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The evolution of Sunset Magazine's cooking department: The accommodation of men's and women's cooking in the 1930s

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THE EVOLUTION OF SUNSET MAGAZINE'S COOKING DEPARTMENT:
THE ACCOMMODATION OF MEN'S AND WOMEN'S COOKING IN THE 1930S

by

Jennifer Hoolhorst Pagano

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by

Jennifer Hoolhorst Pagano

DEDICATION

To Joe, Luca, and Nina for your love and encouragement. And to my parents for the *Sunset* life.

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The Evolution of *Sunset* Magazine's Cooking Department:
The Accommodation of Men's and Women's Cooking in the 1930s

Abstract

by Jennifer Hoolhorst Pagano

University of the Pacific
2019

The Western regional magazine *Sunset* has been published under a series of owners and publishers since 1898. In 1928, *Sunset* was purchased by Lawrence Lane, a Midwestern magazine executive who transformed it from a failing turn-of-the-century, general interest publication about the West, into a successful magazine about living in the West for the Western middle-class. *Sunset* had always been a magazine for men and women, and one that appealed to both male and female intellectuals at the time Lane purchased it. Lane and his editors attempted to interject more rigid middle-class ideals into a magazine that had espoused ideas that were progressive and less structured. Lane's new strategy to compartmentalize *Sunset's* content into its four categories—gardening, the home, cooking, and travel—resulted in a magazine that was conventionally gendered. Tension due to this shift played out in the publication's new cooking department. This thesis traces the development of *Sunset's* cooking department between 1928 and 1938 under the direction of its creator and founding editor Genevieve Callahan through the examination and analysis of *Sunset* cooking features and oral histories. The original department, structured to model a middle-class domestic ideology, did not accommodate all of *Sunset's* readers. The Western intellectualism of pre-Lane readers and their tendency to be less bound by conventional gender roles in the kitchen carried over into

Sunset's cooking department via reader recipe contributions. These Western cooks included men and women whose foodways deviated from that of the typical middle-class housewife. Callahan experimented throughout the cooking department's first decade by shifting its editorial framework and softening her home economics rigidity to create a department that was inclusive of women and men who cooked both inside and outside the kitchen. The changes made to the department over that decade illustrate how editorial experimentation reconciled a new middle-class-oriented cooking department to accommodate Western cooks less apt to model traditional gender roles.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

American domestic ideals in the 1920s and 1930s were in flux. The iconic 1920s image of a young, single working girl faded as the Depression-era helpmate and caretaker drifted to the fore. Middle-class values upholding traditional gender roles percolated through American society. However, conformance to these traditional gender roles was complicated in reality, especially in the West. This thesis examines transitioning domestic ideals in the West as they played out in the Western regional magazine *Sunset* at a key juncture in its history. This thesis focuses on an ownership change in 1928 that set *Sunset* on a course toward becoming a magazine for middle-class Westerners. The new editorial team overlaid middle-class values on a magazine that had espoused progressive ideas to an intellectual elite. Through this process rigidity met the unstructured, the practical met the cerebral, and a conventionally gendered approach butted up against an audience that was less bound by conventional gender roles. This tension between middle-class ideals and a less compliant readership was manifest in *Sunset's* new cooking department.¹ This thesis traces the development of *Sunset's* cooking department from the magazine's purchase by Laurence Lane in 1928 through 1938, when the department's creator and founding editor, Genevieve Callahan, left her post. The changes made to the department over that decade illustrate how editorial experimentation reconciled a new middle-class-oriented cooking department to accommodate Western cooks less apt to model traditional gender roles. These Western cooks included men and women whose foodways deviated from that of the typical middle-class housewife.

¹ "Cooking department" is the term used by *Sunset* staff and in writings about *Sunset* for what is known today as a food section.

Early in the twentieth century *Sunset* positioned itself as "The West's Great National Magazine." It strove to be a Western version of *The Atlantic Monthly* by covering politics, economics, literature, nature, and art from a Western perspective. The magazine's contributors were among the West's intellectual elite and its columns were targeted toward educated men and women interested in reading about the West. *Sunset* was financially unsustainable in this format however, due to a competitive national magazine market and dependence on income primarily derived from subscriptions. In 1928 the failing publication was purchased by an ambitious Midwesterner named Laurence Lane. He applied what he learned as an executive at *Better Homes & Gardens* and *Successful Farming* about magazine advertising, regional markets, and male and female readers, to revitalize *Sunset* into a financially viable magazine. This "new *Sunset*" would become a "how-to" magazine focused on helping Westerners get the most out of what their region had to offer in the areas of cooking, the home, gardening, and travel. Lane's goal was to transition *Sunset* from an older literary-style, general interest magazine into a "modern" magazine about living in the West, in part by switching to a financial model that relied on advertising dollars over subscriptions.

Essential to Lane's plan was the expansion of *Sunset's* target audience to include Western, middle-class readers. He saw an opportunity in the West for a regional magazine that would appeal to middle-class readers who wanted to enhance their Western lifestyles by building homes suited to the Western climate and topography, gardening throughout the year, cooking Western produce, and exploring the outdoors. These consumers were also of interest to advertisers who sold the materials and items to support this Western lifestyle. To attract new middle-class readers, Lane split the magazine into topical sections modeled after *Better Homes and Gardens* and borrowed a family-focused, regional orientation from *Successful Farming*.

These changes reflected a middle-class domestic ideal, one in which women were interested in cooking and housekeeping and men were interested in home building and outdoor recreation. Newly organized and positioned, *Sunset's* content was both compartmentalized and rigidly gendered.

In addition to creating sections based on a conventional notion of gender, Lane's strategy involved turning readers' contributions into content and hiring two *Better Home and Gardens* editors from the Midwest, Lou Richardson as managing editor and Genevieve Callahan as home economics editor, to implement his vision. In this thesis I examine the challenge of creating a *Sunset* cooking department that adhered to Lane's strategy and reflected his vision. The disparity between *Sunset* readers and *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Successful Farming* readers was central to the challenge facing Lane and came to light when *Sunset* readers began submitting recipes to the new cooking department. Both the educated elites who read the pre-1928 *Sunset* and the Western middle-class did not consistently conform to traditional gender roles. This new readership was a departure from the more rigid readers editor Genevieve Callahan had created content for at other magazines. This study examines the tension between a cooking department designed for middle-class housewives and contributors who often crossed traditional gender boundaries and explores how Callahan resolved that tension. It looks at the diverse cooks she encountered—women whose cooking went beyond the confines of their kitchens and into the outdoors and men who were extending their cooking repertoires beyond the campfire and into kitchens and backyards—and analyzes how Callahan accommodated them by experimenting with conventionally gendered and gender-neutral cooking columns.

Before presenting my analysis of *Sunset's* cooking department through Callahan's decade-long editorial tenure, Chapter 2 reviews Food Studies scholarship on men's and women's cooking in the 1920s and the 1930s and on home economics and the middle class. This chapter also lays out my contribution to the existing scholarship on *Sunset* and on gender and cooking. Chapter 3 outlines the methods used to complete this thesis. Chapter 4 grounds my thesis in *Sunset's* history by presenting publisher Laurence Lane's *Sunset* project, the *Sunset* he inherited, and his vision for transforming it. Chapter 5 provide background on the middle-class domestic ideals on which the new *Sunset* team based the revamped *Sunset*; the home economic tradition that informed Callahan's editorial style; and the emergence of outdoor recreation as a middle-class pastime and how *Sunset* covered it. The results of my research are detailed in Chapter 6. The final chapter provides concluding insights.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

This thesis offers an historical examination of *Sunset* magazine from 1928 to 1938. It uses the magazine's transition over this decade to explore fluctuating gender roles in the kitchen amidst a pervasive middle-class domestic ideology. The tension among middle-class values, the growing acceptance of men who cooked, and the role of the outdoors in creating non-conforming cooks played out within the boundaries of the "new *Sunset*'s" cooking department. This literature review situates my analysis of the magazine's new cooking department in the relevant scholarship on men's and women's cooking in the 1920s and 1930s. It reviews key home economics scholarship to better understand how Genevieve Callahan's editorial style influenced how she massaged a middle-class-oriented cooking department to accommodate a Western readership of men and women. In this chapter I also outline what has been written about *Sunset* itself, most notably on *Sunset* and the West. In this context I discuss what my thesis adds to *Sunset* scholarship, to the body of work on food writing in the 1930s, and to the existing literature on gender and cooking.

Gender, Cooking, and Food Studies

Core to this thesis is the differentiation between men's and women's cooking in the 1920s and 1930s. Because cooking has historically been the "centerpiece of women's work" (Schenone xii), the topic of cooking and gender permeates Food Studies. Whereas scholarship on the complicated relationship between women and cooking is prolific, scholarship on men and cooking remains less abundant. This thesis focuses on how both men's and women's cooking was depicted in *Sunset* in the 1930s, a time in which men's cooking was beginning to be accepted as an appropriate topic in popular magazines. Essential to understanding cooking

and gender in this time period is understanding fluctuating gender roles in the post-World War I period and over the course of the 1930s.

The examination of cookbooks and other food writing produced in a particular timeframe is a methodology used by scholars to learn more about cooking in that era.² The most prominent analysis of cookbooks and food writing written for and by men in the 1920s and 1930s was conducted by historian Jessamyn Neuhaus. She includes her analysis in her 2003 book, *Manly Meals and Mom's Home Cooking*, that covers both men's and women's cookery. She concludes that cookbooks and food writing found in magazines published over these decades bolstered a middle-class domestic ideology by targeting their content toward middle-class housewives and stressing cooking as one of their primary roles. Cookbooks, as well as magazine food sections, emphasized that the differences between men's and women's cookery in the 1920s and 1930s were centered around what men and women cooked, what they wanted to eat, when they cooked, and how their cooking skills and styles were depicted. Men were characterized as hobbyist or special occasion cooks and women as the primary, routine family cooks. Men were considered (or more accurately, considered themselves) more creative in the kitchen, while women were regarded as more rigid and precise. Neuhaus meticulously corroborates these conclusions through extensive examples of cookbooks and magazine articles, similar in some cases to the magazine articles I analyze in my study of *Sunset* magazine. Her detailed documentation and discussions on men's and women's cooking instruction inform my work by providing historical background, primary and secondary

² For more information on the advantages and pitfalls of using cookbooks and recipes as historical documents, see Chapter 3: Methodology.

sources, and an organizational framework based on the differences between men's and women's cookery.

Neuhaus was not, however, the first to put forth such ideas about how men's cookery differed from women's cookery. Sherrie Inness discussed the male/female cookery dichotomy in the first half of the twentieth century in her book *Dinner Roles: American Women and Culinary Culture* a few years before *Manly Meals and Mom's Home Cooking*.³ Inness frames the difference between male and female appetites as part of what she describes as a "male cooking mystique," a term she modeled after "the feminine mystique." This "mystique" includes a number of assumptions beyond those mentioned in my description of Neuhaus' work. These include men's ability to maintain masculinity by choosing to cook rather than having to cook, the cultural assignation of some foods as "masculine" and some as "feminine," and women's ability to attract men by cooking to their taste. Inness approaches male and female cooking with a methodology similar to Neuhaus, but with a style that is more descriptive and less analytically rigid. Inness bases her research on the examination of cookbooks, other food writing, and advertising.

Both Neuhaus and Inness reference folklorist Thomas Adler and his oft cited article, "Making Pancakes on Sunday: The Male Cook in Family Tradition." In this article he addresses men's primary role in outdoor cooking, a tradition he traces back to the 1930s and cites *Sunset* magazine as a contributor to the association of men with outdoor cooking (46). Adler's 1981 article veers from Neuhaus' and Inness' books as it focuses on male cookery within the family structure, looks particularly at "dad's," and explores how male cooks can maintain their masculinity by assuming an amateur cook's persona. By contrast, Neuhaus and

³ *Dinner Roles* was published in 2001.

Inness may touch on these areas, but their primary focus is on the differentiation between male and female cooking.

All three of the academics come to similar conclusions about men's and women's cooking, each from different disciplines—Neuhaus as an historian, Innes as a literary critic, and Adler as a folklorist. Their work provided arguments against which to test the theories I explored while investigating men's and women's cooking in *Sunset*. Many of my findings corroborate their conclusions. Others illustrate how, in reality, men's and women's cooking is more complicated than outlined by the above scholars. More specifically, my findings show men and women depicted in *Sunset* who didn't fit into the categories these scholars describe. For example, both women who cooked on equal footing with men when cooking in the outdoors and men who proudly prepared food deemed feminine were featured in *Sunset*.

Home Economics and the Middle Class

The creation of the new *Sunset* cooking department that was revealed in the magazine in 1929 was primarily the responsibility of home economics editor Genevieve Callahan. The form of the newly created department reflected Callahan's training as a home economist. She obtained a college degree in home economics and embarked on a career as a women's magazine editor just after World War I, a time when home economics was shedding its old-fashioned reformist reputation and gaining legitimacy. The fact that home economists helped implement food rationing and nutrition education during the war contributed to its increasingly widespread acceptance (Veit 91-93, Shapiro 218). An essential text in the literature on home economics from a food studies perspective is Laura Shapiro's 1986 book, *Perfection Salad*. Shapiro traces the domestic science movement from the nineteenth century into the twentieth century and discusses its grounding in science and its tenets of efficiency, pragmatism, uniformity, and

predictability. She explains how home economics influenced and upheld traditional middle-class gender roles and homogeneous ways of eating. Shapiro's analysis helps to contextualize Callahan's creation of *Sunset's* cooking department as a well-organized, reliable, and structured food section. It also explains her inclination to shape the narrative of the cooking department to reflect middle-class values.

Another text that helps contextualize Callahan's work at the magazine is Mary Drake McFeely's *Can She Bake a Cherry Pie* (2000), a study that uses cookbooks as a primary resource. McFeely, trained as a librarian, provides further insight into the strategies Callahan used to maintain a cooking department for middle-class women. In particular, McFeely links the changing role of white middle-class women in the kitchen with emerging technologies, convenience foods, and the growth of consumerism in the 1920s and 1930s. She argues that women's domestic role morphed from being managerial in the 1920s, to being focused on family morale during the Depression, a reality Callahan had to navigate after the stock market crashed just months after the "new *Sunset*" launched.

