph Henry Jackson, "Watch The Parade; Write It All Down," San Francisco Chronicle, 1 Nov 1942, "This World Section," p.10. Gertrude Atherton Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Box 2, Folder 1, "Miscellany—Including Oversize."

521 E. F. Harkins, Little Pilgrimages Among The Women (n.d.): 212. Harvard University – FHCL.COLL.
family prominence, Atherton was not part of polite society and mingled with “brown-faces.” He linked her mother’s family relation as the daughter of Stephen Franklin, a descendent of “the immortal Benjamin’s” younger brother, John. But, because Atherton was raised by her grandparents, she was not exposed to the polite society.

Atherton married a Chilean-born man named George Henry Bowen Atherton of Menlo Park, California. When he died of kidney failure in 1887, she set out on her journey for England, claiming, “the press and the literary powers here fought me persistently—I suppose because I was not a child of the regiment.”

Atherton’s literary works (notably Living Present and The Horn of Life) also reflected her own personal experiences with AFFW. She topped the 1923 American fiction bestseller list with her lightly veiled autobiography, Black Oxen. Black Oxen was such a hit that it was transformed into a silent movie starring Clara Bow, one of the era’s more notable actors. Despite Bow’s strawberry blonde ringlets and flirtatious personality, Atherton was disappointed by the performance.

Many dietitians in the United States felt it was presumptuous for the AFFW to expect a “professional” dietitian to volunteer not only her expertise, but to fund her own travel expenses as well to reach the diet kitchens in France. Atherton’s plan to offer “delicacies” for wounded soldiers may have been an affront to women like Lenna Cooper who stood by her claim that the greatest level of waste was not in the homes of working men and women, but in the homes of the “well to do.”

In addition to her literary works, Atherton’s patriotic contributions on behalf of the AFFW shed light upon the way patriotic relief organizations reinscribed class hierarchies. One of the most obvious differences between the aspiring ARC Dietitian Service and AFFW was a difference of

523 Cooper, How to Cut Food Costs, 115.
class status. Atherton, who lacked any formal dietetic training, was part of an American-born elite residing in France.

Literary confrontations underscoring the class tensions surfaced in a series of *New York Times* editorials between Atherton and Eleanor Wells, the president of the New York Association of Dietitians. In one editorial, published in the *New York Times* on February 21, 1918, Wells referred to Atherton's “admirable” scheme of recruiting and placing dietitians for work in diet kitchens in France. But, Wells continued:

"unfortunately, the average professional dietitian is dependent wholly upon her efforts for her livelihood. Not only that, she has spent anywhere from two to four years preparing herself for her work years in which money has been going out for education, not coming in.... After her debts are paid she still has a long way to go before she has the 'few hundreds' to draw out of the bank that Mrs. Atherton suggests she can spare temporarily.... For we have dietitians in France—strange as it may seem—women who have given up big positions and have gone at a big reduction in salary to do their bit in this struggle of all of us for democracy. There are many more of us in line to go, as the list of members of the National Red Cross Dietitians' Organization plainly shows."

Upper-class and elite, native-born white women, such as Atherton, Goddard, Wharton, Hawley, and Mabel Boardman meticulously separated their volunteer war work from the politics of rank. But, for aspiring professional dietitians from working and middle-class backgrounds with college degrees, the quest for rank and status was more pressing. To assume all women serving in the Great War aspired for rank and linked their service to equal citizenship is sanguine and extends the argument too far. Boardman, in fact, said, "Let me say first that I am not a suffragist, that I have faith in the government
by the men of our country and do not believe that the vote of women would be an improvement.”

Through her financial appeals and connections, Atherton managed to supply provisions and “a squad of American dietitians and a fleet of Ford delivery trucks ... and raised $5,000 a month” for Le Bien-Être du Blessé. When she returned to America, Atherton toiled assiduously to obtain publicity and newspaper coverage for her cause. In 1917, she felt so strongly for the work of this organization that when she returned to raise money for AFFW, she autographed her own books and sold them at fund-raising events such as the Boston Bazaar for the Ten Allies. Atherton’s work for the AFFW earned her three notable decorations from the French government, namely the Medaille d’Honneur, Medaille de la Republique Francaise, and the Legion d’Honneur.

After befriending the Mme. D’Andigne of AFFW, dietitian Laura Joy Hawley expressed interest in joining her organization but could not. Hawley had taken an oath with the ARC. She recalled, “Mme. D’A. offered to pay me a salary ... if I would leave the Red Cross ... rather if I could leave.” Due to her oath, she was beholden to the ARC. Hawley wanted to leave. She was appalled by the sanitary conditions at St. Nazaire and pointed out that St. Nazaire was an Army hospital, not an ARC hospital. She confessed, “Quite unofficially, I’ll tell you the sewer was backed up four inches in the

524 Letter from Mabel Boardman to Mr. Murdock, August 24, 1910, Mabel Boardman Collection, Box 3, Folder 1910, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
526 Letter from Gertrude Atherton to “Mr. Churchill” dated November 10 (1917–19) from New York Executive Offices “Bazaar of the Nine (Ten) Allies” 606 West 116 Bryn Mawr Special Collections, Papers of Flora Holly (Atherton’s literary agent).
528 Dock, et al., History of American Red Cross Nursing, 1417.
basement kitchen, where the cooking was done in garbage cans. The food was frightfully prepared...."\textsuperscript{529}

A native of Salt Lake City, Utah, Hawley sailed for France on April 10, 1918. She received her dietetic training at Rockford College in Illinois (formerly Rockford Female Seminary, known as the "Mount Holyoke of the West") and at Stout Institute in Menomonie, Wisconsin. She reportedly left her Asheville, North Carolina business where she earned an income of more than $10,000 a year to serve overseas. She sold dresses, novelty items, hats, underwear, linen, and coats and ultimately became a national business enterprise called Homespun Industries.\textsuperscript{530} Before she became the successful business entrepreneur of Homespun Industries, she worked as a dietitian at the Girton School in Winnetka, Illinois, and at the Congregational Training School in Chicago. Hawley declared the significance of business acumen in dietetics when she said, "I shall need it in persuading the soldiers to eat the things that are good for them ... that will be salesmanship too." Like Atherton and Goddard, military status was not an issue for Hawley. She left her extremely lucrative novelty shop to go to Paris, France, to "take charge of the diet kitchens near the front." Hawley was not interested in obtaining any assistance through the acquisition of nurse's aides, volunteers, or understudies. She noted: "I have been very thankful to have no rank. I do not like having our uniforms like the nurse's aides—absolutely unprofessional women."\textsuperscript{531}

The distribution of World War I military uniforms marked a critical juncture in the definition of the women's medical hierarchy. Uniforms serve several purposes, but they are perhaps the most obvious public display of national and occupational group

\textsuperscript{529} Dock, et al., History of American Red Cross Nursing, 1418.
\textsuperscript{530} Hawley's records point to a business relationship between the Russell Sage Foundation and several prominent New York financiers. It is also interesting to note that on January 14, 1922, she reported her address in a letter to her business partner Fred Seeley as The International Health Resort, Battle Creek, Michigan.
\textsuperscript{531} Dock, et al., History of American Red Cross Nursing, 1418.
belonging or membership. Through insignia and accoutrements, uniforms also demarcate hierarchies within national and occupational memberships. The rite of passage—the Army nursing capping ceremony—signaled the graduation from nurse training programs. Marked by varying colors in hosiery, band-width on caps, military capes, and hospital insignia, a clear nursing hierarchy became clear, beginning around the time of the Spanish American War. Uniforms distinguished nurses from each other (for example, head/chief nurses, surgical nurses, ward/staff nurses, nurse trainees, and nurse’s aides) and from other women working in the hospital. They were instruments of organizational control and could signify membership within a particular profession. The white lab coat of a physician, for example, commands respect and denotes power. The capping ceremony for nurses was a ceremonial rite of passage at most nursing schools. By wearing the cap, nurses announced their membership within a community of trained and educated women. In this case, the cap symbolized their status as graduates of nurse training programs. Concerns over availability of military uniforms and the distribution of insignia affected the relationships within the female medical hierarchy. The Army issued nurses a dark blue, heavy wool cape with crimson interior that swept over the shoulder implying professionalism and a regal notion of royalty, respect, and authority. According to Mary Barber, however, “There was no standardized uniform for dietitians who served in World War I, so some wore the dress prescribed by the Red Cross or the Y.W.C.A.; others wore the uniform of the hospital in which they trained; all were modestly and inconveniently—long in sleeves and skirts.”

532 Barber, History of the American Dietetic Association, 1917–1959, 199. Barber further explained: “The first supervising dietitian, Miss Lenna Cooper, Office of the Surgeon General, recommended a special uniform for Army dietitians, but purchase was not required at this time. The description of the uniform from the period does not suggest consultation with Mainbocher or other designers. The outdoor costume consisted of a dark-gray military overcoat and a wide brimmed black velour hat for winter (black straw sailor hat for summer). The blouse was plain white cotton or silk, or gray flannel or silk, worn button close to the neck, except during warm weather, the button could be open. The tie was a black satin ribbon three inches wide. High or low
The white linen apron with broad pockets distinguished the occupational therapy aides from other women in the military medical hierarchy. This apron or smock evoked the notion of vocational work. The physiotherapy aides and the occupational therapy aides (known generally as “Reconstruction Aides”) had distinctly separate uniforms. Occupational therapists sported aprons with broad skirt pockets to hold the small tools used to teach patients new vocational skills such as basket weaving.

The struggle to acquire uniforms in the military is a critical issue that illustrates yet another example of the depth and scope of the relationship between military service and equal citizenship. The military uniform announces dual membership to both a profession and to the nation. During World War I, the uniform was an important concern and controversial topic of discussion within the female medical hierarchy. Uniforms connote power and command respect. Uniforms are a critical tool in professionalization. Through rank, chevrons, or insignia, uniforms reveal the status of an individual within a larger group. Uniforms may also conceal the social status of one within a larger group.533 Most dietitians had to purchase the uniform out of their own pockets. They bought blue jersey uniforms, white aprons and caps, a gray crepe dress uniform, and an ulster (overcoat). In addition, they procured high, black, lace-up boots; black, cotton stockings; rubber boots; and seersucker underwear. But, not all women expressed concern over the lack of uniforms or rank. Hawley, for example, was not interested in military rank because she identified and socialized with women of leisure. The uniform would have anchored her identity with a lower social stratum of working and middle-class women.

To be sure, dietitians formed a collective corps identity through their own memoirs and letters of complaint, but it was the uniform in particular that assisted

black shoes were worn in winter, and white shoes were authorized for the summer uniforms. No jewelry, flowers, furs or ornaments of any kind were to be worn with the uniform. A neat muffler or scarf of black, gray, or white was approved.”

dietitians, as well as other women of the medical hierarchy, with articulating both membership and a sense of professional identity. Dietitians during World War I signaled the emergence of something new. They were not social workers, nurses, or reconstruction aides. They were not cooks or domestics. They identified as paid scientific workers serving with the military.

Military Service and Citizenship

The military service of dietitians provides a critical window through which to analyze the context of predominately native-born, Protestant, middle-class white women’s struggle for equal status as citizens in the World War I era. The experiences of their service demonstrate that claims of female citizenship, based on military service, embraced social concerns within the professionalization framework. Dietetic leaders lobbied for civic equity and legitimized their work by aligning the goals of the dietetic profession with the service of the state.

On October 28, 1918, the ARC Department of Nursing issued a circular citing ten specific regulations for the enrollment and service of the dietitian. One of the regulations, labeled “Response to Call,” required dietitians entering military service to recite an oath of allegiance “as specified in Army regulations.” They raised their right hand and promised to support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, but their words met hollow reciprocity. The ARC circular notes an important caveat. It stipulates,


“The oath does not affect the citizenship of the dietitian, but is operative during the period of her employment in time of war.”\(^{536}\) This admonition brings the connection between military service and citizenship and the history of raced and gendered civic obligation into sharp relief. Cooper, for example, explicitly connected military service to full citizenship in terms of equal access to veteran benefits. “During the epidemic of influenza,” Cooper argued, “the dietitians proved themselves of inestimable value in organizing forces for the feeding of the sick and well. Three dietitians lost their lives during the epidemic and several others were seriously ill from it. It seems unfortunate that these professional women, who work side by side with nurses, doctors and enlisted men, should not have the privilege of War Risk Insurance.”\(^{537}\) This excerpt from Cooper’s 1918 letter to the Surgeon General and her request for the veteran’s benefits drives straight to the heart of the connection between military service (or bearing arms) as a fundamental civic obligation and equal citizenship.\(^{538}\) “The obligation of military service can be traced indirectly,” writes Linda K. Kerber, “by measuring the benefits and preferences with which the nation responds to those who have fulfilled it.”\(^{539}\)

The connections between military service and citizenship have deep roots in republican political tradition; this tradition implicitly pairs equal rights with the obligations of citizenship. Bearing arms in the defense of the nation is one of several obligations of citizenship and one that was hotly debated in the context of women’s suffrage and World War I.\(^{540}\) Carrie Chapman Catt, an active suffragist starting in the mid-1880s, wrote about this connection on behalf of the National American Women’s

\(^{536}\) RG 200 National Archives Gift Collection, Records of the American Red Cross, 1917–1934. 494.1 ARC 700 Department of Nursing Information for Dietitians Box 466.

\(^{537}\) According to Gwendolyn Mink, the first national social program to unite the American republic to military service crystallized in the pension program for Union Army veterans after the Civil War. See Gwendolyn Mink, “The Lady and the Tramp,” *Women the State and Welfare*, ed., Linda Gordon (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), 94.


\(^{539}\) Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies*, 260.

\(^{540}\) Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to be Ladies*, xxi.
Suffrage Association. In her article, “Female Warriors,” she asserted, “All of history shows that she can fight in defense of her rights and for the honor of her country ... We by no means plead for the battlefield ... The army is not a good place for women; neither is it an excellent place for men. War is sometimes a terrible necessity. All we have attempted to show, is, that women are as patriotic as men, have quite as much power of endurance, and can fight as well as men, and from this point of view, are quite as much entitled to the ballot as men.”

Cooper's personal position on women's suffrage is less clear. She may have rejected or ignored it altogether and focused her energies on (what Huntington referred to in the context of the male officer as a professional) the “higher calling” of professional dietetics. Nevertheless, her recommendations to the Surgeon General regarding War Risk Insurance underscore Cooper's political concerns over veteran status within her campaign for dietetic professionalization.

Physical danger is one of many inherent subtexts in the discussion of race, dominant gender ideologies, military service, and equal citizenship. The service of more than 200,000 African American soldiers who served overseas during World War I, for example, provided the basis for the claim to the rights and privileges of civic equality. In terms of gender, even today the presence of women in the military profoundly upsets the social order and the constructions of man as protector and woman as the protected. Dietitians also dispelled the myth of the male protector/female protectee because the dietitians were also susceptible to physical danger. In one of Hulsizer's letters, she

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542 See also Nancy Cott, The Grounding of Modern Feminism (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987).
provides in detail the reality of life on the front: "The chug-chug-a-chug of the Hun machines, the mixture of calcium flares, searchlights and bursting shrapnel, and the zip, zip, zip, zip lightning quick, of the machine guns plays havoc with the nerves.... There is a sickening fatality about the bursting of bombs ... one is not so much afraid for oneself, but the thought of seeing someone else go!"544

The two dietitians stationed with the British Expeditionary Forces (BEF) at Base Hospital No. 12 (Northwestern University Medical School and Cook County Hospital) witnessed this danger firsthand. Born and raised in Green Village, New Jersey, Mary Lindsley attended Eastern Seminary in Pennsylvania and later graduated from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. By the time she joined the war effort, Lindsley had acquired nearly a decade of dietetic experience in her positions with the Harrisburg General Hospital, Woman's Hospital of Northwestern University Medical School, and the Illinois Training School for Nursing. As one of two dietitians to set sail on May 19, 1917, on the luxury liner the SS Mongolia, Lindsley experienced firsthand the dangers of wartime service within twenty-four hours of deployment. Her colleague, Margaret Knight, from Ann Arbor, Michigan, was also on board. Knight was well-educated and had a particularly useful skill—she was proficient in French. She had graduated from Vassar College and earned a master's degree from Ohio State University. Lindsley and Knight were both on board the SS Mongolia when a gun exploded during gunnery practice. Brass shrapnel from the blast killed nurses Edith Ayres and Helen Wood. A third woman, Emma Matzen, was wounded. After the accident, the ship turned around and came back to port to deliver the bodies. On May 23, the SS Mongolia lumbered back on course en route to France. The deck of the liner thrummed as it reached the dark port of Camiers on June 11. That night, they slept on boards with straw mattresses in their

one-story huts. The two women who died on board the *SS Mongolia* were the first recorded American deaths in the World War I effort.

Enemy fire posed a serious threat in the war zone, but the real killer during World War I came from within. The 1918 influenza pandemic swept the world toward the end of the war and claimed more deaths than military battles. In a letter to Anna Mae Tracy, dean of women at Florida State College for Women, Bertha Baldwin wrote, “I shall try hard not to let a bomb get me; I have many interesting fragments of bombs which missed me, but if I had to make a choice I should prefer a bomb to the Spanish Influenza.”

Dietitians were not immune from the widespread incidence of communicable diseases in the military camps. Home economics curricula emphasized the scientific connections between sanitation and proper handling of food; nevertheless, dietitians were equally vulnerable when it came to the deadly threat of disease. Disease claimed the lives of six dietitians stationed in the United States and abroad. Clara Mae Keech and Marian Helen Peck died in France “as a result of disability contracted therein.” In 1918, four dietitians died while stationed in the United States. Irene I. Jury died on December 9, 1918, at the Naval Hospital, Pelham Bay Park, New York. Meda Morse succumbed to the flu December 24, 1918, at Camp Taylor, Louisville, Kentucky. Olive Norcross died on September 26, 1918, Camp Dix, New Jersey. Finally, Hortense Elizabeth Wind perished on December 10, 1918 in Norfolk, Virginia.

Conclusion

Military service provided dietitians with a crucial strategy in their pursuit for professionalization. By claiming their right to serve and staking their interest in terms of

545 Letter from Bertha Baldwin to Anna Tracy titled “Private Correspondence, Salis de Bearn,” Bertha Baldwin Collection, MSS 0-12, Box 137, Florida State University Libraries, Special Collections.
national security and military readiness, dietitians entered the broader discussion of citizenship. By advocating for dietetics as a necessary military occupational specialty, Cooper professionalized and politicized dietetics. The military kitchen, though a seemingly insignificant place on the map of the military history, women’s history, and medical history, provides one example of an intensely acrimonious site of struggle in the larger protracted fight for professional currency, citizenship, and power during the Great War.

At the turn of the twentieth century, dietetics encompassed a variety of social reform efforts. Dietitians taught classes on the principles of nutrition for the poor and malnourished. They instructed rural women of the farmland and the South on the proper production and distribution of food. They educated new mothers on proper infant feeding. They conceptualized school lunch programs and advocated diet as one of many methods to Americanize immigrants. They taught the general public how to properly conserve and prepare foodstuffs. As part of the broader trend of women’s Progressive era reform efforts at the turn of the twentieth century, dietitians gently severed their ties from the AREA and, in the fall of 1917, created their own distinct professional organization.

But, most significant was the role of the war itself as a transition in the development of the field. World War I provided dietitians with a critical avenue for professional reform and exposed them to the military ethos and systems of discipline, rank, and hierarchy. By linking the art of cookery with the science of nutrition, dietitians traversed the masculine brotherhoods of the medical, scientific, and military communities. While cooperating with other women in the female medical hierarchy, dietitians carefully crafted professional alliances with military physicians, hospital administrators, and military officers. 547

547 In 1920, Hugh P. Greely, M.D., a physician at the University of Wisconsin Medical School, may have hit a nerve when he advocated dietetic training for nurses. He wrote, “Do not think for a
Dietitians achieved all the trademarks of an aspiring profession. They toured on the lecture circuits; created professional magazines and journals; established training credentials and national and state associations; and served in the name of national defense. Yet, they continued to struggle for full profession privilege because of the gendered dimensions inhered in dietetics as an occupation unique to women. Despite their rigorous scientific-based curriculum, training, experience, credentials, and military service, dietetic leaders would continue to struggle for full professional status because of the inherent connections between dietetics and contemporary notions of native born, middle-class, white, Protestant womanhood. As the field developed into a reputable feminized occupation in the decades of the twenties and thirties, women drifted into the realm of hospital food administration and institutional menu planning.

Still, the strides dietitians made during the war years paved the way for a developing profession. Armed with two years’ college study, four months’ practical experience in hospital dietetics, and ad hoc uniforms purchased from the ARC, 356 dietitians served in Army hospitals in this country and Europe through December of 1918. Their voices reveal a group of women who defined the contours of a profession within the male-dominated military. Cooper’s program for professionalization and the experiences of the dietitians working toward military status provide one of many ways to understand what these women felt regarding their rights as professionals, veterans, and citizens.

