Lee Miller. Beyond the Muse.
A Very Modern Woman: A Woman of Her Time

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DECLARATION

I certify that the work contained in this thesis, or any part of it, has not been accepted in substance for any previous degree awarded to me, and is not concurrently being submitted for any degree other than that of Doctor of Philosophy being studied at the University of Greenwich. I also declare that this work is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise identified by references and that the contents are not the outcome of any form of research misconduct.

17.03.2017 Gillian Stacey

17.03.2017 Dr Carolyn Brown

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ABSTRACT

Fashion model, surrealist artist, muse, photographer, and war correspondent. This discourse of simple transition from model to war correspondent, influenced by Antony Penrose and the Miller estate, has dominated the reading of Miller's life and work, as exemplified by the Imperial War Museum's exhibition (15 October 2015 – 24 April 2016).

This thesis challenges the dominant view of Lee Miller as defined by the familial discourse and its associated narrative arc of trauma, success and decline. It emphasises her years in Egypt and the Balkans as being formative of her engagement with documenting life and with contemporary technological and artistic developments. This provides a way to understand not only her extraordinary work as a war correspondent for *Vogue* but also her much-neglected work in the post-war era. I examine Miller's post-war writings (and practices) on domesticity, cooking and consumerism with regard to contemporary discourses in order to demonstrate how she negotiated a new life as mother and wife and reworked her own artistic practice alongside the contemporary art movements of Fluxus and nouveau réalisme.

By placing Miller in a context, which emphasises her lived American and Egyptian experience, her engagement with the developments in photography, her writings as a war correspondent, and by exploring how she negotiated the challenges of her years at Farley Farm, I offer a far more complex and positive account than those of the accepted and established discourses.

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Introduction

The Spirit of Versatility

> "Each of her [Colette's] perfectly poised words … has survived total warfare". It stands as a very good description of Lee Miller's own art. (Ali Smith, 2007)[1]

This thesis takes its starting point from Ali Smith's account of Lee Miller in her review of *The Art of Lee Miller* (2007) by Mark Haworth-Booth.[2] From the famous portraits of Miller by Man Ray to the equally famous image of her in Hitler's bathtub, Miller moved from model to witness of the horrors of the Second World War. But her photography marks her most substantial contribution to the twentieth century. Miller captured on film moments in her life and times that are evidence of her diversity and artistry. She carefully crafted her own image in pictures for *Vogue*, owned her own Manhattan studio (1932–1934), lived in Egypt (1934–1939), became a celebrity war photographer and correspondent during the Second World War (1940–1946) and played the role of a gourmet cook and hostess at Farley Farm (1949–1977). Miller's life is one of aesthetic independence, but, as Smith rightly observes, her versatility as an artist is often forgotten. By placing Miller in a context, which emphasises her lived American and Egyptian experience, her engagement with the developments in photography, her writings as a war correspondent, and by exploring how she negotiated the challenges of her years at Farley Farm, I offer a far more complex and positive account than those of the accepted and established discourses.

Becoming "the look of the moment", as art critic Richard Calvocoressi observes in regard to her modelling for *Vogue*, Miller's beauty has overshadowed and distracted from – and, in some respects, continues to overshadow – her accomplishments as an artist.[3] Born on 23 April 1907 in Poughkeepsie, New York and associated with key figures, such as Man Ray and Roland Penrose, Miller's story, introduced in Antony Penrose's *The Lives of Lee Miller* (1985), has been shaped as a colourful biography.[4] Compared with other women artists of the twentieth century, Miller and her work are relatively unknown. Carolyn Burke, another biographer of Miller, suggests that this obscurity is due to her beauty. She writes that as Miller was "one of the most beautiful

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[1] Lee Miller, "Colette," British *Vogue*, Mar 1945, 83, quoted in Ali Smith, "The Look of the Moment," review of *The Art of Lee Miller*, by Mark Haworth-Booth, *Guardian*, Sep 8, 2007, accessed Dec 30, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.

[2] Mark Haworth-Booth, *The Art of Lee Miller* (London: V&A, 2007). Published in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name, shown at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

[3] Richard Calvocoressi, *Lee Miller: Portraits from a Life* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2002), 6.

[4] Antony Penrose, *The Lives of Lee Miller* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2013).

women of the twentieth century", it has been "difficult to evaluate her work in its own right".[5] One only has to look at pictures of Miller to see why this is the case. Even Angela Carter in 1992 wrote about Miller as a muse, unaware of her expertise as an artist.[6]

Jane Livingston introduced Miller in a similar way with a portfolio in her exhibitions *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism* and *The Indelible Image: Photographs of War, 1846 to the Present*.[7] Livingston discovered Miller's work whilst undertaking research for these exhibitions and, understandably, she showcases Miller's images in both exhibitions and catalogues. Her book on Lee Miller, written as a catalogue to support an exhibit touring several American museums in 1989 and 1990, begins with eighteen pages of pictures of Miller taken by various men.[8] None show her older than twenty-five and Livingston does not engage with Miller as a writer or with her works as war documentary or art. The reader is left with the impression that Miller's most imposing achievement was to be an icon of desire. However, as Smith rightly acknowledges, the "embodiment spoke back".[9]

Miller is now more widely recognised as "one of the finest photographers of the 20th century", as exemplified in the Imperial War Museum's exhibition (*Lee Miller: A Woman's War*, 15 October 2015 – 24 April 2016). Only through examining her work can Miller's versatility as an artist be fully appreciated. This thesis, therefore, adopts Miller's work as the starting point to any analysis. Contrary to dominant narratives married with Miller, this study explores Miller's conscious crafting of a variety of personae from which to critique social issues. Locating Miller within her time is important, as to understand the cultural forces and influences of her day, is to reveal the inspiration behind Miller's creative oeuvre. It is important to note that, in this thesis, I do not consider Miller's art as expressive of her personal life. Neither does it, I argue, reveal any of her unconscious processes that have so commonly informed critics' interpretations of her work.[10] Rather, her work demonstrates her interaction with contemporaneous socio-cultural debates. This approach provides opportunities in which to appreciate Miller's intellect in new and different ways from traditional biographies and is a major contribution to understanding her art.

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[5] Carolyn Burke, *Lee Miller: On Both Sides of the Camera* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), xi.

[6] Angela Carter, "Patience Gray: Honey from a Weed," in *Expletives Deleted: Selected Writings* (London: Vintage, 1992), 101.

[7] Rosalind Krauss, Jane Livingston and Dawn Ades, *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985). Frances Fralin, with an essay by Jane Livingston, *The Indelible Image: Photographs of War, 1846 to the Present* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1985).

[8] Jane Livingston, *Lee Miller: Photographer* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1989).

[9] Smith, "Look of the Moment," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.

[10] Burke, *Lee Miller*. Penrose, *Lives*. Katherine Slusher, *Lee Miller, Roland Penrose: The Green Memories of Desire* (New York: Prestel Verlag, 2007).

Miller's art in her photography has been the focus of studies by Mark Haworth-Booth 2007, Becky E. Conekin 2013, and Patricia Allmer 2016.[11] As a curator, publishing *The Art of Lee Miller* (2007) to coincide with the retrospective exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) marking the one-hundredth anniversary of Miller's birth and the thirtieth anniversary of her death, Haworth-Booth's appraisal, as Smith observes, is "by far the fullest and most satisfying".[12] By approaching Miller as an artist, he provides an academic reading of Miller's work.

In an interview with the *London Evening Standard* (13 September 2007), Haworth-Booth states, "I'm not sure people in some quarters have taken her seriously as a photographer but she made a number of photographs that no one else made".[13] Haworth-Booth concentrates on the range of Miller's vision, presenting photography from the 1920s to the 1950s in which "the art of Lee Miller … is as yet still, perhaps, underappreciated".[14] Here he tries to piece together Miller's multifaceted career to form a coherent narrative, declaring that she remains "a surrealist puzzle".[15] This in itself identifies the difficulty in trying to present a clear and "tidy" narrative. Haworth-Booth also considers Miller's Egypt work during the 1930s that until now has been devoid of critical attention.[16] Her social and landscape photography, which she learnt during her time in Egypt, is, as Haworth-Booth observes, important to Miller's artistry as a photographer.

In a similar way to Haworth-Booth, Ali Smith positions Miller's art as integral to any understanding of Miller, essentially, Miller's writing, which, she observes, continues to be "forgotten". Even Miller's wartime dispatches, as a war correspondent covering the liberation of Europe, have been overlooked. Miller's skills as a photographer, "Knowing exactly how to retouch photos, where to cut, where to shade, where to lighten", informed her writing style.[17] By recognising the relationship between the two mediums (photography and writing), Smith presents Miller's continuing development as an artist in both her wartime and post-war life. Aptly defining Miller's writing as "about the act of composition, about the composition of all things, and about what truth actually is", Smith highlights that Miller's writing is an important

[11] Haworth-Booth, *Art* of *Lee Miller*, Becky. E. Conekin, *Lee Miller: In Fashion* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2013), Patricia Allmer, *Lee Miller: Photography, Surrealism, and Beyond* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016).
[12] Smith, "Look of the Moment," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.
[13] Mark Haworth-Booth, quoted in Louise Jury, "Lee Miller's Tale of Bohemia Celebrated in New V&A Photographic Exhibition," *London Evening Standard*, Sep 13, 2007.
[14] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 210.
[15] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 7.
[16] Smith, "Look of the Moment," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.
[17] Smith, "Look of the Moment," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.

aspect to her art. It is "witty and striking", with a voice that Smith calls "sharp", which "met and made History" and made "you look again".[18]

For Smith, the punctum is Miller's piece published in *Vogue* in 1945 about her visit to Colette, a French novelist.[19] Colette is a symbol of "changing times and freedoms", her voice cool but passionate, and reflective of Miller's own. As Smith writes, "the spirit of versatility meets its younger/older incarnation in the piece".[20] Miller writes of the experience:

> The parade of 50 extraordinary years was given to me like flashbacks or cinema trailers. Colette as Colette. Colette, the siren, the gamine, the lady of fashion, the diplomat's wife, the mother, the author … Colette on top of the Chrysler building in the St. Tropez barefoot sandals which tickled the jaded shutters of New York's cheesecake ship photographers 10 years ago.[21]

This is a life not determined by its end, but by its moments. Yet the last three decades of Miller's life have also been ignored. This period, I argue, is important to any study of Miller, who, post-war, adopted writing and domesticity as a tool with which to negotiate her identity and her art. Her years 1948–1956, in which she wrote articles negotiating the concept of domesticity, have similarly attracted little attention. Addressing the traditional female discourses of fashion and cooking, and appearing in a woman's magazine, has meant these articles have been rendered marginal to Miller's art and life. Examining these articles as they appeared in *Vogue*, within their original social historical context, provides new ways of interpreting Miller's work. "The High Bed" (April 1948), "Bachelor Entertaining" (March 1949), "Working Guests" (July 1953) and "What They See in the Cinema" (August 1956) are significant in that they demonstrate Miller's continuing work as a writer engaging with cultural shifts.[22]

Miller's post-war articles identify her anticipation of the cultural debates of the home surrounding gendered activities and roles within the domestic space. By promoting women's creativity, Miller presents possibilities for women who need not be passive and "unseen". Through her writing and her own experiences at Farley Farm, she gives voice to the experiences of many middle-class women negotiating post-war narratives of separate spheres. Miller's

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[18] Smith, "Look of the Moment," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.

[19] "Punctum" refers to Barthes' definition of punctum in *Camera Lucida* (New York: Vintage Classics, 1993). It describes an object or image that grabs the viewer's attention. The punctum elicits surprise and shock. Barthes writes, 'its mere presence changes my reading, that I am looking at a new photograph, marked in my eyes with a higher value.' (p.27, 42).

[20] Smith, "Look of the Moment," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.

[21] Miller, "Colette," 50. Also see *Lee Miller's War*, ed. Antony Penrose. With foreword by David E. Scherman. (Bath: Thames & Hudson, 2005), 105.

[22] Lee Miller, "The High Bed," British *Vogue*, Apr 1948, 83, 111-112. Lee Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," British *Vogue*, Mar 1949, 68–69, 114, 116. Lee Miller, "Working Guests," British *Vogue*, Jul 1953, 54, 55, 56, 57, 90, 92. Lee Miller, "What They See in the Cinema," British *Vogue*, Aug 1956, 46-47, 98.

discourses are provoking; she utilises her humour and irony as devices to comment on women's socio-cultural position. This reshaping of domestic space, I argue, demonstrates the extent to which Miller was politically and culturally aware, outlining woman as active agents, and challenging the idea of conventional feminine roles.

I examine the multiplicity of Miller's creative oeuvre; her photography, her war work, her post-war writing and her role at the farm. By revising Miller's narrative in terms of life-writing, this innovative thesis approaches her work in relation to the cultural structures within which they are embedded. This shift of emphasis opens up a different network of possibilities in which I demonstrate how Miller refused to be defined. This focus on Miller's work emphasises her versatility as an artist and her many forms of cultural production as art, which, until now, have not been acknowledged or explored in adequate detail.