***Sunset* Scholarship**

The most thorough scholarship on *Sunset* was published in 1998 as part of a project conducted by Stanford University on the magazine's centenary anniversary. The core of the project was the development of an index of a significant portion of the articles published in *Sunset* from 1898 to 1998. Accompanying the index are introductory essays by the sons of Laurence Lane who eventually led the business, an essay on *Sunset* and the West by historian Kevin Starr, and an analysis of *Sunset* under its four owners (as of 1998) by Tomas Jaehn, a Stanford University Library curator. This set of scholarly articles covers a copious amount of information on the magazine's formation, focus, and the perspective of its publishers and

editors. It, undoubtedly, is a narrative filtered by *Sunset's* leadership. Essential to my analysis of *Sunset* is Starr's contextualization of *Sunset* in the history of the American West between 1898 and 1998. In particular, his work informed my understanding of *Sunset* before Lane purchased the magazine. Starr's discussion of the magazine as it transitioned from a promotional to a national magazine details the contribution of Progressive writers, artists, and politicians to the magazine's ethos. His exploration of *Sunset's* connections to Stanford University and the Sierra Club were key to my comparative analysis of *Sunset* as a magazine for an intellectual elite and a magazine targeted toward the middle-class. Starr's work also helped me formulate insights on *Sunset's* roots in environmental conservation and coverage of middle-class camping. In addition, Starr's argument about *Sunset* and women—as readers on par with their male counterparts and as an obvious audience for cookery-related content—served as a jumping off point for my thinking about women, cookery, and domestic ideals.

Research Relevance

Food writing and recipes found in magazines, like cookbooks, can provide scholars with a lens into kitchens of a particular time and place. Studying *Sunset's* cooking department affords an even closer look, as much of its content was based on submissions from male and female readers. This primary source, albeit curated by an editor, brings me a step closer to understanding what Westerners cooked in the 1930s. Callahan's cooking department was not designed to be inspirational, but rather to be reflective of what and how Western women and men cooked. By examining how readers' cooking exposed in *Sunset* both echoed and contradicted the predominant domestic ideologies of the era, this analysis furthers the understanding of the existing scholarship on gender and cooking in the 1930. It shows that the

boundaries between men's and women's cooking, boundaries that other scholars have found in magazines and cookbooks during this period, were permeable in reality, especially in the West.

In addition, my research fills a gap in *Sunset*-related scholarship by examining a period of the magazine's history that has not been analyzed in the context of men's and women's cooking. *Sunset* has been a source of primary research for Ph.D. dissertations. Although some have included *Sunset*-related topics that this thesis addresses, none have focused on cooking in *Sunset* in the period between 1928 and 1938 or have compared the magazine's depiction of women's and men's cooking.⁴ Most relevant to my thesis is Philip Lockette's 2010 master's thesis, "Sex in the Kitchen." His analysis of *Sunset*'s men's cooking column "Chefs of the West" supports his thesis about the masculinization of the western suburban kitchen in the 1940s through the 1960s. His work inspired me to investigate men's cooking in *Sunset* prior to the introduction of "Chefs of the West."⁵ Scholar Barbara Berglund wrote an academic journal article on "middlebrow culture" in *Sunset* which focused on the 1920s and 1930s, but she did not include depictions of food or cooking in her analysis.

This thesis also furthers the scholarship on food writing and magazines during the 1930s. Scholarship on food writing in specific magazines in the first half of the twentieth century is scant and tends to focus on the 1940s and later. None of the scholarship looks at both men's and women's cooking within the same magazine. Included in this body of work is a journal article by Elizabeth Fakazis on the male cooking column, "Man the Kitchenette,"

⁴ Of the dissertations I reviewed, *Sunset* is the subject of a communications dissertation that analyzed the concept of being Western in *Sunset* from a rhetorical perspective and is included in a history dissertation focused on housekeeping and liberal individualism. An architecture thesis argues how *Sunset* defined the home for Western living, and a discussion of how camping was depicted in *Sunset* is included in a dissertation about recreational vehicle technology.

⁵ "Chefs of the West" was first published in 1940.

published in *Esquire* in the 1940s, and David Strauss' assessment of *Gourmet* magazine in his book *Setting the Table for Julia Child*. Two academic studies cover the same time period as this thesis, but are focused on gender and consumerism. These are Jennifer Scanlon's book, *Inarticulate Longings*, an analysis of the *Ladies' Home Journal* from 1910-1930, and Kenon Breazeale's article, "In Spite of Women: *Esquire* Magazine and the Construction of the Male Consumer," that follows *Enquire* from its inception in 1933 into the 1940s.

I discovered many possible lines of inquiry while conducting the research for this thesis, exposing *Sunset* as a rich resource for scholars. Areas for further research include a comparative recipe analysis of men's and women's recipe submissions, an exploration of Genevieve Callahan and Lou Richardson's relationship and careers, women and camping in the Sierras at the turn of the century, and camp provisioning in general.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Studying cookbooks and magazines provide a window into an era. Magazine articles, bylines, images, and advertisements in particular provide clues to how people lived. Recipes published in cookbooks or featured in magazines help us understand how people ate, cooked, and what foodstuffs were available to them. However, these sources are forms of prescriptive literature, and caution must be taken when using them to formulate theories or draw conclusions without understanding the agenda and motivations of the cookbook author, magazine editor, or recipe writer (Miller and Deutsch 184; Oliver 4). *Sunset* presents a unique opportunity to conduct historical research on gender and cooking based on recipes and food writing because it is a magazine for both men and women and its early cooking department was primarily comprised of recipes and tips submitted by male and female readers. These recipes come under the prescriptive literature umbrella, as those chosen to appear in the magazine were curated by the editor. However, they do bring us a step closer to what men and women cooked in the West in the 1930s, the time period of my focus. Nonetheless, this research is not a content analysis of recipes, but a critical analysis of the cooking department as a whole. My goal is to gain a greater understanding of gender ideals and shifting gender roles by examining whose recipes were included in *Sunset* each month, and how the cooking department was shaped at its introduction and changed over the 1930s.

This research focuses on *Sunset* magazine at a specific time in its history. It is an examination of the magazine in its first decade under publisher Laurence Lane, and spans from October 1928, when Lane took ownership of the magazine, to June 1938, the last *Sunset* issue worked on by cooking department editor Genevieve Callahan. This period of time was chosen

because it precedes the 1940 introduction of *Sunset's* iconic and long-lasting male recipe column, "Chefs of the West," a column that has been written about by other scholars who have studied men's and women's cooking after 1940. This previous work sparked my interest in understanding how *Sunset* portrayed men's cooking prior to "Chefs and the West," and in studying that portrayal juxtaposed with women's cooking content.

Primary Sources

Sunset magazines from 1929 through 1939 were accessed at Stanford University Cecil H. Green Library. February 1929 was the inaugural Lane issue, and the preceding issue, January 1929, featured an announcement of the magazine's change in focus. Genevieve Callahan's name last appeared in the masthead of the June 1938 issue. All male-related cooking articles published over this time period were considered in this analysis, either in their entirety or identified by their title and/or authors. "Kitchen Cabinet" columns, which anchored the new cooking department, were analyzed with the aid of Volume One and Volume Two of a three-volume collection of "Kitchen Cabinet" recipes published in book form by *Sunset* in 1944. All of the "Kitchen Cabinet" columns from 1929 through 1938 are included in these two volumes chronologically and exactly as they were published in the magazine. Examples of other women's cooking content that appeared in *Sunset* over this period, and were pertinent to this thesis, were collected and compared or contrasted to men's cooking content and "Kitchen Cabinet" columns. An index compiled by Stanford University of a significant portion of *Sunset* articles from 1898 to 1998 was also used as a resource. This index, organized by topic and author, was used to identify food- and cooking-related articles published in *Sunset* prior to Lane's takeover of the magazine.

What started as an investigation of women's vs. men's recipes within the context of *Sunset*, grew into an analysis of the cooking department as a whole. The women's column, "Kitchen Cabinet," is structured similarly to women's columns in other publications. An analysis of "Kitchen Cabinet" showed that it was primarily comprised of typical middle-class readers' recipes, but with a Western twist. Men's recipes appeared less consistently in the magazine and were presented in a more disorganized fashion. Most notably, men's recipes were not folded into "Kitchen Cabinet."⁶ Through the tracing of men's cooking in *Sunset* prior to the launch of "Chefs of the West" in 1940, the story of a cooking department emerged, one based on reader's submissions that did not quite match the editors' initial expectations.

Oral Histories and Interviews

I looked beyond *Sunset's* published recipes and food-related content and incorporated evidence from interviews with key players in Laurence Lane's "new *Sunset*" to support my hypotheses on the motivations behind editorial decisions. *Sunset's* gifting of records to Stanford University in 2015 and 2016 was fortuitous. This donation was prompted by the closing of *Sunset's* Menlo Park headquarters and included records dating from 1931 to 1998. A series of interviews of editors Genevieve Callahan, Lou Richardson, and Walter Doty, the editor who took over the magazine shortly after Callahan and Richardson left, conducted in 1979 and 1980 were useful to my research. These were in cassette tape format but digitized by the library for my use. An oral history of Laurence Lane's son, Bill Lane, Jr., dated 1993-1994, provided the backstory behind Laurence Lane's purchase of and vision for *Sunset* from a business perspective. This was helpful in showing that the structural changes Laurence Lane

⁶ One instance of a recipe submitted by a man and one instance of a recipe submitted by a boy were found over the time frame covered in this thesis.

made to *Sunset* after his purchase in 1928, his targeting of a specific market, and his new business plan for the magazine exemplified the changing U.S. magazine industry at the turn of the twentieth century. Understanding Lane's vision for *Sunset* from a business perspective also added another dimension to my analysis because Lane's business goals had a heavy hand in guiding the editorial direction of the magazine.

Interviews included in the 1972-1977 Sierra Club Women Series of the Sierra Club Oral History Project were helpful in gaining insight into the experiences of women who camped in the early twentieth century. In particular, they shed light on the experiences of Helen Gompertz and her husband Joseph N. LeConte whose articles about their experiences appeared in *Sunset*. This background influenced my analysis of women and outdoor cooking, and women's role in the emergence of camping as a middle-class pastime.

Use of Quantitative and Qualitative Methodologies

This study began as a quantitative analysis of recipes submitted by men and women, but the discovery of the richness of cooking-related articles led to a deeper analysis and unanticipated findings. Consequently, a mixed-methodology was ultimately used.

Historical research in the form of document analysis, along with critical analysis and quantitative methods were employed. A qualitative document analysis was performed to identify all male-related cooking content in *Sunset* magazine issues published between 1929 and 1938. My research findings resulted from the collation and analysis of this information, along with a comparative analysis that included this male-oriented cooking content, female-oriented cooking content, and gender-neutral cooking content. The cooking-content analysis included recipes, instructional articles, tips, and other food-related narrative pieces.

A quantitative approach was used to assess the prevalence of recipes for food cooked outdoors and other specific types of food published in "Kitchen Cabinet." In addition, quantitative methods were employed to assess the publication of male cooking-related content published under the auspices of an established monthly column, and also to identify and quantify food-related articles written by both men and women published prior to 1929.

The review of oral histories and interviews guided my lines of inquiry and contributed to conclusions drawn through the analyses noted above. Listening to the initial Lane-era *Sunset* editors, Lou Richardson and Genevieve Callahan, tell stories about founding the magazine confirmed that they intended to model the *Sunset* cooking department on that of *Better Homes and Gardens*. Bill Lane, Jr.'s oral history transcript provided the story of *Sunset* as a business enterprise. Without this background I would not have understood the difficulties the magazine went through during the Depression or the impetus for changes the cooking department would take at the end of the 1930s. This knowledge steered me toward focusing this thesis on the years Richardson and Callahan were at the magazine. In addition, listening to the interview of William Doty, an editor who followed Richardson and Callahan, further provided an insider's perspective on managerial motivations to make editorial changes to the magazine. Doty's interview also gave me a better understanding of the contrast between his editorial style and Richardson and Callahan's editorial style. Richardson and Callahan were editors with a great interest in the topics they wrote about, while Doty's expertise was marketing and advertising, a skill Lane and his investors believed the magazine needed at the time. Finally, using secondary sources that examined *Sunset* against the backdrop of the West and within the frame of American history, further contextualized my investigation.

Chapter 4: Background

This chapter looks at changing gender roles and the rising prominence of a middle-class domestic ideology in the decades prior to Laurence Lane's purchase of *Sunset* in 1928. This background puts into context the significance of how and why a cooking department was incorporated into *Sunset* in conjunction with its 1928 ownership change and what prompted Genevieve Callahan's experimentation within the department to accommodate a variety of cooks. Examples of both adherence to and inconsistency within traditional gender roles found their way into *Sunset's* cooking department.

I also take a look in this chapter at how Genevieve Callahan's home economics training and editorial experience formed the foundation of her editorial style. Callahan was charged with curating the many recipes and tips she received from her readers. Many of these readers were middle-class housewives, but others were women whose cooking took them outside the kitchen, and some were men. How she navigated the challenge of incorporating all of her readers' voices into the cooking department stemmed from her past experiences and educational background.

In this chapter I explain how the term "the West" is used in the context of my thesis, because *Sunset* was grounded, literally and figuratively, in the West, and because the West was an inspirational and shaping force for the "new *Sunset's*" publisher and editors. Finally, I explore camping, as the outdoors was intrinsic to *Sunset's* identity and considered key to defining a Western lifestyle. Camping uniquely allowed for more flexible gender roles and was regarded as an appropriate space for both male and female cooks. It was a subject that

continued to be covered in *Sunset* after Lane's acquisition and was maintained as a gender-neutral topic despite the "new *Sunset's*" conventionally gendered structure.

Gender Roles and Domestic Ideology

Sunset's depictions of women shifted with its ownership change in 1928, with that year serving as a demarcation. Prior to 1928, women's writing in *Sunset* and the articles published for women were less focused on their role as a housekeeper (Starr 49). The new conventionally gendered *Sunset* included a dedicated section on housekeeping and cooking in its topical mix. As a family-focused magazine, the new cooking department was organized to appeal to middle-class housewives, signaling that men were not expected to be significant readers of the section. Women were the focus because a middle-class domestic ideal that placed women in the kitchen pervaded American consciousness when Laurence Lane took over *Sunset* at the end of the 1920s.