Throughout World War I, despite their presence in a predominantly male military, dietitians relied on female friendships for companionship, adventure, and support. They lived and worked within a community of women. In essence, their letters, memoirs, and scrapbooks reveal a particularly strong bond of sisterhood in terms of moment it is lowering the dignity of the dietitian. It would be raising the profession of nursing.” Hugh P. Greely, “The Physician and the Dietitian,” Journal of Home Economics 12, no. 4 (1920): 162.
female sociability during their free time. They were not dependent upon the normative concept of a male breadwinner and the family wage system for support. Despite protective legislation, they worked full-time. They were financially independent. “At the core of citizen ideal,” writes historian Gwendolyn Minks, “lay the ethic of independence,” and they answered a higher calling by virtue of serving their nation.548

After the war, the Journal of Home Economics conveyed a message from the Surgeon General, signed also by Julia Stimson (Acting Superintendent, Army Nurse Corps) and Lenna Cooper (Supervising Dietitian), to “all members of the Army Nurse Corps, both regular and reserve, and to all dietitians, reconstruction aides, laboratory technicians, medical secretaries, and other women civilians who have rendered such valiant service with the Medical Department of the Army.” It expressed “personal appreciation and that of the Department for their patriotic devotion to duty and the self-sacrificing spirit they have manifested in giving their assistance to the Department and the Army when it was so badly needed.” He also explained that it would not be possible to accept all the offers of renewed and continued service because of the great reduction of department personnel, but he added his hopes that “all who can will continue their connection with the Department though their membership in the American Red Cross.”549

When the long-awaited news of German surrender and the signing of the Armistice reached one 26-year-old ARC dietitian serving with the AEF at Beau Desert Hospital Center in France, she noted that the wounded continued to pour into their large hospital. Beau Desert was a former racetrack near Bordeaux that averaged approximately four thousand to five thousand patients. “It was nerve wracking,” she reflected, “to get enough food and to get it to the patients, in addition to that required for personnel, but we did manage after a fashion.” Yet, when the news of the armistice arrived, she shared in

548 Gwendolyn Mink, “The Lady and the Tramp,” Women, the State, and Welfare, 94.
549 “War Service Acknowledged,” Journal of Home Economics 11, no. 10 (October 1919), 470.
the joy after two difficult years of service overseas. She recalled: “The French women were hysterical and sang all day. Bells rang in every church for miles around. In Bordeaux in the evening our soldiers formed dancing rings around the French girls, gave them resounding kisses to their delighted cries of ‘Assez, assez.’ Streets were crowded with women, old men, French soldiers on crutches, privates, generals—all having a glorious time.” By the end of January, bed patients were evacuated from the hospital. Ambulatory patients remained, and the unit was “broken up a few at a time.” Somewhat lost in the shuffle of debarkation and demobilization, she later found her way aboard the steamer Aquitania for a “marvelous” but stormy trip to St. Louis via New York.550

This particular dietitian later explained that it was her World War I overseas experience that truly inspired her passion for dietetics: “I realized you had to have food supplies. You had to have qualified personnel. You had to have facilities for handling and for service. You had to have proper equipment. When equipment from the United States finally arrived, it was small household equipment—which we used for decorations on the two by fours in the nurses’ dining room. We had to buy field kitchens. We got big pots from the Navy. We used GI cans for storage and preparation of many things. We sent food to the wards in open pails. We used mess kits in the dining areas.” After her honorable discharge, effective on April 30, 1919, this particular dietitian, Mary deGarmo Bryan, attended her first ADA meeting. At that meeting (the third annual meeting held October 25–27, 1920), Bryan gave a rousing speech about her experiences at Beau Desert. Later that night, while she and her husband were dining, she received a call from

Mary deGarmo Bryan, “Vignettes of World War I Dietitian,” Mary Donnell deGarmo Papers, Typescript, 1966, Box 3, Folder 20, University of Tennessee Special Collections, Knoxville, Tennessee; See also Susie Stephenson, “The Elders Speak: Dr. Mary deGarmo Bryan, ADA,” Unidentified Newsclipping, (July 1981): 54–55, 82. Mary Donnell deGarmo Papers, Box 3, Folder 19, University of Tennessee Special Collection, Knoxville, Tennessee.
Dr. Ruth Wheeler. Wheeler notified Bryan that she had been elected by secret ballot as the second president of the ADA for a two-year term. In the next chapter, I hold that the ideas of racial betterment (epitomized through the debates between euthenics and eugenics) combined with the lessons dietitians gleaned in their wartime service played out and enhanced the professionalization of dietetics throughout the 1920s. This connection becomes especially clear in the context of shifting dynamics between food, advertising, and consumerism during the interwar years. With keen attention paid to the role of dietitians in promoting Americanization and the acculturation of non-dominant groups, I show how white, middle class, native born, Protestant dietitians waged their fight for professionalization on other battlefields. Specifically, I analyze how dietitians used their scientific knowledge base to construct a racial/ethnic hierarchy through studies on the dietary patterns of various racial and ethnic groups. Finally, I will examine how the recipe for citizenship as well as their professionalization project was shaped by their world-view. Grounded in the long history of antebellum, evangelical health reform, scientifically based attitudes of racial and cultural superiority, and an idealized belief in science and medicine – their long campaign for professional respect and recognition culminated, in part, through the official 1947 creation of the Women’s Medical Specialist Corps.

Cassell, Carry the Flame, 32.
Dr. Abby Marlatt, Dean of Home Economics at University of Wisconsin-Madison asserted in 1922, "The dietitian today is not an inferior chef or superior cook, but a woman whose professional training measures up to the professional training of the lawyer or the physician."\(^{552}\) Similarly, the chairman of the ADA program committee Amalia Lautz announced in 1923, "The need for applied dietetics is surging through hospitals, colleges, public health organizations, schools, and the commercial fields. The demand for dietitians who are alive to the problems of the day and the great service they can render exceeds the supply."\(^{553}\) In postwar America, dietitians expanded their professionalization project through a wide array of venues; dietitians found promising work in hospitals and clinics, but also in residence hall food service, student unions, clubs, tea-rooms, hotels, and settlement houses. "The aftermath of World War I was, for the most part, stimulating to the profession," explained ADA historian Mary Barber.\(^{554}\) In this chapter, I attempt to explain why.

A number of factors justify the expansion of dietetic employment opportunities and in this chapter I will analyze some of them. Dietitians achieved relative success from wartime mobilization, networking, and practical experiences they gleaned from military service. Perhaps more important, the war predicated a collective, professional ideal. In her 1921 essay, "What the War Taught Us In Training Hospital Dietitians," Mary deGarmo Bryan claimed, "All of us working together for the good of the patient should

\(^{552}\) Abby Marlatt, "Trends in Hospital Dietetics: Organization of Hospital Food Department, Though Important, Is Not All Of The Dietitian's Job," *Hospital Management*, 14: no. 1 (July 1922): 53.


work together, for after all, the power of an ideal, and cooperation to attain it, is the biggest lesson the war has taught us. That seems to me to be the promise in this association and its possibility as a power.”

The “power of an ideal” is the foundation upon which this chapter is built, but it is tied together by three basic goals. First, I examine the postwar advances (and limitations) for dietitians in the decade leading up to the Great Depression. “...possibly the most spectacular advances in the history of the Association were made between 1922 and 1927,” said Barber. The chronological history of dietitians and the professional benchmarks they established during this time are easy to trace. The many steps toward professional development from this time are too numerous to list in entirety. Some examples include the creation of a new ADA headquarters library. They designated an executive secretary and a publicity chair. They formed a placement bureau and established their own professional journal. They gained support from commercial exhibitors at their annual meetings. They elevated professional standards for dietetic students. In 1927, the ADA formally standardized a six-month dietetic internship or professional training course under the title, “Outline for a Standard Course for Student Dietitians in Hospitals.” The dietetic internship required that the hospital had to be members of the American Hospital Association, its nurses’ training schools had to be accredited, and the staffed dietitians had to be eligible for membership in the ADA; Barber noted this move in particular was “a very courageous step for an organization less than ten years old.” In this chapter, I illuminate some of the important developments, as well as the disappointments, they shared as dietitians working within military and civilian hospital venues. I focus on the expansion of dietetics during what Madeline Foss Mehlig called “the age of dietotherapy.” At the 1919 Chicago Dietitians’ Association in

555 Mary deGarmo Bryan, “What the War Taught Us in Training Hospital Dietitians,” Modern Hospital, 16, no. 3 (March 1921): 273-274.
556 Barber, History of the American Dietetic Association, 134, 136.
Madison, Wisconsin, Mehlig asserted, "Medical colleges are teaching future doctors dietetics, drugs are being superseded by proper foods, many diseases are cured through diet, hospitals are teaching patients what to eat, and infant mortality is being lowered through correction of malnutrition. Infant welfare associations, day nurseries, and special clinics are demanding dietitians for their staffs."

Second, I analyze the role of dietitians within complex patterns of and commentary about early twentieth century consumption. In this section, I situate the professionalization of dietetics within what T.J. Jackson Lears labels the "therapeutic ethos." I also analyze the cultural impact of dietitians in the context of shifting dynamics between food, advertising, and consumerism after the war. How, when, and where did dietitians enter the early twentieth century dialogue about consumption? According to historians Sarah Stage and Virginia Vincenti, "During the 1920s a significant number of home economists entered business and industry in consumer relations, marketing, product development, testing, and demonstration." It is within this context that I explore the role of dietitians in galvanizing postwar consumer culture, imposing codes of normative gender ideologies upon non-dominant groups, while at the same time, advocating dignified, professional (perhaps even characteristically masculine) behavior grounded in military customs for their own dietetic workforce.

Third and finally, I analyze the motivations behind why white, middle-class, native born, Protestant dietitians found it necessary to analyze, scrutinize, and categorize the dietary habits of specific racial, ethnic, and immigrant communities. After the war, the ADA facilitated a range of studies focused on the dietary habits of racial, ethnic, and

immigrant groups. Their attention to the dietary patterns of non-dominant groups coincided with an intense wave of nativism and strains upon new ethnic communities. Jim Crow laws, new immigrant quota systems (notably the Immigration Acts of 1921 and 1924), and the increasing violence of the Ku Klux Klan, are perhaps the most obvious manifestations of these sensibilities. I also examine how nutritional advice and dietary prescriptions offered during this time were renegotiated and, in many cases, resisted by those it was imposed upon. I contend that dietitians constructed a scientifically-based racial/ethnic hierarchy through their dietary studies. It is within this context that I analyze cultural tension over food ways and the significance of this struggle to the broader themes of professionalization and citizenship. Specifically, I attempt to show how non-dominant groups have used food ways as a powerful mechanism to resist “Americanization” and retain individual and group identity in the face of oppression.

The decade of the twenties was a time of radical change in terms of innovation and technology but, as historian Lizbeth Cohen has pointed out, people's unique social situations led them to interpret mass culture in different ways; mass culture in the twenties “did not have one predictable impact. Instead, its meaning changed as its production and distribution was reorganized.” An ethnic borderland, foodways reveal

559 That dietitians remained involved with the latest developments in the field of eugenics is evidenced by correspondence of World War I ARC dietitian Aubyn Chinn, for example, who later worked as the Health Education Director in Chicago. Records indicate that she sought the assistance of Charles Davenport of the Cold Spring Harbor Office in Long Island in 1933 when she worked to set up a Dairy Exhibit for the National Dairy Council. Aubyn Chinn to Charles Davenport, February 11, 1933, Davenport Files, American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, PA.


562 Lizbeth Cohen points to the emergence of mass culture in the 1920s as the most threatening element to ethnic identity; Cohen writes, “Most frightening of all, the explosion of mass culture in the 1920s – chain stores, motion picture theaters, radio, and other forms of commercial recreation – threatened neighborhood shops and ethnically organized leisure such as society outings, sokols, and church affairs...Fears of losing their members to the pull of mainstream America motivated
what historian Donna Gab bacia has called "the symbolic power of food to reflect cultural or social affinities in moments of change or transformation." By the end of the 1920s, the food processing industries were among the most powerful of American manufacturing industries, exceeding iron, steel, and textile giants in terms of capital investment. The mass production and cultural homogenization of food potentially threatened one of the most sacred battlefields of ethnic and cultural identity: the kitchen.

Given the wide scope, it should come as no surprise that this chapter builds upon a wide range of other studies. Dietetic professionalization fills in some important gaps that have been missing from discussions about gender and the discipline of food studies. In 2001, the historian Daniel Horowitz announced, "the study of food and eating as fields within history and cultural studies had reached appreciable maturity." More recently, in her insightful 2007 article titled "Everything 'Cept Eat Us: The Antebellum Black Body Portrayed as Edible," Kyla Wazana Thompkins noted that "writing about food is at times an unabashed pleasure; unfortunately the pleasures of the field have often led critics to perceive our scholarship as hobbyist." But, the general malaise toward the existence of leaders to make deliberate efforts at keeping ethnic Chicagoans tied to national communities." See Cohen, Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939, (New York City: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 54-55, 157.


564 Levenstein, Revolution at the Table, 151.


566 Thompkins argues, “At its most extreme, the connection between food and black bodies emerges in the representation of the black body as food itself, and thus in the desire to consume
the field is rapidly changing as scholars take the social, political, economic, and cultural aspects of food more seriously. For quite some time, food ways have been a resourceful area of study for anthropologists. Sidney Mintz, for example, offered one of the first (and, perhaps the most compelling) books to investigate the role of food, specifically sucrose, as a social and cultural construction in 1985. Soon thereafter, historian Harvey Levenstein deepened our understanding of food production, American consumption, and dietary patterns in the U.S. in his insightful 1989 book *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet*. Levenstein extended his analysis in 1993 with a book about twentieth century eating habits in *Paradox of Plenty: A Social History of Eating In Modern America*. Others have analyzed twentieth century cookbooks as mass-produced, cultural texts that reinforced certain social (specifically gender) norms. For example, in her book *Manly Meals and Mom's Home Cooking: Cookbooks and Gender in Modern America*, Jessamyn Neuhaus explains that it was not until after the Great War did American society see the mass production of cookbooks as clearly those bodies...In these passages, chocolate’s color, history, and cultural valences easily bear the weight of a metaphoric association with the black female body.” See Kyla Wazana Thompkins, “Everything ‘Cept Eat Us: The Antebellum Black Body Portrayed as Edible,” *Callaloo*, 30: No. 1, (Winter 2007), 201-224, esp. 219.


569 Cindy Lobel notes, “Despite the cultural phenomenon that is cookbooks, academics have been slow to study them. Women’s historians have used cookbooks as sources for years to understand women’s roles and activities in American society but few scholars have concentrated on the history of cookbooks themselves.” Lobel cites Janet Theophano’s, *Eat My Words: Reading Women’s Lives Through the Cookbooks They Wrote*, New York City: Palgrave Macmillan Press, 2002 and Anne Bower’s, *Recipes for Reading: Community Cookbooks, Stories, Histories*, Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 1997 as two notable exceptions. See Cindy Lobel, “The Joy of Cookbooks,” *Reviews in American History*, 33: no. 2 (2005), 263-271.
distinguishable from general housekeeping advice. Her main argument rests on the idea that the gendering of "home cooking" is a twentieth century invention that emerged along with a surge of domestic ideology in twentieth century America.\textsuperscript{570}

Before I examine the role of dietitians in terms of early twentieth century patterns of consumption, production and acculturation, it is important to address some of the professional strides dietitians were able to make after the war and some of the important lessons they gleaned from their service with the U.S. military.

Postwar Dietetic Professionalization

In this section, I analyze some of the critical professional benchmarks dietitians were able to establish in their campaign for professionalization after the Great War. Despite a gradual increase in the number of dietitians on duty in army hospitals immediately after the war, employment prospects for dietitians in the military arena actually appeared very dim. In July of 1919, Lenna Cooper recommended that dietitians acquire the same status of the members of the Army Nurse Corps. As I explained in the last chapter, she called for the establishment of a separate corps for dietitians and for a director of dietitians in the Surgeon General's Office, but no action resulted from her recommendations.\textsuperscript{571} Cooper submitted these recommendations along with her resignation from her post as Dietetic Supervisor with the U.S. Army and returned to Battle Creek, Michigan to direct the School of Home Economics at the Sanitarium.\textsuperscript{572}


\textsuperscript{572} When the Battle Creek Sanitarium School of Home Economics merged into the curriculum of Battle Creek College, Cooper transferred to the University of Michigan as the Food Director. In 1930, she moved to New York City where she served for 18 years as chief for the Department of Nutrition in Montefiori Hospital.
In the fall of 1922, Walter Reed General Hospital established a six-month training course for dietetic and physical therapy students. (At the same time, a six-month graduate program for occupational therapists was established at Walter Reed General Hospital). Drastic cutbacks due to the National Economy Act of 1933 later reversed this small step forward. According to military records, only twenty-four dietitians served on duty in Army hospitals in 1923. In 1933, the same year as the National Economy Act, only seven dietitians officially served with the Army Medical Department. By 1939, this number slowly climbed back up to fifty-three.\(^{573}\)

On the surface, it might appear that such bleak prospects for dietitians in the military arena during the interwar years would undermine my argument that military service is a crucial vehicle for professionalization. But, the greatest professional progress dietitians acquired from their military service cannot be measured wholly in terms of facts and figures or in the wax and wane of positions available in military hospitals. Rather, I believe it was the insight, lessons, and what Mary de Garmo labeled the "power of an ideal" that enhanced their professionalization project through the military customs, discipline, standards, and ethos of unit responsibility; I argue that their World War I military service extended their professional and cultural power in dramatic ways. It was a similar sensibility echoed by Samuel Huntington decades later when he inquired in 1957, "Yet is it possible to deny that the military values – loyalty, duty, restraint, dedication – are the ones America most needs today? That the disciplined order of West Point has more to offer than the garish individualism of Main Street?"\(^{574}\)


The lessons they learned during wartime, notably the transmission and application of military discipline and ethos into the civilian workplace, are evident in a number of writings published by ARC World War I dietitians after the war. Marjorie Hulsizer Copher, who served as an ARC dietitian with Peter Bent Brigham (Base Hospital Unit No. 57) in Paris during the war, believed the executive hospital dietitian was responsible for efficient organization and administration of the hospital dietary department. Using the rhetoric that may have inspired a soldier in the war zone, she asserted, "No matter what your state of mind or how much you tremble inwardly over situations, never give the appearance of being nonplussed. Keep your chin in the air, think your way out with apparent sang froid. It is a good rule." In this article, she also offered recommendations of the quality and character of selecting good leadership and personnel. "[V]est in her full authority and responsibility for the entire hospital food service, including purchasing, receiving, storing, preparation, distribution, and service. This is a large order but successful hospital administration today has as its fundamental principle unit responsibility" [Italics added.]

Women's military service in diet and nutrition within the context of the Great War facilitated organization and networking of dietetic experts from all over the United States. It also armed them with the lessons of experience in military hospital work, specifically knowledge of tools needed for efficient organization, administration, and professional codes of conduct. Dietitians carried the lessons they learned during the war into postwar civilian hospitals. One essay written by World War I ARC dietitian Mary Northrop of New York City's Montifiori Hospital, supplies an appropriate case in point. Northrop advised student dietitians upon entrance into the civilian hospital workforce,

that she represented something bigger than herself when she wore the uniform of a dietitian. "She must remember that she ceases to be Miss Smith or Miss Jones the moment when she puts on her white uniform, for she is then simply 'the dietitian' – a necessary cog in the machine – as long as she is on duty, and often after she is off duty. If that cog slips out of place through the lack of a sense of responsibility, or assumes undue prominence because the dietitian reverts to being Miss Jones, not only the wheel which is the dietary department, but often the whole machine which is the hospital, may be jarred out of its smooth running routine. A dietitian must hold her personal feelings entirely removed from her professional contacts."\(^{577}\)

Northrop explained that the uniform of the civilian dietitian represented more than her individual person. She was never allowed to wear it on the street. The uniform symbolized the department, the hospital, and the dietetic profession. As such, she recommended that dietitians always present a neat and professional appearance; that all uniforms and footwear be sized to fit appropriately and worn in good condition with no accessories or jewelry. She advised that hairnets always be worn over neat hair. Noting that social conversations were not appropriate at work, she also called for a "reserved and business-like attitude" at all times on duty. "Loud voices and laughter are disturbing and undignified," she emphasized. She believed that dietitians should always accept criticism with grace and not take it personally.

Finally and perhaps most important, Northrop characterized the civilian hospital a "military organization" and emphasized the strict system of rank within it. She clarified three basic rules. First, she believed the professional behavior of student dietitians in a hospital followed the military customs of rising to greet a superior of any department upon address or approach. Second, she explained, "Always give a superior precedence in

elevators, doorways, etc. In this connection your white uniform will probably give you precedence over all persons wearing colored uniforms, but that fact that you rank as a student, even though a graduate student, makes it advisable that you yield precedence to all persons wearing white. Third and finally, she emphasized the importance of always being prompt, meeting all appointments, carrying out orders, and giving strict adherence to time schedules in her work.\footnote{578}

This philosophy for professional behavior allowed dietitians to make some significant strides in civilian hospitals, but also in areas of higher education and academia throughout the interwar period. According to Hazel T. Craig, all but six state universities and all but five land grant colleges offered some phase of home economics in their curriculum in the 1920-1921 academic year. This trend was reinforced by an increase in the number of government publications provided by the Department of Agriculture, the Food Administration, Children’s Bureau, Bureau of Fisheries, and the Public Health Service. Craig also explained that the home economics curriculum expanded to include “child care and advanced nutrition with more colleges introducing home management houses or apartments.” It was within this context that several colleges began taking children as study tools for their “practice” houses or cottages in 1921. According to Craig, this was specifically the case at Oregon Agricultural College, the University of Minnesota, Cornell University as well as several other colleges and universities.\footnote{579}

\footnote{578} In this essay, Northrop reiterated certain standards for overall hospital ethics such as never discussing the affairs of patients or their condition with anyone outside the hospital or anyone inside the hospital except the professional staff. Never mention the affairs of the department to anyone in another department or outside the hospital. She believed dietitians needed to avoid gossip and “be as little involved as possible.” She advocated loyalty to the hospital that was implied in her acceptance of training there and common honesty in the use of hospital property. She also emphasized scientific honesty and accuracy in all work and in all records. When in doubt about a situation she recommended that the dietitian seek the advice of their superior. See Mary W. Northrop, “Open Forum – Ethics for Student Dietitians,” Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 3: No. 1, (1927): 30.

Craig also explained that in 1921 Purdue University, Kansas State Agricultural College, and Oregon State Agricultural College offered courses in cafeteria management and “courses leading to positions as dietitians were reported in nearly all leading colleges with a home economics department.” Of the 547 higher institutions of learning with a home economics curriculum in 1926, only sixteen were offered for African American students. According to Craig, “By 1930 home economics was an established course in high schools and colleges throughout the country and opportunities, in addition to teaching and institutional work, were expanding rapidly.”