Mythologising Miller

Recent research on life-writing, as termed by Virginia Woolf in "A Sketch of the Past" (1939), has identified the difficulties of conventional biography.[23]Alison Booth, in her paper on biography, "Prosopography and Crowded Attention in Old and New Media", observes that biography shapes personal details into the overall pattern. Its main goal is to "play upon the person as a representative type … he must at least seem to fit with the dozen".[24] The crafting of categories and connections of an individual's life, which appeals to audiences, can, as Booth notes, "also reduce the individual".[25] Generalisations dominate the narrative and adhere to plots and forms that resist an individual's autonomy.[26]

Zachary Leader's introduction in a compilation of academic papers in *On Life-writing* (2015) observes how since the 1970s, life-writing has offered a more diverse approach than biography.[27] By reflecting "a wider distrust of fixed forms, simple or single truths, or meanings, narrative transparency, objectivity, 'literature' as opposed to writing", life-writing can cover, meld or fuse many genres.[28] Life-writing encompasses autobiography, biography, memories, letters, diaries, personal essays, testimonies and even blogs and tweets, and it has increased in popularity within the academic field.[29] This is the case in the new book about Angela Carter, *The Invention of*

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[23] Virginia Woolf, "A Sketch of the Past," in *Moments of Being*, ed. Jeanne Schulkind (Florida: Harcourt Brace & Company), 80.
[24] Alison Booth, "Prosopography and Crowded Attention in Old and New Media," in *On Life-writing*, ed. Zachary Leader (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 73.
[25] Booth, "Prosopography," 73.
[26] Booth, "Prosopography," 72, 95.
[27] Leader, introduction to *On Life-writing*, 1–2.
[28] Leader, introduction to *On Life-writing*, 2.
[29] Leader, introduction to *On Life-writing*, 1.

Angela Cater: A Biography by Edmund Gordon (2016).[30] The title addresses the myth that has surrounded Angela Carter, and in the biography itself, Gordon provides alternative and revisionist narratives of the established biographical practices.

Rachel Cooke notes in her review of Edmund Gordon's book, "The Invention of Angela Carter: A Biography by Edmund Gordon – review", in the *Guardian* (9 October 2016) that Gordon's research on Carter's less-well-known years in Japan is the most interesting section of his book.[31] Here Gordon explores Carter's independent spirit: when it came to relationships with men, she could appear ruthless, able to leave them in order to attend to her own needs. Moreover, Cooke recognises Gordon's respectful and intelligent treatment of Carter's novels as a revision of "those critics who did not 'get' her [Carter]".[32] Gordon's inability to put Carter in a wider context when she returned to Britain in 1976, listing her works during this period and relying on scintillating gossip that may not be altogether accurate, are Cooke's criticisms of Gordon's book. Following the structure of a traditional biography is another. However, by attempting to dent the Carter mythology, as stated in the introduction, Gordon's book provides "the first step" to rereading Angela Carter.

How is this approach relevant for Miller's story? The complexities of Miller's life, like Carter's, have similarly been shaped into a popular and coherent narrative. This ignores certain aspects that do not fit into any pattern, whilst focussing on key moments in her life that prove popular with audiences – from her accidental encounter with Condé Nast (who rescued her from a traffic accident, which led to her being taken on by *Vogue*), to her meeting with Man Ray and their joint "discovery" of solarisation, to Miller's "accidental" ability (as a war correspondent) to turn up where the action was, to her accidental discovery of her Muddles Green Green Chicken recipe. This "saleable" image has led to the mythologising of Miller. As Hermione Lee observes in her essay on biography, "'From Memory': Literary Encounters and Life-writing", "the moment of encounter" defines and structures an overall pattern to someone's life.[33] These "turning points or key moments in a life" are, as Lee recognises, of particular interest to a reader.[34]

Miller's story has also been influenced by Antony Penrose's biography, *The Lives of Lee Miller*. As Miller's son, Penrose's role as a biographer positions him differently from others. He is, in

[30] Rachel Cooke, "The Invention of Angela Carter: A Biography by Edmund Gordon – review," review of *The Invention of Angela Carter: A Biography*, by Edmund Gordon, Guardian, Oct 9, 2016, accessed Dec 30, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/oct/09/invention-of-anlgela-carter-a-biography-edmund-gordon-review.

[31] Cooke, "Invention of Angela Carter," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/oct/09/invention-of-ankgela-carter-a-biography-edmund-gordon-review.

[32] Cooke, "Invention of Angela Carter," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/oct/09/invention-of-angela-carter-a-biography-edmund-gordon-review.

[33] Hermione Lee, "'From Memory': Literary Encounters and Life-writing," in Leader, *On Life-writing*, 125.

[34] Lee, "From Memory," 127.

some ways, directly involved with the narrative, whilst in others he is completely removed. He is both a participant and a spectator, and this influences his account. Introducing Miller as an artist, his biography focusses on the more sensational aspects of her life in order to present an appealing and exciting image of his mother to the general public. This presents Miller as an effervescent individual and focusses on her beauty, her photography and her personal relationships with leading surrealistic figures. Penrose locates Miller within the surrealism movement of the 1920s and presents her style as indicative of the surrealists' exploration into the collapse of conventional experiences of space and time. This has determined how her work has been interpreted. Relying heavily on his father (Roland Penrose) and David (Dave) E. Scherman (one of Miller's former lovers and work colleagues, who worked alongside Miller during the war as a correspondent for *Life* magazine), Antony Penrose has attempted to fill in the gaps of a life and a woman who, he reflects, was unknown to him.

In an article published in the *Guardian* on May 14 2005, Penrose recalls that it was due to his wife, Suzanna, that he discovered evidence of Miller's life as a photojournalist and war correspondent.[35] Deciding to search the attic of Farley Farm in East Sussex following Miller's death in 1977, they discovered approximately sixty thousand photographs and *Vogue* manuscripts hidden away in boxes. Penrose states:

> I could not relate the person who had written this vivid and lucidly observed prose to the drunk, often hysterical and incompetent woman I had known. There was a whole life here that I had completely missed. From that moment I had to find out everything I could about her.[36]

He discusses the difficulty of weaving together a narrative of Miller in order to present a coherent and cohesive account. The title of his book, *The Lives of Lee Miller*, was suggested to him by Scherman, whose foreword to Antony Penrose's *Lee Miller's War* acknowledges Miller as a diverse individual.[37] Penrose's biography captures some of Miller's multifaceted character, but its simple narrative of transitions from model to photographer to war correspondent to cook overlooks Miller's professional development and her versatility as an artist.

As Hermione Lee observes, using stories or details supplied by others has implications for life writing. In hearing these stories, "Other people will take hold of and alter a story in the process of its being told".[38] They are revised in the retelling, even distorted, and, when retold by a

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[35] Antony Penrose, "Learning to Fly the Hard Way," *Guardian*, May 14, 2005, accessed Dec 23, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/books/2005/may/14/featuresreviews.guardianreview26.
[36] Penrose, "Learning to Fly," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2005/may/14/featuresreviews.guardianreview26.
[37] Penrose, *Miller's War*, 7-13.
[38] Lee, "From Memory," 128.

biographer, selected to create a certain narrative: the biographer's narrative.[39] Although Penrose tries to present an objective truth in his biography by adopting the third person when referring to himself and his mother, the narrative is more subjective and more revealing about his own life than he possibly intended. J. David Velleman, in his paper about non-fictional and fictional narratives, observes that telling stories is always an emotional process. He writes, "the story form is an emotional cadence – an arc of emotions aroused, complicated, and resolved".[40] This, I would agree, is pertinent to Antony Penrose's story about Lee Miller, as her story is also his story. This results in, as Alison Booth observes, the inevitable influence of the biographer when writing about an individual's life. She writes, "it is not difficult to see ways that first-person testimony has been shaped by third-person voices or parties".[41] This is certainly true, as evidenced in Penrose's interviews about Miller.[42]

Whilst growing up at Farley Farm, Penrose had an estranged relationship with his mother. His subjective account (as he admits in the postscript) is understandably his attempt to reconcile his own relationship with his mother. Speaking about her failures as a mother to Kate Kellaway of the *Guardian*, he states that she was "hopeless. The more I look back, the more astonished I am she ever did it. … She had no natural maternal instincts. 'Give me a baby and I'll cook it' she used to say". I don't know whether to laugh".[43] It is hard to ignore Penrose's personal feelings towards his mother, as Kellaway observes: "when Tony talks about his mother" by referring to her as "Lee" or even "Lee Miller", it "produces a chilly frisson, a sense that even now, it is most comfortable to keep her at a distance".[44] Penrose's experiences with his mother have ultimately influenced his narrative, and his book reconstructs an image of Miller that he, and readers, can relate to.

Framing Miller within a discourse of surrealism, Penrose's methodology has relied on chance, juxtaposition, fragmentation and polarisation to convey the surreal. This correlates Miller's use of the strange, bizarre or unusual with André Breton's definition of surrealism's philosophy, which is outlined in his second manifesto:

[39] Lee, "From Memory," 127.
[40] J. David Velleman, "The Rights to a Life," in Leader, *On Life-writing*, 223.
[41] Booth, "Prosopography," 88.
[42] Chris Hall, "Lee Miller, the Mother I Never knew," *Guardian*, March 19, 2016, accessed Dec 23, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/mar/19/lee-miller-the-mother-i-never-knew. Kate Kellaway, "Tony Penrose: 'With Picasso, the Rule Book was Torn Up,'" *Guardian*, Aug 22, 2010, accessed Dec 23, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2010/aug/22/picasso-lee-miller-tony-penrose.
[43] Kellaway, "Tony Penrose," https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2010/aug/22/picasso-lee-miller-tony-penrose.
[44] Kellaway, "Tony Penrose," https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2010/aug/22/picasso-lee-miller-tony-penrose.

> Everything tends to make us believe that there exists a certain point of the mind at which life and death, the real and the imagined, past and future, the communicable and the incommunicable, high and low, cease to be perceived as contradictions.[45]

Adopting the works of Freud, surrealism developed methods that aimed to free the imagination from false rationality and restrictive customs and structures. Regarded as a cultural movement, surrealism, as part of modernism during the period between the two wars, aimed to enact societal change through revolutionising the personal, social and political aspects of human experience. As Breton observed in his 1924 manifesto of surrealism, exploring "the depths of our mind contain within it strange forces capable of augmenting those on the surface, or of waging a victorious battle against them".[46] The dream, consequently, became the mode in which these ideas could be expressed.

Photography, in its ability to reveal a reality beyond what appears before the human eye, was, for the surrealists, the perfect medium to explore the imagination, the dream and the unconscious, chance, revelation and a certain kind of abstraction. Like Breton, Walter Benjamin recognises the relationship between photography and psychoanalysis. In his 1931 essay, "Little History of Photography", he writes:

> For it is another nature that speaks to the camera than to the eye: other in the sense that a space informed by the human consciousness gives way to a space informed by the unconscious … photography, with its devices of slow motion and enlargement, reveals the secret. It is through photography that we first discover the existence of this optical unconscious, just as we discover the instinctual unconscious through psychoanalysis.[47]

Due to a primary focus on Miller's Blitz images from *Grim Glory: Pictures of Britain Under Fire* (1941), a few iconic images have come to define what Penrose terms Miller's surreality in her work, and the way it governs any reading of her photography.[48] Whilst this is perhaps useful in explaining some of Miller's earlier work, continuing to associate her whole *oeuvre* with the same discourse is to forget other aspects of her photography and the cultural developments of proceeding decades. The posthumous titling by Penrose of some of Miller's photography for books, articles and exhibitions where the original titles have been lost is evidence of this. With the estate's copyright laws over Miller's work (photography, diaries, letters and recipes) and the

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[45] André Breton, *Second manifeste du surréalisme* [1930], in *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, trans. Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969), 123.
[46] Breton, *Manifeste du Surréalisme*, 10.
[47] Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, ed. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland and Gary Smith, vol. 2, part 2 (Harvard University Press, 2005), 510–11.
[48] Antony Penrose, in Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 10.

tours run by the estate, this overarching narrative continues to influence how Miller is perceived by the public today.

Carolyn Burke's biography, *Lee Miller: On Both Sides of the Camera* (2006) is another influential text about Miller. Burke's book provides a comprehensive insight into Miller's life, tracing her development through each decade; however, it highlights the limits of an overly psychological approach based on "models of the destructive, depressive, and reparative or restitutive stages of identity formation".[49] As Laura Marcus observes in her paper on psychoanalysis and autobiography, constructing a life narrative through psychoanalysis concerns itself with "issues of unity and 'patterns' of a life".[50] Looking at how the outside world and the inside world of the unconscious can be connected underpins an individual's identity and basic human relationships.[51] If this is applied to Burke's biography, what does it mean for Miller?

Burke reads Miller's art as externalising her inner "objects" as a shaping force on Miller's life. Focussing on Miller's childhood as an influential factor that determined her life, Burke explores Miller's rape at the age of seven as damaging her sense of identity. She writes "the damage done to her seven-year-old self stayed with her, even though she later made use of her ability to observe as if objectively what was happening to her body".[52] This trauma (her "outraged emotions", as Burke writes) is expressed "decades later … into her compositions – where enigmatic doorways hint at damage to the house of the self, or look to a space beyond loss and trauma".[53] This perspective determines much of Burke's narrative. Miller's parents' reactions to this childhood trauma, and Miller's childhood memories, also contribute to Burke's psychological interpretation of Miller. Adopting Kristeva's theory of melancholia as a methodology with which to interpret Miller's trauma, Burke explores the role that her mother played after her rape.[54]

Adopting Freud's definition of depression that comes from a concealed hatred of a lost love object, Kristeva's melancholia identifies another form of depression, which is narcissistic and mourns not the object but the "Thing" (an archaic, unnameable pre-object). For Kristeva, the mother-daughter relationship is pivotal. She observes how a woman faces a difficult task in trying to gain autonomy from her mother and then experiences a profound loss once this has been achieved. Burke evaluates the mother-daughter relationship as vital to how Miller viewed

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[49] Laura Marcus, "Autobiography and Psychoanalysis," in Leader, *On Life-writing*, 273.
[50] Marcus, "Psychoanalysis," 272.
[51] Marcus, "Psychoanalysis," 273.
[52] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 16.
[53] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 16.
[54] Julia Kristeva, *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*, trans. Leon. S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).

herself in later life. Miller had contracted a venereal disease from the rape and Florence (Miller's mother) who was a nurse applied painful treatments for gonorrhoea to Miller. Burke writes, "Whatever Florence actually said … the treatments … made her daughter feel that she … was 'damaged goods'".[55] Burke concludes that the impact this had on Miller and the trauma related to this incident may also have stemmed from her mother's rejection of her.