From the emerging market economy in the early nineteenth century grew the concept of separate spheres, men's sphere encompassing business and women's sphere encompassing the home. The Cult of Domesticity, a primarily middle-class distinction that pervaded the nineteenth century, prescribed that a wife yield to her husband's authority and focus on her duty to her husband and family. In reaction against this rigidly gendered ideology, a shift in mindset began to occur around the turn of the century, one that fostered the idea of the "New Women." The educated, attractive, athletic Gibson Girl, who had a mind of her own, gave way to the image of the flapper in the 1920s, as well as a less party-girl version, who was educated and single, took care of herself, and did not subscribe to the Cult of Domesticity. Tension grew as the emergence of the self-sufficient single woman challenged the middle-class domestic ideal. Other tensions abounded in the decade after World War I. Politically, women were involved in

the temperance movement that restricted the rights of its citizens, and the suffrage movement, which expanded them. Women entered the post-World War I era having had the opportunity to be part of the workforce, but also bearing a strengthened association with the kitchen as a result of their role in food conservation efforts on the home front, encapsulated in the slogan, "Food will win the war."

Men's roles also shifted between the end of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. After the Civil War, industrialization led to new employment patterns that increasingly linked male identity with a profession outside the home. For those with industry-related jobs, the standardized work day led to increased time for leisure and time spent with family. Masculinity that was once linked to physicality shifted to include competitiveness, strength and courage. Theodore Roosevelt was a model of this combination of the manly ideal and family man. As women became more independent and began to enter the workforce in the early twentieth century, men's position at home as the provider and as the preeminent force in the workplace was called into question.⁷

Gender roles can be characterized as being in flux during the decades that led up to Laurence Lane's *Sunset* acquisition. However, adherence to a traditional middle-class domestic ideology prevailed, in part as a backlash against women's gains in political power and independence. Toward the end of the 1920s, middle-class families in which women and men assumed traditional gender roles were ripe for the new conventionally gendered *Sunset*, a magazine created by a publisher and a staff that hailed from the Midwest and were well versed

⁷ For more information on gender roles in the nineteenth and twentieth century see Sylvia Hoffert's *The History of Gender in America*, Chapters 4, 5, and 9-11, and David Kyvig's *Daily Life in the United States, 1920-1940*, Chapter 1. For more information on gender roles as they pertain to food, see Laura Schenone's *A Thousand Years Over a Hot Stove*, Chapters 8 and 9, and Jennifer Jensen Wallach's *How American Eats*, Chapter 5.

in producing magazines for middle-class men and women. In the early years of the "new *Sunset*" and throughout the 1930s the editors provided commentary that supported middle-class values, an irony given that the two female editors were unmarried, educated, and gainfully employed "New Women" themselves. Even after the stock market crash in 1929 and throughout the Depression, when gender roles were again challenged by women taking on work outside the home, *Sunset* was there with inspirational editorials and tips to enhance domestic life, even on a budget. Whatever the intentions of *Sunset*'s new publisher, evidence of shifting gender roles made its way into its new cooking department in the form of recipes, food-related experiences, and tips submitted by readers for inclusion in the magazine. Although most submissions were typical of middle-class housewives, some did not reflect this traditional gender role. Submissions were also sent in by men and by women whose cooking extended outside the kitchen and into the outdoors. It was food editor Genevieve Callahan's job to figure out how to accommodate the realities of these Western cooks.

Genevieve Callahan and Her Home Economics World View

Callahan herself embodied the tension created by an era in which the "New Woman" was taking her place alongside the middle-class housewife. She had been born, raised, and educated in Iowa, trained in a discipline that focused on the importance of women in the kitchen, and had worked for women's magazines that upheld traditional middle-class values. Yet, she was a "New Woman," single, educated, and in a position of authority at a new magazine. Callahan's career modeled the ideal early twentieth-century home economist. She received a home economics education and worked in a recognized profession made possible by the work of home economics movement luminaries such as scientist and reformer Ellen Swallow Richards. Her approach to recipe testing and cooking combined the rigid scientific

methodology and feminine "art" that harkened back to Catherine Beecher's framing of homemaking in the 1840s. Looking at cooking and the act of eating through a scientific lens led early home economists to value efficiency, economy, standardization, and purity. These values formed the foundation of Genevieve Callahan's editorial style. She entered the workforce after graduation from Iowa State College in 1920,⁸ just after World War I ended. Home economists were well respected in the post-World War I era after contributing to the creation of wartime nutrition education and food conservation programs.⁹

Magazine content in women's magazines in the 1920s highlighted the domestic roles of middle-class women, which had changed along with advances in technology. New household technologies contributed to the transformation of women's domestic responsibilities, which now required management skills, as described by historian Silvia Hoffert:

Ladies' magazines and advice manuals began to emphasize the importance of a housewife's managerial skills. She needed to have expertise in time management as well as accounting. She needed to develop a sense of aesthetics in order to tastefully decorate her home. She needed to be familiar with the chemical make-up of fabrics as well as food. And she needed to acquire a rudimentary knowledge of the germ theory, nutrition, and sanitation. (292)

⁸ College level programs in domestic science were first established at land-grant colleges in the 1870s (Veit 83), the first at Callahan's alma mater, Iowa State College in 1872 (Belier 24-25; Iowa State University (formerly College) timeline found at <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~isu150/history/timeline-1858.html> and accessed in 2018 is no longer valid). In 1914 the Smith-Lever Act created the Cooperative Extension Service which funded scientific training for farm women in home economics, and in 1917 the Smith-Hughes Act included funds for training home economics teachers, adding legitimacy to home economics as a course of study (Veit 83; Shapiro 185).

⁹ The U.S. Food Administration formed a Committee on Home Economics that organized the services of home economists to work in the areas of food conservation and nutrition. Managing food at home became a patriotic act and the role of the "housekeeper" also rose in importance. By the end of the war, the home economics profession had gained respectability (Veit 91-93; Shapiro 218).

This aligned with the home economist's world view. The advice from home economics professionals found in woman's magazines helped new housekeepers and cooks accumulate the technical and managerial skills they needed to run their modern households. Armed with her home economics tool kit and experience working on several women's magazine food sections, Callahan left the Midwest to take the helm of *Sunset's* new cooking department in 1928.

The Lure and Definition of "The West"

Not only was *Sunset* magazine located in the West and about the West, but Lane and his editors were inspired by the West, as were the tourists the original *Sunset* sought to attract. Laurence Lane's enthusiasm for moving west to revitalize *Sunset* extended to his personal interest in the West. In the 1920s, the West still had the allure it had in the nineteenth century when it conjured the image of wide-open spaces and symbolized possibility (Schwantes 18-19). The West, nature, and accessing the outdoors were essential themes in *Sunset*, from enticing readers to come west in its first iteration as a Southern Pacific Railroad promotional tool, to Lane's version that showed its readers how to access and engage with the Western outdoors. For the purpose of this thesis, "the West" is defined as it was imagined by the publishers of *Sunset* throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For the Southern Pacific Railroad, the West was defined as anywhere west of New Orleans that could be accessed by rail. When *Sunset* became a regional magazine, the West could be construed as including the states in which *Sunset* offered subscriptions or as the places the magazine's content covered. *Sunset* first defined "*Sunset* Land" as California, Oregon, and Washington, and was expanded in the 1930s to include California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, and Arizona. The West also had a more amorphous meaning for those who migrated or dreamed of migrating west. In the case of

the publisher and editors of *Sunset* it was not only a physical place but a state of mind that symbolized a unique way of life.

The Evolution of Camping

Exploring the wilderness and camping as a form of recreation have been significant topics covered in *Sunset* since its inception, and hence they play a prominent role in this thesis. The Western terrain led Laurence Lane to regard the outdoors as integral to family life in the West and convinced him that the automobile would increase the opportunities for Westerners to explore and enjoy the outdoors (Lane and Patenaude, 6-7). *Sunset's* content on outdoor recreation followed along with the advent of camping as a middle-class pastime. In writing about *Sunset's* continued coverage of the Western outdoors, historian Kevin Starr writes,

Outdoor life—camping, back-packing, hiking, pack trips with horses, river rafting—which once seemed the prerogative of the elite Sierra Club in the early years of the century (professional people, capable of mounting expensive expeditions into the Sierra Nevada) increasingly became an affordable family-oriented affair in state and federal lands that were far more abundant and available to more people. (59-60)

Sunset's early coverage of this "outdoor life" included articles that focused on preserving nature and the exploration of remote places, and eventually covered camping as a family sport. By *Sunset's* founding in 1898, camping was an established form of recreation (Pomeroy 141). The West followed the East Coast and Europe in the formation of mountain or Alpine "clubs" (144). Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club was one of the first of these clubs established in the West, and had a leadership and membership primarily comprised of financially successful professionals, those from old money, and the highly educated, a group reflective of those who had the time and/or financial means to explore the outdoors at the time (*Articles of Association* 5, 14-20; Starr 36-38). Although some explored the wilderness with little equipment (John Muir is one of the best known), most used packing companies to organize their trips. This

required stage coaches and railroad tickets, hotel stays on the way to the trip's starting point, and funds for cooks and pack animals.¹⁰ There was a strong link between the Sierra Club and *Sunset*. Sierra Club members wrote about their experiences for *Sunset* and Sierra Club luminaries also served as subjects for articles published in *Sunset*.

The automobile spurred a middle-class interest in the outdoors. This was possible as automobiles became more affordable and widespread in the early decades of the twentieth century. Automobiles granted greater access to places (both in nature and in towns) inaccessible by trains. In addition, the paid vacation, which became a benefit for salaried workers in the 1920s, gave workers the time required to explore the outdoors. Outdoor recreation shifted from being "aristocratic and exclusive" to being democratized by the influx of middle-class families.¹¹

Camping equipment evolved along with the modes of transportation used to reach the wilderness. Equipment designed to be packed in on horseback evolved into camping equipment that was lighter or smaller or folded (Harmon 47-61). These advancements made the camper more comfortable and many of them were written about in the magazine. *Sunset* followed the design of camp stoves and other cooking equipment, even featuring a column called "Trailer News" in the 1930s.

Camping was a sport in which both women and men participated. This is well documented in *Sunset* magazine articles written by avid outdoorswomen and Sierra Club

¹⁰ See Sierra Club Women oral histories, particularly interviews of Helen LeConte and Ruth Praeger; and *Sunset* articles such as, "A Closer Acquaintance with Yosemite," by Helen M. Gompertz, *Sunset*, May 1900, 2-28; "The Sierra Club in the Kings River Canyon," by Helen Gompertz LeConte, *Sunset*, July, 1903, 250-262; and "Mount Whitney with the Sierra Club" by Victor Henderson, *Sunset*, Oct. 1903, 505-515. See bibliography for links to digital versions.

¹¹ Belasco 7, 29; Kyvig 161; Pomeroy 146-147, 203-204.

members. Female wilderness adventurers, who were portrayed similarly to their male counterparts in *Sunset* at the turn of the century, gave way to *Sunset* women who strove to domesticate the outdoors in the 1930s. Camping also became more family friendly as amenities were added and women began to take on the traditional homemaker role in camp. Warren Belasco describes "autocamping" in the 1920s as an activity that brought family members together because it "offered something for everyone" during a time when companionate family values were evolving. Articles in *Sunset* continued to portray camping as a family-friendly sport. The magazine covered camping trips with children and showed how a camp set-up that mimicked home attracted women whose interest in roughing it in the outdoors didn't match their husbands'.

Chapter 5: *Sunset* Magazine

Sunset magazine has made a number of transitions over its 120-year history. This thesis focuses on 1928-1938, the years over which *Sunset* transitioned from a gender-neutral magazine for the intellectual elite to a "how-to" magazine that advocated middle-class domestic ideals. This decade begins with the year Laurence Lane took ownership of the magazine and ends with the last year its founding cooking department editor, Genevieve Callahan, was on staff. This chapter contextualizes this transition by delving into the magazine's history and exploring the changes magazines were undergoing at the turn of the century. It also sets out Laurence Lane's vision for *Sunset* and how he planned to execute it.

From Promotional Magazine to Literary Publication

Sunset magazine has been published, proudly uninterrupted through wars and earthquakes, since May 1898. It was created by the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1898 with the purpose of promoting travel to the stops along its Sunset Limited route to the "Far West," from its origin in New Orleans, Louisiana, to its endpoint in Monterey, California. This promotional publication highlighted what the West had to offer, mainly attractions of interest to tourists and its natural beauty. Its founding motto was, "Publicity for the attractions and advantages of the Western Empire." In this core way, *Sunset* evoked a sense of manifest destiny inherent in the railroad's effort to bring Americans west. The Southern Pacific established a higher-income target readership for *Sunset*—Easterners and Midwesterners with disposable incomes and a penchant for leisure travel. The magazine published articles on the West's natural wonders such as Yosemite and the Golden Gate, Mt. Shasta and Mt. Hood, Lake Tahoe and Crater Lake, and served as quasi-society pages printing the names of visitors who were currently vacationing

at California resorts and hotels. It linked readers to the edge of the Western frontier, literally, listing transportation schedules for those wanting to continue on to the Alaskan Klondike or to explore the Hawaiian Islands and the Far East (Starr 31-34).

By 1914 a rise in population and a strong economy in the West made it unnecessary for the Southern Pacific to fund a publication that promoted the region. Hence, *Sunset* was sold to a group of *Sunset* staff, organized as the Woodhead, Field, and Company and led by editor Charles K. Field. They relaunched *Sunset* as a national general interest publication distinct from those published on the East Coast, in part to combat the perception perpetuated by Eastern publications that the West was intellectually inferior and less civilized than the East. To accomplish this, they shed the magazine's promotional image and created content that bolstered the West as a place with an intelligentsia, showcased its artists and writers, and highlighted its unique natural landscape. *Sunset* also covered national and international politics, but with an eye to how the West was impacted, and with a Progressive bent. Education, the arts, environmental conservation, and America's place in the world were topics editorialized by contributors with ties to politics (Herbert Hoover), Stanford University (its first President David Starr Jordan), and the Sierra Club (president Joseph N. LeConte, and as a subject, John Muir).

The goal was to turn *Sunset* into the "*Atlantic Monthly* of the Pacific Coast" (Starr 36).