Avenues of specialization within the field of dietetics also took place after the war. “We have today, the administrative dietitian, the special diet dietitian, and the clinic dietitian,” said Abby Marlatt from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1922. She also claimed that there would eventually be recognized “the need of and a demand from the general public for the expert dietitian in all public health work.” Historically, diet has been used as a medicinal treatment for the mentally ill. But, after the Great War, dietitians called for more advanced training in psychology for their field. According to Marlatt, “[T]here is today a keen realization that the psychic factors, often influenced by prejudice against types of foods may have a very modifying influence on the rate of recovery. The expert psychological dietitian will recognize her position in the treatment of the patient and will never trespass upon the field of the physician or the nurse, but will

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580 Hazel T. Craig, “The History of Home Economics: Part IV Home Economics in Education,” *Practical Home Economics*, (December 1944), 534. Historian Margaret Rossiter suggests the most competitive graduate programs in nutrition included Yale University and Columbia University Teacher’s College where Henry C. Sherman, Mary Swartz Rose, and Grace McLeod trained a number of the land grant home economics faculty members. Other notable programs included the University of Chicago (Hazel Kyrk, Lydia Roberts, Katherine Blunt), California (Agnes Fae Morgan), Wisconsin (Helen Tracy Parsons), Kansas State University (Margaret Justin), Pennsylvania State University (Pauline Beery Mack), and Cornell (Martha Van Renassler and Flora Rose). See Margaret Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America: Struggles and Strategies to 1940*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 200.
cooperate so as to make the whole treatment of the patient such that nature will push recovery to the maximum speed.\textsuperscript{581}

The institutional development home economics programs were in no small degree influenced by a number of prominent university women who demonstrated their leadership during the Great War. Though all individual successes are impossible to list by name, it is important to highlight specific examples of academic achievement made by some of the dietitians that served during the war. Some of them include World War I dietitian, Dr. Agnes Fay Morgan, for example, who chaired the Department of Household Sciences at the University of California at Berkeley for 38 years. Over the course of her career, she published more than two hundred papers and one nutrition textbook, along with more than seventy-seven review articles.\textsuperscript{582} Abby Marlatt revolutionized the Home Economics Program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison; over the course of her tenure as program director, between 1909 and 1939, Marlatt brought the University of Wisconsin-Madison program to national prominence. Similarly, Ruth Wheeler, who earned her Ph.D. in physiological chemistry and nutrition at Yale University, was appointed professor of Home Economics at Goucher College in Baltimore, Maryland. By 1923, Dr. Wheeler collaborated with her WWI Red Cross comrade, Dr. Kate Daum as co-founders of The Nutrition Department at the University of Iowa. Wheeler served as the

\textsuperscript{581} In her 2006 analysis \textit{Fit to be Citizens}? Natalia Molina argues that the racial lexicon was wound up in the development of public health as a profession. Within this context it is also significant to mention that on July 1, 1944, an Act of Congress granted dietitians admission as reserve and regular officers in the commissioned corps of the U.S. Public Health Service. By 1959, Mary Barber accounted for dietetic assignments at twenty-four Marine hospitals (including the two tuberculosis hospitals and the leprosarium) located at major American sea and river ports, and two neuro-psychiatric hospitals at Fort Worth, Texas, and Lexington, Kentucky. See Abby Marlatt, "Trends in Hospital Dietetics: Organization of Hospital Food Department, Though Important, Is Not All Of The Dietitian’s Job," \textit{Hospital Management}, 14: No. 1 (Jul 1922), 53. See also Mary Barber, \textit{History of the American Dietetic Association, 1917-1939}, (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1959), 255. See also Natalia Molina, \textit{Fit to be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939}, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 11-12.

President of the American Dietetic Association from 1924-1926. In 1926, Wheeler returned to her alma mater as Professor of Physiology and Nutrition at Vassar College. Daum served as the President of the ADA from 1932-1933. Anna Van Meter became a professor of Home Economics at Ohio State University. In 1930, the *Lincoln State Journal* published an extensive article above the fold titled, “Former Nebraskan on National Honor Roll: Girls Who Have Gone to New York and ‘Made Good’.” The article showcased the success of the first ADA president, Miss Lillian “Lulu” Graves from the “great granary” of Nebraska. The author wrote, “A baby is dying in the Ozarks. The treatment depends wholly upon diet. The doctor writes for her advice. Miss Graves lends her aid. The baby lives. A Children’s Hospital is opening in the south. Working with the architects, Miss Graves plans the dietary kitchen. A new food is to be placed on the market. Its health qualifications are to be nationally advertised. Miss Graves is consulted before the product is sold. Sweden’s king is interested in the opening of a national hospital. His personal representatives consult Miss Graves. Physicians in out of the way places seek her advice.”

This is a mere sample of the individual achievements made by early twentieth century dietitians who served during the war effort.

Finally, attendance at annual ADA meetings during the interwar years also sheds light on the extent of rising interest regarding dietetics. Records from the annual meetings during this time also reflect a renewed sense of importance for the alliance between dietitians, household technology manufacturers, and the collective food industry. Approximately 500 people attended the fourth annual meeting of the ADA held in Chicago from October 24-26, 1921. The conference hosted twenty-one exhibits with commercial vendors and non-commercial advocates of health information on the nineteenth floor of the LaSalle Hotel. E. Moreland Geraghty juggled the tasks of ADA

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secretary chair of the commercial exhibits where manufacturers introduced new foods as well as new household technologies. According to ADA historian Joann Cassell, “The exhibits included two types of dishwashing machines, a type of electric toaster, a food cart, a mixing machine, packaged meats, and canned goods.” It was at the 1921 convention, the ADA hired their own publicity agent to cover and promote their mission. He served them well. One of his dispatches in the New York Herald-Tribune read:

“Dietotherapy is a new one, it takes its place along with hydrotherapy, electrotherapy, psychotherapy, and other special branches of medical science which in the days of our forefathers were under the general head of castor oil and common sense. Dietotherapy is the science of curing by feeding. It is the next thing to the fat girl’s consolation, eat and grow thin. It means, in brief, eat and grow well.”584 That the ADA hired a publicity agent for the first time in their professional history invites a closer look at the connections between dietetic professionalization, mass production, and consumption.

Therapeutic Ethos

Dietitians played a significant role in the construction of ideas about early twentieth century American consumption. Early twentieth century patterns of consumption, specifically as they relate to food, are complex. It is a subject that has captured the attention of a number of historians from a broad range of perspectives. Because such a wealth of scholarship exists about attitudes, behaviors, and patterns in American consumption, some basic clarifications are in order. According to the historian Lawrence Glickman, Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929) pioneered the “terms of modern consumer criticism” and introduced the phrase “conspicuous consumption” in 1899 with

his analysis *Theory of the Leisure Class: An Economic Study of Institutions*. However, when Dr. Hazel Kyrk, a University of Chicago economist, traced the origins of literature about consumption in an extensive 1939 essay, she did not point to Veblen. Rather, Kyrk paid tribute to Simon N. Patten’s (1852-1922) book *Consumption of Wealth* (1901) as the landmark text in the field. Unlike Veblen, Patten linked social reform to self-restraint. He believed that abundance, when properly controlled, could not be destroyed. Along with contemporary supporters, Walter Weyl and the sociologist Lester Ward, Patten believed that Americans could demonstrate restraint and that non-Protestant immigrants could be “taught” appropriate attitudes. Patten was also hopeful about the possibilities of science to remedy social problems. When Harvard University Press reprinted Patten’s *New Basis for Civilization* in 1968, the editor, Daniel M. Fox elaborated on this point. According to Fox, “Patten found a way out of this dilemma in another assumption he shared with many men of his generation: the belief that science could provide solutions to social problems. Specifically, science could develop and justify the restraints which would protect abundance from the evils of men’s greed and the urges of the flesh.” Fox continued by using the examples of alcohol and sex. He asserted that Protestant ethics considered alcohol consumption as sinful and “was forcefully condemned by the science of nutrition. Alcohol was unhealthy; it interfered with a man’s consumption of a balanced diet, vitamins, and other necessities. Moreover, indulgence in drink could prevent a man

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586 Historians refer to Thorstein Veblen as a pioneer in the field, but Kyrk does not include Veblen in her historiographical discussion. Hazel Kyrk, “The Development of the Field of Consumption,” *Journal of Marketing*, 4: No. 1 (July 1939):16-19. According to Horowitz, “More than any other writers of their generation, Simon N. Patten, Thorstein Veblen, and George Gunton attempted to comprehend these changes...Patten shaped a social reform substitute. Veblen devised a radical alternative to old-fashioned censoriousness. Over the course of his lifetime, Gunton shifted from a radical moralism to a celebration of mass consumption society. Although they rethought familiar approaches, in varying ways they all remained captives of the tradition they were challenging.” See Daniel Horowitz, *The Morality of Spending: Attitudes Toward the Consumer Society in America, 1875-1940* (Chicago: Elephant Paperbacks, 1985), 30.  
from supplying his family with what we now call their minimum daily requirements.”  
Similarly, in terms of sex, Fox explained that a man abstained from sleeping with his 
wife as a sign of superiority over the flesh or desire and to control reproduction. “Men 
with Patten’s moral and ethical commitments,” Fox explained, “could logically fear that 
abundance, by ending the struggle for subsistence, might produce a national orgy.” Fox 
reasoned that Patten’s own logic of abundance appeared to be contradictory where sex 
was concerned; after all, it is likely (that in Patten’s theory of abundance) a society could 
produce adequate goods and services to sustain a larger population. But, Patten believed 
that science, notably eugenics and controlled heredity, was the key to “new restraints.” 
According to Fox, eugenics “convinced many people that they should mate after a careful 
assessment of the characteristics they would bestow on their progeny, not out of such 
unscientific feelings as affection or lust. Research and invention developed devices which 
would enable people to have sex without children: contraception enabled men to have the 
benefits of abundance and restraint at the same time.”

Patten, a child of the Illinois prairie and a student of German Sozialpolitik, was elected in 1909 as a “councilor at large” for the American Home Economics Association. In terms of the 
professionalization of dietetics, the connection between social reform and self-restraint 
resonates with particular force. In his 1924 address at the ADA annual meeting in 
Swampscott, Massachusetts, Dr. Haven Emerson announced, “Self-denial, self-control, 
moderation, judgment, sense of proportion in our lives, sturdy independence and

determination in all we do for ourselves rather than seeking for some way to unload, relieve, escape our burdens, of these must the character of man be built if he would be strong with the power of health.”

Historian T.J. Jackson Lears explains that by the 1920s among the American bourgeoisie, “the newly dominant consumer culture was a muddle of calculated self control and spontaneous gratification.” In many ways, the trajectory of the professionalization of dietetics closely resembles what Lears calls a “therapeutic ethos.” In part shaped by a nebulous sense of modern “unreality” and a “quest for real life,” the therapeutic ethos included a “prudential attitude toward health” and rested on assumptions of “physical and psychic scarcity.” I believe elements of what Lears calls the “therapeutic ethos” are visible in turn of the century dietary prescriptions, food consumption patterns, as well as new technologies and innovations for the kitchen, home, and family – around which new family rituals, eating habits, traditions, household budgets, and standards of living were constructed. Lears suggests that the therapeutic ethos mirrored the contradictions of a class upset by the changes it was helping to promote. According to Lears, women (specifically those in the helping professions) were critical to the dissemination of older and newer therapeutic strategies.

590 Haven Emerson, “Intelligence and Character in Relation to Food Habits,” Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 1: No. 1 (June 1925): 14-17.
What is particularly significant in terms of dietetics is that Lears attributes the origins of a therapeutic ethos in part, to professionalization and the growing authority of medicine. “That process,” writes Lears, “had been underway at least since the early antebellum era, when health reformers sprouted like mushrooms, linking medical with moral standards of value.” Dietitians echoed Grahamite sensibilities with their dietary prescriptions for good health in the midst of the antebellum health reform movement; I believe these sensibilities trickled into early twentieth century public health discourses. For example, Haven Emerson linked diabetes to the dangers of excessive consumption when he said, “Diabetes is a disease of the successful years of middle life, of the rich, of obesity, of industrial cities, of merchants and professions, of high per capita income, of old age groups.” There was also an ideological link between the dangers of excessive consumption where the topics of sex, food, and public health overlapped. Particularly in the context of race betterment during the first two decades of the twentieth century as the hygiene of food and sex were connected in a variety of ways. Like gluttony, social critics pointed to sexual promiscuity, as a comparable zone of excessive sensuality and consumption that led to inherent danger. Or, as Eugene Lyman Fisk, the Medical Director at the Life Extension Institute of New York put it, “There is an urge toward indulgences.

World War I undermined the old tradition and prepared the ground for a new vision of a consumer society that emerged in the 1920s.” See Horowitz, The Morality of Spending, 109. In 1993, William Leach analyzed the creation of a “land of desire” or a culture of consumer capitalism (not the behaviors); Leach believes that American consumer capitalism launched a culture that was hostile to the past and to tradition. He says it was a culture that confused “the good life with goods.” He locates the main features of this culture were acquisition and consumption as the means of achieving happiness; the cult of the new; the democratization of desire; and money value as the predominant measure of all value in society.” The culture of consumer capitalism emerged, according to Leach, because of three central factors: 1) the development of a new commercial aesthetic, the collaboration among economic and noneconomic institutions, and the growth of a new class of brokers. See William Leach, Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture, (New York: Vintage Books, 1993), xiii, 3, 9.


594 Haven Emerson, “Intelligence and Character in Relation to Food Habits;”
that bring about communication of these [venereal] diseases which place them in a different category from all other diseases, except those resulting from alcohol and gluttony. 595

Dr. Hazel Kyrk, a consumer economist and consumer protection advocate, formulated her own opinions and ideas about consumption. 596 In her most notable book *Theory of Consumption* (1923), Kyrk analyzed the position of the consumer in a free-enterprise, mass-produced society and the 'why' of consumers' desire. She explained that she was interested in the problems, forces, and conditions affecting standards of consumption. According to Kyrk, "A study of consumption is in the main a study of human behavior." 597 Kyrk's emphasis upon the freedom of choice, as historian Charles McGovern has noted, was the distinctive factor separating her work from other writings of her time. 598

595 Eugene Lyman Fisk, *Health Building and Life Extension: A Discussion of the Means by Which the Health Span, The Work Span, and the Life Span of Man Can Be Extended*, (New York City: The MacMillan Company, 1923), 483. In her 2001 book, *Hungering For America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration*, Hasia Diner briefly interpreted the parallels between food and sex when she explained that the ways people think about food and sex are connected. Food and sex make people feel good (or bad), she explained. Diner noted that both are defined as either acceptable or taboo, sanctioned or not sanctioned. Ultimately, as she argued, "[Both] systems of food and sexuality strengthen bonds between group members and create barriers to interaction with outsiders. Put bluntly, the person with whom one cannot eat (and whose food cannot be consumed) is often the same person with whom sexual relations must be avoided." See Hasia Diner, *Hungering For America: Italian, Irish, and Jewish Foodways in the Age of Migration*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 3-4

596 Kyrk earned her "Ph.B." in Political Science from the University of Chicago in 1911. Her doctoral dissertation was entitled, "The Development of State Policies of Control in the United States." "List of Doctoral Dissertations in Political Science, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (November 1913), 689. According to Margaret Rossiter, the home economics program at the University of Chicago was "strongly research oriented" and had esteemed faculty members such as Katherine Blunt and Lydia Roberts. See Rossiter, *Women Scientists in America*, 200.


598 Charles McGovern, *Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890-1945*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 159. Race betterment was also a common denominator in formulating or constructing early twentieth century ideas about high standards of living and philosophies about consumption. That Hazel Kyrk's mentor Dr. James A. Field from the University of Chicago, authored a sixty-seven page essay in 1911 entitled, "The Progress of Eugenics," is significant. In the preface to *Theory of Consumption* Kyrk noted, "My interest in the subject of standards of consumption was first aroused when I was a student of [James Alfred Field], and his lectures were the nucleus of my later thinking." Eugenic dogma influenced her
Kyrk is often conflated with other early twentieth century women writers and home economists. Christine Frederick, for example, has received a fair amount of attention from scholars for her 1929 book *Selling Mrs. Consumer*. In her book, Frederick offered advice to male manufacturers and advertisers about the significance of female buying power. Though Frederick is often credited as a home economist, she had no formal home economics education or training. This problem, as historians Susan Strasser, Sarah Stage, and Virginia Vincenti have note, illustrates a deeper problem. Stage and Vincenti asserted, “Unlike other professional organizations such as the American Dietetic Association, which set standards and demanded specific professional qualifications including college preparation for membership, the AHEA welcomed all comers into its ranks.”

After the war, dietitians entered the civilian workforce in a new climate of market control and manipulation of the food industries. “Among food processors, the prewar trend toward concentration and growth in some of the food industries paled before the spurt of organizing and consolidation of the 1920s,” writes historian Harvey Levenstein. With the economic prosperity of the 1920s, the relationship between dietitians and the food industry coalesced in important ways. By the end of the decade, the food processing industries were among the most powerful of American manufacturing industries,


600 Sarah Stage and Virginia Vincenti, eds. *Rethinking Home Economics: Women and the History of a Profession* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 236. For more discussion about the distinctions between Christine Frederick and formally trained home economists see Susan Strasser, *Never Done*, 246-250; 256-257.
exceeding iron, steel, and textile giants in terms of capital investment. This growing relationship between dietitians and the food industry was visible in the demand by commercial exhibitors to secure booths at the annual 1924 ADA meeting. At the 1925 annual ADA meeting the program included papers that addressed some practical suggestions as to food standards, marketing, and equipment evaluations. ADA historian Mary Barber confirmed in 1959, "Through the years the firms have made it a practice to send their home economists or top sales personnel to handle their exhibits. Relationships with the cooperating commercial organizations were excellent from the first conference." However, the alliance between dietitians and the food industry had a long history predating the ADA conferences. In the last three decades of the nineteenth century, cookery experts forged a cooperative network with the burgeoning food industry. Cooking school instructors created recipes and acted as consumer advocates for local manufacturers. Historian Susan Marks confirms that product related brochures, newspapers, and popular women’s magazines were an “open forum” for expert opinion makers. Marks explains how these women blurred the “line between paid advertising and honest testimony” in their endorsements of domestic products, product specific cookbooks, and advice columns. Fannie Farmer, for example, wrote recipes on behalf of Rhode Island’s Rumford Chemical Works (which manufactured baking powder) and promised that her product held the secret to “lusciously light and tender” layer cakes. Mary Johnson Bailey Lincoln, another fixture with the Boston Cooking School, created recipes for the New Hampshire ice cream manufacturer, White Mountain Freezer

601 Levenstein, Revolution at the Table, 151.
603 Susan Marks, Finding Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America’s First Lady of Food (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 16.
Decades before the Great War, white, middle-class, native-born, Protestant women skilled in cookery also provided convincing testimonials and expert endorsements for local manufacturers and their products. In the fall of 1896, Mrs. Lucy Andrews, a "graduate of Ann Arbor" and Corson’s New York Cooking School, traveled to Des Moines, Iowa to teach "culinary art" to the local Y.W.C.A. branch. The Capital City Gas Company funded Andrews’ lecture tour. Embedded in her cookery teachings, were also demonstrations about the latest kitchen technologies. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, utility companies deployed women like Andrews across the nation to rural communities to provide demonstrations and teach families about new ranges, kitchen appliances, and developments in household technology. This practice continued throughout the twentieth century. “Their skills were in steady demand by utility companies and appliance manufacturers pursuing an expanding market,” confirms historian Amy Bix. Bix asserts, “For example, during the 1930s [Iowa State home economics] graduates secured positions with Chicago’s Commonwealth Edison, Milwaukee’s Gas and Light Company, and gas companies in Tulsa, Kansas City, and Topeka. These home-service employees gave shop-floor presentations to potential buyers and offered equipment demonstrations to local women’s clubs, high schools, and adult education groups. They ran company display booths at fairs, model homes, appliance shows, and furniture conventions.” It is worth reiterating that dietitians did more than just “sideline” as consumer advocates. Sarah Tyson Rorer, for example, acknowledged

604 Mary Lincoln, Frozen Dainties (White Mountain Freezer Company), 1888.
605 November 5, 1896, p. 57, YWCA Collection, Box 14, Scrapbook (1895-1905) Iowa Women’s Archives, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
607 In his analysis, Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890-1945, Charles McGovern argues that between the late nineteenth century and the Great Depression, the U.S. economy rested upon consumption; McGovern contends that during this timeframe, Americans interpreted spending as a form of citizenship, “an important ritual of national identity in daily life.” See McGovern, Sold American: Consumption and Citizenship, 1890-1945, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press), 3.
from the very beginning that her own Philadelphia New Century Club Cooking Classes began as a "business enterprise."  

In her analysis of the National Consumer League (NCL) and their efforts to promote ethical consumption during the New Deal, historian Landon Storrs shows how early twentieth century affluent women (who believed they had special sensibilities for protecting the vulnerable) fought for better working conditions for all workers. According to Storrs, it was the low labor standards of women and the employment of children that angered them most of all. NCL activism overlapped with dietetic activism on several fronts. Dietitians worked in factory and industrial plant cafeterias to provide nourishing foods to enhance worker efficiency. The idea that food was an important tool for company efficiency gained credibility throughout the twentieth century. Margaret Sawyer, Director of the Nutrition Service for the ARC, confirmed this in 1924 when she wrote, "Many industrial plants and corporations have employed home economics women to manage their cafeterias and lunch rooms...another progressive step has been taken by certain food companies in establishing departments for express purposes of carrying on a consistent educational program."  

When Sawyer left her position as the ARC nutrition director, she launched the home economics department at the Postum Cereal Company (later General Foods) in 1924.