The strained relationship that existed between mother and daughter as a consequence of this was heightened further by Miller's relationship with her father. Burke asserts that their relationship was a close one, which continued to influence the relationships that Miller had with men later in life: "He [Theodore] was the only man she could feel comfortable with and really love".[56] As Burke writes, he hoped "to make his daughter more comfortable with her body" by photographing Miller naked, in the snow, two weeks before her eighth birthday.[57] This allowed Miller to dissociate herself from her body, to "see herself split between good and bad selves".[58]

This narrative based on Miller's childhood trauma and personal relationships threads its way through Miller's story, detracting from the brilliance that Miller expressed as an artist. As Henry Edward Hardy observes in his review of Burke's book, it "misses the mark".[59] He continues:

> to see Lee Miller as a victim [of rape and war trauma] as Burke does is just as dehumanising as to see her as an object, as many of her surrealist compatriots such as Jean Cocteau, Man Ray and Picasso seem to have done.[60]

Seeing Miller through methods "of dealing with depression" overshadows her accomplishments as a war correspondent. "Benzedrine followed by cups of bitter coffee to rouse herself in the morning, and rounds of drinks followed by sleeping pills to calm her nerves at night" ultimately defines Burke's presentation of Miller during the war.[61]

However, as Hardy rightly observes, Miller "was at her best in the middle of this war and chaos". Referring to Burke's attitude as "fawning and hostile", Hardy's criticism also lies with the lack of selection of Miller's work.[62] Here Hardy is right: the focus lies more with Miller's personal circumstances than with her work and her diversity as an artist. His criticism also

[55] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 18.
[56] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 19.
[57] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 19.
[58] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 55.
[59] Henry Edward Hardy, "Looking Down on Lee Miller: Carolyn Burke's Lee Miller: A Life," Scanalyze, accessed Dec 22, 2016, https://scanlyze.wordpress.com/.
[60] Hardy, "Looking Down," https://scanlyze.wordpress.com/.
[61] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 271.
[62] Hardy, "Looking Down," https://scanlyze.wordpress.com/.

highlights the influence of the biographer on an individual's story; for Hardy, Burke's tone is "at times, condescending, judgmental and moralizing".[63]

As Hardy acknowledges, a psychoanalytical interpretation detracts attention from Miller's work and places primary importance on the author's "person". The work becomes secondary or primary only in terms of how much it evidences the effect of Miller's earlier life on her adult life. Even Miller's Egypt work (which is mainly ignored in favour of her war photography) is evidenced by Burke as Miller's need to escape the confines of her life with her first husband, Aziz Eloui-Bey. This continues in her approach to Miller's wartime work. Reading images of the Blitz as representations of Miller's own "sense of blockage", Burke attempts to weave patterns or discern meaning in Miller's art and her person, using Kristeva's language of the depressed as an important source of artistic inspiration.[64] Associations are made between the past and the present through spatial rather than temporal connections. Images are given meaning through an understanding of Miller's psychological state and imagined inner drama.

Consequently, images of doorways provide openings into Miller's unconscious processes rather than links to any contemporary socio-historical events or concerns.[65] Moreover, the latter part of the book, covering Miller's post-war life at Farley Farm, is an attempt to explain or justify Miller's decline. Burke's methodology has tended towards a narrative of psychological resolution in which she attempts to explain the disparity between Miller's wartime work and what she terms as Miller's decline into domesticity. Miller's cooking is presented as a consequence of her wartime trauma and her inertia at the farm, which only helps to heighten the portrayal of Miller as victim or passive recipient.[66] Burke's focus on Miller's personal relationship with Roland Penrose also presents her as an individual whose identity and success are measured against Roland's.[67] This attempt to resolve Miller's post-war life with her past raises the question of psycho-biography as an appropriate medium for narrating an individual's life story, as it looks to unity as a methodology against the multiplicity of identity.

A Very Modern Woman: A Woman of Her Time

Becky E. Conekin has revised Miller in terms of her work. Whilst her biography, *Lee Miller: In Fashion*, is influenced in certain respects by accepted discourses involving Miller's childhood, it also explores Miller's relationship with *Vogue* and fashion. As Conekin writes in the preface to her book, "For as Miller has been posthumously recuperated as an artist, her relationship with

[63] Hardy, "Looking Down," https://scanlyze.wordpress.com/.
[64] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 207.
[65] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 207.
[66] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 339.
[67] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 333.

Vogue and her fashion photography have slipped from view".[68] Richard Calvocoressi views Miller's association with *Vogue* as inhibiting her from developing her status as an artist and as doing little to promote her own work during her lifetime. The only solo show of her work was held in 1933, when Miller was twenty-five, at Julien Levy's gallery in New York.[69] However, as Conekin observes, for a full assessment of Miller's career, "fashion is vital".[70] Forming the foundations of the study, Conekin explores Miller's fashion work within a socio-cultural framework. As a fashion historian, Conekin looks at Miller's career within a historical context, and considers contemporary social factors affecting Miller.

By considering Miller's connections with New York and London, Conekin examines how Miller helped to transform *Vogue* as a magazine and how she broke boundaries in her photography.[71] Using previously unseen photographs and contact sheets from *Vogue*'s London offices, Conekin examines Miller's development as a photographer, covering her 1930s work in Paris and her studio in Manhattan, her work during the war, and her post-war work. Conekin briefly touches on Miller's Egypt work with reference to her *Portrait of Space*, but the real focus is her contribution to *Vogue* during the war.

The exhibition at the Imperial War Museum, *Lee Miller: A Woman's War*, has similarly focussed on Miller's wartime work for *Vogue*, building on Conekin's research. This exhibition, aimed at the general public, claims to be the first to address Miller's vision of gender and features photographs, objects, art and personal items never before seen on display.[72] The exhibition also attempts to examine "the vital role women played throughout the period and the sizeable impact it had on their mobilised position in society".[73] Miller's photography of women involved in the armed services in the exhibition is the most useful and insightful.

The second section of the exhibition explores Miller's relationship with women and the predominantly feminine discourse of fashion. Her photographs *Fashions for Factories* (1941), *Short Hair is News Again* (1941) and *Couture Suit for Pidoux* (1944) explore the changing roles of fashion and of women during the war. The latter photograph addresses style within a discourse of austerity. This sub-text of women's relationship (including Miller's) with fashion runs throughout this section. Although the section focusses on the changing times and women's position within this new order, Miller's relationship with *Vogue* provides the foundations for this

[68] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 15.
[69] Calvocoressi, *Portraits*, 6.
[70] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 16.
[71] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 16.
[72] "Lee Miller: A Woman's War: IWM London," *Art Fund*, accessed Dec 20, 2016, http://www.artfund.org/what-to-see/exhibitions/2015/10/15/lee-miller-a-womans-war-exhibition.
[73] "Lee Miller," http://www.artfund.org/what-to-see/exhibitions/2015/10/15/lee-miller-a-womans-war-exhibition.

narrative. Again, Miller's photography is the focus of the exhibition, rendering her war dispatches as secondary. This thesis seeks to redress this discrepancy. It develops Miller's relationship with *Vogue* by examining Miller's photography and her much neglected war time writing. This alternative consideration presents Miller's work as significant in modifying women's social positioning during the war and in the following decade.

Whilst the Imperial War Museum's exhibition and Conekin's study of Miller's fashion work during wartime are extremely useful, Conekin's examination of Miller's post-war photography is framed by Miller's struggle with civilian life. This is disappointing, especially as Conekin's earlier work had revised this narrative of decline in Miller's post-war years.[74] In these works, she focusses on Miller's post-war life at Farley Farm. Drawing on Miller's skills as a hostess, Conekin presents her as a central figure to life at the farm and her cooking exploits as part of the rejuvenation of the domestic arts at the end of the Second World War.

By analysing Miller's role as housewife within a similar social historical context, Conekin considers contemporary social expectations, which encouraged women to become homemakers and men to be providers. Describing a conversation with one of Miller's friends, Conekin writes, "Another friend of Miller's and Penrose's told me that she thinks that at some point Miller … decided that there was to be only one career in their household and it was to be his [Roland Penrose's]".[75] In comparing Miller's skills as a cook with those of Elizabeth David (both having been regular food columnists for *Vogue*, David actually replacing Miller in 1956), Conekin highlights Miller's creativity within domesticity. Conekin's exploration of Miller's cookery and its connection to culinary traditions reinforces that Miller's post-war period is one of aesthetic significance.[76]

This is particularly useful when researching Miller's post-war life at Farley Farm, as it provides a more positive narrative, which rejects a dichotomy between Miller's pre-war brilliance and her post-war decline. In building on Conekin's work, the latter half of this addresses how Miller reworked her identity after the war, when she was subject to the constraints of the 1950s and the

[74] Becky E. Conekin, "Lee Miller and the Limits of Post-war British Modernity: Femininity, Fashion, and the Problem of Biography," in *Fashion and Modernity*, ed. Christopher Breward and Caroline Evans (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2005). Becky E. Conekin, "'She Did the Cooking with the Same Spirit as the Photography': Lee Miller's Life after Photography," *Photography and Culture* 1, no. 2, November (2008): 145–64. Becky Conekin, '""Another Form of Her Genius"": Lee Miller in the Kitchen," *Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies* 10, no1, (2010): 50-60.

[75] Anonymous, telephone conversation with Becky Conekin, Aug 2, 2002, quoted in Conekin, "She Did the Cooking," 150.

[76] In March 2012 at the annual conference of International Association of Culinary Professionals, Becky Conekin and Karen Hagen (editor of the forthcoming *Lee Miller Cookbook*) led discussions on Miller's art and her relationship with fashion and food. See Elizabeth Nicholas, "In Good Taste: Lee Miller in Fashion," *HuffPost*, Apr 4, 2012, accessed Feb 12, 2017, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/elizabeth-nicholas/lee-miller-fashion-food_b_1394637.html.

difficulties of being a wife, hostess and mother. I examine how Miller was a vital force at the farm. In establishing Farley Farm as a home, she ensured that Roland Penrose accessed many of the key figures of modernism and surrealism, thus reinforcing his credentials in setting up the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA).

Miller cultivated and encouraged friendships and networks, which are important in artistic innovation. As a well-known proficient photographer and a wartime celebrity, Miller had an influential status that attracted artists and visitors to the farm. As John Craxton states in an interview with Carolyn Burke (June 26, 2000), Miller was "the lure … an icon who represented the pre-war era, a time of utter freedom".[77] Many stayed at the farm to be around Miller, whose spirited and independent character drew people towards her. Through her skills with people, her ability to mix in a variety of artistic circles and her professional life as a photographer and journalist, Miller's entertaining of an array of friends, guests and artists created and encouraged a similar atmosphere of intimacy. The farm, acted as an extension of the ICA, where new collaborations and innovations took place. Creative projects, from pop art to Picasso's first exhibition at the Tate in 1960, in similar if not more relaxed conditions than at the ICA, were cultivated at the farm.

Farley Farm, purchased by Roland in January 1949, is Miller's own vision of a democratic national community: a view of democratic socialism through which to improve the quality of life. Miller's article "Working Guests", written for *Vogue* in July 1953, promotes not only artistic collaborations that blur public and private but also specific class and gender roles and tasks. Reading Miller's work within the socio-cultural climate it was written provides new opportunities for understanding Britain's post-war climate. Miller's work articulates, as Becky Conekin recognises in her book examining Britain's post-war regeneration, "a social democratic agenda for a new and modern Britain".[78] The site for this modernisation and forward-looking vision was the home: a place where people could interact with culture by improving their material surroundings.[79]

"Working Guests" documents these modernising activities and the range of individuals who stayed at the farm. Antony Penrose in his biography on Miller lists some of the guests who frequented the farm:

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[77] John Craxton, interview by Carolyn Burke, Oct 4, 1999, in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 338.
[78] Becky E. Conekin, *"The Autobiography of a Nation": The 1951 Festival of Britain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 4.
[79] Conekin, *Autobiography*, 49.

> There were habitués, such as Timmie O'Brien and her husband, Terry, and Tommy Lawson of the ICA and her husband, Alistair. The American artist Bill Copley visited at the time of a dance in the village hall, and … William Turnbull [who] complet[ed] his wind vane sculpture for the top of the pigeon-house. Audrey Withers, now married to photographer Victor Kennet, arrived with a basket containing a pair of tumbler pigeons … Jean Dubuffet … [and] Man Ray …[80]

The photographs by Miller included in Penrose's biography show that Saul Steinberg (cartoonist), Pablo Picasso (artist), and Valentine Penrose (Roland's first wife), visited the farm, in addition to many others, some of whom Miller mentions in her article "Working Guests".[81] The pictures accompanying the article show guests including Reg Butler (a sculptor) and his wife, Jo; Richard Hamilton (an artist); Katherine Wolfe (Mrs William Turnbull); Alfred Barr, M. D. Molesworth (keeper of sculpture at the V&A); Renato Guttuso (a painter) and his wife; Ernestine Carter (British Museum curator, journalist and fashion writer) and her husband, John Carter; Henry Moore (an artist); John Craxton (a young painter); Dorothea Tanning (a painter, writer and poet); Leonora Carrington (an artist and writer); and Max Ernst (an artist and a poet).[82] This article presents Farley Farm as a community that aimed to improve a post-war Britain through artistic and cultural practices and the promotion of equality. Calvocoressi suggests Miller's post-war work possesses the same intensity as her widely acknowledged wartime work. He acknowledges that to read Miller's post-war work as "detect[ing] a loss of intensity … is unjust".[83]

Miller continued working for *Vogue* until 1956 and then, as Conekin observes, developed her creativity anew with different artistic ventures.[84] Miller was a vital force in her relationship with Roland and at the farm. Her post-war life articulates an active individual, similar to her pre-war and wartime self, whose creativity found new outlets and expression. By developing Conekin's work, in the later chapters of this thesis (chapters four to eight), I argue that Miller's creativity continued. Through her domestic articles for *Vogue*, elaborating on her role as hostess and her food art, Miller refocussed her vision on different events and situations. Moreover, by exploring Miller's artistry other than her photography, I demonstrate that she continued to extend her own experiences and that she redefined the possibilities and potential of women's socio-cultural roles.

