

Vogue in Britain: Authenticity and the Creation of Competitive Advantage in the UK

Magazine Industry

Introduction

*Wherever people live graciously – wherever fashion is in force, there you will find Vogue. The reason for Vogue’s international (even world-wide) leadership in its field is because it deals with the interests of smart and cultivated women in an authoritative, timely and beautiful manner. Advertisers in Vogue reach an incomparably rich market with the maximum degree of effectiveness.<sup>1</sup>*

During the Second World War the increased participation of women in factory production led to a sharp rise in workplace accidents. According to the Chief Inspector of Factories the accident rate in factory work for adult females rose ninety percent from 1938 to 1941, despite the view that women in general were in less dangerous jobs than men and were usually more careful workers.<sup>2</sup> The fundamental reason for this rise in the number of accidents involving women was the greater employment of female factory labour, but one preventable element of the problem was due to the fact that women’s hair, worn long in the current fashion, was prone to being caught up in the machinery, and firsthand accounts of women being scalped were not uncommon.<sup>3</sup> Harry Yoxall, the Managing Director of Condé Nast Publications in the UK, related one unorthodox approach taken to improving this situation by Ernest Bevin, the Minister of Labour and National Service. Bevin wanted the editor of *Vogue* ‘to make long hair unfashionable.’ The prevailing view of the London editorial office was that the magazine reported on, rather than made, fashion, but in the national interest it was agreed that the magazine would emphasise the trend towards shorter hair observable in France and the

United States. According to Yoxall, ‘within a few months Absalom-type accidents had disappeared from our workshops.’<sup>4</sup> It would appear that the opinion of *Vogue* fed through to the workplace.

In the inter-war period the British edition of *Vogue* magazine had come from being a low-circulation loss-making American publication to one which was not only highly profitable, but was able to authentically influence British women’s fashion decisions. The reason for this success was primarily based on the development of a business strategy that sought not only to understand and target a select readership, but also to provide an authentic link to the world of fashion on behalf of their advertising clients. In the execution of this strategy, the management of Condé Nast and their editorial departments went from being passive commentators to active participants in the fashion and apparel industries, creating competencies that competitor firms in the long-established British women’s magazine industry found impossible to replicate.

This paper begins by outlining the role played by fashion in the development of woman’s magazines in the UK prior to the arrival of *Vogue*, and demonstrates that the reconfiguration of the fashion magazine market by US-based publishers such as Condé Nast and W.R. Hearst allowed them to create a high-value niche-market founded on strong relationships with their readers, advertisers and, critically, the fashion industry itself. In particular, the paper analyses the success of the focused business strategy developed between the wars by Condé Nast as exemplified by its flagship title *Vogue*.

### The Early British Woman’s Magazine Industry

By the launch of the British edition of *Vogue* in 1916 the women’s magazine market had a long established history in Britain. Cynthia White has dated the earliest professional attempt

to produce a magazine aimed at a female audience to the launch of *The Lady's Magazine* in 1770, and this sixpenny monthly, which ran for 77 years, became an established favourite of the leisured classes and included illustrations of the current fashions in ladies clothing.<sup>5</sup> By 1806, when *La Belle Assemblée* was launched as a rival to *The Lady's Magazine*, evidence of a more professional approach to publishing could be seen in the movement away from the model of a single, amateur Proprietor-Editor. As the nineteenth century wore on and magazine publishing developed the characteristics of a commercial industry,<sup>6</sup> a number of new titles including *The Ladies' Pocket Magazine* were launched on to the market. White notes that periodicals such as *The Ladies' Pocket Magazine*, established in 1825, were designed solely to entertain, rather than to instruct or educate, being composed of fiction, fashion and miscellaneous light reading.<sup>7</sup> Given the success of this new editorial approach, the older-style journals were forced to consolidate. In 1832, *The Lady's Magazine*, *La Belle Assemblée* and a third erstwhile competitor, *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, pooled their content whilst retaining their independent existence. However, with the demise of these three titles in 1847, a new generation of women's magazines began to take shape.

A combination of technical developments, most notably the introduction of steam-driven rotary presses<sup>8</sup> and a reduction in taxes on weekly periodicals,<sup>9</sup> along with rising rates of literacy, meant that the second half of the nineteenth century represented an era of significant growth in the letterpress industry in Britain.<sup>10</sup> Among the group of entrepreneurs who exploited these new opportunities was Samuel Beeton. After making his start in book publishing, Beeton joined forces with Frederick Greenwood who had been writing copy for leading magazines including the *London Illustrated News*. In May 1852 the two launched a cheap monthly magazine entitled *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine (EDM)*, selling at twopence and aimed at women who managed and attended the needs of households.<sup>11</sup>

Kathryn Hughes has pointed out that the *EDM* contained many features of the modern

women's weekly and mid-market monthly magazines: 'There is a problem page, tips on fashion and beauty, instructions on how to make your own clothes, an essay competition, advice on gardening and pets, and a system of loyalty rewards: save up your tokens from twelve consecutive issues and you get the chance to enter a draw and win anything from a gift voucher to a piano.'<sup>12</sup>

Beeton's new magazine is generally credited with extending the reach of women's magazines into the homes of middle-class Britain. Nevertheless, fashionable clothing continued to be more relevant to a woman of means, and Beeton's subsequent development in this area of publishing used fashion to raise the profile (and price) of his leading publication. Buoyed by the successful growth of the *EDM*, Samuel Beeton's career in magazine publishing reached its zenith during the early 1860s. Beeton's wife Isabella, known to posterity merely as 'Mrs Beeton', emerged as a strong creative force in support of Samuel's publishing initiatives. From the perspective of fashion, Isabella's major contribution occurred in 1860 when Beeton's company decided to reissue the *EDM*, now apparently selling 60,000 copies per issue, as a luxury product.<sup>13</sup> In order to revamp the *EDM* Beeton established a collaborative arrangement with Adolphe Goubaud, owner of the Parisian-based fashion monthly *Le Moniteur de la Mode*; a journal which carried as inserts high quality colour plates illustrating the current fashions, and the accompanying dress patterns. English language copies of *Le Moniteur* were exported to London where they sold for the exorbitant price of 3s 6d. With a recently agreed reduction in the excise duties on trade between Britain and France now in force, Beeton recognised that an opportunity existed to purchase these patterns and plates for insertion in the *EDM*. Thus in May 1860 Samuel and Isabella, the latter now ensconced as 'editress', undertook an excursion to Paris to secure a deal with Goubaud. Shortly afterwards, a higher quality version of the *EDM* was launched, selling for sixpence, that included a plate from *Le Moniteur* showing 'two or three

anatomically impossible young women dressed in the latest fashions', whilst a second version of the magazine was offered for one shilling which included paper dress-making patterns.