What is particularly significant to my dissertation where Storrs' work is concerned lies in her argument that "women's voluntary associations shaped social policy not just in the absence of the state – by creating model programs, or by acting as a bridge

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between eras of reform – but also in concert with the state.” The 1941 creation of a committee entitled Economic Policy and Social Responsibility as Related to Nutrition provides just one of many examples. By that time, a number of factors led to increased concern over matters related to food and health. The Great Depression raised awareness about hunger and malnutrition, unemployment made the purchase of wholesome foods more and more difficult, food could not be sold, and surpluses grew. In 1935, the USDA began purchasing surplus foods for school lunches. But, World War II soon interrupted the availability of the surplus program. In 1941, the three expert committee members came together to address the problem. Committee members included Dr. Hazel Kyrk, and two fixtures in the ADA, Lucy Gillett, and Hazel K. Stiebeling. Kyrk, Gillett, and Stiebeling provided their best solution to the problem. They recommended the extension of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act. They also advised that the Social Security Act be extended to include “domestic and agricultural workers, especially those employed on commercialized and factory-type farms.” They advocated among other things “the maintenance of free collective bargaining among all workers, the elimination of barriers against the employment of Negroes and other minority groups whose nutritional problems are acute by reason of very low incomes, the elimination of taxes on very low incomes, and provision for benefits to workers temporarily or permanently disabled on account of sickness or accident.” Finally, it was the consensus of Kyrk, Gillett, and Seibling that “Government should take the initiative in increasing the supply of protective foods and should encourage industry to bring on the market such low-cost, highly nutritious foods as soybeans, peanuts, and milk products in forms acceptable to consumers. Surpluses on hand should be saved by suitable processing, if necessary by means of Government subsidies. As the step beyond increasing the supply of protective

foods, Section II recommended that essential foods be provided wholly or in part at public expense. This measure should include free school lunches, extension of the Food Stamp Plan to relief families and to other families whose incomes are inadequate for nutritious diets, and the extension also of Federal-local programs providing milk at low cost. This section recommended, in all, a five-point program that included the services which education can perform, the need for reducing the costs of processing and distribution, and the necessity for further research, and this inclusion confirmed the recommendations of those sections which dealt particularly with these subjects.\textsuperscript{611} In 1943, legislation helped expand the surplus program. According to ADA historian JoAnn Cassell, By 1944, it was estimated that “[six] million children were participating in the federal school lunch program at an annual cost of $48 million in federal funds.”\textsuperscript{612} Finally, on June 4, 1946, the 79\textsuperscript{th} Congress passed the National School Lunch Act which authorized federal cash and food assistance to “safeguard the health and well being of the nation’s children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities and other food.”\textsuperscript{613}

Storrs work has shaped my belief that the dietitians story, like the NCL story, shows how we have “underestimated the longevity of progressive women’s reform networks.” I agree with Storrs’ when she said, “Their demise – never absolute – was the result of many factors, but the impacts of World War II and the early Cold War were profound, thwarting hopes that had been sustained since the suffrage victory and disrupting transmission between the first and second waves of organized feminism.”\textsuperscript{614}


\textsuperscript{612} Cassell explains that this program received funding on a short term basis so the program consistently suffered from financial distress. See Cassell, \textit{Carry the Flame}, 176.

\textsuperscript{613} “School Food Service Facts and Figures,” American School Food Service Association, [n.d.] Mary de Garmo Manuscript Collection, MS-1879, Box 4, Folder 2, University of Tennessee Special Collections Library, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Nearly a century removed from the charitable penny lunches of the mid-nineteenth century, the National School Lunch Act is one example of the impact and the longevity of progressive women’s reform networks. Before I shift gears and address the construction of a racial/ethnic hierarchy through diet (the third theme of this chapter), it is important to briefly weigh in on some of the important connections between dietetics, advertising and consumption. As I will show, the inspiration behind Betty Crocker, one of the greatest marketing icons emerged from the imagination of dietitians, notably Blanche Ingersoll and Marjorie Husted, who served as ARC dietitians during the Great War.

Dietetic professionalization and consumerism overlapped on several fronts. As product-testing professionals on food and cooking products, dietitians could offer women with advice that would enable them to make better purchasing decisions for their kitchens, homes and their family. In this sense, dietitians mediated the pull between postwar attitudes toward self-restraint and pleasure by positioning themselves authorities of food as well as symbols of white, middle-class, Protestant, native-born, American womanhood. They mitigated the difficulties of parenthood by promoting certain diets, recipes and products with the purchases of wholesome, nutritious foods. They authored a wide range of publications and literature in journals and advice columns.

In her analysis *Food Is Love: Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America*, historian Katherine J. Parkin explains that advertisers used images and text not only to influence consumers’ purchases but also to “sell” gender roles. Looking at six basic themes employed by food advertisers, Parkin makes a convincing argument “for the surprising sameness that marked American food advertising...The most fundamental of

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these commitments was their decision to market food almost exclusively to women. It was not until after World War I, that cookbooks began to be mass-produced, separate and apart from general housekeeping manuals. According to Parkin, "Advertisers focused on women’s centrality to domesticity and made little creative effort to expand their consumer base by imaging new roles for women and men. Isolating women in the kitchen, they suggested that preparing food for the families was not work, but an act of love." If food, as anthropologist Sidney W. Mintz asserted, is an inherently social and cultural construct, white, middle-class, native born, Protestant dietitians were principal architects in advertising the hegemonic "all-American" design.

Targeting women as the primary consumers and purchasers of food products, companies used dietitians and their credibility as food experts to appeal to their market base. Promoting everything from ice cream to olive oil to flour, local manufacturers hired

616 Parkin focuses on six themes used by food advertisers to promote the idea that food is love. Her six areas of focus include: 1) food advertisers preyed on women’s insecurities and lavished them with false praise; 2) food advertisers suggested that through cooking, women had a powerful tool within their home with the power to please and their ability to assimilate their family into American life; 3) food advertisers used representations of men to suggest that women were subservient to men and should cater to their needs; 4) food advertisers placed the responsibility of family health in the hands of women; 5) food advertisers commonly used beauty and sexuality to appeal to women; 6) food advertisers charged women with sole responsibility for the children’s health, happiness, and performance. See Katherine J. Parkin, Food is Love: Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 8-10.

617 Jessamyn Neuhaus, "The Way to a Man’s Heart: Gender Roles, Domestic Ideology, and Cookbooks in the 1950s," Journal of Social History, 32: no. 3 (Spring 1999), 531.


619 Mintz explains that socially acquired group habits, like eating and languages, “dramatically demonstrate the infra-specific variability of humankind... Food choices and eating habits reveal distinctions of age, sex, status, culture, and even occupation. These distinctions are important adornments on an inescapable necessity.” According to Mintz, “The connections between food and kinship, or food and social groups, take radically different forms in modern life. Yet surely food and eating have not lost their affective significance, though as a means for validating existing social relations their importance and their form are now almost unrecognizably different.” See Sidney W. Mintz, Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History, (New York City: Penguin Books, 1985), 4-5. I employ the term “hegemonic” in the sense that dominant classes cannot maintain control simply by violence or force. Italian theorist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) is perhaps best known for using the principle of hegemony to explain the control of the dominant class in twentieth century Marxism and contemporary capitalism. See Raymond Williams, Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 144-145.
dietitians to create recipes using their product. A number of dietitians who served in the Great War went to work for the food industry. If dietitians and home economists could use their influence to encourage women on the home front to save and ration in the spirit of patriotism during wartime, they could also encourage women to spend both for their own homes and for the greater good. It is within this context that spending became a core element of national identity. According to historian Charles McGovern, an important transition took place when the market replaced the polis in a new communal public life. This shift was characterized by spending. McGovern argues that between the late nineteenth century and the Depression, "the U.S. economy came to rest decisively on consuming [and] in those years Americans came to understand spending as a form of citizenship, an important ritual of national identity in daily life." While Betty Crocker symbolized the normative "ideal" of female citizenship and white, native-born, middle class, Protestant, American womanhood, historian Susan Marks has noted, her image as the "conscientiously happy housewife" was not necessarily the reality of the women who gave Betty Crocker her voice and persona. In her analysis, Finding Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America's First Lady of Food, Marks chronicled an American search for Betty Crocker's identity. According to Marks, Betty Crocker was born in 1921 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, "to proud corporate parents" who, over eight decades, has grown into one of the most successful branding campaigns.

620 Their endorsements were not limited to food products. Silver manufacturers, for example, also sought out food experts to create etiquette books on table settings. One ARC dietitian, Nellie Sargent Johnson, began her career in dietetics after graduating from Simmons College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work and Home Economics in 1909 but later shifted to textiles. Sargent-Johnson is best known as a master weaver and for her design for the Sears Hearthside loom presented in 1946 Fall General Sears, Roebuck & Co. Before the war, Nellie Sargent Johnson worked as the Assistant Superintendent of the New England Kitchen in Boston and as a dietitian at Eastern Main General Hospital, the New York Polyclinic Hospital and the Lakeland Hospital in Cleveland. She listed in Cooper's World War I ARC dietitian enrollment book under No. 1055. See Nancy M. McKenna, "Look Up, Think Up, Lift Up: A Short Biography of Nellie Sargent Johnson," Self Published, 1998. See also, Nancy M. McKenna, "The Sears Hearthside Loom," The Weaver's Friend, Fall/Winter, Duluth, MN, 1988, n.p.

the world has ever known. Marks writes, "In 1945, Fortune magazine named her the second most popular woman, right behind Eleanor Roosevelt, and dubbed Betty America's First Lady of Food. And in 2000, an Ad-week poll revealed that a majority 'voted' for Betty Crocker in a mock presidential contest beating out a ballot of five other (Mr. Clean, Mr. Goodwrench, Aunt Jemima, Ronald McDonald, and Cap'n Crunch) brand icons." What is particularly unique about Betty Crocker where this dissertation is concerned is that two dietitians who served with the ARC during the Great War were instrumental in crafting and promoting her image.

Dietitians were also influential in writing commercial literature for marketing purposes. "Information about the vacuum cleaners, milk, bread, washing machines, corsets, coffee, shoes, soap gelatin, refrigerators, baking powder and breakfast food can now be obtained from home economics trained women who know their products and are conscientiously sending out facts about them," said Associate Editor, Blanche Ingersoll of the American Food Journal in 1924. To be sure, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other federal and state organizations published vast amounts of literature on public health and nutrition in the early twentieth century. But, Ingersoll pointed to another avenue of learning that to her, appeared to be faster and more up to date with the latest science. She was perhaps one of the first to use her credibility as a non-partisan dietitian praise and legitimize the commercial literature for classroom use when she wrote, "Information as to growing, preparation for marked, grading, shipping, storing, etc., is found in some textbooks - but the pamphlets issued by commercial associations is usually

622 Marks explains how Betty Crocker's surname was chosen in honor of William G. Crocker a well-loved director of the Washburn Crosby Company and "Betty" was selected because it sounded "cheery, wholesome, and folksy." This pairing, says Marks, "produced a simple and unforgettable name that would one day lead the sweet ranks of America's baked goods royalty - Duncan Hines, Sara Lee, Dolly Madison, and Little Debbie. See Susan Marks, Finding Betty Crocker: The Secret Life of America's First Lady of Food (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 4, 11.

more up to date and give more detailed information than is otherwise available.” She offered some examples of companies who she believed offered sound data through charts, exhibits, graphs, and nutrition information. She praised the “cake chart” made by the Swans Down cake flour company. She highlighted the table illustrating the composition of different types of baking powder made by the K.C. Baking Powder Company. Among others, she commended the Washburn-Crosby Company for their depiction of the various layers of the wheat grain and noted that their large chart “adorns the walls of many food laboratories.” As a graduate of home economics and journalism at Lewis Institute in Chicago, professorships at Kansas State Agricultural College, Iowa State University, and Teacher’s College Columbia University, Blanche Ingersoll had legitimacy and credibility in her field. Her readers trusted her advice – and, so did food companies and manufacturers.

By the early twentieth century, the practice of conducting dietary experiments for commercial and marketing purposes was a fairly common practice. Companies sought the support of local schools and hospitals to engage in their own studies. The Borden Company’s experiment for condensed milk in the summer of 1922 provides just one of many examples in which scientific experiments were launched under commercial auspices. Under the leadership of Dr. Lewis Sanman of the Borden Company’s food laboratory undertook an experiment to show the relative value of (diluted) condensed milk and (fluid) whole milk as a food for some forty-six children selected from Public School No. 38 in New York City. They were testing the effect of Borden’s Eagle Brand Condensed Milk upon malnutrition. Advertised with the slogan, “Clean milk kept clean – is the Borden’s Ideal,” it was described as pure cow’s milk combined with unadulterated cane sugar. As a selling point, Borden took pride in the fact that milk borne epidemics

had never been traced in any way to Borden's Eagle Brand Condensed Milk. At the time, the Borden Company actually had more than 1,000 malnourished school children "under observation" across the country and claimed their experiments generated two years of valuable scientific information in the fight against malnutrition in the spirit of understanding the most basic and essential ingredient (milk) in a child's diet. According to the report, the children used in the experiment were selected from the most poorly nourished and one group of twenty-three was given 200 calories of condensed milk daily while the other group a similar amount of whole milk for a period of three months. St. Vincent's Hospital collaborated with the Borden by examining the children before and after the "feeding experiment." They were given a complete physical exam, a complete blood count, and x-ray exams. The x-ray captured an image of the right forearm including the elbow and wrist tracking the visible signs of nourishment. The writer explained, "The feeding was carried out under the direction of representatives of the Borden Company and a considerable amount of hygienic instruction was given in the homes of these children in both groups." The experiment results showed that 200 calories of milk given to each case in addition to the regular daily diet, the improvement for the group fed on condensed milk was equal to that of the group fed on bottled and pasteurized milk.625

When she crafted the 1924 essay about the lessons offered by food manufacturers, Blanche Ingersoll was serving as the Associate Editor of the American Food Journal. That Ingersoll focused on the potential for collaboration between commerce and education caught the eye of the director of the Washburn Crosby Company in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Later that year, in the fall of 1924, Winifred Stuart

625 It is also important to draw attention to the author's observation in the Borden booklet that, "In very recent years this movement for promoting better health among children has spread into commercial fields. Business organizations have established health and welfare department with trained workers on their staff. See Helen Rich Baldwin, Nutrition and Health: With Twenty Suggested Lessons for Nutrition Classes, (New York City: The Borden Company, 1924), viii, 23-24.
Gibbs (the Editor of the *American Food Journal*) reflected on the “closeness” of their connection with food manufacturers and distributors when she reported that Blanche Ingersoll, “formerly the Associate Editor of the *American Food Journal* has left us to join the staff of the Washburn Crosby Company. Moreover, we permit ourselves a bit of becomingly restrained self congratulation at the thought that it was while engaged in an *American Food Journal* project that Miss Ingersoll demonstrated to the Washburn Crosby Co., the fact that her services were worth securing.”

On October 2, 1924, the Washburn Crosby Company sponsored the debut of their most ingenious marketing inventions—a radio show titled “Home Service” with Betty Crocker. Blanche Ingersoll was one of the first women to provide the reassuring voice of Betty Crocker in the homes of Americans. Though specific details of her wartime service have been difficult to trace, Ingersoll is listed as the 190th dietitian in Lenna Cooper’s American Red Cross Dietitians Enrollment Book from the Great War. Ingersoll was not the only woman behind the creation of Betty Crocker. According to Marks, “Home economists Ina Rowe, Agnes White, Ruth Haynes Carpenter, Blanche Ingersoll, Janette Kelley, and Marjorie Child Husted were the ‘voice’ of Betty Crocker in print and

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626 “Editor’s Page,” *The American Food Journal: National Magazine of the Food Trades*, 19: No. 10, (Oct 1924), 451. However, not everyone agreed with the principle or the efficacy of market-based research for public good. Carl L. Fellers, for example, criticized the quality and quantity of research being collected. He felt compelled to qualify the meaning of research because the term was being abused in the marketplace. Fellers noted, “Advertising of foods and other commodities has brought research before the public. Certainly the ‘research’ carried on by some companies can scarcely be dignified by the name in its true meaning. Too often it is simply the gathering of data for use by the advertising branch of the firm.” In his essay, Fellers cited the attempts made by the Office of Experiment Stations, U.S. Department of Agriculture to clarify that “Research, as commonly understood, means more than the mere accumulating of data or the compiling of information; it means gathering data for a particular purpose guided by ability to discern the kind of data necessary, to weigh their adequacy, and to interpret them, rather than to merely summarize them. Research is not only an advanced type of inquiry, but a mature effort, dominated by an attitude of intellectual curiousity. See Carl L. Fellers, “Laboratory and Business Relations in Food and Nutrition,” *Journal of Home Economics* 33, no. 2 (February 1941): 89.

person." Marjorie Child Husted (1892-1986) also served with the ARC during 1917-1918. She worked in the ARC information and publicity bureau of the home office in the northern division and was later promoted to assistant director of the field service.

According to James Gray, who wrote the history of General Mills in 1954, Husted was "unusually well equipped to explore the world of women" with degrees from the University of Minnesota in both home economics and education. Gray writes, "Inevitably she was caught up into the service of the Red Cross during 1917-1918 and after the Armistice, she took back to peacetime assignments the preoccupation with the problems of the helpless that her war experience had induced. For a succession of welfare agencies she examined many of the crucial problems of community life today: malnutrition in infants, juvenile delinquency, breakdowns of public health, threats to the family unit." Ultimately, Husted became Betty Crocker’s "interpreter in the fullest sense...she took over the task of preparing the Betty Crocker scripts and for ten years, in the midwestern section, she also spoke them before the microphone."

In his 1954 history of General Mills, James Gray explained that Betty Crocker became "the eternal and supreme house-wife, all-wise, generous with her time, advice, [and] sympathy...direct, forceful, candid, and completely in control of her world, she looked out of advertisements with reassuring seriousness ready to face any emergency of hospitality." For as much as the Betty Crocker trademark symbolized the imaginary ideal of white, American womanhood in the early twentieth century, Aunt Jemima epitomized the regional and racial counterpart of white leisure, abundance, and sexual

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628 Marks, Finding Betty Crocker, 22.
order. The overlapping histories of Betty Crocker and Aunt Jemima icons are far too complex to analyze in a brief section of this dissertation. A number of books and articles have examined the significance of her imagery, but my understanding of Aunt Jemima, as much more than just a Quaker Oats marketing symbol, is based primarily upon the work of independent historian M.M. Manring. In *Slave in a Box: The Strange Career of Aunt Jemima*, Manring explains how her image evoked a sense of “white leisure, based on the perpetual servitude of blacks, a specific kind of nostalgia, all moonlight and magnolias, about race relations in America.” In contrast to the instant gratification of a ready-made mix offered to consumers by Aunt Jemima, Gray noted that “a Betty Crocker recipe has all the merit of a treasure inherited from an ancestor who once fed George Washington.”

Constructing a Dietary Racial/Ethnic Hierarchy

“It is no easy task to feed little Jews and Italians...even if one is versed in the peculiarities of Italian and Jewish cookery,” said Mary Swartz Rose and Gertrude Gates Mudge in their 1920 co-authored essay about their experimental nutrition classes at Stuveysant Neighborhood House in New York City’s lower east side where 75 of the 175 children registered for the class allegedly suffered from malnutrition. Dietitians from Columbia University Teacher’s College engaged in home visits of New York City’s “racial groups” to examine the nutrition content of their meals. The Stuveysant Neighborhood House is one of many examples of an early twentieth century postwar shift

633 According to Rose and Mudge, twenty-five aspiring dietitians from Columbia Teacher’s College gained hands-on dietetic experience during this particular summer session and were “admirably fitted to engage in this piece of social work. They had some training in dietetics and were enrolled for further study of this subject.” Mary Swartz Rose and Gertrude Gates Mudge, “A Nutrition Class: In Cooperation with a Summer Play School,” *The Journal of Home Economics* 12: no. 2 (February 1920): 49-50.
to a focus on the dietary patterns of racial/ethnic groups. In this section, I show how the postwar professionalization efforts made by dietitians relied heavily upon the scientific construction of a racial/ethnic hierarchy through diet. To clarify the authority of dietitians on this matter, one physician from the Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago, Dr. Abraham Levinson said, "No one should attempt to do any Social Service among children unless she has a working knowledge of the practical side of feeding children."\textsuperscript{634}

My understanding of the scientific construction of racial/ethnic hierarchies and discourses is influenced by Natalia Molina’s important 2006 book *Fit to be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles, 1879-1939.* In her analysis, Molina explains how areas home to L.A.’s Chinese, Japanese, and Mexican populations were “separately and serially targeted as ‘rotten spots.’”\textsuperscript{635} Molina argues, “Armed with institutional power buttressed and legitimated by the language of ‘scientific objectivity,’ public health officials developed discourses that attributed the serious health problems confronting these minorities to purported deficiencies in the groups’ biological capacities and cultural practices.”\textsuperscript{635}

Similarly, health reformers became interested in the dietaries of immigrant communities as an important step toward better public health. “Gallons of American soups and broths were served to these people only to be untouched and thrown out. This was at a time when diet might have meant much in furnishing resistance to the disease,” asserted Michael Davis and Bertha Wood from the Boston Health Dispensary in 1927.\textsuperscript{636} According to Davis and Wood, the influenza epidemic of 1918 epitomized the notion that the medical community was not well enough versed with the foodways of the foreign-

\textsuperscript{634} Abraham Levinson, “Field Work In Dietotherapy: The Inter-relations of Pediatrics and Field Work,” *Dietary Administration and Therapy* 1: no. 3 (May 1923), 6.
born; they explained that neither district nurses, settlement workers, nor visiting
dietitians, fully understood the eating habits and religious practices of immigrant patients.
And, by this oversight or omission, Davis and Wood believed their work was ultimately a
disservice to immigrant patients as well as the overall good of public health. For Davis
and Wood, the imposition of American dietary regimens or even feeding a sick or
hospitalized immigrant patient American foods amounted to nothing less than “hitting a
person while he is down.”637

But, there were still many others who disagreed with this approach. Many
believed that it was the burden, if not the obligation, of ethnic and immigrant families to
adapt and appropriate American manners, habits, and customs. Despite a range of
regional variations, this sensibility is perhaps most apparent in what historians generally
refer to as Americanization – a movement that began during the Great War and gathered
tremendous strength throughout the twenties. One journalist characterized the ultimate
purpose of Americanization courses as a way to foster a “sense of duty” and allegiance
toward their new nation and help them to “become American citizens and capable
voters.”638

But, there were no two clear ways about it; Americanization through diet did not
have a single unifying agenda. Building on the scholarship of the historian Linda Gordon,
Molly Ladd Taylor emphasized that the women who attended the classes offered by
Anglo American club women (or, in this case, what she calls sentimental maternalists)
were engaged a system of complex cultural negotiation and bargaining.” Ladd-Taylor

637 Michael M. Davis, Jr. and Bertha Wood, “The Food of the Immigrant in Relation to Health,”
Journal of Home Economics, 12, no. 12 (December 1920): 517.
638 Katherine Richardson, “The St. Louis Star’s Daily Page for Women: Teaching Foreign-Born
Women Our Language,” The St. Louis Star, April 12, 1920, pg. 19
explains, "In any case, white club mothers' condescending attitude toward immigrant women coexisted with a romanticized view of 'simple' hard working mothers." 639

It is within this context of sentimental maternalism that I return to the activism of Mary de Garmo (1865-1953.) In chapter two, I analyzed the activism of Mary de Garmo for her work with the creation of the first eugenic better baby contest, but the rest of her story warrants our attention. After the war, she became one of the most outspoken advocates of early twentieth century Americanization programs. On behalf of the St. Louis Women's Chamber of Commerce, de Garmo crafted the Plans for Organization and Work for Americanization as well as a Constitution for a Central Cooperative Americanization League in October of 1919. Among many other points of interest, she recommended the establishment of a uniform public school system for home and industrial classes as well as cooperation of all agencies including the public schools, the postal service, and the police department. Journalist Katherine Richardson noted in a 1920 St. Louis Star expose, "Mrs. Frank de Garmo has brought the Americanization work to its present high standard of efficiency under the Women's Chamber of Commerce. Believing that only women could teach the foreign born women in an understanding way, she obtained pledges from St. Louis housewives to attend a course of lectures, to fit themselves for carrying our manners, customs, and language into the homes of the women of the old world." In St. Louis alone – the Women's Chamber of Commerce, with the support of the local police department, registered 350 "students" representing thirty-one nationalities and documented the names of approximately 6,000 foreign born St. Louis residents for their Americanization classes in the spring of 1920. Richardson further explained, "These are the Americanization classes about which one has heard so much; the work which several presidential candidates have chosen as an issue to which to

ride into the big chief's seat in Washington. Dozens of these 'kitchen schools' are held daily in St. Louis.\textsuperscript{640}

Mary de Garmo also worked closely with the Naturalization Service in the U.S. Department of Labor. In one letter written directly to de Garmo, the Chief Naturalization Examiner, M.R. Bennington told de Garmo, "My department feels that the public schools constitute the one agency to which the problem of Americanization should be intrusted."