Patricia Allmer has also revisited Miller's story. As a leading scholar in surrealism and teaching a specialist course "Breaking Frames: Women in Dada and Surrealism", Allmer has revised

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[80] Antony Penrose, *The Lives of Lee Miller* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2013), 191.
[81] Penrose, *Lives*, 190–93.
[82] Lee Miller, "Working Guests," British *Vogue*, Jul 1953, 54-57.
[83] Calvocoressi, *Portraits*, 15.
[84] Conekin, '"She Did the Cooking," 158.

surrealism as a discourse by which Miller is measured and how she is portrayed to the public. Miller was, as Allmer identifies in *Lee Miller: Photography, Surrealism, And Beyond* (2016), a woman who was "very capable of deciding her own trajectory, and reliant on narratives of 'accidental encounters' only insofar as they foster and help to circulate the myth of an artist investing in, and 'produced' by, the creative potential".[85] By focussing on Miller's works and not on the prominent biography surrounding her, Allmer's study proves essential in highlighting Miller as an artist.

This new perspective on Miller's work is, as C. Chiarenza observes, "provocative and will inspire thoughtful reconsideration of Dada and surrealism – its people, activities, and production".[86] Applying art-theoretical analyses, and focussing on Miller's modernist connections and sympathies, Allmer explores the much-neglected Egypt photography whilst revising accepted analyses of Miller's *Portrait of Space* (1937), her *Severed Breast* from *Radical Mastectomy* (*c*.1930), her Blitz photography and her lesser-known works, such as her photographic portraits of the opera *Four Saints* (1934) and post-war European landscapes.

Placing Miller within an artistic discourse, Allmer explores Miller's photography from an alternative perspective. She explains that she "wanted to celebrate Miller's polymathic creativity, drawing attention to neglected aspects of her oeuvre … [and] to add new and enlightening details and insights into the many myths surrounding Miller's biography and art".[87] Here Allmer "transcends [the] tendency to psychologise Miller's Egyptian photography" by exploring the complex set of functions and contradictions at work.[88] By concentrating on how Miller's images operate in photographic and art historical traditions, she examines the socio-cultural environment in which Miller lived and moved. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's work on space, Allmer invites "readings on intellectual, political and philosophical contexts" of Miller's work.[89] This considers the wider Western traditions of Egypt as a territorialised space and correlates this with surrealist concepts of the construction of women's bodies as patriarchal fantasies and, thus, another territorialised space.

By reading Miller's *Portrait of Space* (1937) as opening multiple and different perspectives on key conventional Western colonial and patriarchal ideas of "frontiers, identities and power",

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[85] Patricia Allmer, *Lee Miller: Photography, Surrealism, and Beyond* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 18.

[86] C. Chiarenza, review of *Lee Miller: Photography, Surrealism, and Beyond*, by Patricia Allmer, Manchester University Press, accessed Nov 22, 2016, http://www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/9780719085475/.

[87] Patricia Allmer, "Chancellor's Fellow Publishes New Book on Lee Miller and Surrealism," The University of Edinburgh: *Edinburgh College of Art*, accessed Dec 22, 2016, http://www.eca.ed.ac.uk/history-of-art/news-events/chancellor's-fellow-publishes-new-book-on-lee-miller-and-surrealism.

[88] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 122.

[89] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 124.

Allmer evaluates Miller's deconstruction of these ideologies. In this instance, surrealism is not about the bringing together of different realms (inside and outside) but represents an in-betweenness, "flux, displacement and dispersions … moments which can be traced along folds, tears, creases" in the dominant discourse of patriarchal and colonial ideology and space.[90] These tears or creases are used by Allmer to invite different perspectives and interpretations of Miller's Egypt photography that, in Deleuzian terms, "implies a plurality of centres, a superposition of perspectives, a tangle of points of view, a coexistence of moments which essentially distort representation".[91] This approach builds on Allmer's earlier work on women surreal artists and their identity within the surrealistic movement. This also focusses on folds, tears and creases to explore the multiplicity in female identity and challenge patriarchal concepts of the female body.

This approach is continued by Allmer in her examination of Miller's war work. By adopting Deleuzian concepts of territorialisation and de-territorialisation, she explores Miller's use of surrealist cartography. Adopting Adamowicz's argument that the surrealist map deconstructs the "ideology of imperialist maps", Allmer analyses how Miller uses maps, as backgrounds in her pictures, to challenge the Germans' use of maps as a nationalist project to obtain land rights.[92] Through this, Miller contests "Aryan superiority [and] cultural ownership".[93] Consequently, her wartime photography engages with a more politically interrogating surrealism: one that attacks Nazi propaganda and Nazi aesthetics. Using images from Miller's fashion shoots and the Leipzig suicides, Allmer provides a comprehensive exploration of Miller's wartime photography.[94]

Allmer's presentation of Miller as a vitally intelligent artist engaging with contemporary socio-political debates of the day is a position that this thesis develops. Examining Miller's Egypt photography, I analyse the cultural dialectic forces at work in producing her images. In contradistinction to Allmer, I emphasise a realist reading of Miller's work within the context of Group *f*.64. This, I argue, is just as provocative to comment on the socio-economic climate of Egypt during the 1930s and its effect on its people. The only area left untouched by Allmer is Miller's wartime writing and dispatches. Once again, Miller's writing is ignored in favour of her photography.

That said, Allmer has also revised Miller's post-war story. She explores Miller's post-war activities, focussing on her artistic connections and exhibitions at the ICA. She explains, "I've set out to resituate Miller as a key contributor to the British post-war avant-garde scene,

[90] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 127.
[91] Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. M. Lester (London: Continuum, 2004), 362.
[92] Elza Adamowicz, "Off the Map: Surrealism's Uncharted Territories," in *Surrealism: Crossings/Frontiers*, ed. Adamowicz (Bern: Peter Lang, 2006), 197.
[93] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 154.
[94] The Leipzig suicides were Germans who committed suicide as they feared reprisals from allied troops.

including her artistic, intellectual, and curatorial work for major ICA exhibitions such as *Wonder and Horror of the Human Head* (1953)".[95] By revising the dominant narratives of Miller's post-war life, her study has proved to be an important source for my thesis. By highlighting Miller's continuing artistic connections and her crucial role in setting up the ICA, she disputes the narrative of Miller's post-war decline. Miller's connections with European avant-gardes are presented as an influential factor in this rereading. Allmer has also reflected on Miller as an art collector and includes information about Miller's extensive art collection, rightly observing that this tends to be ignored. Allmer's observation is crucial in evidencing Miller's continuing creativity. With a similar focus on Miller's work, this thesis is complimentary to Allmer's positive presentation of Miller.

Whilst Roland Penrose's association with surrealist circles and the ICA has strengthened his status as a conscientious art collector, Miller's artistic status has been overshadowed. Miller's art collection was quite significant and went on loan. One such occasion was to Vassar College in Poughkeepsie in 1946. It included "pieces by de Chirico, Man Ray, Ernst, Dali, Moore, Delvaux, Gris, Miró, Klee, Magritte, Lam, Braque, Chagall and Turnward".[96] Miller also owned *Portrait of Wilhelm Uhde* (1910) and *Portrait of Lee Miller* and had received several drawings from Picasso: an erotic linocut (1963), *L'étrinte II* (1963) and a large erotic drawing with the inscription "pour Lee Penrose Picasso le 22.1.68" (dated 2 October 1968), which now belongs to The National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh.[97] On several occasions she lent her artwork to the ICA.

Allmer also notes the significance of sustained friendships with artistic and cultural figures from Miller's early career. She observes that this "problematizes the assertions of [Whitney] Chadwick and others … that Miller let 'earlier lives' 'slip into the past' as 'she compartmentalised her life'".[98] Allmer recognises that Miller's post-war life was built on her existing connections within the art world and *Vogue* as well as making new ones. These artistic activities also establish the importance of friendships to Miller's creative vision and to the way in which Roland and Miller lived their lives. For Allmer, the friendship between Roland, Miller and Picasso was an influential force on Miller's continuing artistic involvement. Picasso was a frequent visitor and a close friend of both Roland and Miller.

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[95] Allmer, "Chancellor's Fellow," http://www.eca.ed.ac.uk/history-of-art/news-events/chancellor%E2%80%99s-fellow-publishes-new-book-on-lee-miller-and-surrealism.
[96] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 220.
[97] Elizabeth Cowling, ed. *Visiting Picasso: The Notebooks and Letters of Roland Penrose* (New York: Thames & Hudson 2006), 257, 313.
[98] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 221. Also see Whitney Chadwick, "The Many Lives of Lee Miller," San Francisco Museum of Modern Art video, 00:2:00, May 2003, 2016, https://www.sfmoma.org/watch/the-many-lives-of-lee-miller/.

In 1956, the ICA exhibition *Picasso Himself* (25 October) celebrated Picasso's seventy-fifth birthday and "relied on Miller's intimate knowledge of Picasso and modern art".[99] Its catalogue included numerous works from Miller, whose photographs of Picasso also see Miller as an exhibiting photographer. She photographed Picasso at Paul and Dominique Éluard's wedding in June 1951 and with Cocteau in 1953; in 1954 she conveyed Picasso at work in Vallauris; and in 1956 she photographed him at La Californe with his recent work and with Gary Cooper and Aga, the master potter.[100] A review by *Burlington Magazine* in December 1956 acknowledges Miller's important contribution:

> The exhibition Picasso Himself, organised by the Institute of Contemporary Arts … is a huge family album with some superb photographs and the abiding impression is of Picasso's tremendous vitality and of his dignified simplicity. Such is the care and discrimination with which this wealth of material has been presented that one's interest is never allowed to wane; happily too, Picasso encourages his photographers and among these Man Ray, Dora Maar, and Lee Miller have served him well.[101]

Miller's photographs also contributed to Roland's biography of Picasso. In the 1981 edition (updated to coincide with Picasso's centenary) Roland acknowledged Miller's contribution: "But above all I must record the loving and expert assistance given to me throughout by my late wife, Lee Miller, who not only provided excellent photographs but also gave me unceasing encouragement".[102] Her range of photographs capturing Picasso with other artists documents, as Allmer observes, "artistic events and figures, and its capturing of works, and avant-garde personalities and their relations and meeting points with each other, not from the perspective of a detached photographer and documenter, but from the subjective, intimate position of a friend".[103]

Alfred Barr and James Thrall Soby from the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) were also two new friendships initiated during Miller's stay in America in 1946 that proved to be significant for both Roland and Miller. The museum inspired Roland to create an equivalent back in London, the ICA, in which Allmer recognises that Miller played a significant part. Photographs taken by Miller at the farm document Alfred Barr's visit and this connection proved to be significant for Penrose's exhibition *40,000 Years of Modern Art. Comparison of Primitive and Modern Art* in 1948–1949.[104] Visiting the MOMA was also a strong influence on Miller's artistic vision. The exhibitions during her visit in 1946, focussing on American consumerism's potential to

[99] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 223.
[100] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 224.
[101] CNPP, "Current and Forthcoming Exhibitions," *Burlington Magazine*, 98: 645 (Dec 1956), 458.
[102] Roland Penrose, acknowledgement in *Portrait of Picasso*, 3rd ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981), n.p.
[103] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 226.
[104] Roland Penrose, *40,000 years of Modern Art. Comparison of Primitive and Modern Art in 1948-1949*, Feb 10 to Mar 6, 1948, Academy Hall, Oxford Street, London.

transform lives, are evident in Miller's contribution to Penrose's *Wonder and Horror of the Human Head* exhibition in 1953.

Miller's significant and innovative contribution to this exhibition saw her lending several pieces of art from her own collection, including de Chirico's *Jewish Angel (1)* (1915) and Miró's *The Pipe Smoker* (undated). Allmer notes that several of the pieces lent by Miller bear the Condé Nast Publication stamp, *Vogue*, London, highlighting Miller's involvement in sourcing them.[105] Miller's expertise is noted by Burke. She writes:

> Roland made use of Lee's talents … to conceptualise and hang an exhibit that showed in its own way that the ICA was keeping up with the eclecticism of the organisation's younger members … Roland, who wrote with difficulty and may have been dyslexic, nonetheless produced a scholarly catalogue. Dedicated "To my wife without whose help this essay could not have been written", it drew heavily on Lee's editorial skills and long standing interest in phrenology.[106]

Miller also exhibited work for the exhibition. This identifies Miller's significant contribution as curator and her input into the unusual layout of the exhibition. Kim Tyler, in her paper (2009) in *The Art Book* journal, suggests that Miller's contribution to the exhibition was "ground breaking".[107] Her installation of popular images arranged like a page in a magazine juxtaposes high and low culture. Miller explores the effect of popular culture, commercial advertising and technologies on post-war Britain. Her unusual scrap book received positive reviews and shows her work as the beginnings of pop art.[108]

Miller's relationship with art and consumer culture is another area that this thesis explores in conjunction with Miller's cooking. Whilst Miller's cooking has been examined through a psychoanalytic lens by Carolyn Burke and Antony Penrose, I offer a very different perspective of Miller's creative cuisine. To interpret Miller's innovation with food as a consequence of her trauma is to dismiss Miller's continuing creativity. Only by interacting with Miller as an artist in and of her time, and through examining her culinary practices, her recipes and articles appearing in American and British *Vogue*, can Miller's innovation be fully understood. Consequently, by placing Miller within the artistic and cultural discourses of her day, I emphasise her engagement with contemporary emerging artistic practice, its relationship with pop culture and the importance of post-war consumerism on daily lives. By examining areas left still unexplored by

[105] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 227.
[106] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 320.
[107] Kim Tyler, "A Talent or a Muse? Lee Miller at the Birth of Pop Art," in *The Art Book* 16, no. 3 (Aug 2009): 57–58.
[108] Tyler, "A Talent or a Muse?" 57-58

critics – namely, Miller's writing and her role at the farm – I explore how Miller applied her aesthetic and critical practices in new and innovative modes.