Fashion notes, provided by Isabella Beeton, were written under guidance from the wife of the owner of *Le Moniteur*.<sup>14</sup> As Hughes has observed, 'The masterstroke of the magazine... was its coverage of fashion.'<sup>15</sup>

Notwithstanding Beeton's enhanced attention on fashionable women's clothing, no British woman's magazine in the nineteenth century developed a focus purely on the issue of fashion. Indeed, during the late nineteenth century the appeal of fashion as a focus in women's magazines began to wane. In 1886 one of the leading British magazine publishers, Cassell, launched *The Lady's World*, subtitled *A Magazine of Fashion and Society*. Failing to make headway, the proprietors decided to place greater emphasis on literary appeal, and appointed a new editor in the shape of Oscar Wilde. Wilde insisted that the title of the magazine should be altered to that of *Woman's World*, a change of nomenclature which itself set in train an irreversible fashion within the industry. Largely through his own indolence, Wilde failed miserably to revitalise the magazine's fortunes and Cassell closed it down in 1890.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, in changing the form in which the female readership was to be addressed, and in downgrading fashion as the focal point for the magazine, Wilde had in many respects shifted the ground upon which popular women's magazines would henceforth move forward. Titles such as *The Lady's Own Magazine*, launched in 1898 with little purpose other than 'to find favour with the fair ones', now lost ground to periodicals designed to appeal to housewives, female office workers and shop assistants.<sup>17</sup> By the turn of the twentieth century, a desire on behalf of publishing companies to widen the circulation of their female-oriented magazine titles often carried the implication that traditional notions of fashion should be jettisoned. High quality, fashionable clothing remained an exclusive commodity in late Victorian Britain, and magazines whose editorial content focused on this

area faced the danger of sacrificing a potentially higher sales volume through the opportunity to appeal to a more popular readership.

### The Harmsworth Revolution and the Decline of the UK Fashion Magazine

In Britain, the revolution in magazine publishing that centred on the development of 'new journalism' effectively cemented a relative decline in the coverage of exclusive fashion within British-owned woman's magazines. This revolution, pioneered by George Newnes, initiated the establishment of the generalist mass-market in women's magazines that dominated this segment for decades to come. Newnes was working in Manchester as the representative of a London-based company when he first developed the idea for his landmark magazine *Tit-Bits*. Reading an item in the *Manchester Evening News* about a runaway train, Newnes was struck by the thought that a magazine made up entirely of 'entertaining and interesting anecdotes' might prove popular with those members of the reading public who were looking for a publication to provide them with entertainment rather than news in the traditional sense.<sup>18</sup> His hunch was soon borne out. Launched in October 1881 with an unprecedented degree of razzamatazz,<sup>19</sup> *Tit-Bits* quickly achieved a circulation of 200,000.<sup>20</sup> Although Newnes moved his business from Manchester to London in 1884, a proportion of his energies from this point were also directed towards his role as Liberal MP for the Newmarket division of Cambridgeshire,<sup>21</sup> and it was not until November 1891 that he consolidated his business enterprise by setting up George Newnes Ltd.<sup>22</sup> The new firm provided Newnes with a platform from which to significantly expand his range of publishing activities. A short-lived collaboration with the newspaper-based pioneer of new journalism, W.T. Stead, in the *Review of Reviews* was followed by the successful launch of the lavishly-illustrated monthly *Strand Magazine*. With *Tit-Bits* and *Strand Magazine* both performing

well during the early 1890s, Newnes was able to bring to market a range of different publications, including two directed towards a female readership. The first of these, *Woman's Life*, was launched in 1895. By this time the use of the terms 'Lady' and 'Woman' to distinguish between periodicals designed to appeal, respectively, to upper-class readers and a more general cross-class audience, had become a well-established feature of market segmentation amongst magazine publishers in Britain.<sup>23</sup> The focus of *Woman's Life* was on the home and domesticity and, in pursuing this approach, Newnes was competing directly with other expanding publishers of popular magazines.

The firm which developed Britain's most extensive range of low-priced weekly periodicals around the turn of the century was the Harmsworth brothers' Amalgamated Press. The origins of Amalgamated Press can be traced back to the launch in 1888 of Alfred Harmsworth's *Answers to Correspondents*, a direct riposte to Newnes' *Tit-Bits* that boasted nothing by way of originality save for the editor's extraordinary drive and winning personality.<sup>24</sup> It was with women, however, that the future press lord sensed the most lucrative market for magazines lay. In November 1891, Alfred Harmsworth and his more business-savvy brother Harold, set up the Periodical Publishing Company. This new organisation's first offering was *Forget-Me-Not*, a penny weekly aimed at the young female market. Thompson comments that the journal's 'outlook was improving, stressing etiquette and propriety, well in step with the moral tone prevalent in the fifty-fourth year of Queen Victoria's reign.'<sup>25</sup> As the 1890s wore on, Harmsworth's publishing operations increasingly targeted women with modest levels of disposable income. In March 1895, unashamedly mimicking his main rivals once again, Harmsworth launched *Home Chat* as a penny weekly competitor to Arthur Pearson's sixpenny monthly *Home Notes*.<sup>26</sup> White observes that *Home Chat* 'proved to be lively, entertaining and above all practical, covering as far as possible all the interests and occupations of the home-loving woman and setting new standards of

service.’ The magazine’s launch created a frenzy of interest, and circulation had reached 186,000 within three months.<sup>27</sup> *Home Chat* was Harmsworth’s fourteenth successfully published title and by 1902, when the Harmsworth brothers transformed their existing business into the Amalgamated Press Ltd., their publishing empire was capitalised at £1.3 million.<sup>28</sup>

Magazines such as *Forget-Me-Not* and *Home Chat* helped to forge a particular set of features that emerged as typical characteristics of the popular British women’s periodical press between the two World Wars. The penny weekly magazine, produced using the cutting edge letterpress technology and printed on a quality of newsprint that compared favourably with daily newspapers, provided its female consumers with an affordable luxury, or at least semi-luxury, item. Adopting an approach to market positioning that could be usefully equated with the modern concept of a hybrid strategy, Harmsworth led Britain’s popular magazine industry along a specific path which placed its competitive strength on the ability to provide consumers with a more than adequate product, available for the lowest possible cover price that the prevailing printing technology could allow. The impact of the Harmsworth business strategy for the images of fashion with which British women were presented is perfectly exemplified by the editorial preface from the first issue of Harmsworth’s most enduring women’s weekly journal. Launched in November 1911, *Woman’s Weekly* stated boldly that ‘its fashions, ignoring the extremes of taste, consisted of “the ordinary garments which will be worn by the average woman”, supplemented by a complete wardrobe of patterns for home dressmaking which readers could collect over several months.’<sup>29</sup> One year prior to the launch of *Woman’s Weekly* the Dundee-based publishing house of D.C. Thomson had brought to market a magazine expressly designed for working class women. *My Weekly* was based on an editorial formula centring on romantic fiction, household hints, cookery and dress-making, and this title, together with *Woman’s Weekly*, effectively set the direction

which an increasing number of women's periodicals were to take in the years between the wars; a direction which focused on domesticity rather than exclusive design and fashion.<sup>30</sup>