What was particularly significant about their correspondence was the fact that Bennington believed Americanization efforts needed to be shifted away from club-based volunteer system and into the public schools. He noted, "As I understand it, it [public school instruction] favors all those who have the interest of this movement at heart, directing their energies to getting into the public schools those in need of Americanization, rather than to the expenditure of such energies on volunteer instruction elsewhere." Bennington put the icing on the cake when he told de Garmo, "I believe the plan urged by the St. Louis Optimist Club represents concretely the position of the Naturalization Service, and accordingly, I take the liberty of inclosing herewith a copy of the resolutions adopted by such Club."\textsuperscript{641} With Bennington's blessing, de Garmo began shipping materials to schools and reaching out to educational extension departments in surrounding areas.\textsuperscript{642} De Garmo also called for the creation of Americanization centers


\textsuperscript{641} M.R. Bennington (Chief Naturalization Examiner, U.S. Department of Labor) to Mrs. Frank de Garmo (Director, Americanization Department, Women's Chamber of Commerce, St. Louis), January 30, 1920. Mrs. Frank de Garmo Papers (1900-1985), MS 1879-Box 1, Folder 3, Hoskins Library, University of Tennessee Special Collections Library, Knoxville, Tennessee.

\textsuperscript{642} For example, de Garmo sent materials to the Kirksville Normal School in Kirksville, Missouri and highlighted the considerations that must be met when developing Americanization programs. See Correspondence Mrs. Frank de Garmo to Chairman, Americanization Extension Work, Kirksville Normal School, Kirksville, Missouri, January 24, 1920. Mrs. Frank de Garmo Papers (1900-1985), MS 1879-Box 1, Folder 3, Hoskins Library, University of Tennessee Special Collections Library, Knoxville, Tennessee.
and urged them to be constructed "near the homes for women, where American women will teach them Cooking, Dressmaking, Millinery, Home Economics, etc. In such centers recreative features may be added, entertainments, moving pictures, recreative and educational conferences, musicales, dances, etc. To work in concurrence with the Public Schools, the Park Department, The Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., Y.M.H.A., Knights of Columbus and make use of the educational and recreative equipment found there. [sic.]"

As her notoriety spread, letters began to flow into de Garmo's St. Louis home. For example, Martha Nutt, head resident of the St. Mark's Hall Settlement in New Orleans wrote to de Garmo and told her about their work with the "children of this section" where they had "278 babies under observation." She explained that they were "feeding quite a number of these from our station, and so far as we can, are instructing the mothers." Nutt added "We are however dealing with a foreign people and ninety percent of these children are Italian." 643

In 1920, the same year that de Garmo's Americanization initiatives received favorable reviews and headlines in the city's most prominent newspaper, de Garmo found other - perhaps more personal - reasons to celebrate. In 1920, her daughter, Mary de Garmo Bryan was elected to the presidency of the American Dietetic Association. It was under her daughter's leadership that diet, racial/ethnic categorization, and the sensibilities of Americanization coalesced. In her 1920 Christmas letter to her colleagues and constituents, ADA president Mary deGarmo Bryan reported, "We are a large band of professional women, well organized, with a capacity for making definite contributions to the field of work for which we are trained. To do this we must be strong within ourselves." She continued, "Let us make this a year of internal development, of study of our problems as dietitians, of careful gathering of information which is essential to us and

643 Martha Nutt (New Orleans) to Mrs. Frank de Garmo (St. Louis), [n.d.] Mrs. Frank de Garmo Papers (1900-1985), MS 1879-Box 1, Folder 3, Hoskins Library, University of Tennessee Special Collections Library, Knoxville, Tennessee
useful to others.”\textsuperscript{644} As I will show, one aspect of “the careful gathering” of essential information included a series of surveys examining the dietary habits of non-dominant groups.

As the ADA pushed their postwar professionalization agenda through the construction of a racial/ethnic hierarchy, they also promoted a discourse that linked race and ethnicity to food and health by vast amounts of statistical and scientific data.\textsuperscript{645} The Social-Service section of the ADA sponsored a variety of dietary studies of racial and ethnic groups. While the dietotherapy section collected information on laboratory research and clinical application of the findings, the social service section had other goals. Their main purpose in collecting this information was, as Gertrude Gates Mudge (Chairman of the ADA Social Service Section) explained, “to secure a better understanding of foreign dietaries and interpret the data thus secured for the use of nutrition and social workers.”\textsuperscript{646} At the 1921 annual ADA meeting the Social Service Section, (chaired by Lucy Gillett) brought in Sophinisba P. Breckenridge from the University of Chicago as the main speaker. According to ADA historian Joann Cassell, “[Breckenridge] spoke about foreign born families or those not yet adjusted to American life and modern housekeeping according to American standards of living. Four papers on


"Dietary Customs of Various Nationalities" followed. It was at the 1922 annual ADA meeting that the topic of school lunches appeared, for the first time, on the ADA program. Daisy Treen, the director of school lunch in Boston addressed the topic.

ADA historian Mary Barber attributed this interest in foreign, ethnic, and racial food ways to dietitians' overseas war work and their exposure to international food concerns. But, this does not explain it all. What does it tell us that dietitians focused intensely on the dietary studies of immigrants, specific ethnic groups, and people of color? In Americanization centers led by native born, middle- and upper- class, Protestant women, women of non-dominant groups received instructions on what to feed and what not to feed their children, but the case in St. Louis illustrates, they also received instructions on who to vote for and how. Finally, discourses about race and ethnicity in relation to food were also significant because the professional image of the dietitian was shaped and sustained by situating themselves above, if not in opposition to, other races, ethnicities, and nationalities.

Some of the most notable studies executed during this time by the ADA's Social Service Section included dietary studies of Detroit’s Syrian and Roumanian communities. In southern states, surveys were conducted to analyze the “menus of Negroes and Mountain Whites.” In 1923, calls were put out in the Journal of Home Economics in search of women who lived in or around Polish settlements to assist the ADA with a

649 I also think it may have mattered because race, ethnicity, and nationalities played important roles in how white women thought about and cared for their own bodies. Historian Margaret Lowe takes a closer look at this idea and argues that "perceptions of the female body – its purpose, appearance, and health – continued to set the terms of the debate, delineating the meanings and objectives of higher education for women" in the postwar decade. See Margaret Lowe, Looking Good: College Women and Body Images, 1875-1930, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 10.
“Polish Dietary Survey.” Dietitians also engaged in dietary studies of specific Native American tribes. In their important book *The Newer Knowledge of Nutrition*, Elmer McCullom and Nina Simmonds summarized a few of these studies with the generalized observation “that the Italian dietary was characterized by a large amount of wheat products, green vegetables and olive oil; the diet of the negro by pork products and milled grains such as rice and hominy, whereas the Hebrew adhered more or less strictly to the dietary laws.” Taking it a step further, Lucy Gillett (the former ADA chair of the Social Service Section) calculated her survey findings and reported that Italians were generally deficient in calcium and vitamins. Jewish families lacked enough iron and vitamins and in cases of Jewish poverty they also lacked enough calcium. Lithuanian families lacked enough iron and vitamins. And, African American families suffered from vitamin and calcium deficiencies.

An attempt to precisely analyze entire range of the dietary data and the vast scope of specific diseases for the purposes of this dissertation would be infinite and vain. But, it is important to provide a few examples of the kinds of studies that captured the

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654 Scientists carefully scrutinized the specific health problems that affected various racial and ethnic groups. For example, by the turn of the twentieth century, rickets was little understood. It seemed to typically affect children between the ages of six months and two years. Scientists understood that rickets was a disease of nutrition and called it a “disease of the city” because it was believed that children in urban areas among other factors, were not exposed to enough sunlight. It appeared to reach higher rates in temperate zones and seemed to adversely affect “southern races transported north.” “It is very common among the negroes of Baltimore,” two physicians from Baltimore’s College of Physicians and Surgeons concluded in 1909. John Ruhrah, a professor of diseases in children, and Julius Friedenwald, professor of gastro-enterology observed “that nearly 100 per cent of the infants in asylums for colored children were affected with rickets, whereas in similar institutions for white children in the same city the disease was rare.” Julius Friedenwald and John Ruhrah, *Diet In Health and Disease*. Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders Company, 1909.
attention and the scrutiny of dietitians. Jessie Anderson Stene and Lydia Roberts, for example, explained in their study of the Sioux Indians of the Crow Creek Reservation, Fort Thompson, South Dakota, that their purpose was to secure “first hand information on the living conditions of these Indians, and to determine insofar as possible whether the diets were such as to account for the physical conditions found.” Stene and Roberts went from house to house on the reservation surveying sixty-seven families, which as they noted, included 323 people. “It is obvious,” they concluded, “that the diets of the Indians studied are generally poor...Although no definite conclusions can be drawn as to a cause and effect relationship between the diets and the physical findings, it is obvious that the dietary deficiencies are such as would be expected to produce the types of physical deterioration found. The lack of calcium, which is essential for skeletal development, shows its effects in the prominence of poor teeth and bow-legs. The prevalence of eye-sores and blindness – although it may of course be due to trachoma, venereal disease, or other cause – could be attributed to xerophthalmia caused by the extreme lack of vitamin A in the diets. In view of the demonstrated relation of vitamin A to the prevention of tuberculosis and of respiratory infections in general, the fact that eighty-five percent of the deaths from known causes were due to these infections strongly suggests that diet, which is especially low in Vitamin A, may be a big determining factor in these conditions. It is a significant fact that one-third of the 164 children dead belonged to the fifteen families whose diet was principally bread and coffee.”

Stene and Roberts did not offer a plan to resolve the situation, but they did conclude that “diet may be the fundamental responsible factor” in the physical deterioration of Native Americans.

In general terms, interest in the diets of various racial/ethnic groups may also have generated concern because dietitians interpreted a direct link between the health of

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the workforce and the health of the economy. Gertrude Gates Mudge believed that “each nationality seemed to have its own characteristic occupations.” Dietitians may have taken greater interest in the dietary habits of non-dominant groups because it contributed to their understanding of U.S. standards of living and national security. It was understood by many that the effects of poor nutrition rippled across so many different aspects of life. According to Et. Burnet and W.R. Aykroyd, authors of Nutrition and Public Health, “Nutrition is an economic, agricultural, industrial, and commercial problem, as well as a problem of physiology...Digestion and assimilation are not mechanical acts which are precisely the same in all human beings; within the bounds of the normal, the great scope for variation may exist. Might it not be possible, in this as in other fields, to approach the knowledge of the individual by the definition of categories or types? It is possible that varying types exist, knowledge of which would throw light on the problem of the ‘normal’ diet.” The authors also explained within an international framework that (beyond complex forms of supply and demand) the evolution of the U.S. diet followed a curiously different course than other nations. They accounted for this by explaining that the education of the public in the scientific principles of nutrition has had a powerful

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656 Mudge reasoned, “The majority of Italians were engaged in a diversity of unskilled labor, especially in New York as compared with the well paid factory workers in Detroit. The Polish in Chicago were employed in unskilled occupations. In Cleveland and in Pittsburg they were engaged in steel mines and foundries in which occupations they are uniformly successful and fairly well paid. The Negroes, irrespective of locality, were engaged in a variety of activities, from chauffeur or janitor to minister and real estate dealer. The Polish and Negro bread winners were frequently ably assisted in the supplementing of the family incomes by their industrious wives.” See Gertrude Gates Mudge, “A Comparative Study of Italian, Polish, and Negro Dietaries,” Journal of the American Dietetic Association, 1, no. 4: (March 1926): 166-173.

effect upon national dietary habits. They noted, "The effects of such education on national diet trends are particularly evident in the United States." 658

Dietary studies of non-dominant groups also figured into the construction of certain discourses that categorically linked serious health problems to certain racial/ethnic groups and their cultural practices. Italian families, particularly those from central and southern Italy, for example, were the focus of much attention. According to Elmer McCullom and Nina Simmonds, rickets was "alarmingly frequent in unhygienic quarters of Boston." Based upon two studies, one completed by Strongman and Bowditch (1921) and another completed by Hess and Unger (1922), revealed that the Italian population was especially susceptible to rickets. According to their studies, diet was a determining factor in susceptibility. The Hess and Unger study of 1922 revealed that fifty to seventy-five percent of artificially fed children living in large cities suffered from rickets. 659 They argued, sanitation did not entirely explain the problem because "the children of the Jews and Poles, although kept under equally unsanitary conditions, were not as susceptible to the disease." McCullom reasoned that Italians did not like milk and because meat, eggs and fish were expensive items, they lived primarily on a diet of macaroni and bread served in olive and cotton-seed oil. Gertrude Gates Mudge noted that Italians "indulged in much wine, purchased either in large quantities or produced at home." While Lucy Gillett believed that "No milk and too much coffee and candy are the greatest factors of the nutritional problem of the malnourished Italian children." 660

The rationale behind studies of racial/ethnic groups can be linked to a variety of topics. But, in this case, I suspect their interest was, in part, motivated by their pursuit of greater professional recognition by establishing themselves as the authorities in the construction and production of new knowledges. In Gertrude Gates Mudge’s study of Italian, African American, and Polish dietaries, she concluded her study with a call for more professional intervention and nutrition instruction in the homes of the families she studied. “[E]ducation in proper food selection is greatly needed in these homes where the adjustment of old dietary customs to new environments is made necessary,” said Mudge. “Without a doubt,” she continued, “the field worker in nutrition can render an invaluable service in aiding the mothers in these homes, as they struggle with the problems involved in providing three meals a day for their families.”

But, not everyone believed the most effective route to dietary reform rested on the notion that “others” conform entirely to American standards and practices. In December of 1920, Michael Davis and Bertha Wood of the Boston Dispensary appeared to be more sympathetic to the cultural customs and practices of immigrant families. They encouraged their colleagues to learn more about their food ways and customs, not necessarily to impose strictly American standards upon them and reasoned it was an important matter for overall public health. Margaret Sawyer, for example, explained in 1924 that results of research as well as clinical evidence show not only that “sound nutrition of the individual and the family is the foundation of public health, that remedial work leads inevitably to preventative, that child welfare points to baby welfare and baby welfare to prenatal work with the mother, but also that nutrition is a matter of careful education and not the application of food formulae ad lib.”

David and Wood explained, “A dietitian has never been so honored, in college or out, as she will be by these foreign-born people once she talks to them of their familiar foods.” If immigrants could learn where to purchase the foods of their homelands and how specific diets could remedy specific diseases, they would be less prone to illness and disease. They explained, “Our milk soups are nutritious but so are theirs; why not learn them and prescribe them? The same is true of other foods.” Davis and Wood told the story of the Angelo family to substantiate their arguments. The Angelo’s had seven children and lived off the income of the father (a printer) who earned seventeen dollars a week. They explained that the Angelo’s daughter Barbara (age eleven) had to “have her legs broken to straighten them.” Three of the younger Angelo children were sent to a dispensary food clinic for diet to prevent their being bow-legged. The authors explained that it was necessary to have at least two and one-half quarts of milk added to their food per day, but the family could not afford the milk. Pointing to the father’s effort to work a night job in order to make additional money so he could pay for the milk, the Davis and Wood explained that this effort made by the father demonstrated that the Angelo family was open to changing their diet habits. “There are certain diseases prevalent among the foreign-born people, due largely to their change of diet. When the diet is corrected the disease may be overcome,” argued Davis and Wood. 662

They suggested that assisting immigrants with diet was especially important because they believed that diet was actually one of the few elements of their homeland that could possibly be retained. The authors believed it was important for professionals to study their ways and get acquainted with immigrant food ways in order to help the “foreign born to adjust themselves to new conditions with as few changes as possible.” According to Davis and Wood, “[Immigrants] housing conditions are changed; their style

of clothing must be changed; many of their social customs, as well as some of their religious ideals, must be given up; the only habit and custom which can be preserved in its entirety is their diet. This is made possible because they find in America, as in no other country, all their native raw food materials.”

While the ADA’s Social Service section collected information on laboratory research and clinical application of the findings, the ADA’s Dietotherapy section had other goals. The notion that dietitians crafted a racial/ethnic hierarchy through the science of diet is also visible in terms of the experimental techniques used to promote early twentieth century science. Abby Marlatt, from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, called for more nutritional evidence based on human experiments in 1922 when she stated, “There has been a vast amount of research in nutrition done in this country and abroad mainly with lower animals. While this research work has taught us the biological values of classes of foods, variations in mineral matter, and presence or absence of controlling vitamins, strictly speaking the data refers to the nutrition of animals. This data while valuable is not conclusive. In a very few hospitals in this country it has been possible to secure some intelligent research studies on human nutrition. One hospital in particular is confirming some data from studies of nutrition of lower animals in their application to the needs of the infant and young child. In more hospitals there has been a small amount of research data published in regard to special dietotherapy in human diseases involving serious metabolic changes. In every hospital in the country and in every private clinic there is need for more careful observational study on the effect of the diet upon the progress of disease.”

It was through their scientific dietary studies, white, native born, middle-class, Protestant dietitians in some ways justified or rationalized the use of non-dominant groups and “expendable” children in their medical experiments.

663 Abby Marlatt, “Trends in Hospital Dietetics: Organization of Hospital Food Department, Though Important, Is Not All Of The Dietitian’s Job,” *Hospital Management* 14: no. 1 (July 1922): 52.
The theoretical and practical lessons that dietitians gleaned from the war were important tools in their campaign for professionalization. But, the impact of the war upon science also contributed (both directly and indirectly) to the overall public awareness of the world food supply. For example, Dr. Elmer McCullom, explained, “Common experience has shown that under the strenuous conditions of food supply to which large groups of people are exposed as a result of war or famine, nutritional defects of a serious character do develop within a short time in children.”^664\footnote{Elmer V. McCollum and Nina Simmonds, The Newer Knowledge of Nutrition: The Use of Foods for the Preservation of Vitality and Health (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1925), 335.} The war, specifically the draft, also generated statistical evidence and increased awareness in terms of overall public health. That approximately thirty percent of all young men were rejected from wartime service because they were physically unfit provided a harsh commentary for some critics. Interpreting the draft as the nation’s first “general health inventory,” Dr. L. Emmett Holt pointed to that figure as evidence of the deteriorating conditions of American health.\footnote{L. Emmett Holt, Food, Health and Growth: A Discussion of the Nutrition of Children, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1927), 7.}

Before I continue, it is important to acknowledge that the debates between hereditarians (eugenicists) and environmentalists (euthenicists) were far from resolved in the court of professional or public opinion.\footnote{See Leon Whitney and Mandel Sherman, “Heredity, Environment, and Hoover,” The Science News-Letter, 15: no. 419 (April 1929): 239-240, 247.} Few could dismiss the impact of environment on morality, character, and general health, but, as outlined in previous chapters, new scientific developments and discoveries in nutrition appeared to entrench dietary factors deeper and deeper into eugenic dogma.\footnote{“The relation of the glands of internal secretion, commonly known as endocrine glands, to human development and human behavior is becoming daily more obvious. Stature, build, proportions; details of development of bone, teeth, nails, hair, skin; intelligence, emotional control, all of these things can be shown to be influenced by endocrine secretions. Indeed, it seems naturally to follow that the hereditary differences between people are due to hereditary differences in the activity of these glands. Now these glands, as is well known, secrete substances called ‘hormones’ which regulate our physical, mental and tempermental constitution.” Charles Davenport, “Research in Eugenics,” Science, New Series 54: no. 1400 (October 1921): 394.} Perhaps most compelling was
the discovery of vitamins and the indications that they produced human physical
growth. This connection brought the topics of diet, prenatal nutrition, and reproduction
into even sharper focus. This issue only added to the concerns and anxieties over racial
purity brought on by the Great War, urbanization, industrialization, and high immigration
rates. Proving the merit of social science methods of data collection, scientists emerged
from the war with a host of statistical evidence that was used to substantiate eugenic
concerns. One of the most obvious conclusions regarded the grave danger venereal
disease posed to the race. "As an aftermath of the war," said registered nurse Ella M.
Rafuse, "many states realized, as never before, the prevalence of venereal disease, its
sequelae, mental, physical, and social, and the need to control it for the good of the
individual and the good of the race."