Beyond the Muse

As the title of this section suggests, this study examines other aspects to Miller's work that have been ignored. It looks beyond the muse for which Miller has been most notably celebrated. With Miller's work providing the primary source of interpretation to determine meaning, rather than personal details, I present Miller as a producer of culture. Exploring the entirety of her work, from the 1930s to her death in 1977, Miller's art in its many forms (photography, writing and cooking) is the focus.

Miller's time in Egypt from 1934 to 1939 is vital to revising Miller's art. Therefore, her social documentary work in Egypt is an area that this thesis addresses in chapter one (Invitations to Other Spaces). By examining Miller's landscape and social photography, I argue that the transition from indoor studio work to outdoor landscape work helped Miller to develop her unique vision and transition from fashion photographer to war photographer and correspondent. This transition sees Miller's style evolve, and her photo-documents used by *Vogue* to highlight the Blitz, the atrocities of the war and the German death camps. I argue that during her time spent in Egypt, she produced work that is not necessarily surrealist but, as Group *f*.64 termed it, is "pure" and without manipulation. This new reading of Miller's photography focusses on the landscape and local people working or going about their daily lives. This, as Susan Sontag outlines in her book *On Photography* (1979), links to contemporary culture and the everyday.[109]

Mary Alinder's book, *Group* f*.64: Edward Weston, Ansel Adams, Imogen Cunningham, and the Community of Artists Who Revolutionized American Photography* (2014), provides an insight into photography's cultural developments in America.[110] This development witnessed a moving away from Pictorialism – concerned with making pretty pictures of pretty things – and towards straight or pure photography. Straight photography – a more realist approach to its subject matter – thus became an aesthetic with which to document the American landscape and its people during the American Depression. Moving back to America and opening a studio in 1932, Miller would have been aware of such initiatives.

Whilst considering her experience of photography and her connection with Julien Levy and his gallery in Manhattan, I explore how Miller's knowledge of straight photographic methods is

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[109] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1979).
[110] Mary Street Alinder, *Group f.64: Edward Weston, Ansel Adams, Imogen Cunningham, and the Community of Artists Who Revolutionized American Photography* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014).

evidenced in her Egypt and Balkan work. I analyse her landscape images in correlation to Ansel Adams' work, whilst presenting her images of Egyptian and Balkan culture as analogous to the work of Dorothea Lange. This much-needed exploration into Miller's 1930s photography builds on Haworth-Booth's acknowledgement of Miller's Egyptian period as an important stage in her development as an artist. I provide an alternative interpretation of how Miller's work is received and read today, with a social and cultural emphasis that is informed by contemporary Egyptian socio-political and economic concerns.

Ali Smith has highlighted Miller's negotiation of herself in front of the camera and behind it.[111] This is nowhere more obvious than in Miller's role as a war photographer and correspondent for *Vogue*, in which she used her celebrity status and female presence to become "a figure whose combined eye and voice, notions of politics, fashion, liberation and eyewitness met and made history".[112] This acknowledges Miller's engagement with social concerns, on which chapter two of this thesis (Women, War and Work) builds. I explore Miller's wartime work from a socio-political and cultural perspective, especially in her documentation of women and their contribution to the war effort. This perspective provides an alternative reading of her wartime pictures, which have commonly been read as surrealistic unconscious expressions. I use work that appears in *Vogue* rather than pictures that appear in her well-known book *Grim Glory*. Although an important wartime document, this book has tended to dominate interpretations of Miller's wartime work. By focussing on Miller's relationship with women and *Vogue*, I explore Miller's modification of women's roles within the sphere of war. Miller became a member of *Vogue*'s staff in January 1940 and I examine Miller's articles as part of the magazine's contribution to the war effort.

With the support of Audrey Withers (Miller's editor at *Vogue*), Miller documented the socio-economic constraints placed on women and what this meant for style and fashion. I argue that fashion was significant for women during the war, as it allowed them to assert their femininity when faced with the threat of masculinisation and the practicality of utility clothing. Miller's photo-essays helped to document the relationship between fashion and war, which I argue is reflective of contemporary culture and is performative. In this instance, the uniforms of the armed forces were influential in encouraging women to join the war effort. Dividing Miller's work into two categories, I explore women's civilian war work and women in the armed forces. Such experiences must be understood in the context of "total war", which demonstrates women's negotiation of their private and public roles. Building on Penny Summerfield's book, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives: Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral Histories of the*

[111] Smith, "Look of the Moment," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.
[112] Smith, "Look of the Moment," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.

Second World War (1998), which explores women's wartime oral accounts of their experiences, I argue that Miller gives a personal voice to these women's experiences and contributes to women's historiography of war.[113]

With a particular emphasis on Miller's book, *Wrens in Camera* (1945), I explore Miller's images as important cultural documents that chart the change in women's social roles.[114] This chronicles women doing tasks that before the war were considered men's work. By presenting women as competent individuals working with technology, Miller visually conveys the multifaceted nature of women's identities, and women's ability to adopt many different guises and roles. Working with telephones and technical equipment, Miller's images present the positional stance of women's identity during the war. They were involved in physically challenging activities and becoming technical engineers whilst also focussing on their domestic duties.

This relationship between women and technology is also reflected in Miller's activities as a war photographer and later as a correspondent. With her Rolleiflex camera, her Hermès baby typewriter, and later the kitchen gadgets she utilised in innovative ways for her post-war cooking, Miller evidences women's capabilities beyond that of the home. Ultimately, I suggest that Miller helps to reposition women's wartime efforts by making visible their contributions. These contributions were significant not only to the war but also, and more importantly, to the women themselves, who realised their own potential and the potential of woman-power for the future.

Miller's engagement with socio-political concerns continues in chapter three (Writing the War: Combat, Civilians and Collaborators) with Miller's repositioning of herself as war correspondent. This sees, as Smith identifies, Miller's negotiation of herself, which I explore in the context of being seen as the *femme soldat* (a title bestowed on her by the French) and the act of seeing (as a female photographer behind the camera). Miller gained a certain amount of popularity, which I argue that she uses in a similar way to today's female celebrities to influence the public's thinking on humanitarian issues. Miller's photography of the liberation of France and on entering Germany (which has received considerable academic attention) is the focus of the chapter, alongside, as Smith has identified, Miller's forgotten skills as a writer. Her writing adopts a subjective stance, which engages with her subject matter in a more personal and political way than her images do. This new analysis challenges the dominant readings of Miller's

[113] Penny Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women's Wartime Lives: Discourse and Subjectivity in Oral Histories of the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998).
[114] I use both the original publication, Lee Miller, *Wrens in Camera* (London: Hollis and Carter, 1945), and the republished version, Lesley Thomas and Chris Howard Bailey, *WRNS in Camera: The Women's Royal Naval Service in the Second World War* (Gloucestershire: Sutton, 2002).

wartime dispatches as expressions of trauma and as surrealistic articulations of unconscious processes to the horrors she had witnessed.[115]

I argue that these articles help to contextualise *Vogu*e's contemporaneous importance and transform understanding of it so that it can be considered as a current, influential and relevant magazine that covers news journalism in addition to fashion. With reference to David Scherman – friend and colleague of Miller and war journalist for *Life* magazine – and Antony Penrose's *Lee Miller's War*, I explore Miller's early dispatches that focus on the social impact of war due to the restrictions placed on female correspondents regarding combat. Miller's images documenting soldiers, nurses and resistance fighters, and her use of sensory language, articulate a sense of the horrors witnessed and the war's victims. I also examine how, on entering St Malo and finding herself in a combat situation where she witnessed the first use of napalm, Miller occupied a similar space to her male colleagues.

With a close focus on Miller's dispatches during the liberation of France, I consider Miller's use of fashion as a form of resistance by French women against their subjugation at the hands of the Nazi regime. I also explore the mixing of fashion, aesthetics and war adopted by Miller in her dispatches from Germany. Through these, Miller exposes Nazi atrocities, deconstructing the Nazi patriarchal claims to territory. Miller's use of first-person narrative heightens these atrocities and provides context to her images, which are sometimes beyond the scope of understanding. Through her dispatches, Miller strips away the myths surrounding Hitler and Eva whilst consciously constructing her own image and voice as the *femme soldat.*

The war is where most academics who study Miller have focussed their research. As Smith identifies:

> having used up a spirit quota that would have kept 20 people happy for 20 lifetimes, Miller unwillingly returned to England after the war, profoundly disillusioned by its aftermath, and sank herself into the kind of silence that means that every book written about her is thick with detail till roughly 1950. The last three decades of her life always take up a disproportionately slim page width.[116]

Her years 1948–1956, in which she wrote "The High Bed" (April 1948), "Bachelor Entertaining" (March 1949), "Working Guests" (July 1953) and "What They See in the Cinema" (August 1956) have been ignored as important source materials for Miller's lived experience. The only

[115] Penrose, *Lives*, Zox-Weaver, Annalisa, "When the War Was in *Vogue*: Lee Miller's War Reports," *Women's Studies* 32, no. 2 (February 2003): 131–63. Paula M. Salvio, "Uncanny Exposures: A Study of the Wartime Photojournalism of Lee Miller," *Curriculum Inquiry* 39, no. 4 (2009):521-36.
[116] Smith, "Look of the Moment," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.

article that has received any examination is "Working Guests", but even this has received little attention.

Through an original discussion of these articles in chapter four (Fashion, Food and Farley Farm: Discourses on Domesticity), I explore how Miller reshapes dominant narratives surrounding motherhood and women's expected social roles as housewives. By adopting the discourse of consumerism, Miller voices upper and middle-class women's negotiation of these roles, in which the purchasing of consumables (clothes, make-up and domestic appliances) allows them to become active agents. Miller's first article, "The High Bed" sees Miller describing her stay in a nursing home, preparing for motherhood. Her wit and independent spirit are evident in her view of pregnancy as a condition in which to pamper one's self and still look great. Miller asserts a woman's autonomy at a time when, as Simone de Beauvoir (in *The Second Sex*, published in 1949) observes, a woman can lose her sense of self.[117] Miller discusses fashion, food tips and the high bed as the perfect way to be the centre of attention and to assert agency during maternity.

Miller's second article, "Bachelor Entertaining", presents Miller's negotiation of women's post-war societal role and expectations, which associated them with the private sphere of the home. This article has been ignored in terms of Miller's art, but, in providing the first detailed analysis of this article, I identify how Miller questions the premise of separate spheres by writing about her bachelor friends and their household chores of keeping house. Miller's article (written in 1949 before Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*), can be viewed as a counterpoint to de Beauvoir. Whilst de Beauvoir argues for an equality of the sexes and promotes women entering the masculine public sphere of work, Miller encourages men to enter into the private sphere of the home.[118] I argue that by presenting men as cooking and entertaining, Miller destabilises the accepted perceptions of men, whose domain was exclusively attached to the public sphere of work, even perhaps anticipating the "metrosexual" men of today.

As Smith identifies, pieces like "Working Guests" are "a rarity", highlighting the extent to which Miller's post-war work and life have been ignored.[119] To redress this, "Working Guests" is the focus of my next chapter ("Working Guests": Farley Farm as Social Space Creating New Modes of Living). The chapter outlines Miller and Penrose's attempt to set up home and a community of artists in post-war Britain. I identify Farley Farm as an open semi-permeable space, expressed by Miller in her post-war articles to create new modes of living and reshape one's environment. Miller's article "Working Guests", written for *Vogue* in 1953, has been considered only in terms of it being her last significant piece of photo-journalism for *Vogue* and in conjunction with the

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[117] Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (London: Vintage, 2011), 554.
[118] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 737.
[119] Smith, "Look of the Moment," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.

trauma from which she was suffering. Miller's wit and irony in this article counterposes the dominant readings of "Working Guests" and presents Farley Farm as a place of openness and sociability.

Miller's negotiation of the role of housewife is presented as a continuation of her artistic ability in orchestrating all visitors and guests to contribute to the setting up of home. As hostess, Miller brings together different groups of friends to help with the domestic chores and setting up home. Her promotion of an extended family beyond the idea of the nuclear family sees her as an arbitrator of expected social roles and responsibilities. With the shortage and disappearance of domestic servants after the war, Miller coerces her friends from upper-middle and middle-class backgrounds to partake in manual labour.

I believe it is important to locate Miller's creative endeavours at the farm in a historical and social context. Understanding of such a context enables an understanding of Miller negotiating a cultural hegemony that encouraged women to embrace their domestic responsibilities after the war. This vision of an extended family in a post-war world and its disappearing domestic services promotes a space that shares responsibilities and roles. This approach is similar to that of George Maciunas and Fluxus, whose aims promoted a communal approach to living and art. Acting as a linchpin to create and strengthen friendships in personal and professional circumstances, Miller's imaginative and creative spirit continued to influence her life at the farm and promote new avant-garde practices of art and life.