Between the two world wars the British magazine publishing industry underwent a period of significant consolidation, the main impact of which was to bring increased homogeneity between the leading firms. Shortly before the outbreak of the First World War two of the pioneering firms, Newnes and Pearson, were brought together to create the Newnes-Pearson Group.<sup>31</sup> Newnes' main rival, the Amalgamated Press, also expanded and changed hands, falling under the ownership of the Berry brothers in 1926. By this latter date the firm was publishing a total of 76 weekly, fortnightly and monthly journals, as well as 5 serials, 18 annuals and ten libraries.<sup>32</sup> With the Berrys themselves also having previously acquired a range of periodicals, including the magazine portfolios of Cassell and Hulton,<sup>33</sup> the Amalgamated Press now bestrode the British magazine publishing industry and its share capital amounted to £6.2 million. Within this consolidated industry structure the pursuit of economies of scale and circulation rather than targeted readership became the driving imperative for competitive success. However, US-based firms following different competitive strategies had by this time entered the British market, and their coverage of fashion was quite distinctive.

#### Condé Nast and the 'Class Magazine': A New Business Model for Fashion Magazines

*Vogue* magazine had originally been founded in 1892 as a New York society magazine by a gentleman proprietor, Arthur Turnure, and edited by the socialite Josephine Redding.<sup>34</sup>

Initially there was no specific coverage of woman's fashion, in fact advice for men's dress was more prevalent, but by 1898 the emphasis had shifted towards providing the women of New York's social elite with advice on how to dress appropriately, anticipating that those

living outside of the urban centre would wish follow these trends within the pages of the journal.<sup>35</sup> One innovation that Turnure and advertising manager Tom McCready instigated, with a mind to further develop the growing fashion focus of the magazine, was a shift to block rather than line-based advertising, allowing advertisers more space to experiment with pictures and the use of empty space rather than the dense text typical of the time.<sup>36</sup> Observing these changes Condé Nast, who at this point was working as the business manager of the popular *Collier's Weekly* magazine, approached Turnure with an unsuccessful offer to buy *Vogue* in 1905. Nast had built up the circulation and advertising revenue of *Collier's* from 19,159 and \$5,600 in 1897 to reach 568,073 and over \$1,000,000 by 1907.<sup>37</sup> As a private venture Nast had also become Vice-President of the Home Pattern Company, which had franchised dress-patterns from the *Ladies Home Journal*, and from here he exploited the potential of the woman's fashion department by more than doubling the advertising revenue of its *Quarterly Style Book* in a period of less than three years to around \$400,000 per annum.<sup>38</sup>

*Vogue*, which had started to publish dress patterns in 1899, appeared to Nast to have the potential to serve as the vehicle with which he could develop a new business model for the magazine industry. Rival American publisher Frank Munsey, who had harnessed the power of new high-speed printing presses to cut the price of his monthly magazine to ten cents, had already demonstrated to Nast that with advertising support it was possible to sell a magazine profitably below production cost.<sup>39</sup> Nast combined the idea of advertising-led publications with his knowledge of the fashion market to develop a well-articulated theory of the 'class' fashion magazine as a vehicle for attracting luxury advertising. Realising that, by being able to effectively discriminate an affluent readership that would attract the advertisers of luxury goods, a magazine could be supported through advertising without the need for a large circulation Nast reasoned: 'If you had a tray with two million needles on it, and only

one hundred and fifty thousand of these had gold tips, which you wanted, it would be an endless and costly process to weed them out. Moreover the one million, eight hundred and fifty thousand which were not gold-tipped would be of no use to you, they couldn't help you. But if you could get a magnet that would draw out only the gold ones, what a saving!<sup>40</sup> *Vogue* was to be the magnet that attracted the gold.

Nast finally acquired *Vogue* in 1909, and began to implement a further shift towards fashion coverage and advertising. Over the next twenty years he increased the annual profits of Condé Nast Inc. from an initial \$5,000 to \$150,000 in 1915 and \$650,000 by 1929. Moreover, although the circulation had increased from around 14,000, prior to his acquisition, to 30,000 by 1910, Nast was successful in attracting the quality advertising clients he sought to develop his class strategy. Seebohm highlights that within the first six months of 1910 *Vogue* carried 44 percent more pages of advertising than the *Ladies Home Journal* (circulation 1,305,030) and 292 percent more than *Harper's Bazar*.<sup>41</sup> The success of this strategy did not go unnoticed by Nast's great competitor, William Randolph Hearst, who acquired *Harper's Bazar* in 1913 and rebranded it as a fashion magazine after the *Vogue* model.<sup>42</sup> Having already extended his American-based activities in newspapers and magazines from New York to Chicago, Boston and Los Angeles, Hearst then also developed an international market for his magazine titles.<sup>43</sup> An export trade in magazines between Britain and the United States had developed around the turn of the century<sup>44</sup> and, in common with US-based businessmen in other consumer industries, Hearst was prepared to extend his involvement across the Atlantic by means of direct investment. In purchasing control of the British literary magazine *Nash's*, Hearst also acquired ownership of the National Magazine Company as a bridgehead for his publishing activities in Britain.<sup>45</sup>

With imported copies of *Vogue* in Britain selling between 3,000 and 4,000 copies per issue by 1914, Condé Nast saw an opportunity to follow Hearst's internationalisation lead.