668 Levenstein, Revolution at the Table, 150.
669 Tracing the influence of eugenic ideas upon American economic reform, historian Thomas
Leonard emphasizes that it was not necessarily the quantity of immigrants rushing to the shores of
the United States, but (citing Irving Fisher), the author argues that it was the quality of racially
inferior "defectives, delinquents, and dependents" that motivated eugenicists to take on the issue
of immigration. Leonard demonstrates how reform minded economists supported exclusionary
labor and immigration policies because they believed that the labor force should be cleansed of
"unfit" workers. See Thomas C. Leonard, "Retrospectives: Eugenics and Economics in the
the considerations made by Warren Susman in his classic 1973 text Culture as History: The
Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century wherein he asserts that urbanization
and industrialization fail to satisfactorily explain the developments in everyday life. Susman
argues that middle class Americans engaged in a deep ideological shift after World War I that was
built upon a vision of abundance or what he calls a "culture of abundance." See Warren Susman,
Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century. New York:
reflected on the World War I loss of "seven million days of service because of venereal infections,
and 338, 746 men - the equivalent of twenty three divisions - received treatments." See Eliot
Ness, "Venereal Disease Control in Defense," Annals of the American Academy of Political and
Social Science, Organizing for Total War, 220 (March 1942), 89.
671 Ella M. Rafuse, "A Venereal Disease Clinic: An Experience in Adaptation," The American
Journal of Nursing 30: no. 8, (August 1930), 987. It is also significant to note that venereal disease
may have threatened the postwar earning power of soldiers and sailors. In the specific case of
gonorrhea, for example, one writer lamented, "Of all the time lost on account of sickness,
gonorrhea provides the greatest number of days in both the Army and the Navy. These military
figures are an indication of the effect of this disease upon the health and the earning power of
infected persons in the population as a whole." In a 1930 issue of the Journal of American
Nursing, Dorothy Davidson asserted that diet in the case of gonorrhea constituted a matter of
"considerable importance." She conceded that diet would not lessen the duration of venereal
Given her mother’s activism with eugenic better baby contests and in Americanization efforts, Mary de Garmo Bryan was no stranger to the possible dangers of racial degeneracy. She held her position as the President of the ADA from 1920 until 1922. Mary deGarmo Bryan went on to earn her Ph.D. in chemistry from Columbia University in 1931. That Bryan remained active with the ADA throughout her career would be an understatement. When Congress debated the passage of H.R. 4717 in 1946, for example, Bryan intervened and testified against it because it included a provision that relegated military dietitians to therapeutic assignments only. The provision was infections, but she did argue that “the breaking of dietary rules” would prolong illness. Offering a dietary prescription reminiscent of those advocated by antebellum health reformers such as Ellen White, Davidson explained, “The diet [for venereal disease patients] should consist of plain, wholesome foods...All irritating drinks and indigestible articles should be omitted and all complicated and highly seasoned foods avoided – pepper, spices, and salad dressings. Acid fruits, asparagus, and tomatoes are forbidden. No alcoholic drinks are allowed. Tobacco may be allowed but not in excess.” As interesting as the dietary prescriptions for venereal disease may be, they are less significant than the connection between issues of hygiene and nutrition. Dr. Malcolm MacEachern advised those in charge of selecting personnel for hospital dietetic work that all applicants be screened with a physical examination. He explained that hospitals were behind the curve of hotels and cafeterias in terms of physically inspecting their dietary employees. “It is equally true,” MacEachern said, “that many hospitals very commonly neglect this matter. MacEachern described an incident where “a most excellent, faithful employee, who after serving for four years in the diet kitchen of a hospital, was found to be suffering from an open case of venereal disease, which might easily have contaminated much of the food. I dare say that such as condition as this exists occasionally unless proper precautions are taken.” William F. Snow, “Venereal Disease and Sex Abnormalities in Relation to Population Growth,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, The American People: Studies in Population*, 188 (November 1936): 72; Dorothy Davidson, “Diet During Treatment of Venereal Disease,” *The American Journal of Nursing*, 38: no. 4 (April 1938): 438-440. See also David S. Hillis, “Venereal Disease and Pregnancy” *The American Journal of Nursing* 38, no. 5 (May 1938); Malcolm MacEachern, “Hospital Dietary Department – A Forecast,” *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 1: no. 2 (September 1925): 64-65.


In her *New York Times* obituary, it was also reported that she served as chairman of the committee that made long overdue revisions in 1941 for the U.S. Navy’s cookbook, which dated from 1906. The obituary also cited her role with the development of a $50 million federally sponsored program to provide school lunches in 25,000 communities of the United States. “Dr. Mary Bryan, Nutritionist and Ex-Columbia Professor,” *New York Times*, June 3, 1986, [n.p.]

Cassell, *Carry the Flame*, 154.
ultimately removed from the final bill. The quest to eradicate malnutrition through the creation of federally funded public school lunches inspired her throughout much of her career.

In 1933, shortly after Bryant’s graduation from Columbia, two members of the Consumers’ Research staff, Arthur Kallet and F.J. Schlink, published a book criticizing the U.S. Food and Drug Act and its administration. In 100,000,000 Guinea Pigs: Dangers in Everyday Foods, Drugs, and Cosmetics Kallet and Schlink launched a harsh indictment against the FDA. In their book, a best-seller, Kallet and Schlink argued that Americans were being used as guinea pigs in an experiment of American food producers and patent medicines.675 One reviewer, writing for the Journal of Home Economics called the book “rather biting.”676 Another reviewer, Dr. Hazel Kyrk also provided a scathing review of the controversial book. I believe her opinions generally reflected the collective sensibilities of the broader professional class. She explained that the book was written to “arouse the public to the dangers to which it is needlessly subjected through the weakness and ineffectiveness of the food and drug laws and their administrators.” Kyrk retaliated by calling the book “unquestionably effective propaganda” and full of “half-truths and misleading statements.” She asked, “Is this book wholly accurate? By no means.” She specifically challenged the authors “unfair” and “gratuitous slur on the Children’s Bureau” for neglecting to mention the dangers of impure ergot in its bulletin on pre-natal care. On this point, she noted, “[T]his bulletin has been of inestimable value in safeguarding the health of mothers and infants.” What is most significant about Kyrk’s review is her emphasis on the greater good. She explained that “there is insufficient discrimination between dangers possible and dangers proven, between dietary difficulties

due to ignorance of nutrition and long established food habits and those due to adulteration and the manufacturer's avarice, between inadequacy in the substantive and remedial provisions of the law and the temper and capacity of its administrators." She concluded with a statement that would continue to haunt the medical profession for several more decades. She asked, "And if the end is good and the reviewer for one believes that it is, shall we criticize the means? That is the troublesome question." This "troublesome" question of the end versus the means is also the engine that drives the penultimate section of this dissertation.

Human Experiments: From Pellagra to Plutonium

In 1968, Earl McGrath asked, "How is it that in the final third of the twentieth century, in the most affluent society in the world and within blocks of famous medical centers and educational institutions, such pitiful misunderstanding of human health and nutrition exists? How has information about food values and diet failed to reach these people? And who is responsible for the resulting malady when bone marrow of mothers and children contains no iron?" In part, the answer to this question is grounded within the long and complex history of dietetic professionalization.

The history of dietetics and nutrition rests upon the foundations of modern chemistry. It was a topic that captivated the interest of one of the most prominent leaders in twentieth-century dietetics E. Neige Todhunter (1901–1991). Todhunter dedicated much of her life and writings to the history of diet and nutrition in the 1960s. She

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679 Todhunter identified the "father of nutrition" as Lavoisier (1743–1794) who analyzed respiration, oxidation, and early calorimetry. She attributed studies of human digestion to Army surgeon William Beaumont (1785–1853). Regarding laboratory work as the basis of teaching
observed that scientific research and discoveries accelerated rapidly in the early twentieth century. To make better sense of the flurry of developments during this time, Todhunter singled out four pioneers. "Every dietitian must know these four great men," she said.

The four men she held in highest esteem for their work in the field of nutrition were: F. Gowland Hopkins (1861–1947), Lafayette Mendel (1872–1935), Henry Sherman (1875–1955), and Elmer McCollum (1879–1967). According to ADA historian Jo Anne Cassell, "Scientific nutrition was firmly established as a discipline in America in 1911 when Henry Sherman published The Chemistry of Food and Nutrition." Another one of the ADA’s most celebrated figures was Dr. Joseph Goldberger, known for his legendary work with pellagra.

Beginning in 1908, pellagra was one of the most detrimental plagues to scourge the South. By 1912, for example, South Carolina alone had thirty thousand cases, with a mortality rate of 40 percent. In the ADA’s fiftieth-anniversary anthology published in 1967, the editors (Beeuwkes, Todhunter, and Weigley) included the paper that Goldberger presented before the ADA’s annual convention on October 31, 1928, at the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C. (The toastmistress of the 1928 banquet was Mrs. chemistry, she pointed to the German organic chemist Justus Von Liebig (1803–1873) and his pupils for paving the way for the study of the chemistry of proteins, fats, and carbohydrates. She also celebrated the work of Liebig’s most famous pupil, Carl von Voit (1831–1908), as well as Max Rubner (1854–1932) and Graham Lusk (1866–1932) for their contributions to animal and human calorimetry and "many of the so-called laws of nutrition." See E. Neige Todhunter, "The Evolution of Nutrition Concepts: Perspectives and New Horizons," Adelia Beeuwkes, E. Neige Todhunter, Emma S. Weigley, eds., Essays on the History of Nutrition and Dietetics (Chicago: American Dietetic Association, 1967), 12–20. For more information about the respective works of Hopkins, Mendel, Sherman, and McCollum, see E. Neige Todhunter, "The Evolution of Nutrition Concepts: Perspectives and New Horizons," Adelia Beeuwkes, E. Neige Todhunter, Emma S. Weigley, eds., Essays on the History of Nutrition and Dietetics (Chicago: American Dietetic Association, 1967), 12–20. See also John Murlin, "Historical Background for the Nutritional Treatment of Metabolic Diseases," Adelia Beeuwkes, E. Neige Todhunter, Emma S. Weigley, eds., Essays on the History of Nutrition and Dietetics (Chicago: American Dietetic Association, 1967), 222–230.

681 Cassell, Carry the Flame, 9.

682 The three most significant books about pellagra include: Elizabeth W. Etheridge, The Butterfly Caste: A Social History of Pellagra in the South (1972); Daphne A. Roc, A Plague of Corn: The Social History of Pellagra (1973); and Alan M. Kraut, Goldberger’s War: The Life and Work of a Public Health Crusader. (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003. (Note the cover image of Kraut’s book; courtesy of Pfizer Consumer Group, Pfizer Inc.)
Mary de Garmo Bryan.) They closed the anthology with the paper presented by Goldberger's wife, Mary Farrar Goldberger, at the thirty-eighth annual meeting of the ADA in St. Louis on October 20, 1955. Reflecting on her husband's early work with the disease, Mary Goldberger recollected: "He visited orphanages, insane asylums, and hospitals where there were cases of pellagra. He studied the literature on trains and in hotels at night. Soon it struck him that those who worked with pellagra handled the sick children but never contracted pellagra; also, that the children of a certain age and babies who had milk were never known to have the disease. Why?" She concluded her presentation by stating, "During the twenty-six years since his death, his name has become an immortal one in medicine as a pioneer in our knowledge of nutritional diseases."

Experimental testing through institutional feeding with suitable control groups was one of the most effective means employed by twentieth-century physicians, public health officials, nutritionists, and dietitians to collect evidence of the impact of diet on human health and mortality. In Susan Lederer's history of human experimentation before World War II, she examines the professional and public debates over human experimentation throughout the first four decades of the twentieth century; she argues that the moral issues over animal and human experimentation were intimately related. The campaign against human experimentation was "most intently pursued by the men and women committed to the protection of laboratory animals, the American antivivisectionists." Pellagra studies relied heavily upon testing on dogs and

685 In light of my chapter on the origins of dietetics, it is relevant to note that Lederer provides evidence of the WCTU’s harsh opposition to the use of animals in medical experimentation and their influence in antivivisection crusades. Susan Lederer, Subjected to Science: Human
experiments with black tongue. But, the “all important rat” was one of the most common subjects in nutrition laboratories. E. Neige Todhunter explained: “What the frog is to the student of biology and the chicken is to the embryologist, so the rat is to the nutrition investigator. When one thinks of nutritional research, it is often a picture of laboratories filled with rows of cages and albino rats.” Todhunter also mentioned that monkeys were the most ideal animals for human nutrition investigations but they were difficult to acquire and too expensive to maintain.686

Lederer’s analysis led me to some important connections between dietitians and proponents of human experiments in the medical profession. She cited William Henry Welch, dean of the Johns Hopkins Medical School, as one of the strongest advocates of laboratory science in the United States. Welch engineered the medical profession’s response to the formal legislation proposed by antivivisectionists. She explains how Welch introduced the techniques of Robert Koch, the leading German bacteriologist at the turn of the century, to the American medical community. Welch furthered the development of laboratory medical sciences in America by founding a journal in 1896 for the publication of original American research. According to Lederer, “Although Welch feared that he would be unable to obtain manuscripts of sufficient quality for the journal, he was soon overwhelmed by papers of impressive quality being submitted to his Journal of Experimental Medicine.”687

Writing from the Sheffield Laboratory of Physiological Chemistry at Yale University in 1923, Dr. Lafayette Mendel wrote to his former graduate student Helen Mitchell, “I want to tell you confidentially that Dr. Slosson took the opportunity, in a


687 Lederer, Subjected to Science, 56–57.
personal letter to me, to pay you a compliment in reference to some of the educational work which you undertake." Mitchell was testing the dietary conditions in the context of rat fertility. Mendel was referring to chemist Dr. Edwin Emery Slosson, who served on the Committee for Popular Education for the American Eugenics Society. It was Slosson who asserted, "A human life is nothing compared to a new fact in science."

Born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, Dr. Helen S. Mitchell attended Mount Holyoke College where she earned her degree in physiological chemistry and physics. In 1918, she attended graduate school at Yale University where she studied with Lafayette Mendel. She noted: "I was granted tuition scholarships for all three years. They were going begging because the boys were away at war.... After reviewing several possible subjects for a thesis, I chose 'The Choice of adequate and inadequate diets by rats and mice.' It involved feeding several groups of both species with both types of 'synthetic' diets as they were called in those days. At the time I was doing this feeding only three vitamins were really known: Fat soluble A, Water soluble B, and Water soluble C." Upon graduation in 1921, she went to Battle Creek College where she worked as a professor of home economics. Captivated by the topic of nutritional anemia, Mitchell published more than sixty papers throughout her career on discoveries through her own work and others. While at Battle Creek, Mitchell worked closely with Lenna Cooper. Together, they published the first edition (1928) of Nutrition in Health and Disease. In 1978, E. Neige Todhunter celebrated a special anniversary of the book. The book, familiarly known as the "Cooper, Barber, and Mitchell" book, reached the sixteenth edition. Todhunter

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688 Lafayette Mendel to Helen Mitchell, December 1, 1923, Box 2, Folder 2, Helen Mitchell Collection, Eskind Biomedical Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.
characterized it as one of the most valuable resources for historians of nutrition and diet. And, she cited the books sold as exceeding one million. It was also translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, and Sinhalese. 692

“Dr. John Harvey Kellogg came to New Haven to interview me personally,” Mitchell reflected. “He must have made the opportunity seem so attractive that I accepted on May 11, 1921.” 693 Mitchell accepted the position of Research Director of the Nutrition Laboratory with Battle Creek Sanitarium. “Very soon after I had established the research lab at Battle Creek, I was asked to speak to patients at the Battle Creek Sanitarium and later to teach in the school of Dietetics Dr. Kellogg had founded. In 1924, this became Battle Creek College, specializing in Nutrition and Nursing and Physical Education.” That year, Mitchell was appointed professor at Battle Creek College. She remained at Battle Creek until 1935. 694 In her reflections, she noted that while she was at Battle Creek, she had the opportunity to attend the meetings of the Federation of Experimental Biology and Medicine throughout the 1920s. She also noted that before the specific dietetic and nutrition journals were established, she published her papers in the American Journal of Physiology and the Journal of Biological Chemistry and the Proceedings of the Society of Experimental Biology and Medicine. 695 During World War II, Mitchell served as the “principal nutritionist” in the Office of Defense, Health, and Welfare. After

692 E. Neige Todhunter, “A Special Anniversary,” Box 1, Folder 1, Helen Swift Mitchell Papers, Eskind Biomedical Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.
695 “Biographical Note: Helen Swift Mitchell, Ph.D.” Box 1, Folder 1, Helen Swift Mitchell Papers, Eskind Biomedical Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.
the war, she served as Dean of the School of Home Economics at Massachusetts State College in Amherst. She retired from Massachusetts State College in 1960. 696

Dietitians also celebrated French physiologist Claude Bernard (1813–1878), who worked with glycogenesis, as another important pioneer to the dietetic profession. Bernard established that the experimental method was the most important procedure in the acquisition of medical and scientific knowledge. 697 He designated clinical research as the third pillar of medical knowledge, but Bernard also insisted that there were limits. He asserted that researchers were never entitled to sacrifice the interests of the subject for the benefits of others. Writing in 1865, in *An Introduction to the Study of Experimental Medicine*, Bernard articulated the ethical boundaries of human experimentation. According to Bernard, “The principle of medical and surgical morality, therefore, consists in never performing on man an experiment which might be harmful to him to any extent, even though the result might be highly advantageous to science.” 698 Long before the Nuremburg Code, the ethical boundaries of human experimentation were again articulated by professor of medicine William Osler, who in 1907 emphasized that the principle of consent had to govern the research. 699 How researchers negotiated these injunctions depended upon the ambiguous definitions over the degree of risk to the patients.

For a clinical nutritionist such as Dr. Joseph Goldberger, institutional feeding held great promise for advancements in nutrition research, but it also required the cooperation in the service of specific foods to large control groups. The pellagra

696 “Biographical Note: Helen Swift Mitchell, Ph.D.” Box 1, Folder 1, Helen Swift Mitchell Papers, Eskind Biomedical Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.
experiments are particularly relevant to the professionalization of dietetics because the ADA held Goldberger in such high esteem and considered his experiments significant chapters of their own professional history. In the United States, pellagra did not become a matter of critical public concern until 1908. Sporadic cases occurred in various parts of the country, but it was a particular menace among African Americans and poor tenant farmers in the southern states. Historian Alan Kraut writes: "At a time which most physicians regarded germ theory as the causal explanation, or paradigm, for all forms of disease, Goldberger hypothesized that pellagra was triggered by a flawed diet. Thus, his first battle was against a deficiency of understanding."\(^{700}\)

On September 7, 1916, the New York Times announced the conclusion of an experiment conducted by the U.S. Public Health Service at two orphan asylums in Jackson, Mississippi. The story began in February 1914 when Dr. Joseph Goldberger received official word of his assignment to tackle the mystery of pellagra from Dr. Rupert Blue, former Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service. The U.S. Public Health Service selected the textile town of Spartanburg, in the upper piedmont of South Carolina, as a field headquarters for its campaign. Goldberger subsequently toured the South, state by state, visiting pellagrains. People with light cases of pellagra experienced skin lesions, indigestion, a red tongue, and a burning sensation in the mouth. The more serious cases of pellagra induced the three "Ds"—severe diarrhea, dermatitis, and dementia. Historian Susan Thoms writes: "Men and women differed in some symptoms. In men, the first sign of the disease often occurred as a rash on the scrotum. In women, the dementia took a peculiar form, convincing victims—no matter their age or level of sexual activity—that they were pregnant."\(^{701}\) It affected primarily the poor and working segments of society, with more frequent cases in textile mill towns and southern prisons,

\(^{700}\) Kraut, Goldberger's War, 7.
mental hospitals, and orphanages where invariable diets routinely consisted primarily of corn and wheat.

Goldberger began one of his first experiments at a Baptist orphan asylum in Jackson, Mississippi, where 60 percent of the children had pellagra in the spring. By adding an egg and a glass of milk at breakfast and lunch and a piece of lean meat with vegetables at dinner, "the astounding result was that in a few months he had not one case of pellagra," his wife said in her speech to the ADA. Goldberger also conducted an experiment at the Georgia State Sanitarium in Milledgeville, where he added milk, eggs, and lean meat for one group and maintained a control group on a heavy grain diet. After a few weeks, pellagra symptoms of the group that received milk, eggs, and lean meat began to fade. Goldberger also carried out a notable experiment at the farm of the Mississippi State Penitentiary. The penitentiary, located about eight miles east of Jackson, Mississippi, had no history of pellagra. Goldberger sought the cooperation of Governor Earl Brewer who offered a "volunteer squad" the exchange of pardon for allowing Goldberger to test "the possibility of producing pellagra in the healthy human, white, adult male, by a restricted, one-sided mainly carbohydrate (cereal) diet." His findings confirmed that a well-balanced diet would prevent pellagra. The final words on the scientific origins of pellagra would not be confirmed until 1937, when Dr. Conrad Elvehjem from the University of Wisconsin isolated nicotinic acid, a B-complex vitamin, as the specific dietary deficiency that causes pellagra.