Miller's last two decades (the 1960s and 1970s) also see Miller's creativity pass into what Smith defines as her "next passionate incarnation": that of a gourmet cook and collector of recipes.[120] I examine this much ignored aspect of Miller's art in chapter six (Lee Miller's Cooking: Negotiating Food, Austerity and the Avant-garde) from the perspective of her own post-war writing. Miller's expertise in cooking and her culinary knowledge are outlined and comparisons are made with Elizabeth David, another contemporary. Miller's post-war activities at the farm, and her ability to provide innovative meals subject to rationing, provide evidence of her growing expertise.

Through the medium of food, Miller reshaped her living environment to articulate the endeavours of women artists whilst engaging with avant-garde sensibilities about art. An exploration of her methods of cooking and her culinary innovations is addressed through an original analysis of several articles written about Miller in American *Vogue* and *House and Garden*. Her role as artist, set alongside Dali's melting watch, Man Ray's floating lips and

[120] Smith, "Look of the Moment," https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/sep/08/photography.art.

Cocteau's statue of Miller, present her culinary endeavours as a powerful force with which to interrogate art and culinary conventions. This chapter presents a different approach to Miller's post-war activities, one that has only been recognised by Becky Conekin in her paper, '"She Did the Cooking with the Same Spirit as the Photography: Lee Miller's Life after Photography", published in *Photography and Culture* in 2008.

As art, Miller's cuisine engages with the contemporary post-war avant-garde practices of Fluxus and Daniel Spoerri's Eat Art. Miller's experiments with food as engaging with post-war avant-garde practices of art production and consumption is another focus in this chapter. Cecilia Novero's work, *Antidiets of the Avant Garde; From Futurist Cooking to Eat Art* (2010) and Hannah Higgins' *Fluxus Experience* (2002) provide a context in which to evaluate Miller's cooking as a medium that challenged conventional assumptions of art and food.[121] This reading of Miller's cooking is new and explores Miller's art through her culinary and social practices. Her appropriation of cooking as art challenges conventional associations of women and the domestic and continues to demonstrate, contrary to the views of most critics, Miller's continuing creative spirit in her post-war years.

With the announcement on 14 October 2015 that Kate Winslet has been proposed to play Miller in a film depicting Penrose's biography, it seems that Miller's popularity continues to grow, with her story reaching a wider audience. Miller depicted on the silver screen is a fitting tribute to a woman whose own love of film is evidenced in her final article for *Vogue*, "What They See in the Cinema" (August 1956).[122] This article, although beautifully written, has also been ignored. Only Haworth-Booth acknowledges the artistry of Miller's piece by including a copy of it in his book, but he does not carry out any examination of the piece.[123] Chapter seven (Revisioning Lee Miller: Her Life and Legacy), therefore, provides a close reading of the article and the context in which it was written. With a similar emphasis on Miller's involvement with socio-cultural and political concerns, I explore her engagement with debates surrounding the film industry in the 1950s.

Drawing on Mackillop and Sinyard's (2005) revisionist reading of 1950s film, I explore Miller's love of all film genres within the British film industry.[124] Her use of figurative language extols

[121] Cecilia Novero, *Antidiets of the Avant Garde: From Futurist Cooking to Eat Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010). Hannah Higgins, *Fluxus Experience* (London: University of California Press, 2002).
[122] Although "Working Guests" has been considered by some (Carolyn Burke, Antony Penrose) as being Miller's significant last piece, "What They See in the Cinema" (August 1956, British *Vogue*) is an impassioned piece of writing that has received little attention by critics.
[123] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 222.
[124] Ian Mackillop and Neil Sinyard, "Celebrating British Cinema of the 1950s," in *British Cinema of the 1950s: A Celebration*, ed. Ian Mackillop and Neil Sinyard (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2003), 1–10.

her love of the medium, which she describes as poetry and, as Mackillop and Sinyard recognise, highlights the diversity apparent in British film during this period. Miller's film aesthetics, I argue, accords with Alexandre Astruc's essay (1948) in which he recognises the importance of the director's autonomy.[125] For Astruc, the director is an artist, expressing a personal view to create art. Consequently, the 1950s begin to see the rise of the auteur in the works of directors such as Alfred Hitchcock, John Ford and Vincente Minnelli, who not only directed but edited and wrote their own scripts to bring their vision to the screen. Miller's own experience of creative directors can be seen in her involvement in Jean Cocteau's film, *The Blood of a Poet* (1930), in which she plays a statue. Her inclusion of this experience with Cocteau in "What They See in the Cinema" evidences her support and celebration of the role of the director.

I suggest that Miller also engages with contemporary politics surrounding American film during the 1950s and McCarthyism, which swept America during the post-war period. With Miller's American connections, I discuss how her piece contests the constraints placed on Hollywood, the types of films produced and, subsequently, the lack of creativity within the industry. Her friend Ed Murrow, with whom she collaborated on *Grim Glory* (1941), was a vocal opponent to McCarthyism and those accused (without proper evidence) of harbouring communist sympathies. Miller's inclusion of a variety of films, covering contemporary issues, highlights her view that freedom of expression is essential.

I argue that Miller's concern with women's socio-cultural roles continues in this piece. By exploring women's social roles through cinema, Miller reinforces the power of film to represent possibilities beyond the lived experience. By referencing strong female leads, such as Katherine Hepburn in *The African Queen* (1951), Miller signals her support of women as active agents, which is similar to her wartime photographs.

Reflecting on my learning journey since my project began, I review in my last chapter (Lee Miller: A Reconsideration) Miller's work as a consequence of her time and its relevance for women today. Evaluating Miller's artistry from her Egypt photography in the 1930s to her writing and cooking in the post-war period, I conclude that her diversity cannot be denied. The newly updated website for the Lee Miller Archives also evidences the breadth of Miller's work. Her creativity and vision are the subjects of many exhibitions nationally and worldwide, demonstrating her continuing relevance and opening up other possibilities for reinterpreting her work.

[125] Alexandre Astruc, "Naissance d'une nouvelle avant-garde: ie camera stylo," *L'Écran français* 144, Jan 30, 1948.

1.
Invitations to Other Spaces

> I don't know whether you are still interested in photography – or got the same loathing for it I had had … I know how it feels to be a photographer and it's hell … (Lee Miller, 1932)[126]

This chapter presents Miller's photography of the 1930s as an important period in her development as a photographer. Miller's photographs from 1934 to 1937 capture life in Egypt, where she lived with her first husband, Aziz Eloui-Bey. From 1937 to 1939, Miller travelled with Roland Penrose around the Balkans, taking photographs of its people and way of life. In 1939 Miller separated from Aziz and joined Roland Penrose in London. Her Egypt and Balkan work traces her transition from indoor portrait photography in New York in her own studio (1932–1934) to outdoor landscape and social photography. This chapter investigates what has been overlooked with regard to Miller's photographic skill and vision in her landscape and documentary-style work. Critics reading Miller's work from this period have focussed on surreal and unconscious practices in their interpretation of her images. By placing Miller's work in a socio-cultural context, I provide an alternative interpretation that engages with contemporary developing cultural photographic practices. Providing Group *ƒ*.64 as a comparison, I argue that Miller's photography is indicative of American realism and its relationship to geographic and social reality.

Discussion of Miller's photography during this period has tended to focus on a few iconic images. Her most famous, *Portrait of Space* (1937), has come to epitomise her surrealist influences and, as such, it has influenced how her other landscape images are read. This discourse has been strengthened by Antony Penrose's biography of Miller, and Magritte famously commenting on how his painting, *Le Baiser* (1938), was inspired by Miller's photograph during a visit to Roland Penrose's house in Hampstead.[127] Subsequently, surrealism and Miller's work have been married tightly, and Antony Penrose's singular perspective of Miller's work has been applied to all her photography.

Mark Haworth-Booth conducts an academic study of Miller's Egyptian photography in *The Art of Lee Miller* (2007). He approaches Miller's images from the perspective of Miller's art. Having established her own photographic studio with her brother Erik in New York in 1932, Miller grew tired of the art by the time she moved to Egypt as Aziz Eloui-Bey's wife in 1934. Exploring

[126] Lee Miller, postscript to Erik Miller in a letter dated Aug 6, 1935, quoted in Antony Penrose, *Lives*, 65.
[127] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 141.

Miller's return to photography during her time in Egypt, Haworth-Booth examines her reappropriation of the medium in which she adopted street photography as a method to capture Egyptian society and "the little mysteries of Egyptian life".[128] As Miller stated in a letter to Erik in 1935, Egypt had provided her with the opportunity to fall in love with photography again:

> I don't know whether you are still interested in photography – or got the same loathing for it I had had…I know how it feels to be a photographer and it's hell…
>
> Until Xmas time this year I hadn't even taken a roll of film – about three exposures I didn't even bother to develop. But then I went to Jerusalem for a day [in July 1935] and got sort of inspired and did about ten swell ones. The rest is muck. I've found a small shop to do my developing and printing to my satisfaction, so I'm taking an interest again. There is a very nice American boy who is here to organise the new Kodachrome processing plant for the Middle East. He and I went out to a village to take some pictures…[129]

Haworth-Booth frames his discussion around Miller's avant-garde influences, with her surrealist sensibility providing the foundations for this discussion. He places Miller within a socio-historical context, but this only briefly informs his reading of her images. Most of his observations are linked to Miller's personal circumstances rather than to any contemporary socio-cultural concerns. However, in discussing Miller's photography as art, he acknowledges her ability to marry technique with creativity. This focus on Miller's photographic skill and approach has revised some of the appraisals of her work, highlighting areas for further study.

Haworth-Booth subsequently analyses Miller's *Portrait of Space* for its composition and technical skills. With a focus on photographic processes, he "trace[s] the evolution of a famous photograph through the variants leading up to it".[130] By focussing on Miller's sensitivity towards the image, he highlights her connection with the American school of photography, but this acknowledgement is brief. This experimenting and learning (or even re-learning) of Miller's craft, however, is recognised by Haworth-Booth as "an anticipation of her later career in reportage".[131] This, as Haworth-Booth rightly observes, is important to the development of Miller's wartime vision, which adopted photojournalism as a method to document the atrocities of the Second World War. However, it remains an area that is fleetingly acknowledged by critics today.

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[128] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 124.
[129] Lee Miller, quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 65.
[130] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 133.
[131] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 133–39, 124.

Hilary Roberts has similarly recognised the significance of Miller's Egypt photography for her wartime work. Discussing the most recent exhibition of Miller's wartime work at the Imperial War Museum, Roberts describes Miller's images as "simpler and less contrived … that fitted comfortably into the categories of documentary photography and reportage".[132] This, Roberts observes, "laid the foundations of her future career as a photojournalist".[133] However, Roberts' acknowledgement in the catalogue accompanying the Imperial War Museum's exhibition of Miller's war images is brief. This narrative of simple transition from fashion photographer to war photographer glosses over an important stage in Miller's life. This period is vital to any reading of Miller's work and her subsequent transition to photojournalism.

Susan Sontag in *On Photography* (1979) observes that "Surrealism lies at the heart of the photographic enterprise: in the very creation of a duplicate world, or a reality in the second degree, narrower but more dramatic than the one perceived by natural vision".[134] In determining photography as a surreal practice in itself, Sontag observes how by finding "new ways to look at familiar subjects", the surreal does not lie in what surrealists believe to be the universal or in a matter of psychology (the unconscious) but in what is most local, ethnic and class-bound.[135] In other words, "culture".[136] By adopting this approach to Miller's 1930s photography, the social and cultural significance of her images, which have up until now been marginalised, becomes the focus.

The first section of this chapter explores Miller's Manhattan studio, which she and her brother set up, from 1932 to 1934. I examine how Miller's approach to portrait photography informs her later photographic work in Egypt and the Balkans. Drawing on her experiences as a model and working with photographers George Hoyningen-Huene, Horst P. Horst and Man Ray, Miller learnt how to develop her photographic vision. Consequently, Miller would only take one sitting a day. This ensured that clients felt relaxed during a session and enabled her to capture the character of the sitter she was photographing. This intimate approach to her subjects is also evident in her pictures during her time in Egypt and the Balkans.

This approach made Miller the subject of an article in a local newspaper, the *Poughkeepsie Evening Star*, in 1932 and helped to establish her as an adept and proficient photographer.[137] A

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[132] Hilary Roberts, *Lee Miller: A Woman's War*, with introduction by Antony Penrose (London: Thames and Hudson, 2015), 17. Published in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name, shown at the Imperial War Museum, London.
[133] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 17.
[134] Susan Sontag, *On Photography*, 52.
[135] Sontag, *On Photography*, 42.
[136] Sontag, *On Photography*, 53–54.
[137] Julia Blanshard, "Other Faces Are Her Fortune," *Poughkeepsie Evening* Star, Nov 1, 1932, clipping. Also see Burke, *Lee Miller*, 128.

range of techniques learnt from her time with Man Ray involving the latest European cultural trends and technical advances is evident in her portraiture work. However, I argue that her adeptness with the camera and her ability to visualise the image she desired (similar to contemporary Ansel Adams) is comparable to the photographic methods used by American photographers. Mary Street Alinder, in her 2014 account of the achievements of Group *f*.64, provides a relevant and important source for reading Miller's photography from a social and cultural perspective, which I explore in the second part of this chapter.