When the outbreak of the First World War cut off the flow of continental fashion magazines, sales of *Vogue* in Britain rose sharply and by 1916 they had quadrupled, making the printing of a local edition feasible. By this time the disruption of Atlantic shipping had effectively curtailed exports of the magazine from America, and so the decision was taken to produce a British version of *Vogue*. A management team was put in place led by William Wood, an Englishman who had been responsible for managing the distribution of the American version, and included an advertising manager, George W. Kettle, the principal proprietor of the Dorland Advertising Agency in Britain (which handled *Vogue's* advertising management until Condé Nast set up an internal British advertising department in 1922).<sup>46</sup> In the first issue of British *Vogue* (known within the firm as *Brogue*), the magazine was able to attract advertising from producers of fashionable clothing, such as Maison Lewis, Aquascutum, Gooch's Ltd. and Spunella, Queen of Silks, cosmetics manufacturers such as Helena Rubenstein, as well as leading London department stores including Whiteley's, Waring & Gillow, Peter Robinson's and Selfridge & Co, who commented in their advert that *Vogue* was 'a beautifully printed journal.'<sup>47</sup> In total this first issue carried 12 full page adverts, two half-page adverts and 58 box adverts.

The entry of Condé Nast represented a new paradigm in UK magazine publishing: the 'class magazine' designed to have a small but select affluent readership which would appeal to the advertisers of luxury manufactures and their retailers. In order to fully develop this business model, fundamental changes had to be made in the relationships maintained by the firm. In order to be perceived as authentic leaders within the fashion industry by the consumer, *Vogue* was drawn into more direct participation in the fashion industry, creating a need to engage *Vogue's* own art directors to produce or commission covers and artwork. The development of connections with artists and designers also became an international activity, where the ownership of UK and French subsidiaries was instrumental to the operation of the

business as a whole. The need to be positioned as a quality leader in the fashion world mandated that print and reproduction quality was continually improved by control over the technologies employed, and required a strong management system in order to effectively control costs. The focus on a narrow segment also required a closer relationship with, and a dependence on advertising, especially as the high cost of quality printing that was required could not be offset by cover price revenues given the comparatively low volume of sales. In dealing with a select readership, this business model required an understanding of the consumer, driving the development of market research in order to increase the effectiveness of targeted advertising.

#### From Commentator to Actor: Fashion Magazines and the Fashion Industry

In order to preserve their status in the eyes of readers and advertisers, fashion magazines had to project a quality image and be informed by the latest developments in culture and fashion. This meant that fashion magazines had to be authentically connected to the haute couture world in Paris. Although magazines such as Beeton's *EDM* had used links and guidance from Paris to reproduce plates and illustrations in Britain, they had done so from the position of passive observers, with no direct influence on the leading fashion houses. This arms-length relationship presented an obstacle not only to getting news in advance of the public opening, but made getting accurate drawings and later photographs difficult. Condé Nast ultimately achieved this authenticity by founding French *Vogue*, known affectionately as *Frog*, in 1921, having earlier in 1915 formed a working relationship with the highly-regarded French high fashion magazine *Gazette du Bon Ton* published by Lucien Vogel. Vogel was also instrumental in Nast launching *Jardin Des Modes*, a re-branding of the failing *L'Illustration de Modes*. As a result of this relationship the management of Condé Nast were able not only

to access the crème of France's fashion illustrators, artists and later photographers, but also to directly influence developments within the industry.<sup>48</sup> Although French *Vogue* was not profitable,<sup>49</sup> it provided *Vogue* and *Brogue* with content and gave them authority, particularly with its studio serving as a breeding ground for new talent. Attempting to forge authentic linkages with the world of haute couture was fraught with problems and one which made the correct choice of editor crucial, requiring an editor with a strong focus on developing the advertising market as well as being able to engage with art, editorial and the fashion world. Initially because of poor choices of editors in the UK Nast was unable to fully exploit his business 'formula' successfully, resulting in low circulation of only 9,000 in 1924 and the possibility of closing the title by mid- 1920s.<sup>50</sup> From 1926 British *Vogue* was given a new commercial focus and was established firmly as a fashion magazine, reversing the highest losses of \$98,797 in 1923 to profits of \$67,474 in 1933.<sup>51</sup> The search for an authentic connection with the fashion world continued, and in 1935 Nast acquired the rights to reproduce content and solicit advice from a newer successful fashion magazine, *Votre Beauté*.<sup>52</sup>

The importance of hiring staff connected to the fashion world, and being able to manage them effectively was central to *Vogue*'s competitive success. Competition between Condé Nast and Hearst for artists and editorial staff in this market was fierce, and international. In 1933 Condé Nast circulated a blacklist of 38 key staff members who had moved to Hearst publications (notably the close rival *Harper's Bazaar*), including *Vogue* editors such as Carmel Snow, advertising managers including Chester Van Tassel, artists and photographers.<sup>53</sup> The management of artistic talent was also something which was beyond the usual scope of formal management: Yoxall bemoaned the difficulties of managing artists, illustrators, and photographers, noting in relation to the latter that 'No form of bitchery is beyond these charming creatures.'<sup>54</sup>

Relationship management with the fashion industry was highly volatile, and fashion houses were also strategic consumers and key advertisers. The fashion houses used advertising in *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* as part of their competitive rivalry – an often passionate rivalry which could be personal and nationalistic as well as purely business-related. Seebohm relates incidents where advertisers attempted to influence the editorial of the magazine, from the typical incident such as Chanel threatening to withdraw advertising unless her models were shown on whole pages with no competitors on facing pages, to the more serious incidents such as the famous ‘eruption’ of 1938 when Chanel (again) used the platform of the *Syndicat de Défense de la Grand Couture Française* trade body meeting to threaten an industry-wide advertising withdrawal due to the perception that *Vogue* was privileging foreigners.<sup>55</sup> The couturiers correctly perceived that far from being outside of the industry, *Vogue* was increasingly able to form and shape as well as report on fashion.

The Parisian fashion houses did not forget that Chase had been steadily working to reduce the influence of the French fashion houses following the growth of the US fashion industry during the First World War,<sup>56</sup> and was perceived to have the ability to influence fashions directly. Chase had herself created the modern conception of the fashion show by starting the first recorded dress show for French war charities,<sup>57</sup> and this was to become a central feature of competitive rivalry within the fashion industry. *Life* magazine reported in 1937 that although designer competition at the Paris ‘Openings’ week was intense ‘their rivalry is child’s-play to that which exists between the world’s two leading fashion magazines, *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*,’ and considered that ‘their influence is inestimable. Key people in every branch of the \$300,000,000 women’s apparel industry read them religiously; their names are familiar to millions of women who never buy a copy.’<sup>58</sup>

The artists nurtured by the *Vogue* editorial office were usually influential in the fashion world after having been developed as new talents. These artists were themselves able

to influence the market directly, for example when they sought to develop their own fashion styles.<sup>59</sup> The exigencies of the Second World War were to underline the ability of *Vogue* to influence the fashion industry directly when Yoxall formed the Incorporated Society of British Designers (later the Incorporated Society of London Fashion Designers) in London to stimulate the domestic fashion and textile industries.<sup>60</sup> There is no doubt that by the Second World War *Vogue* and its rival *Harper's Bazaar* had become key stakeholders in the industry, able to influence developments in fashion as well as report on them. In addition they had developed competencies in developing and maintaining relationships across a spectrum of industries and crafts.