704 Nicotinic acid was produced through the oxidation of nicotine. But, the name was changed to "niacin" as a marketing scheme intended to keep the product from being associated with the negative perceptions of highly addictive nicotine. Then, during the 1940s, niacin became an additive to commercially produced white bread in the United States. "This simple step," writes historian Susan Thoms, "stopped pellagra in its tracks." See Susan Thoms, "Joseph Goldberger
In the years leading up to World War I, dietitians struggled to secure their place among other professional societies. It is difficult to determine the extent to which trained dietitians were directly involved in Goldberger’s orphan or inmate experiments because most of their professional writings were not published until after the creation of the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* in June 1925. In what would be his last public appearance before his death, Goldberger presented his work on pellagra at the ADA’s eleventh annual convention, held in Washington, D.C., in 1928. “He could scarcely speak above a whisper,” recalled Mary Barber. Goldberger continued to face criticism from members of the medical community throughout the twenties, but, arguably, he demonstrated that eugenics or environmental reform—specifically rooted in economic and social factors—was critical to the prevention and causation of disease.

By the early 1970s, the ADA was recovering from a serious financial crisis, and the issue of human experimentation and biomedical ethics was under intense fire, particularly in Alabama. Less than two years earlier, the Associated Press broke the frightening news that the U.S. Public Health Service had been conducting a non-therapeutic study for more than forty years on the effects of untreated syphilis on African American men in Macon County, Alabama, in and around the county seat of Tuskegee. One of the most prominent nutritionists, mentioned earlier in this chapter for her writings and the Fight Against Pellagra,” *Carologue: A Publication of the South Carolina Historical Society* 19, no. 3 (fall 2003): 18.

705 Cassell, *Carry the Flame*, 55.

706 Because Goldberger’s experiments were conducted under the auspices of the U.S. Public Health Service, it is important briefly to comment on the role of dietitians within it. The trained dietitian appeared in the U.S. Public Health Service for the first time in September of 1919. When the Marine hospitals were organized in 1870, the supervising surgeon managed the food regulations while the steward handled the food preparations and service. It was not until the fall of 1919 that a dietetic section under the leadership of superintendent of dietitians, Hallie Corsette, was officially organized within the U.S. Public Health Service. According to Mary Barber, “Most of her time was spent in the field developing the various hospital dietary departments and recruiting dietitians, of which there were approximately 85 at the close of 1919. This number had doubled by 1921.” Dr. William Walsh, Hospital Division, U.S. Public Health Service appeared on the second annual ADA convention program in Cincinnati in 1919. See Barber, *History of the American Dietetic Association*, 26, 253–254.

707 Barber, *History of the American Dietetic Association*, 44.
about the history of dietetics and nutrition, E. Neige Todhunter, was not a stranger to
scientific experimentation on human subjects. Todhunter, a native of New Zealand, began
her studies in the United States in 1928 under the tutelage of Henry Sherman at Columbia
University. After teaching at the State University of Washington in Pullman, she moved
to Alabama, where she remained active for the next five decades of her life. In 1953, she
was appointed Dean of Home Economics at the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa.
Todhunter served on the University of Alabama faculty from 1941 until 1966. She was
instrumental in the creation of the first school to operate a research laboratory of human
nutrition with a full-time staff in a separate state university. \(^{708}\) The General Education
Board of the Rockefeller Foundation funded the initiative. Under Todhunter’s leadership,
nutritionists and dietitians supported experimentation on human subjects through
institutions such as asylums, reformatories, orphanages, and prisons, to research dietary
problems unique to the South.

Concern over the use of human subjects in clinical research became a matter of
intense public scrutiny in the mid-sixties and early seventies when a series of experiments
conducted with disregard for patients’ rights was revealed in the press. We know from
the work of historian Susan Lederer that a significant body of thought about the ethical
boundaries of human research evolved in the early twentieth century. However, it was not
until the 1940s that the American Medical Association included voluntary consent in its
code of ethics. \(^{709}\) Some of the cases making headlines in the mid-sixties and early
seventies included the Willowbrook State School (Staten Island) hepatitis vaccine
research on institutionalized children; the Jewish Chronic Disease Hospital (Montefiore)
cancer research, involving the injection of cancer cells into elderly nursing home


\(^{709}\) Susan Lederer, \textit{Subjected to Science: Human Experimentation in America Before the Second
World War} (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 141.
residents; and perhaps the most notorious, the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. In 1974, the same year as the publication of Weigley's article, "It Might Have Been Euthenics," Congress passed the National Research Act that guaranteed formal protections for human subjects, including written consent and institutional review boards.

Todhunter moved from Tuscaloosa to Nashville, Tennessee, in 1966 at the invitation of a Vanderbilt nutritionist named William Darby. That year marked a critical time in the controversy over biomedical ethics in human experimentation. In June of 1966, Dr. Henry Knowles Beecher, a Harvard anesthesiologist, exposed the common practice of nonconsensual testing and medical experimentation on human subjects in an essay published in the *Journal of New England Medicine.* But, Todhunter's philosophy regarding the use of human subjects for nutritional experimentation was already in print. "The ideal 'guinea pig' for study of human nutrition is, of course, man himself," she asserted in her paper, "Development of Knowledge in Nutrition: Human Experiments." Todhunter further claimed that, "By 1900, human experiments began to get well under way." With deference to science—over subjects' human rights—she propagated the

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711 Henry Knowles Beecher was born Harry Unangst in Peck, Kansas, in 1904. In a supreme twist of irony, he changed his name to Henry Knowles Beecher as a tribute to the famous Congregationalist minister Henry Ward Beecher, the brother of Catherine Beecher. Catherine Beecher authored what is considered the first study of home economics, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy* (1841).

712 In her essay, originally presented at the Seminar for Dietitians, University of Texas Southwestern Medical School, Dallas, on December 2, 1961, Todhunter traced the employment of human experiments from the Book to Daniel (1:3–20) to twentieth-century scientific studies on humans. See E. Neige Todhunter, "Development of Knowledge in Nutrition: Human Experiments," Beeuwekes, Todhunter, Weigley, eds., *Essays on the History of Nutrition and Dietetics*, 48–53.

713 "Development of Knowledge in Nutrition: Human Experiments," Beeuwekes, Todhunter, Weigley, eds., *Essays on the History of Nutrition and Dietetics*, 48–53. This paper was first presented at the Seminar for Dietitians, University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in
importance of a 1917 experiment conducted by D. Marine and O.P. Kimball on ten thousand girls in fifth through twelfth grades in Akron, Ohio, in search of the relation of iodine deficiency to thyroid enlargement. She also highlighted the success of an experiment with children reported by the British Medical Research Council in 1926.

It seems that human nutrition research experiments were not a matter of secrecy or confidentiality in the twenties. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that nutrition experts were advocating the establishment of human experiment stations in 1926. Journalist Frederic J. Haskin asserted, “Progress is being made, it is pointed out, as a result of the splendid work being done in Home Economics Departments, in modern hospital practice, in children’s clinics, and in the educational campaigns that are being undertaken by major food industries.” In the mid-twenties the New York City Department of Public Welfare called for dietitians’ support of special dieting studies, specifically for testing the pernicious anemia diet of “Murphy and Minot” and other nutrition procedures for adults and babies. One announcement called for student and graduate dietitians to participate “from time to time” in the Department of Public Welfare which consisted of “twelve large institutions, accommodating general hospital patients, tubercular patients, neurological cases, cancer, maternity cases, defective children, the aged and infirm, children in hospitals and city lodgers.” The advertisement called for the labor of dietitians and cited more than fourteen thousand people being sheltered and fed in the institutions of the department. They also cited the administration of $1.7 million annually for food in the dietary department.

Dallas on December 2, 1961, and reprinted in the ADA Fiftieth Anniversary commemorative anthology.


In 1966, when Todhunter moved from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa to Vanderbilt University in Nashville, she began working as an assistant visiting professor of nutrition. She also had a contract from the National Institutes of Health to “work on nutrition terminology and on several grants and projects” with William Darby.\textsuperscript{716} On April 1, 1977, the History of Nutrition Collection, now housed at the Eskind Biomedical Library, came into being. According to librarian Mary Teloh, who manages the Eskind Nutrition Collection, Todhunter was responsible for encouraging her colleagues to contribute their papers to the nutrition collection.

William Darby had a unique interest in controlling the accessibility of materials related to nutrition in Vanderbilt’s special collections. He was instrumental in a wartime experiment on the long-term effects of radioactive isotope on low-income, white, pregnant women who were coerced into consuming a radioactive “cocktail” at the Vanderbilt University Prenatal Nutrition Clinic.\textsuperscript{717} The study was part of a larger Vanderbilt Cooperative Study of Maternal and Infant Nutrition. The project was funded by the Nutrition Foundation, the International Health Division of the Rockefeller Foundation, the U.S. Public Health Service, the Tennessee Department of Public Health, and Distillation Products, Inc. The Vanderbilt Prenatal Clinic study with radioactive iron began in September 1945 and concluded in May 1947.\textsuperscript{718}

In October 1944, the ADA handed the gavel to the incoming president-elect, Maniza Moore from Vanderbilt University. The following year, at the twenty-eighth annual meeting, Moore emphasized the federal support provided for a national nutrition program to remedy some of the defects in the diet of the present generation and to prevent widespread malnutrition in the future.\footnote{Cassell, \textit{Carry the Flame}, 148.} And, the president-elect, Bessie West, addressed the ADA House of Delegates with her presentation, “Some Radiations from Atomic Energy.” West said, “I propose rather to call your attention to a simple, brief description of the tremendous force that men and women have been able to consolidate with the bomb, and to draw some analogy to our work in this Association.” In her presentation, West projected ADA plans for the coming year. “In keeping with the start of a new era, the atomic age,” as she said, the ADA leadership invited Dr. James Doull (medical director of the U.S. Public Health Service), Dr. John Youmans, and Dr. William Darby as special guests for their 1946 annual meeting at the Netherland Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati.\footnote{John B. Youmans (1893–1968) joined the Vanderbilt University staff in 1927 where he studied human nutrition. He remained at Vanderbilt until he was commissioned in the U.S. Army Medical Service in 1944. Colonel Youmans served as Chief of the Nutrition Division of the Preventative Medicine Service of the Surgeon General’s office.} Approximately two thousand dietitians gathered for the meeting.

In the late 1980s, Eileen Welsome, a reporter for the \textit{Albuquerque Tribune}, stumbled upon Army documents indicating that humans had been injected with plutonium to see how their bodies reacted and how much their bodies retained. She obtained interviews with family members, survivors, and officials, and her findings led to her Pulitzer Prize–winning series in the \textit{Tribune} in November 1993. Welsome’s series prompted Secretary of Energy Hazel O’Leary and President Bill Clinton to establish an Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experiments to review the matter and establish a policy of full disclosure. In her 1999 book based on the same subject, \textit{The}
Plutonium Files: America’s Secret Medical Experiments in the Cold War, Welsome dedicates a chapter to the Vanderbilt study.

Welsome recounts the story of a young researcher, Dr. Paul Hahn, who arrived at Vanderbilt University in 1943 with a stack of published reports and five years’ experience using radioisotopes. Hahn was one of the first scientists, according to Welsome, to take advantage of the Atomic Energy Commission’s radioisotope distribution program, and he received the largest number of radioisotope shipments in the country in 1947.\(^{721}\) The radioactive iron experiment was part of a larger nutrition study that focused on how a woman’s diet and nutrition impacted pregnancy, delivery, and the condition of her infant. At the Vanderbilt Prenatal Clinic, unsuspecting female subjects were told they were drinking a vitamin-loaded, nutritional “cocktail.” The female subjects later reported that it was fizzy and sweet and tasted like cherry Coke. Welsome also noted, “William Darby, a young nutritionist, was in charge of the overall study.”\(^{722}\)

Years later, in 1964, “a new group of researchers” at Vanderbilt decided to follow up on the study. It took three more years for researchers to process the prenatal clinic records and identify mothers who received the radioactive iron. The findings, summarized by Dr. Ruth Hagstrom and S. R. Glasser, were finally reported in a 1969 issue of The Journal of American Epidemiology under the title, “Long Term Effects of Radioactive Iron Administered during Human Pregnancy.”\(^{723}\) The subjects in the research trial were not told about the radioactive iron in the follow-up study questionnaires or about the results of the study.

It is difficult to precisely ascertain the extent to which dietitians were specifically involved in carrying out the original Vanderbilt study or the follow-up. But, I believe

\(^{721}\) Eileen Welsome, The Plutonium Files: America’s Secret Medical Experiments in the Cold War (New York: Dell Publishing, 1999), 221.

\(^{722}\) Welsome, The Plutonium Files, 222.

they played a collaborative and supporting role. "The Vanderbilt Cooperative Study of Maternal and Infant Nutrition," received for publication in the *Journal of Nutrition* on August 10, 1953, built upon the numerous reports of investigations on the influence of maternal nutrition upon the course of pregnancy or the health of the infant. For example, the Vanderbilt study employed methods and procedures first published in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* as a "short method of calculating the nutritive contents of diets as studied and adopted for Middle Tennessee by Steinkamp, Robinson, and Kaser (1945). The validity of this procedure was discussed in the original description of the method and has been further examined by Kaser, Steinkamp, Robinson, Patton, and Youmans (1947)."  

Post-war human dietary experiments also took place at the Biomedical Research Laboratory affiliated with Elgin State Mental Hospital in Elgin, Illinois. One study submitted for publication in the summer of 1949 revealed in detail the studies of the effects of riboflavin depletion of 39 subjects who were chosen after evaluating the qualities of several hundred mental patients. The investigators noted, "Choice was based upon chronicity of mental illness, excellence of physical condition, and the presence of a reasonable amount of emotional stability." The patients were fed strict diets and subjected to daily clinical examinations (including, but not limited to) tests of neurological reflex, vibration sense and auditory acuity, visual acuity, mental and psychological fatigue, dermal lesions, severe scrotal dermatitis, urinary excretions, and tear flow. Additionally, the patients were subjected to a photographic record of their "gait, face, tongue, lips, genitals, and finger capillaries." The authors acknowledged the support and cooperation of the "research unit" comprised of nurses, psychologists,
laboratory staff, cooks, and the dietitians, Miss Gordon Sampson and Mrs. Mary Meyers. The authors of the Elgin riboflavin study also cited the collaborative riboflavin dietary studies published in the 1949 issue of the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*.

Clear evidence directly linking dietitians (or the ADA) specifically to the Vanderbilt experiment or the follow-up study is difficult to find because much of the material has been lost or destroyed. We do know that dietitian Maniza Moore of Vanderbilt presided over the ADA at the time Hahn and Darby launched the prenatal nutrition study. We also know that the timing and motivation behind Todhunter’s move from Tuscaloosa to Nashville coincided with the Hagstrom follow-up study. Finally, Darby’s involvement with the ADA as an honored guest at the 1946 ADA annual meeting and his continued role in the professionalization of dietetics as one of nine members on the 1970 Study Commission on Dietetics implies a degree of cooperation.


726 In the oral history of Dr. John Gofman, as part of Hazel O’Leary’s 1993 Openness Initiative with the Human Radiation Experiments, Gofman provides an example that describes utilizing the service of dietitian Virginia Dobbin at the University of California (Berkeley) Cowell Hospital for some of his human experiments with low- and high-cholesterol diets. Gofman was selected for the oral history program because he co-discovered Uranium-233 and was involved with isolating the first milligram of plutonium. Gofman reflected: “[Bill Donalds, Chief Physician at Cowell] introduced me to Virginia Dobbin. They set up a diet table and I had between four and eight people eating lunch and dinner at Cowell Hospital. Virginia did all the menus. I would tell her we would like to have a high-cholesterol diet or a low-cholesterol diet, a high-fat diet or a low-fat diet, or a high-animal-fat diet or a low-animal-fat diet. Alex Nichols—at that time (he’s a professor in the Division of Medical Physics) [he] was a graduate student of mine who got his Ph.D. with me—co-handled that whole diet study. We did a lot of human experimentation in this sense. We had both some students and some of these people referred from around the world. We would have them on one diet or another and we would study their blood every week—[of course, all these people knew these were experimental studies.] And, we didn’t get any permission from anybody to do it, but they never got any radioactivity. We had that diet table running at Cowell Hospital for a few years. We had excellent cooperation from Virginia Dobbin, and my wife, and Hardin’s wife and Tom Lyon’s wife. Tom was a cardiologist in San Jose who worked with us, providing us clinical material. The [wives] wrote a book on the low-fat, low-cholesterol diet in 1951.” See “Human Radiation Studies: Remembering the Early Years, Oral History with Dr. John Gofman, M.D., Ph.D.” Conducted December 20, 1994, United States Department of Energy, Office of Human Radiation Experiments, June 1995.
and suggests that Darby well understood and valued the support of dietitians in research on human nutrition—particularly in the context of group feeding in institutions. It also implies that dietitians endorsed reigning assumptions about the "flexibility" of ethical boundaries of human experimentation and they held the physicians in charge of the experiments in highest esteem.

As collaborators in the establishment of the Ekind Nutrition Collection, I believe Darby and Todhunter may have taken a close inventory of their records in accordance with new standards for the ethical treatment of human subjects. Todhunter died in 1991. She did not live long enough to witness Vanderbilt's formal apology on public record in open court in the class-action lawsuit led by Emma Craft for the unethical toxic exposure of radioactive iron that nutritionists at Vanderbilt imposed upon unsuspecting pregnant women. The case was settled in 1998. According to Craft's attorney, Don Arbitblit, who described Darby as "remarkably dismissive" in his deposition, Craft would not consider any terms of settlement without a formal apology from Vanderbilt in open court. Craft received her "cocktail" of radioactive iron when she was thirteen weeks pregnant with her daughter Carolyn. Carolyn died on August 28, 1958, after a two-year battle with synovial sarcoma that started in her right thigh and spread up her spine, into her heart, lungs, and throat. Carolyn was eleven years old. Arbitblit said that Craft knew the settlement would not bring her daughter back, but she sought comfort in the justice of a formal apology. According to Arbitblit, Craft would not consider any terms of settlement without that apology.

Historian David J. Rothman testified on behalf of the plaintiffs on two critical points. The first point Rothman addressed concerned the ethical standards that governed

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729 Interview by the author with Don Arbitblit, April 17, 2008.
730 Interview by the author with Don Arbitblit, April 17, 2008.
medical research at the time the women were given radioactive iron. Citing a 1914 Supreme Court decision enunciated by Benjamin Cardozo in *Schloendorff v. Society of New York Hospital*, Rothman explained that if standards of ethical treatment were mandated in 1914, they also carried legal weight at the time of the Vanderbilt study. On the second point, Rothman was asked to offer his expert opinion about what was understood at the time of the study about the risks of ingesting radioactive substances. Rothman concluded, "Feeding radioactive iron to human subjects represents a manifest example of non-therapeutic research, and as such, the investigators were ethically required to inform the subjects of the fact of the experiment, the details of the experiment, the risks of the experiment, and obtain their consent to participate." For Rothman, other invasive research studies with radioactive substances also came to light. He noted the disturbing discovery that Vanderbilt researchers also intentionally inserted radioactive sodium in the “traumatized” vaginas of seven women who had just given birth to study rates of absorption. Ultimately, Rothman noted that when Vanderbilt attorneys finally agreed to the settlement and began to present the apology to the judge, the judge interrupted the attorney and asked him to turn around and face the plaintiff. Not long after the settlement, in 2001, Darby suffered a heart attack and died at the age of eighty-seven.

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CONCLUSION

Some historians have argued that white, middle-class, native-born Protestant women's advances in terms of suffrage and prohibition in the two decades preceding the Great Depression unleashed a cultural backlash included a heightened emphasis on women's role in feeding the family. What remains obscure, perhaps even enigmatic, however is the role of white, middle-class, native-born, Protestant women themselves, and dietitians' in particular, in facilitating that shift. As men filtered home from war, a new army of dietetic experts shaped new visions for consumer behaviors that increasingly emphasized native-born, white, Protestant women’s responsibility for feeding the family and feeding the state. I believe it was the unique bond of military service that ultimately secured a national network of academic, institutional, and market cooperation among dietitians throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Many of the Great War dietitians returned to leadership positions prominent academic, medical, and commercial food departments across the United States. If the specific examples of all the dietitians’ postwar successes are impossible to itemize by name, the cultural power they effectuated is equally profound and evasive.

On behalf of ARC dietitians, Cooper continued to lobby for official inclusion in the Army Medical Department throughout the interwar years. Opposition to the passage first hinged on the cost involved; second, opposition centered on the peacetime inclusion of “non-essential” occupational therapy aides in the bill. The chief adversary was the Secretary of War Harry W. Woodring. He argued that occupational therapists were deemed essential only in times of war and therefore not necessary adjuncts in the Medical
Department. 734 Morris Sheppard, with the support of Georgia representative Carl Vinson, lobbied on their behalf again in 1940 and 1941 – on these occasions he pushed only for the military status of dietitians and physiotherapists.

Army dietitians did not receive full military status until the enactment of Public Law 80-36. This law, titled the Army-Navy Nurse Act of 1947, established the Army Nurse Corps and the Women’s Medical Specialist Corps in the Regular Army. Dietitians, physical therapists, and occupational therapists did not receive permanent military status until the passage of this law. 735 On April 16, 1947, President Harry S. Truman signed the Army Navy Nurses Act of 1947 (Public Law 80-36) upgrading nurses’ military status of relative rank to permanent commissions. Approximately 894 nurses were integrated into the Regular Army. It was on that day, that Cooper’s dream became a reality. Public Law 80-36, sponsored by Congresswoman Margaret Chase Smith of Maine and subsequently passed by the 80th Congress, also established the Women’s Medical Specialist Corps and authorized Regular Army commissions for dietitians, physical therapists, and occupational therapists.