Alinder posits that Group *f*.64 was foundational to the movement of American realism and the development of creative photography.[138] I suggest that Miller's work is indicative of American realism and its relationship to geographic and social reality. Alinder explores how a group of photographers from northern California (Ansel Adams, Imogen Cunningham, John Paul Edwards, Dorothea Lange, Sonya Noskowiak, Henry Swift, Willard Van Dyke and Edward Weston) fought for artistic recognition against the dominance of Stieglitz and Pictorialism. They called for photography to be viewed as an art equal to all others. Asserting the unique property of photography, in that it is a lens-based medium, they promoted "straight" or "pure" photography. Choosing to call themselves Group *f*.64 further highlighted their philosophy about, and their belief in, the prominence of the lens and its ability to produce a finely detailed image.[139] Their philosophy of straight photography – a true and unmanipulated photograph of the image *seen* by the photographer through the lens of a camera, not cropped, with rich tonality and sharp focus – posited "that photographic beauty was defined by beautiful prints produced by purely photographic means".[140] These ideals were encapsulated within the name of the group, *f*.64: the "*f*." is the ratio of the lens aperture in relation to its focal length and created sharp photographs with superb depth of field, allowing the image to speak for itself.

Unlike Stieglitz, whose approach helped to cultivate photography as an elitist art, Group *f*.64's philosophy promoted the opposite. Sharing their knowledge of the medium and outlining specific techniques in books and magazines, they challenged the dominant perception of the medium. Its most popular members, Edward Weston, Ansel Adams, Imogen Cunningham and, later, Dorothea Lange, demonstrated the power that straight photography could have, not only in producing beautiful photographs but also in its ability to depict "real" life. Lange's images in particular encouraged the government to decide on a social policy that would assist many American citizens who had suffered greatly as a consequence of the American Depression.

[138] Alinder, *Group f.64,* xii.
[139] Alinder, *Group f.64*, xii.
[140] Alinder, *Group f.64*, 102.

Influenced by the Great Depression, their environment and their friendship, Alinder argues, the group's aesthetic "became a consequential chapter in the history of photography".[141]

The group's ideals are presented in the second part of the chapter as an alternative framework in which to compare and analyse Miller's Egypt and Balkan images. Although Miller did not belong to the group, I argue that her images are congruent with similar, if not the same, methods and approaches as those of the group. The group's promotion of the technical side of the art would have appealed to Miller, whose ease with technology is evident in her pictures and later in her obsession with gadgets at Farley Farm. Moreover, the group's egalitarian approach to the medium would have appealed to Miller's sensibilities: first as an artist, later as a war correspondent and finally in setting up home during a post-war climate of austerity. Miller's post-war domestic articles, in which she negotiates societal expectations of gender and class, evidence her socialist sensibilities.

Miller's ability to transgress boundaries is also evident in the subjects she chose to photograph. Alinder identifies that within Group *f*.64 the men's photographs "were landscapes and closely examined objects. The women did not follow as narrow a definition of suitable subjects, but used photography to present a more expansive vision that encompassed the world and its people".[142] Miller's images explore geographical structures and locations in addition to recording the plight of the Egyptian people. Her images of geographical locations are comparable to Ansel Adams' concern with composition and techniques, whilst her exploration of social and economic issues is analogous to Dorothea Lange's social documentary work in photographing the effects of the Depression on the people and landscape of America. To examine Miller's approach more thoroughly, the second section of this chapter focusses on Miller's landscape photographs. Here her use of unusual angles, her visualisation and her tonal contrasts are compared with Adams' photography to demonstrate Miller's skill as a photographer, which has not been recognised in a similar way to that of Adams. The third part of this chapter is concerned with Miller's social documentary work, which is similar in style to Lange's.

Lange's images have been celebrated for their empathy with the plight of American families, especially her most iconic image, *Migrant Mother* (1936). Miller's Egypt and Balkan work, with its social and cultural emphasis, has a similar empathy. The impact of Egypt, its culture and people on Miller is visible in her learning of Arabic, her passion for the local food (which influenced her cooking in later life) and her photography. The Egypt to which Miller had been introduced by her husband Aziz Eloui-Bey, a member of the upper class, was very different from

[141] Alinder, *Group f.64*, xv.
[142] Alinder, *Group f.64*, xiv.

the one she discovered in the street. Her photography is dominated by scenes of children playing in the street, boys collecting water, women at markets and girls washing clothes. Choosing to stay with local Egyptian people during her treks to local villages and sites of historic interest provided Miller with first-hand experience of their daily lives, customs and rituals. Miller's letter to Roland Penrose in 1937, recounting her visit to Siwa, expresses the profundity of these encounters that allowed her to connect with Egyptian culture. Staying at an oasis overnight, she writes how she awoke to the sounds of a Siyaha fantasia, a ritual celebrating male friendship. Allowed to watch the dancing of Siwans, Arabs and Bedouins, Miller wrote how it "brought me to life".[143] It was the local people, the peasantry, who captured Miller's imagination.

The hardship of the fellahin (Egyptian rural peasants), when compared with the lifestyle of what Miller referred to as the "black satin and pearls set" from whom she desired to escape, may have offended her socialist sensibilities.[144] Miller would have been aware that, as Aziz Eloui-Bey's wife, she was seen as part of the local aristocracy, whose comfortable standard of living was maintained by the fellahin as cheap labour or house servants. Miller's own household employed fifteen house servants, including a personal maid whom Aziz had engaged for Miller. Moreover, the exploitation of the Egyptian fellahin was compounded by the effects of the American Depression in Egypt, which had political, economic and social ramifications. The impact of Egypt's socio-economic crisis and Miller's contribution to helping local people is referenced by Aziz in a letter to the Millers. In this, he recounts Lee Miller's idea for creating a glass factory, as the materials were readily available.[145] Aziz, who by 1936, was chief technical advisor to the National Bank of Egypt, also devised projects that would improve the country's economy: a power station, a marble and granite works, a button factory and air-conditioning provision for local hotel and cinemas.[146]

Consequently, the Kodachrome plant to which Miller refers in her letter to her brother is an important cultural reference. It indicates not only Miller's re-engagement with photography but also Egypt's urbanisation and educational expansion during the 1930s. The Kodachrome plant indicates the development of a new body of consumers and new forms of cultural production. The emergence of a new "modern literate culture" that was drawn to urban areas represented a changing cultural landscape. The number of writers and journalists increased from 1,200 to

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[143] Lee Miller to Roland Penrose, Oct 27, 1937, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 177.
[144] Penrose, *Lives*, 78. A letter to Roland Penrose in 1939 (March 23) makes clear Miller's political views. Containing a footnote in the letter, she asks Penrose not to send her any books with "communist leanings" as George Henein (an artist) was being watched by the foreign office. Miller was also the subject of an MI5 investigation (because of her political disposition) from 1941 to 1956 and is referenced in more detail in chapter 7.
[145] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 156.
[146] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 156.

8,200 during the period 1937–1947.[147] Consequently, rural life represented an older generation whose culture and tradition was significantly declining; it was being replaced by a more educated, politically aware and nationalistic population. Miller's awareness of these social and cultural issues is evident in her preoccupation with the country's peasantry when photographing farms, places of industry and historic sites of interest. These concerns, I believe, inform Miller's work and influence her approach and style when photographing subjects.

Apart from Allmer's Deleuzian reading, Miller's Egypt and Balkan photography has always been read through the lens of Miller's own internal conflict. Her personal need to escape, linked to psychoanalytical interpretations of her work, has dominated discussion of this period in Miller's life. This has relied on Freud's theory of the unconscious. In his works (1900, 1905), he identified the unconscious mind as determining an individual's behaviour.[148] Acting like a repository of primitive desires and impulses, which are mediated by the preconscious area, the unconscious mind attempts to bring into awareness often forgotten memories or events in childhood. Consequently, conflicts between the conscious and unconscious mind can cause anxiety and depression. Only by acknowledging these memories can an individual be free from the effects of the unconscious. For many interpreting Miller's work, this conflict is expressed through her photography.

I argue that Miller's adoption of straight photography to document scenes of Egyptian and Balkan local life and the country's geographical history represents more than this. Ignoring any socio-historical context dismisses Miller's awareness of the cultural trends in photography and the decade's socio-economic concerns. Rather, Miller engages with these issues through her personal experiences of the conflict and through her photography. With a conflicted Egyptian parliament in power that largely represented the landed gentry, the attitudes of many Egyptians, as a young Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir (the future president of Egypt) observed in 1935, were "A life of despair and despair with Life".[149] As Miller chose to photograph local people, her photography can be read as social documentary engaging with contemporary social and cultural issues, which in turn informed her approach as a wartime photojournalist and her post-war articles. I reinforce the significance of Miller's Egypt photography in the last section of the chapter by examining Miller's post-war photography within a similar social historical context.

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[147] Jean-Jacques Waardenburg, *Les Universités dans le monde arabe actuel*s (The Hague : Mouton,1966), 2: 80; Charles Issawi, *Egypt at Mid-century: An Economic Analysis* (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 81. Also quoted in Israel Gershoni and James Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation, 1930–1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 13.

[148] Sigmund Freud and James Strachey, *The interpretation of Dreams* (New York: Basic Books, 2010), Sigmund Freud, ed. by Angela Richards, *Three essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (London: Penguin Books, 1991).

[149] Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir, quoted in Gershoni and Jankowski, *Egyptian Nation,* 3. The text of the letter is available in Sabri Ghunaym, '*Abd al-Nasir Dhalika al-Insan* (Cairo, 1970), 53–57. See also Georges Vaucher, *Gamal Abdel Nasser et son équipe* (Paris: Julliard, 1959), 71–75. Gamal Abdel Nasser is a transliteration of Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir.

1.1. Miller's Manhattan Studio

Appearing in *Vogue* and referenced in the *Poughkeepsie Evening Star* (1932) as "one of the most photographed girls in Manhattan", Miller set up her own Manhattan photographic studio in November 1932 with her brother Erik.[150] Her contacts with Condé Nast provided her with an opportunity to move in commercial circles to acquire financial support and a starting capital for her studio. Christian Holmes II, heir to the Fleischmann Yeast fortune and a Wall Street broker, and Cliff Smith, heir to the Western Union fortune, provided her with a share capital of $10,000.[151] In an interview with Ruth Seinfel in the *New York Evening Post* (24 October 1932), Miller set out her intentions for her studio whilst helping to publicise it. She stated how she wished "to settle down in her native land and photograph the American great" when referring to photographing its celebrities.[152] Here she photographed portrait clients, from important US statesmen to film stars, in innovative and emphatic ways. Miller's style, in making her subjects feel at ease, allowed her to capture images of her subjects at their "most natural self".[153] This subjective response to her clients and her ease with the technical side of the art established Miller as an adept portraiture photographer and photojournalist.

Through her work with George Hoyningen-Huene, Horst P. Horst and Man Ray, Miller had learnt how to develop her vision and perspective. As Antony Penrose observes in his biography of Miller, "These modelling sessions with Hoyningen-Huene were rather like a privileged tutorial, allowing Lee to experience the work on both sides of the camera at the same time".[154] Though subject to the male gaze and celebrated for her beauty, Miller was no passive subject. As she voiced in an interview in 1932, "What you mostly do is absorb the personality of the man you are working with. The personality of the photographer, his approach, is really more important than his technical genius".[155] Studying how each photographer used lighting and composition allowed Miller to stage the image she had composed in her mind's eye.[156]

In some respects, this visualisation (an approach similar to that of Ansel Adams) defines Miller's art. She learnt how to mark, shade and manipulate negatives whilst working with Steichen.[157] She also observed his work on advertising campaigns as technicians set up lights and adjusted the cameras.[158] Furthermore, it determined her approach to her sitters. For Miller, it was

[150] Blanshard, "Other Faces Are Her Fortune." n.p. Also in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 128.
[151] Penrose, *Lives*, 44.
[152] Lee Miller, quoted in Ruth Seinfel, "Every One Can Pose," *New York Evening Post*, Oct 24, 1932, 10.
[153] Lee Miller, quoted in Blanshard, "Other Faces". Also in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 128.
[154] Penrose, *Lives*, 29.
[155] Miller, quoted in Seinfel, "Every One Can Pose," 10.
[156] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 91.
[157] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 68.
[158] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 60.

important for clients to feel relaxed, as catching them being "natural" was essential to her portraiture work. Her technique was the subject of a local newspaper article entitled "Other Faces Are Her Fortune" by Julia Blanshard in the *Poughkeepsie Evening Star* (1 November, 1932):

> She takes one sitting a day. Never more…Every sitting takes several hours. If her client hasn't eaten and is hungry, Miss Miller has luncheon served. If tired she lets her subject recline on a chaise-longue, with low tables holding beverages, cigarettes, sandwiches. She dislikes having any friends come along with her clients because, she explains, "they always give a person an 'audience complex', or make them wear a 'gallery smile', and both are unnatural"…. "It takes time to do a good portrait", Miss Miller went on. "I must talk to the sitter, find out what idea of himself or herself he has in mind … Men are more self-conscious than women. Women are used to being looked at". Miss Miller thinks photography perfectly suited to women as a profession … "It seems to me that women have a bigger chance at success in photography than men," she told me. "Women are quicker and more adaptable than men. And I think they have an intuition that helps them understand personalities quicker than men … And a good photograph of course is just that, to catch a person when he is unaware of it but when he is his most natural self".[159]

Miller took only one sitting a day in order to produce artistic portraits that captured the character of her clients, presenting them in new and innovative ways. Miller's unique vision is epitomised in her image of Joseph Cornell (1933). Here, Miller composes an image of Cornell using a toy boat with a butterfly and mane of hair attached to the top of the mast (Figure 1, page 39). Cornell's head is in profile so it appears as if the mane of hair is Cornell's own. The image is indicative of Miller's ability to articulate her sitter's inner self: in this case, Cornell's artistic nature and imagination.