Unfortunately, *Sunset* as revamped by Field and his collaborators proved financially untenable for a number of reasons. First, the political and social climate had shifted after World War I. Historian Kevin Starr posits that political changes during and after World War I resulted in opinions and attitudes that were less in line with the magazine's Progressive and globalist political inclinations. He explains that,

Increasingly, middle-class Americans—traumatized by the casualties the United States had experienced in two short years of the AEF [American Expeditionary Forces]—were withdrawing from their previous stance of optimistic internationalism and becoming more cautious, isolationist, and conservative. And besides, the high-mindedness of the Progressive era seemed increasingly out of touch with the cynical syncopations of the Jazz Age. America had become frenzied and materialistic in contrast to the more philosophical and aesthetic stance of the pre-World War I Progressives. (44)

Sunset's circulation numbers mirrored a decrease in national interest in a westward-leaning magazine that promoted Progressive ideals and had a global point of view.

Secondly, as a national general interest magazine, *Sunset* competed with better-established national magazines and was dependent on its circulation as its only funding source. Literary-style magazines, like *Sunset*, that were funded by subscription revenue were being replaced by magazines with business plans designed to bring in advertising revenue. These "modern" magazines were able to decrease their cover price and subscription rates due to the financial infusion of advertising dollars. Lower prices resulted in increased circulation, which made the publication more attractive to advertisers. As this new advertising-based business model widened a magazine's audience, content was shortened, simplified, and became less literary.

Also detrimental to *Sunset's* bottom line was a declining market for general interest magazines. As the public's knowledge and interests expanded through the dissemination of radio and movies in 1920s, the market opened up for special-interest magazines. Along with this shift, "Magazines became defined not as much by their content but by the demographic character of their audiences" (Sumner 5, 9, 16). *Sunset*, a literary-style general interest magazine reliant on its subscription base and financially ailing, was at a crossroads at the end of 1920s.

A New Publisher and a New Perspective: Laurence Lane

In late 1928, Midwestern advertising executive Laurence Lane purchased *Sunset* magazine from Woodhead, Field, and Company. Lane had risen through the ranks at the magazine publisher Meredith Corporation, where he had worked on the publisher's notable magazines, *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Successful Farming*. Working for Meredith, he gained experience traveling around the country liaising with the company's advertisers. It was Lane who facilitated *Sunset's* transition from a nineteenth-century-style literary magazine to a twentieth-century "business enterprise." Lane executed a plan to take *Sunset* from a magazine about the West for the educated elite and reposition it for middle-class consumers interested in enhancing their lives in the West. This new readership was also a key target for advertisers.

In addition to his interest in *Sunset* as a business opportunity, Laurence Lane had an affinity for the West. He had frequently visited California on business and to see family (Lane, Jr., "*Sunset* Publisher" 19-20). Lane's son Bill explains how inspired his father was by the Western landscape when he tells the story of a 1922 business trip the elder Lane took with his boss, Mr. Meredith, and the president of the Southern Pacific Railroad across the San Joaquin Valley and up into Yosemite:

The dramatic transition from seacoast to broad valley to high mountains in only a few hours' travel made a lasting impression on Dad and convinced him that travel and recreation would, in the advancing age of the automobile, play an increasingly significant role in the lives of Western families. (Lane, Jr., *Sun Never Sets* 7)

Lane Sr. was struck by the outdoor opportunities the region afforded middle-class Westerners, and this contributed to his vision to recreate *Sunset* as a magazine that catered to their interests.

The "New *Sunset*"

Laurence Lane had a variety of objectives for modernizing *Sunset*. First and foremost, he wanted *Sunset* to emphasize the outdoor life unique to the West. The magazine would elevate the pride readers had in their homes by providing practical advice and instruction on how to improve those homes. A rapport with his readers would be created by incorporating their ideas into the magazine's content. He wanted the magazine to be relevant and of interest to both men and women, and he intended to expand the magazine's reach by appealing to the middle class. In the last issue produced by Charles Field and his team (the January 1929 issue), the "new *Sunset*" was announced. The proclamation first touched upon what Lane considered the West's advantages and pointed out the coexistence of the indoors and outdoors in Western living:

Advancing with modern trends, life in the West offers the utmost in living. Charming and comfortable homes are the rule. Tastefully designed and furnished, they also abound in new convenience ideas, making housekeeping less of a job and more of a joy...Gardens are not only beautiful, but livable...putting greens and wading pools are not uncommon. And family life here extends beyond the garden walls. The mountains, the seashore, fishing, camping, hiking are family adventures close at hand. (Starr 44)

Modern Western living, according to this version of *Sunset*, included taking advantage of modern appliances and conveniences that allowed, presumably, women to enjoy the act of housekeeping and have more time to enjoy the outdoors.

The announcement goes on to make a connection between Western living and a "modern tempo," acknowledging that the current readers of *Sunset* were educated and "progressive," and committing to a shift from an editor-driven to a readership-driven magazine:

*Sunset*¹² swings right into this changing spirit of the times. The new *Sunset* will be vitalized by a constant stream of new ideas in the art of living. It is keyed to the prime

¹² Throughout this thesis "Sunset" is not italicized in direct quotes and article titles and introductions in which it was not originally italicized.

interests of life in the West—indoors and out. It is pitched in the modern tempo. It's your editorial policy—as asked for in thousands of letters from readers over the past year. *Sunset* heartily endorses these wants. They are intelligent. They are progressive. They are intensely human. And so we know you will like the new spirit of *Sunset*. We think it will go far beyond any magazine printed in helping you get the most fun out of living in the West. (Starr 44)

It is clear from this announcement that Lane and his staff had done their due diligence. They made the effort to understand *Sunset's* readers and their opinions, and eventually used that knowledge to form an alliance with *Sunset* subscribers. Like *Better Homes and Gardens* and other magazines of the time, *Sunset* incorporated into the magazine its readers' point of view by creating content from contributed ideas and recipes the magazine paid its readers to submit. *Sunset* relied heavily on these contributions to capture the "how-tos" of the Western lifestyle. This also made it possible for magazine readers to learn from their Western peers. Through this process, Lane and his editors built a magazine that projected a unique Western lifestyle.

Finally, the end of the message outlines what Lane believed constituted living in the West and reveals the magazine's new areas of focus. The core topics were a combination of features borrowed from *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Sunset's* elemental features, travel and the outdoors:

The new *Sunset* will cover the whole range of home-life and family interests with timely and practical suggestions on gardening, building, home-decorating and furnishing, cooking and home management, traveling, enjoying outdoor life and a host of other subjects of equal interest to men and women. (Starr 44)

That the magazine would "be of interest to men and women" was not new. *Sunset* had always been a magazine for both men and women. What was a key change to the magazine was its new mission to provide "practical" information pertinent to both men and women. To do this end, Lane instituted a new editorial strategy.

Lane invited two experienced editors to lead the magazine's transition, both veterans of *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Successful Farming*. Lou Richardson would be the editor, and Genevieve Callahan, a skilled editor and trained home economist, would co-edit and oversee the new cooking and housekeeping sections of the magazine. Lane and his team drew on their tenure at *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Successful Farming* to fashion *Sunset* as a provider of practical content of interest to both men and women. *Successful Farming* was a regional magazine and *Better Homes and Gardens* a national magazine that both covered topics that were either of particular interest to men or of particular interest to women. Lane Jr. expounds on how his father positioned the magazine's content as particularly relevant to Western men and women:

In the West, as my father could see, a lot more of the living experience was shared by both the man and the woman. Men did more gardening, for one thing. Barbecuing was more popular in the West, and you could do it year-round. Dad saw this as an opportunity for *Sunset*, and it became part of the magazine's distinctive personality. (Lane, Jr., *Sun Never Sets* 15)

The "new *Sunset*" gendered the content to match conventional views in an effort to appeal to both male and female members of Lane's middle-class target.

Lane's first step in achieving his goal to grow the magazine's middle-class audience started by targeting the populous states of California, Oregon and Washington. In a letter to his new editors describing his mission, he wrote:

Certainly in these states there is an abundance of money, motor cars, country homes and desire and ability to have the best of everything. Strange as it may seem with this condition we find among the people of the Coast a surprising spirit of friendliness and good fellowship with almost an utter lack of snobbishness. Certainly this is the thing to keep in mind in outlining the editorial program. (qtd. in Lane, Jr., *Sun Never Sets* 11)

These Westerners became the readership Lane, Lou Richardson, and Genevieve Callahan had in mind when they began redesigning the "new *Sunset*" for its February 1929 debut.

Chapter 6: Results

Laurence Lane's creation of the "new *Sunset*" was defined by his enthusiasm for the West. Armed with his experiences working for the Iowa-based Meredith Corporation, he modelled the structure of *Sunset* on Meredith's *Better Homes and Gardens*, while its *Successful Farming* informed *Sunset*'s regional focus and the inclusion of both male- and female-oriented content. His overarching vision was to take *Sunset* from a general interest magazine to one that was practical: to create a mass-market service magazine in form, tailored to a regional, middle-class audience of men and women, that would show its readership how to get the most out of living in the West.

The two women whom Laurence Lane hired to take charge of *Sunset*'s editorship when he took the helm in late 1928 were also experienced veterans of *Better Homes and Gardens* and *Successful Farming*. Genevieve Callahan was an Iowa native who graduated with a degree in home economics from Iowa State College in 1920 and honed her editorial and recipe testing skills at the quintessential women's magazine *Ladies' Home Journal*. Lou (Louvica) Richardson was also college educated and a skilled writer and editor (*American Women* 91, 466). Callahan had been the home economics editor and Richardson an associate editor when they left their jobs at *Better Homes and Gardens* to go west with Lane.

The Lane team made some of their intended changes to *Sunset* in its first few issues, yet they maintained some of the aspects of the pre-1929 *Sunset*, taking a gradual approach to its transformation. As Richardson explained it, they did not want "to impose [their] own ideas on the Western people."¹³ The editors accepted that they were Midwestern outsiders imposing a

¹³ Richardson and Callahan, 1980 interview tape A, 12:36.

new, more rigid format on *Sunset*. The magazine had been projecting information about the West outward to a national audience. The new team wanted to shift that focus inward to provide more relevant content to Westerners. As their predecessor's project was to create a Western version of *The Atlantic Monthly*, they wanted to create a *Better Homes and Gardens*-type magazine for the West. However, what the new team didn't foresee was that their project was more complicated than changing the magazine's structure and readership target. The mission was to modernize a nineteenth-century literary-style magazine read by the educated elite, by providing content that would appeal to middle-class readers. This vision involved organizing the magazine for a middle-class, conventionally gendered readership, while the pre-Lane *Sunset* editorial team catered to a more intellectual readership that was less bound to traditional gender roles. They were attempting to interject more rigid middle-class ideals into a magazine that had espoused ideas that were progressive and less structured. The resulting tension played out most overtly in the magazine's newly added cooking department, as opinions about what were appropriate gender roles in the context of the kitchen were distinct.

Gender and *Sunset's* New Cooking Department

Sunset had always been a magazine for men and women, from its days luring tourists to the West through the decade prior to Lane's acquisition when it included general-interest articles that appealed to both male and female intellectuals written by male and female authors. The strategy to compartmentalize *Sunset's* content into its four categories in 1929—gardening, the home, cooking, and travel—resulted in a magazine that was conventionally gendered. Consistent with the early twentieth-century's middle-class domestic ideology, the magazine's new cooking department was designed to appeal to women, while other sections were designed to interest men (home building, for example) or both men and women (gardening and travel).

This new structure perpetuated traditional middle-class gender roles, and was one that Lane, Richardson, and Callahan, were familiar with, coming from the Midwest and collectively working on magazines built on this type of framework.

Using *Better Homes and Gardens* as a guide, home economics editor Genevieve Callahan set out to build a *Sunset* cooking department based on readers' recipes, consistent with her home economics know-how, and appealing to readers in traditional gender roles. The modelling of *Sunset's* new cooking department on that of *Better Homes and Gardens* could be interpreted simply as a tactic to boost interest among potential middle-class women who read women's magazines. The department did, in fact, mimic women's magazine food sections typical of the 1920s and 1930s that depicted cooking as a woman's responsibility and a fulfilling domestic task (Neuhaus 44, 60). Historian Kevin Starr comments on this topic in an essay about *Sunset* and the West he wrote in celebration of the magazine's centenary. He argues that because women already "held an equal place among *Sunset* readers" and were assumed to have the primary responsibility for their homes, the inclusion of a cooking department made *Sunset* more "appealing to women" who read the magazine, rather than indicated it was trying to be a woman's magazine (Starr 48-49). From this perspective, the inclusion of a cooking department in the new *Sunset* is reconciled because cooking was something relevant to all women and would be of interest to both the more educated female readers of the old *Sunset* and the new middle-class female readers the editors planned to attract. That the kitchen was women's domain in the 1920s may have been implicit, but prior to Lane's purchase of the magazine there was no cooking department and few articles on cooking. Primarily due to their membership in an upper class and having a high level of education, women had not been positioned as family food providers in the pages of *Sunset*, and as Starr

points out, were considered equals to the magazine's male readers. Food was typically covered in the old *Sunset* as part of a wider topic, such as politics, nutrition, or outdoor exploration. Standalone articles on the pure food movement, the nutritional value of vegetables, and cooking while camping in Yosemite authored by women and articles about food as it related to World War I by men appeared in the early part of the twentieth century (Stanford 149). Throughout the 1920s there were a few cooking articles a year that focused on a single subject, for example an outdoor meal, a wedding feast, or holiday foods, some written by men and some by women. All of these articles could have been of interest to both male and female readers. There were only one or two articles a year that discussed cooking a particular food. The topics of these articles were quite diverse—frozen desserts, jams, meat, oysters, and liver—and appear to have been written for a female audience.

Some of the contributions *Sunset* readers made to the new *Sunset* reveal that, in some degree, the less traditionally gender-bound attitude of the intellectual and Western readers of the old *Sunset* carried over into the new cooking department. Most of the submissions were typical of middle-class women, some with a Western twist. However, some contributors did not adhere to traditional gender roles, such as women who wrote about outdoor cooking and male readers who cooked. Despite adding a cooking department fashioned to appeal to middle-class women who spent much of their time in the kitchen, the Western intellectualism of pre-Lane readers and their fluid gender roles in the context of the kitchen carried over into the *Sunset's* cooking department via reader contributions.