Whilst managing and nurturing artistic talent could be difficult, the equally important quality and costs of printing the magazine could be controlled much more tightly. For Nast print quality was a vital differentiator over his rivals and in the US during 1921 he had bought the Arbor Press printing company in Greenwich, Connecticut, in order to have control over quality.<sup>61</sup> In the UK Condé Nast Publications developed a long-term relationship with the Sun Engraving Company which ultimately took over full printing after *Vogue's* contract printer, the Arden Press, closed in 1937. Yoxall had been authorised to award the printing contract to Sun Engraving in spite of the higher bid they tendered, compared with those of the St. Clement's Press and William Clowes, because of the 'supreme importance of quality in printing to publication of *Vogue* character', and the Sun company developed the highest-quality letterpress and photogravure press in the UK in the inter-war period.<sup>62</sup> Cost controls at Condé Nast were sophisticated, with the Art Department required to produce full costings for every page of the magazine, and a full profit and loss account for each edition within a month followed up by analysis, something which was not common practice elsewhere in the magazine publishing industry.<sup>63</sup>

### Developing Relationships with Advertisers and Readers

Between the wars Britain's leading magazine publishers tended to adopt copycat strategies as they vied for shares in the market for women's magazines. For example, in 1924 the Newnes-Pearson group issued the *Woman's Friend* as a twopenny weekly competitor to Amalgamated Press' *Woman's Pictorial*, featuring a very similar editorial mix.<sup>64</sup> Although these cheap titles were able to attract a reasonable amount of advertising, the success of mid-market weekly titles such as these depended primarily on spreading production costs over high volumes and generating significant revenues via the cover price of the magazine. According to Ballaster et al: 'In the 1920s and '30s, women's magazines continued to develop the use of advertising, but they were still regarded by advertisers as insignificant by contrast with newspapers and general interest magazines, and could not command the same volume of advertising and revenue as other periodical literature.'<sup>65</sup> Although the traditional description of the inter-war years as the halcyon era of editorial freedom for British women's magazines from the influence of advertising has been questioned, it is clear that American magazines such as Hearst's *Good Housekeeping* gave much greater attention to the advertising material carried within its pages than their British rivals.<sup>66</sup>

Due to *Vogue's* initial difficulty in establishing a suitable editorial direction, in the UK it had been Hearst's National Magazine Co. which initially most successfully utilised advertising as a central element in its strategy by launching the British version of its *Good Housekeeping* monthly magazine in March 1922.<sup>67</sup> By the time that Hearst attempted to build on the success of *Good Housekeeping* in the fashion market with a UK-edition of *Harper's Bazaar*, Nast had managed to install an effective management team in London able to implement his advertising strategies. One business strategy that Condé Nast successfully transferred from the US for securing subscriptions, customers, and advertising was to

persuade retailers to buy large numbers of the periodical for in-house distribution and promotion.<sup>68</sup> In 1929 Yoxall used his close links with premium retailers to get closer to customers by having them distribute an unprecedented 425,000 copies of a circular to their charge-account customers.<sup>69</sup> Later, in 1936, *Vogue*'s advertising manager William Davenport arranged for large retailers, such as Harrod's in the UK and the Galleries Lafayette in France, to convene workshops where they asked their suppliers to advertise in *Vogue*.<sup>70</sup>

Seeking to further increase the magazine's trade business, Davenport also instigated a substantial survey entitled 'What is the attitude of the upper class public toward' in the Spring 1939 *Vogue House & Garden Book*.<sup>71</sup> The results were distributed to 498 carefully selected fashion retailers,<sup>72</sup> who were reminded that, 'All industries and trades to-day have need of every scrap of authentic information they can get about their markets – the people who buy – or do not buy – their goods.' The survey was able to supply information as to the habits and preferences of the wealthiest consumers, and pointed out that, 'Much of the information derived will be valuable to manufacturers and retailers of household goods of all kinds.' *Vogue* claimed to be 'glad to share it with our friends in the trade, although the research was conceived and carried out for editorial purposes only', although this last statement was certainly disingenuous.<sup>73</sup> The final message to the trade was that reaching this premium market was best done through advertising, and that '40% of readers can ONLY be reached through the *Vogue H&G book*.' To emphasise the point, the booklet ended with British *Vogue*'s advertising rates, which at the time stood at £100 for a full 4-colour page.

Retailers were important sources of advertising revenue in the UK, more so than in the US, and they were unhappy with increases in mass-market brand advertising that lowered the exclusive tone.<sup>74</sup> The fashion magazines had to convince their potential advertisers that targeted advertising was worth paying for, and attempted to do this by demonstrating ability to reach the elite by showing them detailed readership breakdowns of the directorships

subscribers held, the clubs they belonged to, automobiles owned, entries into the social registrar and a range of other proxies.<sup>75</sup> At the same time they had to convince advertisers that they did have a circulation large enough to justify the staggering advertising rates, and both *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue* seriously considered declaring their circulations through the Audit Bureau of Circulations. *Vogue's* US-advertising manager urged caution to Davenport in this consideration: 'unfortunately, there isn't one advertiser in fifty in the class field who ever sees an A.B.C. statement. Those who do, don't know how to interpret it. Agency space buyers pay too little attention to the circulation methods of class magazines – exactly the magazines where they ought to pay the most attention.'<sup>76</sup>

In the inter-war period the low-volume, high quality fashion magazines used direct relationships rather than circulation figures to impress advertisers. The relationship between advertising and editorial could be close. Eager to increase UK advertising from quality clients Davenport instigated a new feature, 'women at the wheel', to respond to the lucrative automotive industries complaint that fashion magazines did not address their markets.<sup>77</sup> There was a fine line to tread, and Condé Nast was very aware of the potential to jeopardise the status of *Vogue* with its elite readership should they perceive advertisers as having undue influence on the editorial and think the magazine 'sold out to its advertisers'.<sup>78</sup> This type of strategy was very different to the approach adopted by the domestic UK magazine industry, whose firms did not relate to advertising clients in such relational terms.