By formally adhering gender to the official title of the corps, dietitians would struggle to achieve the power, dominance, and legitimacy ultimately inhered in a full profession. Their quest for professional status and full commissioned military rank would demonstrate the power of the armed forces as a crucial apparatus in the establishment of a profession. Conversely, their experiences also reveal the power of the military in the institutionalization of gendered divisions of labor. For eight years, the Women’s Medical Specialist Corps enjoyed the solidarity of an all-female cast. They functioned as an exclusively female and overwhelmingly white organization. During the height of fifties

734 Letter, Harry W. Woodring, Secretary of War, to Senator Morris Sheppard, Chairman, Committee on Military Affairs, U.S. Senate July 7, 1939.
consumerism and affluence, Cold War anxieties, high vacancy rates, and fear of nuclear attack, led the Army to manipulate their admission policies for the Women's Medical Specialist Corps and open their doors to male officers. In 1955, male nurses were also officially accepted in the Army Nurse Corps. In the same year, the title of the Women's Medical Specialist Corps was officially re-designated the Army Medical Specialist Corps and men were granted the opportunity to apply for admission. That the official inclusion of men into the field of dietetics coincided with a host of military experiments on the effects of ionizing radiation research with human subjects in the late forties and early fifties may (or may not) be coincidence.\textsuperscript{736}

In this dissertation, I analyzed the professionalization of dietetics by examining the work of dietitians who labored to bring their methods and sensibilities into the military arena. But, this dissertation is obviously not comprehensive. Their struggle to acquire professional recognition and respect continues today. A hunger still exists for more historical analysis on the role of dietitians and their efforts to combat malnutrition throughout the Great Depression. Writing in 1931, for example, Howard Briggs and Constance Hart asserted that the depression years "deepened the concern over hunger and malnourishment among school children, and many states and municipalities adopted legislation, some of them including appropriations to enable schools to serve noonday meals to their children."\textsuperscript{737} In 1935, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) provided the labor and personnel for staffing school lunch programs on a national scale. At the same time, Congress (Public Law 320) initiated direct purchase of surplus farm products and their distribution to the needy and school lunch programs. Thousands of children


\textsuperscript{737} Howard L. Briggs, and Constance C. Hart, "From Basket Lunches to Cafeterias – A Story of Progress," \textit{Nation's Schools}, 8: 51-5, 1931.
were fed in hundreds of schools in many states. By 1937, fifteen states passed laws specifically authorizing local school boards to operate lunchrooms.\textsuperscript{738} Combined with a number of other factors, the long history of dietetic professionalization continued to stimulate public pressure for the National School Lunch Act of 1946.\textsuperscript{739}

The selective service figures from World War II provided another general health inventory for the U.S. and provided additional statistical evidence to justify the creation of the 1946 National School Lunch Act.\textsuperscript{740} This legislation signals one of many examples in the long history and trajectory of U.S. women's Progressive era reform. The struggle to enact this legislation, was due in no small part to the cultural power that dietitians were able to effectuate throughout the early twentieth century. That one of the 1917 charter ADA members, Emma Smedley advocated for school lunches decades before the legislation was finally enacted illustrates this long tradition of activism. Smedley served as the director of the Department of School Lunches at Philadelphia and was named one of eight officers at the 1917 ADA charter meeting in Cleveland. Dr. Mary deGarmo Bryan also "carried the flame" in the campaign for federal funding for public lunches. Bryan, a World War I dietitian, returned from overseas and served as ADA president from 1920–1922; she is credited with the implementation of a $50 million federal

\textsuperscript{738} The Bureau of Agricultural Economics, USDA, \textit{The School Lunch Program and Agricultural Surplus Disposal}, Miscellaneous Publication No. 467, October 1941.


\textsuperscript{740} Mary de Garmo Bryan reported, "The N.S.L. Act declared it to be the policy of Congress, '...as a measure of national security, to safeguard the health and well being of the Nation's children and to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities and other food by assisting the States, through grants-in-aid and other means, in providing an adequate supply of foods and other facilities for the establishment, maintenance, operation, and expansion of nonprofit school-lunch programs.' It authorized annual appropriations in funds and commodities to be apportioned to the states on a matching basis, according to a state income-school population formula to be disbursed by the state educational agency to schools participating in the program under the Act and to other non-profit school lunch programs." See Mary de Garmo Bryan, "School Lunch" Typescript, Box 4, Folder 18. See Louise Stevens Bryant, \textit{School Feeding: Its History and Practice at Home and Abroad}. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1913. Mary de Garmo Bryan, \textit{The School Cafeteria} (2d edition). New York: F.S. Crofts & Co., 1946 and Emma Smedley, \textit{The School Lunch: Its Organization and Management in Philadelphia} (2d edition). Philadelphia: Innes & Sons, 1930.
program to provide school lunches in 25,000 communities. Bryan asserted, "It [School Lunch Program] has become a significant factor in the national economy, a participant in the health and welfare programs of the nation and the community. It competes for priority in the distribution of funds in these areas as well as in education."  

In 1941, Dr. Hazel Kyrk served with Lucy Gillette and Hazel K. Stiebeling on a committee entitled "Economic Policy and Social Responsibility as Related to Nutrition." Kyrk, Gillette, and Stiebeling recommended the coverage of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938 be expanded and extended. According to historian Landon Storrs, the FLSA epitomized the culmination of four decades of activism by the National Consumers' League (NCL). The legislation created a nationwide minimum wage, a maximum hours standard, and prohibited the employment of minors younger than sixteen. Despite disappointment felt by its chief advocates in the NCL over low standards and limited coverage, the FLSA gave hope and "held potential as a tool for increasing the power of wage earners." Kyrk, Gillett and Stiebeling urged that the FLSA "be extended to include those now excluded, and that the Social Security Act be extended to include domestic and agricultural workers, especially those employed on commercialized and factory-type farms."

743 The committee favored "among other things the maintenance of free collective bargaining among all workers, the elimination of barriers against the employment of Negroes and other minority groups whose nutritional problems are acute by reason of very low incomes, the elimination of taxes on very low incomes, and provision for benefits to workers temporarily or permanently disabled on account of sickness or accident. It was the consensus of this section that Government should take the initiative in increasing the supply of protective foods and should encourage industry to bring on the market such low-cost, highly nutritious foods as soybeans, peanuts, and milk products in forms acceptable to consumers. Surpluses on hand should be saved by suitable processing, if necessary by means of Government subsidies. As the step beyond increasing the supply of protective foods, Section II recommended that essential foods be provided wholly or in part at public expense. This measure should include free school lunches, extension of
Dietetics is an extremely rich area of study and dietetic professionalization encompasses the debates around which historians of U.S. women have in our time have struggled to understand. Though their activism has been overlooked, dietitians yielded tremendous power as arbiters of twentieth century eating habits, food reform, and American attitudes and discourses about race and ethnicity. The topic of dietetics speaks to some of the most fundamental themes of late nineteenth and early twentieth century U.S. women’s history. I have tried to touch upon the ways in which dietetic professionalization was uniquely congruent with many of these themes: reigning ideologies of domesticity, conflicts in overlapping race, class, and gender systems, maternalism and the emergence of a welfare state, sexual politics, Americanization, cultural reproduction as well as reproduction culture, and consumerism. It has been difficult to arrive at definitive answers or concise explanations to such a diverse range of issues. But, the history of dietetics intersects with elements of them all. Throughout the long process of crafting this dissertation, I have found assurance and clarity in always returning to a very basic goal. I have attempted to follow the fundamental course offered by historian Paula Baker in 1984. That is: “[W]omen were also shaped by – and, in turn affected – American government and politics.” And, I have attempted to demonstrate how this history helps to provide yet another dimension of a “new understanding of the political society in which women worked – and which they helped change.”744

the Food Stamp Plan to relief families and to other families whose incomes are inadequate for nutritious diets, and the extension also of Federal-local programs providing milk at low cost. This section recommended in all a five-point program. The program included the services which education can perform, the need for reducing the costs of processing and distribution, and the necessity for further research, and this inclusion confirmed the recommendations of those sections which dealt particularly with these subjects.” See The National Nutrition Conference, Public Health Reports (1896-1970), Vol. 56, No. 24 (June 13, 1941), Association of Schools of Public Health, 1233-1255, esp. 1242.

The quest for professionalization and power in the larger recipe for citizenship, was ultimately a long, experimental process that sustained the heat of many “test” kitchens. Throughout this process, dietetic leaders used many different ingredients, techniques, and adaptations - the most effective, as I have argued, being military service. In the end, it was the gendered dimension of their work that proved to be the greatest source of tension. The gendered dimension of cooking allowed them to carve an indelible imprint on so many facets of American society and culture. But, in the end, gender was also the ultimate foible that prevented their professionalization project from ever being fully baked. 745

Dietetic professionalization illustrates the history of white, native born, middle class, Protestant women’s role in fostering American society’s perspectives about and preoccupations with diet. But, on a much larger scale, it also reveals the origins of powerful contemporary race, class, and gender norms that were gradually adopted by state, medical, military, and social service institutions. Traces of a vague pattern emerge in this long and complex history of dietetic professionalization; slow but sure, the history of dietetic professionalization fostered the gradual progression of diet as a preeminent concern to the state. The U.S. Sanitary Commission ultimately usurped Annie Wittenmyer’s idea for the special diet kitchens during the Civil War. Institutions of higher education gradually incorporated scientific cooking classes in their curriculums and displaced the cooking schools (like the Sarah Tyson Rorer’s New Century Club). Juliet Corson’s surveys of food retail prices from across the United States (quoted in the second edition of her 1879 Cooking School Text Book and Housekeeper’s Guide to Cookery and Kitchen Management) presaged a wealth of studies written in the early

twentieth century about standards of living and patterns of consumption. Decades before the Americanization movement of the twenties gained stamina, leaders of the American cooking schools embraced workers and immigrant populations as a tool for moral and sanitary reform. And, they used food as a cultural pathway to American citizenship. Dietetic professionalization was fueled by the fires and fears of 'race suicide' and intensified by dramatic turn of the century demographic shifts such as declining white, middle-class birthrates and rising immigration rates. Authors of the Smith Lever Act (1914) built upon the principles of eugenics espoused by Ellen Richards. With new developments in science and nutrition, dietitians gradually shifted away from eugenics discourses and into eugenics. Just as the ADA began to achieve national and international recognition, the American Institute of Nutrition (1928) was formed by Lenna Cooper's wartime colleague, John Murlin. In a supreme twist of fate, the U.S. Army took over Battle Creek Sanitarium August of 1942. The state bought the facility with a capacity of one thousand beds at the price of $2.5 million dollars. According to the Defense Logistics Information Service, Percy Jones became the largest U.S. Army medical installation in 1945 with a hospital population of more than eleven thousand patients assigned to three sites in the area. Finally, in 1955, in the midst of a Cold War anxieties and a crucial

747 Historian Elaine Tyler May makes it clear that the White American fertility decline was driven largely by the dramatic drop in the birth rate with the urban middle class. She cites an average of seven children per family in 1800, five or six children per family in 1850, and three or four children per family in 1900. See Elaine Tyler May, *Barren in the Promised Land: Childless Americans and the Pursuit of Happiness* (New York: Basic Books, 1995), 44.
748 John Murlin served as the World War I Chief of the U.S. Army Nutrition Bureau; he was Lenna Cooper's supervisor during the Great War and later earned fame as a nutritionist and pioneer in insulin research.
749 Norman T. Kirk served as the first Commanding Officer of Percy Jones Hospital. General Kirk selected the name of the new hospital in honor of Colonel Percy Lancelot Jones who served as an Army surgeon in the Spanish American War, the Mexican Campaign, and World War I. Kirk served under Jones in 1913. As an Army surgeon, Percy Jones was admired for organizing what was called the finest mobile medical treatment in military history because of his innovations with the concept of the modern battlefield ambulance evacuation services during World War I. He was instrumental in the creation of the U.S. Army Ambulance Corps and retired from the Army in
shift toward private life, the Women's Army Medical Specialist Corps integrated men. Gender was dropped and the corps title became the Army Medical Specialist Corps.750

The occupational categories of physiotherapy and dietetics were nourished in the context of Victorian notions of womanhood and the sensibilities of antebellum, evangelical health reform. Sustained throughout the Civil War, ideas about diet, exercise, and fresh air were reinforced in the last decades of the nineteenth century through the American cooking schools, and ultimately institutionalized in the military setting during World War I.751 That dietitians, physiotherapists, and occupational therapists (collectively known as reconstruction aides) aligned their work with the medical profession to acquire greater status and respect does not undermine the fact that dietetics, physiotherapy and occupational therapy was so inherently linked to women’s conventional roles as caregivers that the military specifically linked womanhood to the corps title: The

1931. He was the superintendent of Harmon Hospital in Erie, Pennsylvania before passing away in 1941. Kirk was appointed to succeed Major General James C. Magee for the position of Surgeon General by President Franklin Roosevelt. Kirk was one of the first medical officials in World War II to make a public statement concerning the progress in the Army venereal disease control campaign. In November of 1953, the hospital closed and was designated as a federal center. See Defense Logistics Information Service: Hart-Dole-Inouye Federal Center, “Percy Jones Hospital Years (1943-1953)” at www.dlis.dla.mil/FederalCenter/Percyyears.asp. I believe that concerns over diet invariably led to concerns over sex and vice versa. As the Army Surgeon General, Major General Kirk asserted, “The Army is cognizant of the upward trend in the incidence of venereal disease in the armed forces and the factors behind it. The control of venereal disease is not along a medical problem, but one with social, moral, law enforcement, and economic aspects which can only be solved through the close cooperation of all the Federal, State, and community agencies involved.” See Granville Larimore, “The Army Venereal Disease Education Program for Demobilization,” Journal of Social Hygiene 31: no. 8 (November 1945), 535. During World War II, Norman Kirk also served as a War Department Representative in a program for venereal disease control in the Caribbean. In the program, they emphasized the necessity for a long-term program as a civilian public health measure. See Reba Rayburn, “National Events: Venereal Disease Control in Caribbean Area,” Journal of Social Hygiene, 29: no. 7 (October 1943), 453. 750 The first male member of the ADA was Captain Claud Samuel Prichett, USA. Prichett served during World War II at the Army Medical Center and in the Food Service Branch, Office of the Quartermaster General in Washington, D.C. See Barber, History of the American Dietetic Association, 210.

751 There are historians who do not agree with this interpretation; Beth Linker, for example, recently argued that physiotherapy (in the larger context of women’s history) must be interpreted as a reaction against Victorian notions of womanhood or as a discontinuity with the conventional role of caregivers. I have attempted to show how they were deeply entwined. Beth Linker, “Strength and Science: Gender, Physiotherapy, and Medicine in Early Twentieth Century America,” Journal of Women's History, 17: no. 3 (Fall 2005), 106.
Women's Medical Specialist Corps. Finally, it was precisely this reigning ideology of femininity (or the alleged idea of women as "natural" caregivers) that allowed dietitians to serve as the bridge between scientific control groups and the medical profession. Behind the cloak of "ideal" womanhood, dietitians labored to effectuate cultural and political change as scientifically trained professionals in the medical arena, the market, the military, and the state.

In this dissertation, I have revealed the complex history of a group of women whose influence transcended far more than just the kitchen. In a 1981 interview, recorded when she was eighty-nine years old, Mary de Garmo Bryan proudly noted, "My students were in almost every type of food service at home and abroad." Dietitians struggled for rank and respect in the U.S. Army as a means of generating professional credibility and claiming fuller expressions of their citizenship. For dietitians seeking economic and political parity in the military workforce, the process of professionalization may not have measured up to the "joy" of cooking. The full extent of dietitians' influence cannot be measured precisely, but there can be no question that dietitians' exerted profound and far-reaching influence not just upon patterns of twentieth century dietary habits - but, also on many aspects of public policy and American culture.
Class of 1908. Battle Creek Sanitarium Nurse Training Program Graduates. Lenna F. Cooper stands in the back row, fourth from the right, next to John Harvey Kellogg. Willard Library, Battle Creek, Michigan.


Ella Eaton Kellogg (1853-1920). Historical Images of Battle Creek Michigan, Willard Library, Battle Creek, Michigan

Lenna F. Cooper (1875-1961) "Cooper Memorial Lecture Series" Pamphlet (Chicago: American Dietetic Association), n.d.

Nurses' Mess, Base Hospital No. 69, Savenay, France. Loretta (Bennis) Maloy Collection, Gift of Mary Claire Fittipaldi. Women In Military Service For America Memorial Foundation, Inc.

Kitchen, Base Hospital No. 204. Loretta (Bennis) Maloy Collection, Gift of Mary Claire Fittipaldi. Women In Military Service For America Memorial Foundation, Inc.
Interior of Special Diet Kitchen, U.S. Army Base Hospital No. 214, Savenay, France. Old Negative No. 16918, National Library of Medicine, History of Medicine Division, Bethesda, Maryland.
Anne T. Upham, ARC Dietitian, General Hospital No. 9, B.E.F. (Lakeside Unit, U.S. Army) Simmons College Archives. "I am so happy in being relieved of the duties from the Nurses' Home, to take up my regular work in the patients' kitchen. There is not plenty of chance for that work and oh! So interesting. I supervise the work in the kitchen because with the army ration, there is no planning of menus for the patients as in a hospital at home. I see that the patients on liquid diet get variety, that special cases get the right food, and then there are so many surgical cases, which owing to loss of blood need building up. I have been at it a week and manage to keep pretty busy." -- Anne Upham, "Letters from Alumnae," *The Simmons Quarterly*, 8: no. 2, Part I (February 1918), 18-20.

Marjorie Hulsizer Copher. ARC Dietitian, Peter Bent Brigham, Base Hospital No. 57, Paris, Simmons College Archives

Georgia Finley, awaiting debarkation for France, wrote diary entries and letters to her father about her visits to Brooklyn to hear Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis speak at Plymouth. She observed military nurses being “put through the paces” at Ellis and noted that they have “not learned to turn corners.” Finley reasoned, “[Military drills] enhance morale...since [the women] are living in close contact with each other, it will keep them free from petty irritations and their minds and bodies more vigorous if there is some systematic exercise out of door each day.” She also noted, “If my life depends upon my knowledge of French, I fear I shall not escape the enemy. I hope I shall not have French women to direct at least until I get started.” Finley Diary Entry, November 10-11, 1917. Barnhart MSS. Lilly Library, Indiana University.

ARC dietitian Hortense E. Wind died on December 10, 1918 at Portsmouth Naval Hospital in Norfolk, Virginia. She was one of six dietitians to die during the Great War. Wind was originally from Council Bluffs, Iowa. Iowa State University, Special Collections, Ames, Iowa
Rachel Watkins, ARC Dietitian. Barnes Hospital, St. Louis Unit, Base Hospital No. 21 of the Washington University Medical School. Women In Military Service For America Memorial Foundation, Inc.
Interior of Officer’s Mess at Base Hospital No. 4 (Lakeside Unit) Carrie B. Crites Collection, Gift of Franklin Conrad. Women In Military Service For America Memorial Foundation, Inc.

Patient Mess Hall, U.S. Hospital No. 24, Fort Snelling, Minnesota. Women In Military Service For American Memorial Foundation, Inc.

Symptoms of pellagra, a dietary deficiency disease, include dermatitis, dementia, bowel problems, and ultimately death. This pen and watercolor is labeled with the words, "Primary erythema with beginning recessive changes." John Carroll (1892-1959) Pellagra Watercolors. Nutrition Collection, Eskind Biomedical Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.

Laboratory Animals Under Observation at Battle Creek Sanitarium.  
Willard Library, Battle Creek, Michigan [n.d.] 

Daily Exercises at Battle Creek Sanitarium, Battle Creek, Michigan [n.d.]  
Willard Library, Battle Creek, Michigan
Sent to Mary de Garmo from Harriet Rebecca Harper (age six) with her prize ribbons from the 1913 Better Baby Contest. Harper wrote: “My dear Mrs. de Garmo: -- May this glad day of meeting here bring lasting joy to thee.” MS 1879, Mrs. Frank de Garmo Papers, Box 1, Folder 14, Photos of Better Babies Contests, Shreveport, Louisiana, 1913-1916. University of Tennessee Special Collections Library, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Mary deGarmo Bryan, President of the American Dietetic Association (1920-1922) MSS 1879, University of Tennessee Special Collections Library, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Lenna Cooper Visiting with Students in Battle Creek, [n.d.] Nutrition Collection, Eskind Biomedical Library, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.
Percy Jones Army Hospital, Battle Creek, Michigan. Former Battle Creek Sanitarium. Willard Library, Battle Creek, Michigan
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THESES AND DISSERTATIONS


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University of Florida, Tampa—Baldwin/Tracy Correspondence
University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee—Hoskins Library
Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee—Eskind Medical Library
Tennessee State Library and Archives

Mid-Atlantic
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American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Mary McLeod Bethune House, Washington, D.C., National Park Service
National Archives, College Park, Maryland
National Archives, Washington, D.C.
Women In Military Service For America Memorial Foundation, Inc.

Midwest
Special Collections, Parks Library, Iowa State University
Grinnell College Special Collections, Grinnell, Iowa
Iowa Women's Archives, Iowa City, Iowa
State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa
Herbert Hoover Presidential Library, West Branch, Iowa
Lily Library, University of Indiana, Bloomington, Indiana
Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan
Willard Library, Battle Creek, Michigan

New England
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Digital
Mann Library, Home Economics Archive (HEARTH), Cornell University
American Memory, Library of Congress


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Interview by the author with Donald Arbitblit on April 17, 2008.
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