A tension grew within the cooking department as its structure, designed to model a middle-class domestic ideology, did not accommodate all of its readers. Lane's vision of a framework of conventionally gendered categories was complicated by an initial readership that

was accustomed to *Sunset* as a gender-neutral magazine. Callahan experimented with editorial tactics to incorporate non-conforming submissions. That Callahan had to shift the editorial framework of the cooking department and soften her home economics rigidity to be more accommodating illustrates how the domestic ideal in the West did not conform to the middle-class domestic ideology she brought from the Midwest and imposed on *Sunset* readers. Over the course of her tenure as editor of the cooking department, Callahan navigated this challenge by creating a department that was inclusive of women and men who cooked both inside and outside the kitchen. Throughout the 1930s the cooking department became more accepting of cooks, regardless of their gender. This thesis traces Callahan's circuitous route toward accommodating Western cooks, both male and female, within a cooking department that initially was oriented toward a female middle-class.

Learning About the West

As Midwestern migrants, Lane, Callahan, and Richardson sought to learn about the West and what it meant to be Western through weekend travel.¹⁴ The access to nature, clement weather, and the subsequent opportunity to spend time outdoors throughout the year were what initially drew Lane to the West and was the impetus for his purchase of *Sunset*. In addition, esteem for the outdoors was an essential element of *Sunset* passed on to Laurence Lane by earlier publishers and one he continued to include in the pages of the "new *Sunset*." Callahan highlights this appreciation in the July 1933 issue:

¹⁴ At times they travelled with the Lane family, with whom they were close. They were friendly in particular with Ruth Lane, the wife of Laurence Lane. Throughout their tenure at *Sunset* they collaborated with Ruth Lane on cooking department content as she was also a home economist. All of the early recipe testing was conducted in either Callahan and Richardson's kitchen or Ruth Lane's kitchen, as the *Sunset* office did not include a kitchen (Lane, Jr., "*Sunset* Publisher" 26, 30, 38-39).

We who live in the West should give thanks daily for our divine right to live on friendly, intimate terms with the out-of-doors. Here, as perhaps nowhere else in the country, are we able easily to balance work with play, mental exertion with the physical effort of the outdoor life. (4)

Incorporating the outdoors into one's lifestyle was what Lane, Callahan, and Richardson considered a key characteristic of being "Western."

These excursions also served as research trips,¹⁵ connecting Callahan and Richardson with the people they would be writing for and the people who would submit content to the magazine. Those they met introduced them to the foods and foodways of the Western region. Richardson described these weekend trips in her May 1933 "Adios" column, a monthly column that closed each issue:

In our Pacific Coasting of the past five years we have managed to get acquainted with a fairly large slice of Sunset Land, but we could have seen much more of it had it not been for Genevieve Callahan's inquiring mind and her love of good food. You see, Miss Callahan has never been able to see a man with a string of fish without finding out just where he caught them and how his wife will cook them when he gets home. She cannot pass a rancher's roadside stand without stopping to chat with the rancher's wife about lye peeling of peaches and uses of pomegranate juice. She never eats a western specialty in a restaurant or hotel without asking the chef for his recipe—all of which slows up our traveling appreciably. (42)

Their knowledge of "everything from artichokes to zucchini, from abalone to yellow tail" increased as they gathered information as diverse as cooking wild game to making dishes from the "Old West" (Richardson, "Adios" May 1933 42). Callahan recalled how welcome the women they met made them feel: "So many ladies, when they got acquainted with us, one person would offer to get several women together for a luncheon and they'd volunteer some of the Western things [they did with their produce]." Richardson further described these

¹⁵ Callahan had also taken these types of trips in the Midwest while working for *Better Homes and Gardens* to get to know her readers and their interests (Reuss 47).

gatherings as, "a recipe exchange, really, and it was for our benefit. We did our very best to make friends. Not only for ourselves but for the magazine. And it paid off."¹⁶

Increasingly throughout the 1930s Callahan's understanding of the West evolved and contributed to how she engaged with the *Sunset* content she edited. The importance of the outdoors to being Western would permeate the new cooking department. However, as she entered into her new job at the end of 1928, her editorial style was primarily informed by her experience working at women's magazines in the Midwest, and her training as a home economist.

Genevieve Callahan

Sunset's cooking department was Genevieve Callahan's domain because she was a trained home economist. Her creation and editing of the *Sunset* cooking department reflected both her experience as a women's magazine editor and her deference to home economics. Her editorial style was guided by a scientific cookery sensibility. She engaged home economist "experts" to write columns for the magazine and published information she gleaned from other home economists whom she hosted at *Sunset* to exchange ideas. She had been on the editorial staff of a top women's magazine, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and a magazine with distinct women's pages, *Better Homes and Gardens*, both of which catered to middle-class women in traditional gender roles.

Callahan's editorial contributions to *Sunset* demonstrated her esteem for women who took pride in being good cooks and keeping organized households. In a 1931 column called "Sunset Table Talk" Callahan expressed how pleased she was that a reader wrote to her to say she enjoyed

¹⁶ Richardson and Callahan, Interview 1980 Interview tape A 30:13.

"cooking as well as bridge." Callahan voiced her frustration with the negative status "some" assigned to women who enjoy housekeeping and cooking:

Some misguided souls take the attitude that if a woman enjoys doing anything about the house, she must be a poor dumb 'domestic' person who could have no interest in the 'higher things of life.' Well, this is no time to get into an argument; but we know, don't we, SUNSET readers, that a woman can be both a good cook and a good conversationalist? Food and equipment manufacturers have helped us to take the 'dumb' out of 'domestic,' so that the modern women may be a good wife as well as a good housewife. (28)

Callahan's view of the "modern women" was one who could be cultured, of high social standing, and also take pride in her home.

In addition to her editorial style reflecting the rigidity and precision of home economics, she projected views on gender roles that were typical of the middle-class. Through her writings about topics such as a woman's decision to work during the Depression, a woman's role within a marriage, and a mother's responsibility to her children Callahan set the tone for how gender roles were communicated to *Sunset* readers, in some cases quite vocally under her own byline. Callahan noted in a May 1933 article about middle-class mothers who could afford childcare if they choose to work that, "It takes a superior brand of courage and determination on the part of any modern mother to decide, 'I'd rather be on hand to answer my boy's questions when he wants to ask them than to be at the beck and call of the biggest business executive in the country'" (Callahan, "Sunset Gold" 4). She describes the job of "the successful wife" as helping her husband along in his career by bringing out the best in him, while "unobtrusively keeping things going smoothly at home" in a 1935 article called "It Takes Two to Make a Home" (22, 36). In this article Callahan points out that "the wife who works hard away from home is likely to be too tired—and probably too independent!—to devote herself to bringing out the best that

is in him" (36). Finally, after writing that she is "perfectly willing to concede that there are exceptional cases," Callahan concludes that these women,

Remain exceptions to the fundamental tradition that the man shall buy the flour and the women bake the bread! And whether we do our own baking or buy bread at the corner bakery, we still, when we are being utterly honest with ourselves, must admit that it works out better in the great majority of cases for the man to make the living and the woman to keep the house. It takes both, working together, to make a real home. (37)

It was this position on gender roles,¹⁷ coupled with a commitment to the tenets of home economics, that formed the toolbox Callahan drew from to create the *Sunset* cooking department's foundation. Upon this foundation, Callahan's task was to use readers' recipe submissions to build a Western-oriented cooking section.

Women's Cooking in *Sunset*

"Kitchen Cabinet." The *Sunset* cooking department was introduced in Laurence Lane's inaugural February 1929 issue. The centerpiece was "Kitchen Cabinet," modeled after a column Genevieve Callahan oversaw at *Better Homes and Gardens* called "Cooks' Round Table."¹⁸ Like its *Better Homes and Gardens* counterpart, it was female oriented and

¹⁷ From a women's studies perspective, Callahan's writings are poignant as there is speculation that Callahan and co-editor Richardson were a gay couple (see link to "Did a Couple of San Francisco Lesbians Invent Modern Food Writing?" in which SF Weekly food editor John Birdsall refers to them as "secret lesbian lovers" in the bibliography). Callahan and Richardson lived together in Iowa before they ventured west to work at *Sunset* and did so until their deaths. They owned property together, implied that they were a couple in their *Sunset* writings, and allowed their papers to be archived together at the State Historical Society of Iowa. The relationship between Callahan's perceived sexual orientation and status as a single, childless, career woman and her expression of views on motherhood and marriage in the 1930s merits further study.

¹⁸ There are many references to the role Laurence Lane's wife Ruth Lane had in creating "Kitchen Cabinet" in writings about *Sunset*. In interviews, Callahan and Richardson and Bill Lane, Jr. all mentioned Ruth Lane's involvement in testing recipes. No matter Ruth Lane's involvement, it is clear from interviews with Callahan, and from observing "Cooks Round Table" in *Better Homes and Gardens* in the mid- to late-1920s when it was Callahan's

comprised of recipes submitted by female readers, a format not unusual for women's magazines at that time (Sumner 39). It also fit within Lane's editorial mission: it showed readers how to do something, the overarching theme of the magazine, and reflected the Western-orientation of the magazine's readers. Each contributor's recipe ended with their name and where they were from. The feature's purpose was to help women expand their Western cooking repertoire by serving as a place where they could exchange and discover new recipes for family meals and entertaining. It also aligned with Callahan's home economic sensibility: it was a feature with consistent and structured elements, provided a practical service to home cooks, and supplied them with recipes that had been tested to ensure trustworthiness and were standardized for consistency.

Because "Kitchen Cabinet" was based on input from Western readers it gave *Sunset* readers a voice. "Make friends was our motto" explained Richardson, "Let the people feel that it was their magazine."¹⁹ The editors' approach to meeting their readership through their weekend sojourns extended to this initial editorial approach. Callahan's experiences "exchanging," in a sense, information about Western foodways on the road was replicated within the "Kitchen Cabinet" column. Furthermore, women's recipes that were Western could easily be collected within the "Kitchen Cabinet" format. These Western recipes typically demonstrated how to use Western produce and ingredients, but generally reflected the national culinary ethos. In this vein, "Cranberry Calavo²⁰ Salad" was a typical "salad" topped with French dressing and served on a lettuce leaf, but composed of canned cranberry jelly,

responsibility, that it served as a model for "Kitchen Cabinet" rather than "Kitchen Cabinet" being created specifically for *Sunset*.

¹⁹ Richardson and Callahan, 1980 Interview tape A 40:23.

²⁰ A brand adopted by a California avocado cooperative in 1926 (see <http://www.calavo.com/store/history.html> for more information).

California avocado halves, and California orange sections (*Kitchen Cabinet Two* 51).

"California Raisin Pie" was a typical two-crust pie filled with dried fruit (*Kitchen Cabinet Two* 76).

The "how-to" editorial mandate was highlighted in "Kitchen Cabinet" by step-by-step illustrations that portrayed cooking as a pleasant task and a gift to family and friends. Each month one of the "Kitchen Cabinet" recipes was illustrated by artist Ruth White Taylor. Taylor's vertical, comic strip-style art depicted a female cook preparing, step by step, one or two of the recipes printed in the column. Taylor's illustrations accurately communicated a middle-class domestic ideal. These drawings consistently showed white middle-class women in their traditional female gender role. Each woman is shown stylishly dressed and coiffed, and of an invariable age. They work in tidy kitchens, cheerfully measuring and chopping as they prepare a dish. In the final frame, if Taylor had room, they serve the finished product to a neatly appointed spouse, family, or bridge group.

With "Kitchen Cabinet" in place as the anchor feature of the new *Sunset* cooking department, Callahan established a typical women's magazine food section with a *Sunset* twist. It was clearly organized as an exchange of useful recipes, it was Western because it was fueled by Western cooks, and its illustrations ensconced it as a "how-to" column. However, there was a key difference between the *Sunset* and *Better Homes and Garden's* cooking departments—the variety of submissions Callahan received from her Western female readers did not always reflect middle-class homogeneity. "Kitchen Cabinet" at its core was diverse, as women with varying experiences who lived in distinct parts of the West shared recipes for everything from "Abalone Dinner de Luxe" (*Kitchen Cabinet One* 104) to "Salsa, or Real Mexican Salad"

(*Kitchen Cabinet Two* 48). Contained in the "Kitchen Cabinet" column, these diverse recipes were unwieldy.

To accommodate this diversity Callahan used editorial devices to construct boundaries around the unique range of recipes featured in "Kitchen Cabinet" each month, fitting them more snugly within the column's traditional framework. Callahan "captured, confined, and molded" (Shapiro 100) the "Kitchen Cabinet" recipe submissions in a gelatin-like editorial treatment reminiscent of "Perfection Salad," an iconic dish of chopped raw vegetables encased in aspic (100). Using the persona nurtured by her home economics background to standardize, Callahan included two prominent messages at the top of each page of the two-page "Kitchen Cabinet" spread. The first read, "These recipes have been tested with standard measuring cups and spoons, using a range with automatic oven temperature control. All measurements are level," and the other read, "Sunset Kitchen Cabinet recipes are twice tested: first by Sunset readers in their own home kitchens, and finally by Sunset Magazine's director of home economics." In September 1931, Callahan added menus to "Kitchen Cabinet." She used this editorial device to impose her idea of how the recipes should be used within a traditional meal plan and how they should fit into a family construct informed by a middle-class rigidity. As Shapiro points out when describing scientific cookery's key tenets in *Perfection Salad*, "Menu making, when it was undertaken in a properly analytical frame of mind, was the educated woman's approach to the kitchen" (Shapiro 87). Callahan's menus, sprinkled throughout "Kitchen Cabinet" each month, added what Shapiro called "practical value" to the column (5).

Callahan surmounted the challenge of managing diverse recipe submissions from Western women in "Kitchen Cabinet" by using editorial techniques and her home economics know-how to shape its narrative so it adhered to a middle-class sensibility and the "new *Sunset*"

structure. However, as *Sunset* was a Western magazine, Callahan also inherited a female readership accustomed to the outdoors, an area into which *Sunset* women comfortably ventured but Callahan had little experience.