Along with the need for the company to understand the needs of its advertisers, both Condé Nast and National Magazines were heavily influenced by their home company's attempts to understand the nature of their readerships. *Vogue* had developed a comprehensive and extremely sophisticated system to catalogue readers' letters so that they could be analysed and cross-referenced, and this learning was passed on to other parts of the Condé Nast organisation, although at times there was some debate over whether similar methods

would work in the UK.<sup>79</sup> The aim was to be able to understand readers not only in order to appeal to them, but in order to be able to create readership profiles that would appeal to advertisers and support the premium advertising rate strategy. Efforts to learn about the readership took many forms, including surveys, and Condé Nast even asked all editorial staff to send him their views on what the typical readership of *Vogue* was like. One judgement held that the readership was formed by two groups, ‘a few thousand ultra-fastidious women to whom it is important to be constantly in touch with the latest style and fashionable goings-on. The second much larger group is not of the ultra-fashionable but derives a great deal of pleasure in reading about what the first is doing’,<sup>80</sup> tending to confirm Nast’s judgement that he could attract a wider readership than just the elite.

Whilst British *Vogue* attempted to learn about its customers – both advertisers and readers – its UK competitors were generally much slower to develop the same understanding. In competition with the US firms, this lack of knowledge could prove highly damaging. For example, the UK-created magazine that was seen as the most serious competition to *Vogue* was the *Tatler*, because it appealed to the same high profile demographic as the fashion magazines, although largely to the opposite gender. In the late 1920s, Nast realised that the *Tatler*’s enormous success in generating advertising volume, outstripping other UK and US magazines (second only in quantity to the US *Saturday Evening Post*), was due to adverts that were mainly aimed at women (63 per cent of the adverts carried in 1928 had ‘exclusively feminine appeal’), but that *Tatler*’s readership was mostly male. Using this intelligence, both British *Vogue* and the UK version of *Harper’s Bazaar* were able to solicit advertisers away from the *Tatler* towards their own largely female readership. Thus, whereas in 1929 the *Tatler* had published 174 per cent more advertising pages than British *Vogue*, by 1933 it carried only 30 per cent more.<sup>81</sup> Whilst the *Tatler* seems to have been largely oblivious of the significance to its advertising clients of knowing the make-up of its readership, the US

fashion magazines were very conscious of the benefits of understanding and exploiting their demographic.

### Conclusion

By the early 1940s *Vogue* had become an established byword for fashion. Despite the fact that a range of earlier magazines had made fashion a central point of their appeal to readers, none of *Vogue*'s predecessors had been able to achieve the balance of authenticity and customer focus that Condé Nast brought to the British magazine market between the wars. In effect there were a number of reasons for this, and together they provided *Vogue* with a source of competitive advantage based on a close strategic fit between resources and market position.

As an entrepreneur, Nast's main innovation had been his development of the concept of a 'class' magazine. Drawing on the example of other American magazine publishers who in the 1890s had developed mass circulation titles financed primarily by advertising revenues, Nast had been the first to recognise that such a strategy could also be applied to magazines with a narrower target audience, so long as that audience comprised a well-defined group of consumers. A top quality fashion-centred publication aimed at, but not limited to, an elite readership, provided the platform through which the purveyors of high-class and other aspirational products could reach their intended customers. This simple strategy of focused differentiation provided Nast with the potential to develop the highly successful magazine that *Vogue* was to become between the wars.

Devising the strategy was one thing: putting it into effect was another. To gain credibility within the world of haute couture, it was necessary for *Vogue* to have direct engagement with the leading fashion houses in Paris; thus internationalisation was a critical

element in the strategic development of Condé Nast as a publishing enterprise. Even before the office in London was set up in 1916, Nast had formed a relationship with the leading Parisian publisher Lucien Vogel. From this presence in the creative heart of the European fashion industry the Condé Nast organisation was able to exert a genuine influence, not least by providing the French designers with a crucial link to the wealthy consumers of America and Britain in the 1920s. By employing their own talented illustrators, designers and photographers, and by playing a key role in pioneering the use of fashion shows with professional models, *Vogue* helped to define the very nature of the twentieth century fashion business.

The authenticity that underpinned *Vogue*'s credibility in the world of fashion did not in itself, however, make for a successful publication. Developing an appeal within the UK required a strong degree of adaptation on behalf of British *Vogue*. In this respect, an understanding of its strategic customers – i.e. its advertisers – as well as its readers is what marks out *Vogue* from the myriad of British-based women's magazines. Advertisers, particularly retailers, were not just seen as a critical source of revenue, as they were for other commercial magazine titles, but as partners with whom relationships could usefully be formed. Whilst the link to the Parisian fashion houses was crucial in winning credibility with its readers, *Vogue* did not lose sight of the *real* needs of its *actual* consumers. When Alison Settle was appointed as the editor of British *Vogue* in the mid-1920s, she was curtly informed by Nast that, 'Reporting the mode of super-elegance is a fundamental plank in the *Vogue* platform... [but] it is of lesser importance than those departments in *Vogue* given over to what might be termed practical bread-and-butter fashions and information...'<sup>82</sup> Settle understood and adhered to the advice, introducing the feature 'Seen in London shops' in response. Knowing their readers' profile was a key to its commercial success. Later, when appointing Lady Patricia Ward onto the London editorial group of *Vogue*, Edna Chase

commented on her suitability in the following terms: ‘she knows the right sort of people – young, well-bred and sport-loving.’<sup>83</sup> British *Vogue*’s authentic, high-class fashion credentials served to support the magazine’s 1939 boast that, ‘Wherever people live graciously – wherever fashion is in force, there you will find *Vogue*.’

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Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Vogue promotion to advertisers, *Official Handbook of the PPA, 1938-9*, PPA Archive, History of Advertising Trust, Raveningham.

<sup>2</sup> Summary of the Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories 1941 report and the speech made by Ernest Bevin, Minister for Labour and National Service on 22 July 1942. No Author, *International Labour Review*, 467-468

<sup>3</sup> Braybon and Summerfield, *Out of the Cage*, 224-225

<sup>4</sup> Yoxall, *Fashion*, 153.

<sup>5</sup> White, *Women's Magazines*, 31

<sup>6</sup> Pearson has explored the career of William Makepeace Thackeray as being one which developed on the cusp of the transition “of writing as a gentlemanly and aristocratic pursuit, and the modern age of commercial publishing”, giving particular emphasis to his writings for the periodical press. Pearson, *Thackeray*, 1-2.

<sup>7</sup> White, *Women's Magazines*, 41.

<sup>8</sup> Edward Lloyd had been the first British periodical publisher to install the pathbreaking American Hoe steam driven rotary press in 1856. Cf. Springhall, 'Disseminating Impure Literature', 568.

<sup>9</sup> The stamp duty law demanded that every periodical smaller than a certain size, priced at less than sixpence, and issued more than once a month, must, if it contained news or comment on news, carry the 1d. newspaper stamp. Cf. Nowell-Smith, *Cassell*, 26. The stamp was abolished in 1855.