***Sunset* women and outdoor cooking.** *Sunset* women had engaged with the outdoors since the magazine's inception. Women's writings about mountaineering, camping expeditions, and about the West's natural attractions appeared in *Sunset* when it was owned by the Southern Pacific Railroad and in the years after it separated from the railroad's influence. Originally, including coverage of the uniqueness of West's natural attractions bolstered *Sunset's* turn-of-the-century mission to draw visitors to the West, but there was also a significant environmental conservationist voice that permeated *Sunset* from its early days that Lane fostered during his tenure as publisher. Contributing to that voice were a number of Sierra Club charter members, a group incorporated in 1892 and comprised of professors and academics, naturalists, and professionals from the intellectual and upper classes of the San Francisco Bay Area. Both male and female Sierra Club members contributed outdoor-related articles to *Sunset* beginning at the turn of the century.²¹

Helen Gompertz is an example of an educated, pre-Lane *Sunset* woman who was interested in outdoor pursuits. Gompertz was a Sierra Club charter member who wrote a number of *Sunset* articles in the early 1900s, one which is credited as being *Sunset's* first

²¹ David Starr Jordan, the first president of Stanford University and a prolific *Sunset* contributor, was among the founders of the Sierra Club. Other Sierra Club charter members who wrote outdoor-related *Sunset* articles included professor Joseph N. LeConte and naturalist Charles F. Holder, while some Sierra Club charter members like John Muir, artist William Keith, and professor and conservationist Joseph LeConte Sr. (spelt LeConte and Le Conte in various documents) were written about.

cookery article²² She no doubt was extraordinary, but nonetheless the type of woman of interest to both male and female *Sunset* readers at the time. She was an avid outdoorswoman and 27 years old when she became one of the founding 182 members of the Sierra Club in 1892 (*Articles of Association* 17). According to her daughter, Gompertz started camping on her own with her college girlfriends in the 1890s, "long before women ever did such things" (LeConte 76).

Gompertz and others wrote *Sunset* articles about Sierra Club "High Trips" and other organized mountaineering experiences that shed a light on camping prior to the Lane years, a hobby only accessible to those with the disposable income to fund trips to hard-to-reach places. In both male and female descriptions of large group camping trips into the Sierras it is clear that women were an accepted part of the Sierra Club expeditions, and thus camping was portrayed in *Sunset* as an activity appropriate for both men and women. In a July 1903 *Sunset* article, Helen Gompertz described a Sierra Club trip to Kings River Canyon with 138 male and female adventurers. She acutely noticed that she no longer was the only female outdoor enthusiast, observing in a hotel prior to departing for the trip that, "Having for many seasons withstood the surprised gaze of the gaily gowned hotel guests all by myself, I was delighted to have the tables turned and see short skirts and hob-nailed boots look askance at trailing garments." (Gompertz, "Sierra Club" 251). The women on the trip ranged from "bright-eyed college girls" to "stately dames" (252). Victor Henderson wrote about a Sierra Club trip taken by a group of men and women to Mount Whitney in the October 1903 issue of *Sunset*. He

²² Helen Gompertz joined the Sierra Club as a young single woman, and eventually married a future Sierra Club president, Joseph N. LeConte (See LeConte oral history). Gompertz wrote the first cooking-related *Sunset* article, "Practical Hints on Camp Cooking," which was published in the April 1901 issue.

considered the women on the trip to be as strong as the men, observing that, "the very girls who had climbed Alta that morning, and come into camp after sixteen miles of walking and a descent of seven thousand feet, were the first to say 'Let's go.'" (Henderson 515).

Traditional gender roles were dispensed with on these large organized trips, as the participants were wealthy enough to hire professional cooks to feed the whole group. Both Gompertz and Henderson mention Charles (or Charley) Tuck, a regular Sierra Club Chinese cook. Helen Gompertz also describes cooking on trips she took apart from the Sierra Club on which the less traditionally gender-bound ideals of the educated upper class prevailed and the cooking chores were shared among the men and women on the trip. In 1900, she writes about camping in Yosemite and comments on cooking:

If we have not hired a cook, a working schedule is immediately made out, giving each member of the party his tasks at some definite time, and providing for a rotation of work so that every one [*sic*] has his share of hard and light duties; then there can be no discussion as to whose turn it is to work—usually, two persons work together and find plenty to do. ("Closer Acquaintance" 23)

Similarly, in her 1901 article, "Practical Hints on Camp Cooking," she offers cooking tips for camping with four people who take turns being "on" for breakfast, dinner, and dishwashing, and who cooperatively prepare lunch.

Helen Gompertz was one of many women who wrote about the outdoors for *Sunset* in the early twentieth century. Others wrote about Sierra Club trips, but they also covered Western flora, fauna, and natural points of interest. In the 1920s, women contributed articles with titles consistent with the type of camping described by Gompertz, such as "Why I Enjoy Mountain Climbing" (Shannon 26) and columns that hinted at a more domesticated type of camping, with titles like, "Camping in Comfort" (Edwards 38) and "Say it with Tents" (Porter 38). The "new *Sunset*" inherited female readers who were familiar with the outdoors either

through experiences similar to that of Gompertz and other women like her, or by reading *Sunset* articles written by these women. These pre-Lane outdoor articles were not compartmentalized based on gender, because the magazine didn't include conventionally gendered sections at that time.

Outdoor articles with female bylines were published into Callahan and Richardson's editorship, as they increasingly understood the importance the outdoors played in "Western Living." They also continued to treat the outdoors as a gender-neutral topic.²³ The challenge for Callahan, however, was whether or not to feature outdoor articles that touched on cooking in the magazine's cooking department. Contributing to this challenge was the introduction of a sectioned table of contents. The magazine's table of contents, a feature of the magazine that changed frequently in style, format, and content throughout the 1930s, contributed to the conventional gendering of various sections of the magazine. Distinct sections with accompanying icons were introduced to the tables of contents in November of 1931. "Kitchen Cabinet" and other food-related articles were placed in the "Western Housekeeping" section, which was designated by a graphical depiction of a woman with an apron bringing a tray of food to a table. "Western Gardening," "Travel—Outdoor," and "Western Vacation Notes" were paired with icons of male figures. Increasingly, placements of articles by women that were related to both the outdoors and cooking would cross over into parts of the magazine outside the "Western Housekeeping" section. The conventional gendering of the table of contents forced the *Sunset* editors to make decisions on where cooking-related content should be placed. For example, an August 1932 listing for a woman's submission titled "A Different Way to Roast Game" was listed in the "Vacation Notes" section of the table of contents, presumably

²³ The ungendering of the outdoors in *Sunset* is addressed further on in this thesis.

because it was related to hunting. A September 1932 article by a woman called "How to Cook Venison" appeared in two sections, "Western Housekeeping" and "Travel—Outdoors." In both of these cases, Callahan (and Richardson it can be presumed, as she was managing editor) looked past the conventionally gendered order of the magazine and considered the subject matter. In the case of the roast game article, the editors disengaged the association of cooking with women's work by placing it in "Vacation Notes." They were unable to make a decision about where to place the venison recipe, wavering on whether the instructions for roasting venison on a home-built apparatus constituted an act of domesticity or the result of hunting for food in the outdoors. Nonetheless, these cases are examples of how cooking fit into readers' lives trumped editorial constructs.

The domestication of camping. Camp cookery was domesticated by advancing technology in camping stoves, trailers, and other camping equipment over the course of the 1930s. The increase in vacation time and the use of the automobile in the 1920s and 1930s resulted in further middle-class participation in outdoor recreation. Together, these innovations took camping from Sierra Club-style trips for the educated upper classes, to middle-class family trips that increasingly included the comforts of home. *Sunset* coverage of camping became more appropriate for the magazine's cooking department and less challenging for Callahan to place as it became easier to mimic home cooking in the outdoors. Although both men and women wrote about what was new in camping equipment, women's articles in the mid-to-late 1930s tended to view camping through a housekeeping lens. Callahan typically included a women's outdoor article in the "Western Housekeeping" section of the magazine if it included some aspect of cookery or housekeeping.

No matter where they appeared in the magazine, articles depicting women seeking to domesticate the outdoors started to appear in *Sunset* early in the 1930s. Mrs. Dick Cole, for example, describes in the July 1931 issue how she progressed from dreading camping trips to delighting in them because improved camping equipment allowed her to cook similarly to how she did at home in her article "We Eat—and How! When we go Camping." She notes that it was open-fire cooking that she found a chore, but with her "running board kitchenette" and a "nesting set of aluminum cooking utensils and table-ware," she was able to achieve the consistency and "orderliness" that made her more comfortable than when she had to use an old-style fire pit for cooking (Cole 32). This need for control was punctuated with a diagram showing how Mrs. Cole created an "improvised 'pressure cooker'" to speed up high-altitude cooking by altering a pot with a rubber disk made from an old inner tube and clothes pins (39).

Outdoor enthusiast and *Sunset* travel editor Helga Iversen wrote an article in 1935 that focused on achieving a more domesticated camp. Her article "Fish are Biting—Let's Make Camp!" was about the "general improvement in camp cookery gadgets" and gave a shout out to "gastronomes" for whom "food is of very special importance" when camping and "week-ending" (Iversen 19). She reviewed the newest camping stoves, camp refrigerators (today known as coolers), and the tent "of the year." She discussed metal egg containers that campers could leave with a farmer on their way to camp accompanied with instructions and dates for when to send fresh eggs. She also included information about "Western-built trailers and vacation houses on wheels" that were coming into vogue. (20).

In the same 1935 issue, home economist Fleeta Hoke²⁴ wrote of camping with her family and their goals: "When we go camping we have a comfortable camp, plenty of good food that

²⁴ Fleeta Hoke became the food editor of the Los Angeles Times in 1939.

doesn't require long hours of cooking, and comfortable beds." They would pack in a 40-pound stove they designed themselves because "a good stove" was one of their "most important comforts." Hoke noted that the "enjoyment afforded by a good stove and ample canned food supplies are well worth the added expense of one additional pack mule" (Hoke 44). She added a complete "grub list," some camp recipes, and sample menus to the end of the article, echoing the rigid style in which information was presented in "Kitchen Cabinet." In all of these cases, a housekeeping and cooking focus designated these articles appropriate for *Sunset's* food pages.

Men's Cooking in *Sunset*

Articles on food or cooking as it relates to men was scant in *Sunset* prior to the Lane purchase of the magazine. The limited number of male writings on the topic of food in the pre-Lane *Sunset* include a few related to politics or nutrition, two about Christmas in the West (one written by artist Maynard Dixon that only mentions eating turkey on the range), articles about hunting and fishing that offer how to cook one's catch, and mentions of cooking while exploring the backcountry. Within the pages of Lane's "new *Sunset*" men's cooking became more prominent as the male cooking construct expanded to include middle-class men who cooked as a hobby. Callahan had few options for placing men's cooking contributions, as the revised *Sunset* editorial structure did not accommodate more than an aside in a story about the outdoors on cooking freshly hunted game or a freshly caught fish. Content by and for men that focused on an outdoor activity that included some aspect of cookery fit topically and was gender appropriate for the outdoor, travel, or vacation-related sections of the magazine.

Callahan experimented throughout the 1930s creating various spaces for men's cooking in the form of male-oriented cooking columns and columns that focused on outdoor cooking, rather than fold men's cooking contributions into the female-oriented "Kitchen Cabinet." These

columns that accommodated male cooks appeared, transformed, and disappeared throughout the 1930s, as Callahan vacillated between creating a cooking department that separated content by the gender of the cook and one that was organized by cooking genre. In the case of outdoor cooking, Callahan eventually found that maintaining a separation based on gender did not reflect reality.

Men and outdoor cooking. Outdoor articles authored by men in the pre-Lane *Sunset* focused on exploring nature and highlighting opportunities for outdoor recreation in the West, similar to the early outdoor articles written by women like Helen Gompertz. Men's outdoor articles that focused on cooking were inconspicuous until Callahan began editing *Sunset* in the early 1930s. The articles published in the early 1930s focused on cooking as it related to hunting and fishing, campfire cooking, and the barbecue.

Typical of articles that related cooking to the outdoor sportsman were those written by professional writer Tod Powell. He wrote mainly about the outdoors, hunting, fishing, and vacation cabins, but also authored a number of food-related articles, such as "From Forest to the Frying Pan," "How a Fisherman Cooks Fish," and "Cooking Venison at Home and in Camps."

Male-oriented cooking articles that highlighted cooking while on the trail over an open fire or on a backyard barbecue also began to appear in *Sunset* in the early 1930s. However, they were not regularly published. The few cookery articles written by men in the first few years of the 1930s included one about making pie on a pack trip (Downs 23), an article titled, "How we use our Barbecue" (Gregg 11), and a pair of articles touting the advantages of baking biscuits on the trail using either a reflector oven or a Dutch oven (Kreider 24; Brown 18). The Western ideal, represented by trail cooking and hunting, and the suburban ideal, represented by

backyard barbecuing, eventually came together to become simply "men's cooking" (my emphasis) in *Sunset*. However, because Callahan's cooking department was female-oriented, incorporating these men into the department required decisions about how to position men's cooking.

The categorization of the *Sunset's* table of contents at the end of 1931 forced Callahan to make decisions about where to place men's cooking-related contributions, just as it did in the case of women's contributions related to outdoor cooking. Previous to this change, articles like Tod Powell's about cooking what one caught or shot were slotted into a table of contents that was simply ordered by page number. The articles were loosely arranged in a logical order—travel and gardening articles near the front of the magazine and food-related content near the back—but Callahan didn't have to make a definitive decision about which category to assign a men's cooking article. Once the categorized table of contents was instituted, early male cooking contributions, most related to outdoor cooking, shifted between the "Travel—Outdoor" section of the magazine and the "Western Housekeeping" section. One such article is a December 1932 column called "Selecting the Turkey" by Frank Diener. This column appeared, according to the table of contents, in the "Western Housekeeping" section and is an example of Callahan overlooking the author's gender and traditional middle-class gender roles, and instead choosing to categorize content based on how it will be used.