<sup>10</sup> Alford, 'Business Enterprise'.

<sup>11</sup> Jackson, *George Newnes*, 210.

<sup>12</sup> Hughes, *Short Life*, 162-163.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 179.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, 268-278. Quote from 277.

<sup>15</sup> Hughes, "Zeal and Softness", 16. On EDM see also Ballaster et al, *Women's Worlds*, 86-93. Beeton's publishing business was brought down by the collapse of Overend Gurney in 1866.

<sup>16</sup> Barrell and Braithwaite, *Women's Magazines*, 8; Nowell-Smith, *Cassell*, 149-151.

<sup>17</sup> White, *Women's Magazines*, 69-70.

<sup>18</sup> Morris, *Newnes*.

<sup>19</sup> Newnes used a 100-strong marching band of the local Boy's Brigade to promote the first issue of the *Tit-Bits* magazine in Manchester. Friedrichs, *Life*, 70-71.

<sup>20</sup> Reed, *Popular Magazine*, 87.

<sup>21</sup> Newnes had two periods in which he served as an MP, between 1885 and 1895 for Newmarket and between 1900 and 1910 for Swansea. In 1897 his firm was reorganised with an increased nominal capital value of £1 million. Shaw, *Newnes*, 438.

<sup>22</sup> NA BT31/5097/34316.

<sup>23</sup> Jackson, *George Newnes*, 214.

<sup>24</sup> Pound and Harmsworth, *Northcliffe*, 81-86.

<sup>25</sup> Thompson, *Northcliffe*, 15.

<sup>26</sup> Cyril Arthur Pearson had originally worked for George Newnes and was the manager of *The Strand Magazine* before leaving to set up his own publishing empire founded on *Pearson's Weekly*. Engel, *Tickle the Public*, 92-94.

<sup>27</sup> White, *Women's Magazines*, 76-77.

<sup>28</sup> Dilnot, *Romance*, 35.

<sup>29</sup> White, *Women's Magazines*, 90.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 87-88.

<sup>31</sup> Morris, 'Riddell'; Political and Economic Planning, *British Press*, 104-105. The merger of the firms of Newnes and Pearson began when they jointly purchased the old-established publishing business of Messrs. Leach during 1914. Cf. *The Newspaper World*, No. 919, 14 August 1915, 11.

<sup>32</sup> Companies House, *Mirror Group Holdings* (00218062), G Series (G1: Annual Returns for 1927-1949).

<sup>33</sup> Hart-Davis, *House*, 23-24.

<sup>34</sup> Chase and Chase, *Always in Vogue*, 23.

<sup>35</sup> Hill, *As Seen in Vogue*, 8.

<sup>36</sup> Chase and Chase, *Always in Vogue*, 39-41.

<sup>37</sup> Seebohm, *The Man*, 30.

<sup>38</sup> Hill, *As Seen in Vogue*, 10; Chase and Chase, *Always in Vogue*, 54; Seebohm, *The Man*, 38. On the significance of the dress pattern industry in the United States cf. Walsh, *Democratization of Fashion*.

<sup>39</sup> Munsey was one of a group of American publishers who in the early 1890s had 'hit upon a formula of elegant simplicity: identify a large audience that is not hereditarily affluent or elite, but that is getting on well enough,

and that has cultural aspirations; give it what it wants; build a huge circulation; sell the magazine at a price *below* the cost of production, and make your profit on ads.' Ohmann, *Selling Culture*, 25 (emphasis in original).

<sup>40</sup> Chase and Chase, *Always in Vogue*, 37; Seebohm, *The Man*, 37-39. It is worth reading Condé Nast's full manifesto for this strategy: Condé Nast 'Class publications' *The Merchants and Manufacturers Journal*, June 1913, 12.

<sup>41</sup> Seebohm, *The Man*, 72

<sup>42</sup> Chase and Chase, *Always in Vogue*, 37. *Harper's Bazaar* had one 'a' until 1926 when it became 'Bazaar'. Hearst purchased many of his magazine titles; both *Cosmopolitan* (1905) and *Good Housekeeping* (1911) were existing titles that Hearst acquired. Peterson, *Magazines*, 200-203. Condé Nast also acquired rather than started his leading magazines.

<sup>43</sup> Brendon, *Life*, 140.

<sup>44</sup> *Ayer's Directory* for 1910, for example, shows that both *Strand Magazine* and *Pearson's Magazine* were selling in New York. *Ayer's Directory*, 1910, 1086.

<sup>45</sup> Nasaw, *The Chief*, 349.

<sup>46</sup> Seebohm, *The Man*, 139

<sup>47</sup> *British Vogue*, September 15, 1916, 17

<sup>48</sup> Yoxall, *Fashion*, 111.

<sup>49</sup> The advertising market, key to Condé Nast's strategies, was weak in the French fashion industry, where private shows and exclusive relations with key customers was the dominant form of promotion. Seebohm, *The Man*, 131-132.

<sup>50</sup> Yoxall, *Fashion*, 124. Nast's appointment of the editor Dorothy Todd in 1923 moved *Vogue* away from fashion towards literature, resulting in a decline in circulation, advertising and increasing losses. A new editor, Alison Settle, was appointed in 1926 and the Editor-in-Chief of the three Vogues, the formidable Edna Chase, spent time in London to ensure that Settle understood the commercial focus of *Vogue*. Yoxall set plans in motion to increase advertising revenue and effectively re-launch the magazine. Nast, Condé (1933) "British *Vogue* Formula", unpublished internal report, Condé Nast Archives Manuscripts Collections (CNAMC) New York, (Box 14, Folder 7).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* Costs were alternatively given for *British Vogue* in Sterling or in US dollars, with a conversion rate attached.

<sup>52</sup> A draft agreement specifies a ten-year contract, paying 6 guineas per page not including outside rights, 8 guineas per page including reproduction rights. The prices applied to a circulation of 30,000; above this for each additional 15,000 an extra 1 guinea would be paid to a maximum of 12 guineas, specifying a minimum 1,100 guineas in year 1 and 1,500 guineas in year 2. In addition Nast wanted photo studio work and editorial criticism. Patcévitch, Iva (1935, May 28). [letter 'private 102' to Condé Nast] CNAMC, (Box 6, Folder 12).

<sup>53</sup> Carmel Snow, heir apparent to Edna Chase as *Vogue* editor was poached by Hearst. Rowlands, *Dash*. 132-133; [Unknown Author] (1933, Sept) "Staff members or regular contributors to *Vogue* who went to the Bazaar", loose document, CNAMC, (Box 18, Folder 13). The management of artists could be fraught. Seebohm, *The Man*, outlines some of the difficulties (cf. Chap. 10).

<sup>54</sup> Yoxall commented that negotiations with artistic talent were a constant problem, with Cecil Beaton in particular. The quote is from Yoxall, *Fashion*, 107. In a variety of correspondence it was clear Yoxall dreaded negotiating with key artists. Yoxall, Harry (1941, August 29) [Private 278 to Condé Nast] CNAMC, (Box 13, Folder 5).

<sup>55</sup> Several of the key Parisian couturiers were not French, such as Schiaparelli (Italian), Mainboucher – a former editor of French *Vogue* – (American), Molyneux (English) and Balenciaga (Spanish). Seebohm, *The Man*, 137-139.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*, 101.

<sup>57</sup> Yoxall, *Fashion*, 82

<sup>58</sup> *Life*, September 6, 1937, 32-39 (Quote from 32).

<sup>59</sup> Steele, *Paris Fashion*, 224.

<sup>60</sup> O'Byrne, *Style City*, 11; Yoxall, *Fashion*, 71.

<sup>61</sup> Hill, *As Seen in Vogue*, 11-12.

<sup>62</sup> The Arden Press was owned by WH Smith, and closed in 1937 before being bought and refitted by Lord Camrose as a reserve press for the Daily Telegraph. Correspondence between Yoxall and Nast in July 1937, CNAMC, (Box 12 Folder 19).

<sup>63</sup> Yoxall, *Fashion*, 78. The Condé Nast archive materials contain many monthly detailed profit and loss reports on each edition of the magazine.

<sup>64</sup> Barrell and Braithwaite, *Business*, 16.

<sup>65</sup> Ballaster et al, *Woman's Worlds*, 116.

<sup>66</sup> Greenfield and Reid point out, for example, that ‘*Good Housekeeping* magazine provided an index of “guaranteed adverts” to help readers’, which was not a feature of comparable British women’s magazines.

Greenfield and Reid, *Women’s Magazines*, 168.

<sup>67</sup> Barrell and Braithwaite, *Business*, 13-14. Selling at one shilling, *Good Housekeeping* introduced the new sub-category of the “service” magazine into the women’s market in Britain, and some issues of the magazine carried over 100 pages of advertising. The path-breaking nature of *Good Housekeeping* was further demonstrated in 1924 when the magazine opened the Good Housekeeping Institute, providing Britain with its first experience of consumer advice and protection. Cf. Hilton, *Consumerism*, 172.

<sup>68</sup> By the 1930s the New York department store Macy’s alone was buying one hundred copies every month. Seebohm, *The Man*, 120. The importance of this market, not just for sales, but in influencing fashion and becoming more important to advertising clients in the process, is emphasised in internal correspondence.

Davenport, William (1936, May 13) [letter ‘Private 129’ to Condé Nast] CNAMC, (Box 1, Folder 3).

<sup>69</sup> Yoxall, Harry (1929, September 3) [letter to Condé Nast] CNAMC, (Box 12, Folder 11).

<sup>70</sup> Patcévitch, Iva (1933, Feb 16). [letter to Walter Mass] CNAMC, (Box 6, Folder 21). Seebohm notes that in the US a tacit *quid pro quo* existed between *Vogue* and its department stores and manufacturer advertisers, with editorial space being given to products and information. In 1943 for example Seebohm cites Saks Fifth Avenue spending \$9,180 for 9 pages and receiving 66 ½ pages of editorial space worth \$67,830 in return. *The Man*, 90.

<sup>71</sup> From 1929 *Vogue* was publishing ‘double issues’ or ‘double-numbers’, two separate magazines tied together with string and sold jointly. Originally this was introduced by Yoxall in response to the idea of integrating the British *Vogue Pattern Book* into British *Vogue*, which he preferred to keep as a separate editorial entity. Yoxall, *Fashion*, 130. This strategy also allowed magazines which could not sustain their own circulation (such as the UK edition of *House & Garden*, closed in 1923 but recreated as a double in the *Vogue House & Garden Book*) to be appended to *Vogue*.

<sup>72</sup> Davenport, William (1936, May 13) [letter ‘Private 129’ to Condé Nast] CNAMC, (Box 1, Folder 3).

<sup>73</sup> *Vogue* (1936) ‘What is the attitude of the upper class public toward’, survey report distributed to fashion retailers. CNAMC, (Box 14, Folder 24). The survey covered attitudes towards contemporary furniture, the regency style, the department store versus the furnishing shop, remodelling old houses and the *Vogue House & Garden Book*. It is clear from Davenport’s correspondence with Nast in 1936 that this survey was conceived wholly as bait for the retailers and had no editorial input or connection whatsoever.

<sup>74</sup> The March 1 1936 US *Vogue* carried 57 pages of wholesalers advertisements and 16 pages of retailers. The comparable UK edition published 59 pages of wholesaler adverts and 47 pages from retailers. Davenport, William (1936, March 6) [letter to Condé Nast] CNAMC, (Box 2, Folder 1).

<sup>75</sup> Van Tassel, Chester (1937, Nov 11) [letter to Will Davenport] In analysing the *Harper's Bazaar's* selling strategy a review is given of the efforts undertaking to provide evidence that *Vogue* is able to reach its target demographic. CNAMC, (Box 12, Folder 20).

<sup>76</sup> Van Tassel, Chester (1937, Nov 17) [letter to Will Davenport] CNAMC, (Box 12, Folder 21).

<sup>77</sup> Davenport, William (1938, Jan 19) [letter 'Private 51' to Condé Nast] CNAMC, (Box 2, Folder 6).

<sup>78</sup> Condé Nast (1942, March 26 and May 11) [Letters to Edna Chase] CNAMC, (Box 1, Folder 21). There is sustained correspondence between Condé Nast, the advertising and editorial departments on the importance of keeping editorial 'pure' lest readers become suspicious of legitimate merchandise pages.

<sup>79</sup> Nast, Condé (1935, March 12) [Letter to Richardson Wright] CNAMC, (Box 12 Folder 2).

<sup>80</sup> Mrs Morton (1942, March 10) [Memo to Condé Nast] CNAMC, (Box 18 Folder 21).

<sup>81</sup> Nast, Condé (1933) 'British *Vogue* Formula', unpublished internal report, CNAMC, (Box 14, Folder 7).

<sup>82</sup> Nast, Condé (1933) 'British *Vogue* Formula', unpublished internal report, CNAMC (Box 14, Folder 7).

<sup>83</sup> Chase, Edna (1938, August 25) [letter to Condé Nast] CNAMC (Box 1, Folder 24).