Creating spaces for men's cooking: "Kitchen Rangers." As *Sunset* received contributions from men that went beyond the scope of the outdoors, the tension related to where to situate the submissions within the magazine's framework was manifested in the appearance and disappearance of columns specifically created for them. In March 1933, *Sunset's* first men's-only cooking column, "Kitchen Rangers," made its debut. "Kitchen

Rangers" was based on readers' recipes similar to "Kitchen Cabinet," but was specifically for "men only." At the outset "Kitchen Rangers" positioned men as engaged in both outdoor and indoor cooking. It was branded with an icon of a man wearing an apron and tie alongside a cowboy kneeling by a campfire. "Kitchen Rangers" made it possible for Callahan to easily retreat to a conventionally gender-based system of categorization that fit with the "new *Sunset's*" traditionally gendered editorial plan.

A male-only column also made it possible for men to display their cooking expertise in these spaces without having to compete with their female counterparts within "Kitchen Cabinet." In his thesis on male cooks in the suburban kitchen,²⁵ Philip Lockette argues that *Sunset's* male-only cooking columns allowed middle-class male readers to cross over into a previously female-only culinary space armed with a masculine persona (Lockette 66-93). "Kitchen Rangers" was framed as a club for middle-class men for whom cooking was a hobby rather than a "Kitchen Cabinet"-style recipe exchange. Also unlike "Kitchen Cabinet," Callahan annotated "Kitchen Rangers" with introductory comments. These comments reflected middle-class assumptions about women and men, and how they cooked. Callahan's following call-to-arms was for men to send in "ANY" recipe they wanted to share with the rest of the "Kitchen Rangers club" and it was signed by Callahan personally:

For Men Only. You men who are always bragging about what great cooks you are—here's your chance to prove it. This brand new department, "The Sunset Kitchen Rangers' Club," is yours exclusively—no women contributors allowed! To this department you are invited to send your best recipes, your rules for camp stew, your directions for making flapjacks or whatever. So round up your recipes, men, and send them to The Sunset Kitchen Rangers' Club, *Sunset Magazine*, 1045 Sansome Street, San Francisco. Anything from 100 to 1000 words will be considered and all items printed will be paid for at regular rates.—G. A. C. (Introduction to Gregg 28)

²⁵ Lockette's thesis focused on the 1940s through the 1960s and focused on the male-only *Sunset* cooking column "Chefs of the West."

Callahan's suggestions to her male audience that they contribute pancakes or "camp stew" reveals the types of submissions she either had received or expected to receive from male *Sunset* readers. Her choice of these two dishes aligns her with the middle-class view of the domestic ideal, that temporarily placed men in the kitchen on isolated occasions to prepare a special dish, or placed them outside, cooking for fun.

"Kitchen Rangers" exuded the key attitudes about male and female cooking in the 1930s, well documented by Jessica Neuhaus in *Manly Meals and Mom's Home Cooking*. These included the notion that men were cooking hobbyists and special occasion "chefs," that they considered themselves more natural and creative cooks than women, and that they had different appetites and food preferences. In some instances, Callahan reinforced these conventionally gendered attitudes, in other instances, she let some of the less traditionally gender-bound attitudes of her readers shine through.

The language Callahan used to introduce "Kitchen Rangers" to the *Sunset* readership showed Callahan's alignment with the era's middle-class domestic ideology; she lightly concealed her stance that men typically had only a hobbyist's repertoire and that the kitchen was not their usual domain. In the second year of "Kitchen Rangers" Callahan made another appeal for recipe contributions, this time more forcefully pushing men to send in recipes in any category. Her phraseology also suggests that men only barbecue, cook when camping, or have one special dish:

Hi Kitchen Rangers! Here's your chance to tell the world just how you make that camp stew or potato pie or whatever it is that is your special pride and joy. We want, for this department of yours, anything and everything related to camp or home or barbecue grill cooking that you think other Kitchen Rangers should know. (*Sunset Kitchen Rangers: Corn Pone* 34)

Callahan also hints in this appeal that men required a cooking education and that the most appropriate teachers were each other. She did not edit "Kitchen Rangers" with as heavy a hand as she did "Kitchen Cabinet" and was more lenient in allowing the *Sunset* men to tell their stories and educate each other on how to cook their specialties, rather than contradict their perceived expertise. In fact, throughout the life of the column Callahan didn't have to reinforce that male cooks were hobbyists in an effort to maintain their masculinity or establish a sense of traditional gender roles. Their submissions did that for her. There were a number of men who made it clear that their way of cooking did not resemble the everyday cooking of their wives. The idea that women were fussy cooks and men cooked in a leisurely fashion was clearly expressed in a "Kitchen Rangers" column with a sourdough theme. "Blest if I can see what there is about a bit of cooking that women make such a fuss about," declared a male contributor of a sourdough-related recipe ("*Sunset* Kitchen Rangers: Sour Dough" 22). Another male contributor explained that the "secret" to efficiently putting together a camp meal was to simply leave out those "extras":

The main secret is as much beforehand preparation as possible, and, leaving out the details of pickle, salad, coffee, and dessert, its principal components are grilled steak, rolls, and boiled noodles. Simple? Surely. That's the secret of a good camp meal—simple, quick, and filling. ("*Sunset* Kitchen Rangers" 56)

The "extras" he named resemble those frequently found in the menus Callahan added to "Kitchen Cabinet" to turn recipes into well-rounded meals.

The creation of "Kitchen Rangers" as a club ensured it was understood that the men who contributed were not cooking to feed their families, like the female "Kitchen Cabinet" contributors, but were cooking for fun. The club approach gave men the license to share their interest in their cooking hobby without the worry of jeopardizing their masculinity, as in the case

of this Los Angeles man, who expressed his wishes to be a Kitchen Ranger in the following appeal.

Some cooks may be "born," but I still believe most of them are "made." I belong to the latter class. It used to be considered rather effeminate for a man to be a good cook; that is, unless he was a so-called "chef." Today all this is changed. Men who can cook don't hide their particular talent under a bushel basket; they brag about it. And I am no exception—I like to tell the world about the good things I can cook, and so I am begging for membership in the Kitchen Ranger's Club. May I come in? ("*Sunset Kitchen Rangers: Corned Beef*" 26)

This Los Angeleno also brings up the fact that "Kitchen Rangers" disrupted the perception that men needed to be a professional chef to cook, reinforcing the idea that a typical middle-class male could cook as a hobby.

These "Kitchen Rangers" represented middle-class male cooking as distinctly different than women's cooking and professional cooking in a number of ways. A contributor from Alameda, California points out that it is okay that men learn by trial and error rather than by prescription when he equates the making of sourdough to rice: "This will be about half as much as you think necessary, for sour-dough is like rice, and on my first attempt with that deceitful food, I had enough boiled rice to feed the army." ("*Sunset Kitchen Rangers: Sour Dough*" 22). One contributor extolls the pleasure he derives from a simply cooked trout that isn't fussily feminine or professional, when he writes, "trout baked in an open camp fire can not [sic] be beaten, either by the wife with the aid of all those modern cooking gadgets or by the French chef in your favorite cafe" ("*Sunset Kitchen Rangers: Trout*" 26).

Finally, there is evidence in "Kitchen Rangers" of contributors who consider men the experts when it comes to some types of cooking, as in this case:

Every year about this time, rules and regulations for cooking venison, written by well-intentioned but sadly misinformed ladies, begin to appear in the home magazines. Well, lifetimes have been spent on mistaken paths, and so I hope herewith to clear up some

common misunderstandings. In other words, this is the way to cook venison. ("*Sunset* Kitchen Rangers: Venison" 28)

This depiction of women's magazines suggests that the "new *Sunset*" was successful in its quest not to be regarded as a women's magazine, at least in the opinion of this San Francisco venison cook.

That "Kitchen Rangers" ran sporadically through the 1930s suggests that Callahan and the editorial staff were experimenting with men's cooking contributions. The column ran consistently through 1933 and 1934, and then disappeared until it was resurrected in 1938, after Lou Richardson left the magazine and a few months before Genevieve Callahan left. In the years "Kitchen Rangers" was absent from the magazine, two other columns were created to take its place. "Come and Get it" and "Outdoor Eating" were columns that included both men's and women's cooking contributions, an indication of Callahan's acceptance of outdoor cooking as a gender-neutral cooking genre. But before discussing these other columns, it is important to take a look at barbecuing in *Sunset* in the 1930s.

The Barbecue: The Intermingling of the Western and the Suburban Ideals

In a 1978 *Sunset* "retiree" interview, Lou Richardson tells a story about a weekend research trip to San Juan Batista where she and Callahan overheard some women talking about cooking on "their own little barbecues." She said their ears "pricked up" and she thought "there's something in this" because without air conditioning "in those days," eating outside made sense. As Richardson tells it, they searched for a portable barbecue and eventually found a Los Angeles sheet metal worker who made one of the first portable grills. It is not clear how early in their tenure at *Sunset* this took place, nevertheless, Richardson comments during the interview that it "amazed" her that *Sunset* didn't make more of a "to-do" about "the fact that we

established this whole business of outdoor cooking in the backyard on the patio." She goes on to declare, "we started a movement, when I say we I mean the magazine started a movement" (Richardson and Callahan, 1978 interview tape A 12:13).

Cooking on a barbecue and building backyard barbecues was increasingly covered in *Sunset* as the backyard continued to become part of the "kitchen" and more ubiquitous among middle-class *Sunset* households in the 1930s. Ironically, it was men who became strongly associated with the barbecue in *Sunset*, as they did in cookbooks and other food writing, despite it ostensibly being two female editors who sparked the coverage in the magazine because they were inspired by another woman. Barbecue-related recipes that women contributed to *Sunset* were typically for side dishes or sauces, while men's recipes were typically for meat and discussed technique. As the decade progressed, "outdoor" cooking in *Sunset* began to encompass both cooking outside one's home in the backyard as well as out in nature. *Sunset's* coverage of the Western tradition of cooking out on the trail was never replaced by patio cooking, instead, the new tradition of year-round barbecuing in the mild climate of the West was incorporated into *Sunset's* definition of outdoor cooking. The barbecue cemented the Western ideal of men cooking over an open fire and middle-class suburban ideal of cooking on one's own backyard patio.

Callahan placed many of the 1930s submissions about cooking on the barbecue in "Kitchen Rangers," in other gender-neutral columns (detailed in the following section of this chapter). Only one barbecue-related recipe by a woman was included in the female-oriented "Kitchen Cabinet" between 1929 and 1938, and that was "Barbecue Sauce for Roasting Meat" (*Kitchen Cabinet One* 106). An early bylined stand-alone article about backyard barbecuing

during Callahan's editorship was a 1932 article by Dean B. Gregg²⁶ titled "How We Use Our Barbecue" and was placed under the "Western Vacation Notes" section in the newly categorized table of contents. In his article, Gregg covers how to cook meat on a barbecue and describes various types of barbecue grills. A photo of Gregg and his family reveals a backyard patio surrounding a built-in fireplace-style barbecue. Gregg also dons a chef's hat, a foreshadowing of the future male-oriented "Chefs of the West" cooking column that was introduced in *Sunset* in 1940. This was a barbecue scene to which middle-class male readers would aspire.

In September 1933 Callahan was able to consolidate male submissions on the topic of barbecue into one "Kitchen Rangers" column. "This Month We Brag About Barbecues" featured contributions from three men, all of which Callahan clearly positions as braggarts. The first male contributor defines barbecue quite differently than the other two, who are middle-class backyard barbecuers. His Western "feed" conjures Western images of feeding a crowd of ranch hands as he explains, "Whatever the actual definition for barbecued meat is, it does not matter here. In the cow-country West it means meat cooked in a pit. Not meat cooked over a fire-pit, but meat cooked by hot rocks and coals buried beneath three feet of earth" ("*Sunset* Kitchen Rangers: Barbecue" 26). The second contributor wrote about how he cooked skewered beef over the "small pit" he built in his backyard (27). The third opened his barbecued steak recipe with, "I once lived in Ventura County, California, where practically everyone eats barbecue, talks barbecue, and has a pit in his own yard; so it behooved me to learn the 'ins and outs' of this culinary pleasure" (27). These varied barbecue experiences illustrate the progression of the meaning of outdoor cooking in *Sunset* in the 1930s.

²⁶ Dean B. Gregg was also the first "Kitchen Ranger" contributor.

Men's and Women's Cooking Meet Outside

"Come and Get it" and "Outdoor Eating" were repositories for reader submissions related to outdoor cooking and eating outdoors that only appeared in *Sunset* in 1936 and 1937. These columns were eclectic, short lived, and a further example how editorial experimentation was used to adjust to the reality of fluid gender roles in the context of Western cooking, more specifically, cooking outdoors. Both "Come and Get it" and "Outdoor Eating" were reminiscent of a pre-Lane *Sunset* in which outdoor related content written by men and women was interspersed within the magazine rather than separated, but in this case the submissions intermingle within a bounded column. Callahan's introductory comments to these columns suggest movement toward the categorization of readers submissions by topic rather than by gender, at least within the context of outdoor cooking. Additionally, the creation of "Come and Get It" and "Outdoor Eating" were efforts to corral submissions that fell into the uniquely Western category of cooking and eating in the outdoors.

Far from the consistent maleness of "Kitchen Rangers" and the orderliness of "Kitchen Cabinet," "Come and Get it" was a non-standardized mess of a column that showcased a diverse Western readership and the vast variety of food being cooked in the West. The column was headed by an illustrated mustachioed cowboy calling folks to "Come and Get it" by banging the bottom of a pan with a spoon, suggesting the column was originally intended for men's contributions of a folksy, Western nature. However, along with outdoor recipes contributed by men were outdoor recipes contributed by women. Recipes ran the gamut, from "Breaded Jackrabbit" to "Smoked Fish."²⁷ The column also included profiles of contributors with unique recipes, experiences, or techniques to share. The ideal Western outdoorsman was conjured by a

²⁷ "Come and Get It," Apr. 1936, p. 50 and Apr. 1936, p. 51; respectively.

story from a "sheep man" who cooks mutton in a buried Dutch oven ("Come and Get It," Apr. 1936 49). The uniqueness of the West was displayed by submissions from women who described making beef jerky in Montana, attending a salmon Sluitum²⁸ dinner in Washington, and living in a fire lookout during the summer outside of Seattle.²⁹ Contributions about camp cooking included a woman's story about cooking breakfast in the California desert over a wire grill and this recipe for what we today call s'mores overheard on a train near Seattle: "For a campfire dessert, break off a piece of chocolate the size to cover a cracker. Toast a marshmallow, put it on the chocolate, and cover with another cracker" ("Come and Get It," Feb. 1936 44-45). Recipes that could be executed in camp, at home, or outside on a barbecue grill found a place in this column. In this vein, a male "Kitchen Ranger" contributed "baked spaghetti and cheese" that can be cooked in either the "kitchen range" or "barbecue oven" ("Come and Get It," May. 1936 54), and woman submitted her husband's "invention" called "cheese hamburgers" to be cooked "over hot coals or under a hot broiling flame in the oven" ("Come and Get It," Sep. 1936 49). All but two of the of the last seven "Come and Get It" columns were written by a male biologist who the editors hired as an expert on procuring and cooking Western seafood, fish, and game. In February 1937, he alludes to the column's eclectic audience in his introduction to a column on oysters noting, "It is presumed that only women, bachelors and gourmets read this section." Perhaps he was categorizing middle-class male readers as "gourmets" rather than calling out married men with an interest in cooking ("Come and Get It," Feb. 1936 40).

In April 1937 the mustachioed cowboy icon morphed into one depicting a mustachioed man standing over a cauldron-style pot on a wood burning range with the word "VIVA" over his

²⁸ A Native American technique for cooking salmon over an open fire.

²⁹ "Come and Get It," Sept 1936, p. 48; July 1936, pp. 52-53; and June 1936, pp. 55-56; respectively.

head, implying that the column's focus on the outdoors was believed to be misplaced. The last "Come and Get It" column was a melting pot (possibly the reason behind the cauldron imagery) of genders and topics—a combination of a Mexican-derived hominy dish and a beet recipe, each contributed by a woman, a male contributor's description of mussel hunting while camping at the beach, and a photograph of a girl cooking hot dogs in a backyard fireplace ("Come and Get It," May 1937 51-52). The diverse reader submissions included in this particular column reflected the diverse reality of Western cooks and Western cooking.

"Outdoor Eating" appeared in June of 1937, a month after the last *Sunset* "Come and Get It" column was published. There is little to differentiate "Outdoor Eating" and "Come and Get it" except perhaps that "Come in Get it" attempted to skew male and "Outdoor Eating" loosely focused on the act of eating outdoors rather than cooking outdoors. There was no icon to depict the purpose of "Outdoor Eating," which featured picnic food, recipes that adapted well to camping, barbecue recipes, and instructions for preparing game birds, all within the confines of one column. Its creation was clearly an example of a topic-based rather than a gender-based editorial decision. Many more recipes contributed by women than submitted by men were featured in the column. Despite the gender of the contributor, most submissions reflected a Western lifestyle, from women and men cooking steak in the outdoors and what to drink when enjoying outdoor sports, to local foodstuffs and recipes influenced by Mexican and Native American cooking. Women's contributions ranged from choosing steak "as carefully as you select face cream" and how to make raspberry soda "to top off a game of badminton on a hot day," to recipes for "Hominy con Chili," Huckleberry Pudding, pheasants, and quail.³⁰ Men's

³⁰ "Outdoor Eating" Jun. 1937, pp. 48-49, Oct. 1937, p. 39; Aug. 1937, p. 35; Nov. 1937, p. 37; and Dec. 1937, p. 27; respectively.

submissions were less varied and were either related to the barbecue or hunting, from cooking venison and coots to the "best way" and the "Indian way" to barbecue a steak.³¹

Callahan's editorial comments in the last two "Outdoor Eating" columns had a defeatist but jocular tone. In November 1937, she acknowledges that her only criteria for including a recipe in "Outdoor Eating" was that the contribution was "outdoorsy": "Whether the finished products are to be eaten in camp, or amid the comforts of home, the cooking of game birds is such an outdoorsy subject that it seems to belong in this particular column" (37). Similarly, in the prelude to the last "Outdoor Eating" column, Callahan exposes her categorizing thought process when she casually writes, "Game birds suggest the out-of-doors, hence the inclusion of these de luxe recipes in this particular column. Wherever they're eaten, they're elegant!" ("Outdoor Eating," Dec. 1937 27). As a home economist who took pride in standardization, she had used the outdoors as an organizing mechanism.

The short appearance of the gender-neutral "Come and Get it" and "Outdoor Cooking" in the years "Kitchen Rangers" was on hiatus suggests that *Sunset* wasn't quite ready for gender-neutral, cooking genre-specific spaces. The discontinuation of these two columns and the reappearance of the men's-only "Kitchen Rangers" column implies that the outdoor cooking umbrella did not cover all that men were cooking in the 1930s. The transition back to "Kitchen Rangers" in 1938 coincided with the replacement of Lou Richardson with a male editor and the departure of Genevieve Callahan from *Sunset*.³² During Callahan's last few months at the

³¹ "Outdoor Eating" Sep. 1937, p. 37; Nov. 1937, p. 37; Oct. 1937, p. 39; and Aug. 1937, p. 35; respectively.

³² The last issue that bore Richardson's name as editor in the masthead was September 1937, so she was on board during the first half of "Outdoor Cooking's" short six-month experimental run. Genevieve Callahan's name last appears in the masthead of the June 1938 issue, as Richard mentions in an interview, she stayed on for a number of months after Richardson's departure to help the new food editor get acclimated to her new job. Callahan was a "Foods

magazine "Kitchen Rangers" reappeared, and in the issue after her last, "Kitchen Rangers" was rebranded with a new logo—it lost the man in an apron, leaving only a man working over a campfire. Although this new icon appeared to project a more Western outdoor image, the editor did not deny that men cooked indoors. An announcement in the January 1939 column read,

Maybe you're a camp cook of the rough and rugged school. Or maybe your major triumphs are accomplished indoors, along somewhat more sophisticated lines...In either case this column's the place to establish your fame. So round up your best recipes, men, and send 'em along. Remember, positively no women allowed in Kitchen Rangers!
(31)

No female submissions clouded the maleness of "Kitchen Rangers" in the columns that followed. Recipes for "Bachelor Salad" and "Chili for 100," appeared.³³ So too did cooking in a boat's galley kitchen using canned food, along with male celebrity's recipes, instructions for building and cooking on a barbecue, and tips on cooking venison, this time from a male "Western game authority."³⁴ The editor encouraged submissions and language typical of other male cooking-related food writing in the 1930s. For example, the introduction to the January 1940 column exclaims, "Men! Here's a chance to prove your claim that men, when they want to, are the best cooks" (29).

By shifting men's cooking from gender-neutral columns back to a male-only column, *Sunset* secured its standing as a middle-class publication. Perhaps it is apt that it was two female editors who spent ten years learning what it meant to be Western who attempted to fold men's cooking into a conventionally gendered cooking department by creating gender-neutral

Consultant" for the April, May, and June 1938 issues, the final issues in which she was involved.

³³ "Kitchen Rangers," Feb. 1940, p. 32 and Oct. 1939, p. 41.

³⁴ "Kitchen Rangers," May 1939, p. 42-43; Jul. 1939; p. 32; Aug. 1939; p. 33; and Sep. 1939, p. 34; respectively.

spaces, and a male editor (from New York) who reverted back to instituting a men's-only column. The last step would have been for Callahan to suspend the middle-class rigidity of "Kitchen Cabinet" and let men participate, but that was decades in the future. "Kitchen Rangers" may have accommodated a wider range of submissions, but kept men's cooking distinctly separate from women's cooking. By the end of Callahan's tenure in 1938, the cooking department reflected the traditional gender roles of a middle-class magazine. Laurence Lane had accomplished his goal.

Chapter 7: Epilogue and Conclusion—From Tourist to Westerner

The existence of "Come and Get it" and "Outdoor Cooking" as columns in which men's and women's cooking intermingled signaled Callahan's acceptance that men's and women's cooking could coexist, at least within the confines of the Western outdoors. As *Sunset* made the transition from being about the West to being reflective of the West Callahan had become a Westerner. She started her journey as a tourist, similar to those who the Southern Pacific's *Sunset* lured to the Far West. After nearly a decade working to create a "new *Sunset*" she had found her Western voice.

We will never know exactly how or why Callahan and Richardson left *Sunset* in 1937 and 1938 respectively, but reasonable assumptions can be deduced from oral histories and writings on the history of *Sunset*. In interviews conducted in 1978 and 1980,³⁵ Richardson and Callahan discuss how hard it was for the magazine during the Depression. In 1934, having gone into debt with the Zellerbach paper company, Laurence Lane decided to seek advice from ex-advertising executive James Webb Young. Young assessed *Sunset*, proclaimed a positive future, and made a financial contribution to the publication to keep it in business (Lane, Jr., "Sunset Publisher" 25). Decisions made while Young had majority control of *Sunset* may have prompted the termination of Richardson and Callahan's employment. In June of 1937, William I. Nichols is listed in the *Sunset* masthead as editor and Lou Richardson and Genevieve Callahan as Associate Editors. As Bill Lane, Jr. explains it,

It was a firing almost, it was when Mr. Young owned *Sunset* and really pushed Dad to the wall to let the girls go—we called them "the girls"—let the girls go. Mr. Young

³⁵ In 1978 and 1980 Richardson and Callahan were in their 80s. In the recordings Callahan sounds very frail and speaks less often than Richardson and in a softer and quieter voice. Richardson speaks more clearly and contributes significantly more information.

brought in an editor, and his son was doing some editorial work. And then [in 1937] Mr. Young brought in Bill Nichols, who was a fish out of water. A nice guy, lived very close to us in Palo Alto, but never could get New York out of his system, and so Dad terminated him. That's when Walter Doty came in [in 1939]. ("*Sunset* Publisher" 140)

Richardson does not appear to begrudge her and Callahan's departure from *Sunset*. She speaks highly of Young in the 1978 interview, describing him as having "a wonderful editorial mind" and noting that they "learned more from him than from anyone [they] ever knew."³⁶ She recalls Nichols as a bridge between herself and editor Walter Doty, and describes Doty as an "excellent editor" (Richardson and Callahan, 1978 Interview tape A 39:46).

Richardson remarked in 1978 that her and Callahan's "determination was to stay until somehow [they] helped to make the magazine turn the corner." Richardson also felt "a man could carry [the magazine] further" at that point, and that it "needed that touch."³⁷ In response to the question of her "resigning because of a man" she responded that "there is a place for everybody who can do a good job" and that she liked to see "men have an opportunity."³⁸ Perhaps in 1937 she (or the publisher) believed that the editorial path she and Callahan were on wasn't fulfilling the magazine's mission, or that Callahan's intermingling of men's and women's outdoor cooking was a dead end. Or, possibly Richardson and Callahan were simply ready to move on. After all, their talent was providing useful content to their readers. By contrast Walter Doty's background was in advertising, which allowed him to edit with an eye toward targeting content as a means of increasing ad revenue. The post-Callahan cooking department does give us a clue as to the direction Doty took. In March of 1940 a new men's column replaced "Kitchen Rangers." It was called "Chefs of the West" and its iconography included a

³⁶ Richardson and Callahan, 1978 Interview tape A 28:44.

³⁷ She does not explain if she means financially, but the magazine did start to turn a profit in 1938. Richardson and Callahan, 1978 Interview tape A 39:55.

³⁸ Richardson and Callahan, 1980 Interview tape A 0:13.

man in a chef's hat. The male *Sunset* cook had shed his rugged outdoor persona and joined the more sophisticated image of men's cooking portrayed in cookbooks and other magazines of the time. Both "Chefs of the West" and "Kitchen Cabinet" would remain in the magazine for decades, maintaining a separation of male and female cooking that continued to model traditional middle-class gender roles.

Richardson and Callahan had successful careers after *Sunset* as freelance writers and cookbook authors. Genevieve Callahan's publication of *The California Cook Book* in 1946 marked their full initiation as Westerners. The book encapsulates Callahan's own Western recipe repertoire that, for her, represented the "California way of life." In the opening of the book she explains what that meant to her:

As I see it, it's a pleasant mixture of outdoor and indoor living, with emphasis on the out of doors. It's a blending of comfort and style, casualness and care, functionalism and fun. That way of living explains...why we Californians like to eat so many of our meals under the skies; why we are constantly figuring ways to cut down kitchen time indoors to give us more time outside; why we like to substitute informality for formality, imagination for elaboration, flavor for fussiness." (Callahan, *California Cook Book* ix).

This passage marks her transformation from a Midwestern home economist whose interpretation of cooking mimicked that found in *Better Homes and Gardens*, to a Western cookbook author who understood and appreciated Western living.

In *The California Cook Book*, Callahan had the luxury of a whole chapter on the "Best Ways to Cook Meats on Range or Garden Grill," complete with an illustration on the first page of the chapter of a man AND a woman in cowboy garb with their outdoor grill. The woman is grilling the steaks (Callahan, *California Cook Book* 93). The chapter titled "Indoor and Outdoor Cooking of Poultry and Wild Fowl" is illustrated by a man with freshly killed game entering an empty kitchen beaconing HIM to start cooking. There is no waiting wife (Callahan, *California Cook Book* 125).

Nonetheless, a home economist never loses her love of organization or the need to promote good nutrition and economy, despite touting the importance of good taste. Callahan's home economist persona was not quite tamped down. She includes this parenthetical in the introduction to *The California Cook Book*, "(You'll note, however, that the rules of sound nutrition are observed throughout this book, though the word 'nutrition' rarely appears)," reminds her reader to "remember, you can always balance a rich, glamorous dish in both cost and digestibility by keeping the rest of the menu on the simple side," and includes a final chapter of "Additional Menus for Special Occasions" (Callahan, *California Cook Book* x, 346).

When they became editors of *Sunset*, Callahan and Richardson took on the responsibility of passing on the magazine's essential Western identity to future generations of Westerners. That they did, regardless of the challenges and experimentation required to match *Sunset* readers with the cooking content that matched their needs. Lou Richardson reflects on the difference between a Western tourist and a Westerner in one of her early "Adios" columns. She described the "perennial tourist" (her quotes) as someone who "immigrated to Sunset Land (he may even have been here for years) but who has never really become a part of it." She goes on to say that a tourist may know the sites, the beaches, and the national parks, but that in the West there "are still buried the treasures of history, plant life, geology, beauty, and a thousand and one fascinating interests," and that "we must dig out these riches for ourselves if we are really to be a part of this West in which we live." (Richardson, "Adios" Feb. 1934 52).

Callahan and Richardson's term as "tourists" ended with their tenure at *Sunset*.

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