In advertising her studio as the American branch of "the Man Ray school of Photography", Miller signalled her association with the latest cultural trends and technical advancements in photography.[160] The technique of solarisation, which is referred to in "The New Photography", an article appearing in *The Photographic Journal* in April 1932 by J. Dudley Johnston, is evident in some of the portraits she took of friends and clients.[161] Amongst these is the image of the silent-movie star Lilian Harvey and a friend of Tanja Ramm (one of Miller's friends), Dorothy Hill. Miller experimented with floating heads, echoing her collaborative venture with Man Ray and their image of Tanja Ramm's head in a bell jar.

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[159] Miller, quoted in Blanshard, "Other Faces". Also in Penrose, *Lives*, 54.
[160] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 129.
[161] J. Dudley Johnston, "The New Photography," *The Photographic Journal*, Apr 1932, 148.

Figure 1 Lee Miller, *Detail of Joseph Cornell*, New York Studio, New York, USA, 1933, Lee Miller Archives.

Miller's alignment with photography's latest trends is also apparent in her adoption of straight photographic methods as an artistic approach to photograph her subjects. Having studied the latest European trends in photography, Miller may have been surprised to return to find an American school of photography developing new and different trends. It is, therefore, understandable and not unexpected that Miller also experimented with straight photographic methods to photograph her subjects. Making use of unusual angles to capture the image before her, Miller's portraiture photography adopted elements of realism, whilst her use of soft focus, cropping and solarised images categorised her work as European and adopting surrealist methods.[162]

Miller's portraits of Mina Loy capture this contrast between styles. The first portrait conveys Mina Loy in abstract profile and wearing a hat, whilst the second image conveys her looking directly at the camera, hat removed.[163] This versatility in styles featured in Miller's only solo exhibition at Julien Levy's gallery in 1933. Miller's association with Levy positioned her at the forefront of photographic development. Socialising with the Levys also had its benefits; she became involved with the gallery and also began acting as the gallery's unofficial publicist.[164] As Alinder notes, Julien Levy, along with a number of other critical figures, one of whom was Alma

[162] Solarisation is when the image or negative is reversed in tone. Light areas appear dark whilst dark areas appear light. This is achieved by intense or continued exposure to light during development.
[163] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 51.
[164] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 129.

Reed, was "critical" to the development of *f*.64.[165] Julien Levy's gallery was one of the two major galleries exhibiting any photographic work during this period; the other was Alma Reed's Delphic Studios.[166]

In spring 1932 at the Brooklyn Museum, Levy selected most of the work that was to be exhibited in the exhibition entitled *International Photographers*. He juxtaposed the European prints of Man Ray and László Moholy-Nagy with those of the Americans, including Edward Weston and Imogen Cunningham, in an exhibition. By doing this, Levy was able to present the two contrasting styles of realism (and their search for beauty in the image and the finished product) and European experimentalism (and the search for visual impact of the subject).[167] Miller's work appeared in two of Levy's exhibitions at his gallery: an exhibition entitled *Modern European Photographers* from 20 February to 11 March, 1932 and a solo exhibition from 30 December 1932 to 25 January 1933.

In response to Miller's work displayed in her solo exhibition, Edward Jewell in the *New York Times* praised it as "free from disconcerting tricks of overstatement, evasion and palimpsest", categorising it as European experimentalism.[168] The review also recognised Miller's interest in "compositions featuring highly contrasted light and dark masses". It acknowledged that although Miller demonstrated a feel for abstraction, she did not try "to conceal a healthy affection in subject matter as such – an affection that many modern artists have pretended was unworthy of them".[169] As David Scherman observes, Miller was more concerned about the technical side of the medium than about creating artistic images.[170] Erik Miller makes a similar observation when recalling her technical ability in the darkroom:

> She would come into the darkroom to examine the prints and she would grab hold of any that were even slightly defective and tear the corners off. I always used to marvel at the way she could pick out what was wrong with a print, maybe something had completely escaped my notice, but when it was put right the whole print would greatly be improved. … We always used to plunge right in, rubbing the surface of the print with our fingertips and sometimes blowing on it so the warmth would enhance a specific area. We had a vast array of chemicals which we used to dose up the normal propriety solutions, and the resulting brew sometimes became quite deadly. We would cough and splutter in the fumes, and my fingernails would turn brown.[171]

[165] Alinder, *Group f.64*, xv.
[166] Alinder, *Group f.64*, 113.
[167] Alinder, *Group f.64*, 123.
[168] Edward Jewell, "Two One-man Shows," *New York Times*, Dec 31, 1932, 18.
[169] Jewell, "Two One-man Shows," 18.
[170] David Scherman, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 216.
[171] Erik Miller, quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 45.

Miller's ability to manipulate the negatives to achieve a desired effect is indicative of her versatility with the camera: her variety of approaches and styles and her composition skills, which I discuss in the next two sections of this chapter. Erik's photographic skill made him an appropriate partner for Miller. Not only had he worked for Toni Von Horne, a German photographer specialising in fashion and advertising, but also he had valuable engineering skills. He built the darkrooms and the backgrounds and props for the studio, and he installed the lighting.[172] He was able to conceal cables and designed a remote switchboard from which the lights could be operated. Erik and Miller's understanding of technology helped to create an environment in which sitters felt comfortable. Miller also became friends with Dr Walter "Nobbly" Clark, head of research at Eastman Kodak. This association proved fruitful, as Clark introduced Miller to the technical side of three-colour photography. Lee and Erik both adopted this technique for a cosmetics advertisement involving colour filters (Figure 2). Yellow, red and blue were applied to three different exposures of the subject on black-and-white film.

Figure 2 Lee Miller, *Cosmetics in Colour*, New York Studio, New York, USA, *c*.1934, Lee Miller Archives.

In May 1934 Miller was named one of the seven "most distinguished living photographers" by *Vanity Fair*, alongside Beaton, Genthe, Huene and Muray.[173] Two months later, she closed her studio, married Aziz Eloui-Bey and set off for Egypt. She revealed in a letter to her brother Erik a year later (August 6, 1935) she had had enough of photography. We can never really know if

[172] Penrose, *Lives*, 44.
[173] *Vanity Fair*, May 1934, 51. Also see Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 114.

this was why Miller chose marriage with Eloui-Bey. Perhaps, as Burke suggests, studio work was indeed making Miller dissatisfied.[174] Or perhaps Aziz, a good-looking wealthy businessman who had studied engineering at Liverpool University and belonged to the Franco-Egyptian elite, impressed Miller. The life in Egypt that Aziz offered may have been the new challenge for which Miller was searching. For whatever reason, in July 1934 Miller set off for a new start in Egypt.

1.2. A Different Perspective

Discussion of Miller's Egypt work has predominately focussed on Miller's *Portrait of Space* (1937). Conekin refers to it as "her best Surrealist photograph".[175] Carolyn Burke adopts a similar position, asserting that Egypt "reawakened her [Miller's] eye for incongruities".[176] Burke's biography of Miller, whilst providing a more in-depth study on this period of Miller's life and work, has tended to read her images as "an antidote to boredom" or as "hints of stasis or escape".[177] Both interpretations reinforce Antony Penrose's own evaluation of Miller's Egyptian period and its subsequent focus on personal details. This section explores the dominant narratives that have surrounded any study of Miller's Egypt photography and provides an alternative perspective. It focusses on Miller's images as indicative of pure photographic methods and in her adoption of a similar aesthetic to those photographers belonging to Group *f*.64.

Penrose's interpretation of Miller's work is underpinned by his reading of the surreal. Any reading of Miller's 1930s photography has been dominated by this approach, in which Penrose identifies "some quirky juxtaposition or observation that gives the image a second perspective".[178] Here, Penrose draws on Miller's surrealist affinities and her relationship with the photographer Man Ray. Man Ray viewed juxtaposition as the "key to artistic invention" and stated: "I never do just one thing, but *two things* that are totally unrelated. I put theses together in order to create, by contrast, a sort of plastic poem".[179] Penrose states that "Man Ray gave her [Miller] confidence in her own eye and contact with his Surrealist friends stimulated her imagination".[180] Their most notable collaboration was the discovery of solarisation, a seemingly perfect example of Breton's theory of the marvellous. This:

[174] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 135–36.
[175] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 70.
[176] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 160.
[177] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 160, 150.
[178] Penrose, *Lives*, 81.
[179] Janus, ed. *Man Ray: The Photographic Image*, trans. Murtha Baca (London: The Gordon Fraser Gallery, 1980), 9.
[180] Penrose, *Lives*, 25.

> ... opposes what exists mechanically, what *is* so much it isn't noticed any more, and so it is commonly believed the marvellous is the negation of reality. This rather summary idea is conditionally acceptable. It is certain the marvellous is born of the refusal of one reality, but also of the development of a new relationship, of a new reality this refusal has liberated.[181]

By exploring Miller's play on opposites in her images, Penrose approaches Miller's work from a surrealistic viewpoint. For Penrose, Miller's photography transforms the mundane of everyday life into something other-worldly, dreamlike, surreal and marvellous. He concludes that "Ever present is the oblique poetry of the Surrealist eye" when evaluating Miller's images.[182] The poetry of the image, therefore, emanates from her "surrealist eye", by which she:

> turn[s] plants growing on the roofs of a mud village into hair above a face, or makes the white domes of Wadi Natrun monastery more sensuous than breasts, with the added irony of the celibate monks within them. Even those photographs which at first seem little more than perfectly composed architectural shots reveal heightened perception and symbolism. A wind eroded rock rears up as a ragged phallus, and with similar sexual symbolism doorways of temples are jammed tight with piles of rocks. The contents of cotton bales become compressed clouds straining against their tight bonds, a few wisps escaping to rejoin their fellows in the sky beyond.[183]

Penrose also draws on Miller's personal circumstances in Egypt in providing this reading of her work. In his biography of Miller he refers to Miller's feelings of "anathema" in response to the Cairo social scene. Consequently, the blocked doorways and escaping clouds to which he refers represent Miller's desire to escape the "black satin and pearls set" in Cairo.[184] Her photography becomes a form of escapism and an expression of her feelings of entrapment. This is only one interpretation of Miller's work; however, it has dominated other readings and elicited similar readings by others studying her Egypt work.

Katherine Slusher, in her short biography of Miller and Roland Penrose's relationship, *Lee Miller, Roland Penrose: The Green Memories of Desire*, acknowledges that Miller's vision is "undeniably Surrealist".[185] This similarly informs Slusher's interpretations of Miller's photography, which, for her, provide dreamlike escapes or hints of exotic locations.[186] Miller's photography is not about where she was physically located but about the unconscious providing

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[181] Louis Aragon, quoted in J. H. Matthews, *Surrealist Poetry in France* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1969), 41.
[182] Penrose, *Lives*, 81.
[183] Penrose, *Lives*, 81.
[184] Penrose, *Lives*, 78.
[185] Slusher, *Green Memories*, 29.
[186] Slusher, *Green Memories*, 36.

openings to elsewhere. In revealing "a rich graphic quality with multiple shades and nuances to those made by frottage", Slusher identifies that Miller's photographs provide "another layer of information".[187] These nuances and multiple shades articulate Miller's vision, which Slusher sees as rendering the strange familiar and the familiar strange. Like Penrose, Slusher draws on Breton's theory of the marvellous through which to read Miller's images. As Breton elucidates in his manifesto of surrealism, rationalism – the gaoler of the imagination, as he sees it – can be overcome through:

> a marvellous faculty of attaining two widely separate realities without departing from the realm of our experience, of bringing them together and drawing a spark from their contact; of gathering within reach of our senses abstract figures endowed with the same intensity, the same relief as other figures; and of disorientating us in our own memory.[188]

Here individual experience is key in articulating surrealist space, a bringing together of what is known and unknown, to imagine or reimagine reality. Therefore, the abstract possesses the same or equal importance in redefining existence. For Slusher and for Burke, Miller's individual experience of Egypt informs their interpretation of her art. Slusher writes that the Egyptian landscape also "served as the perfect metaphor for exploring dreamlike themes of displacement: perhaps empty vistas were an inner portrait of Lee and the vacuous, confining lifestyle she felt she was living in Egypt".[189]

Whitney Chadwick (1997) makes a similar observation: "The desert provided a physical and psychological escape for Miller who, camera in hand, pursued in nature a vision formulated during her years with Man Ray".[190] Burke's interpretation reads much the same: "Treks to distant sites became the antidote to boredom, and taking photographs of them, a way to evoke and transcend her 'Egyptian complex'".[191] Miller's *Portrait of Space* is subsequently, "a moment of transcendence … this correspondence between outer and inner state … as if it were an allegory".[192] Consequently, transcendence and escape have become common motifs in reading Miller's Egyptian landscape photography.[193]

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[187] Slusher, *Green Memories*, 35.
[188] André Breton, preface to the Max Ernst Exhibit, Paris, May, 1921, quoted in Dawn Ades, *Photomontage* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976), 115.
[189] Slusher, *Green Memories*, 35-36.
[190] Whitney Chadwick, *Women Artists and the Surrealist Movement* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 161.
[191] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 160.
[192] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 187.
[193] Slusher, *Green Memories*, Chadwick, *Women Artists*, Roger Cardinal, *Surrealism in Britain* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1999).

However, I would suggest that Miller's photographic technique is also realist in style and approach, adopting photographic methods and ideas promoted by American photographers in the 1930s. Penrose acknowledges this, but it is a fleeting recognition and lost amongst a discourse of surrealism. He states that "the style is pure and innocent, the photographs made simply for their own sake".[194] This opinion of Miller's work posited by Penrose is condescending to Miller's skill as a photographer.

During her time as a portraiture artist, Miller demonstrated her versatility and expertise with the technical aspects of the art. Her use of filters and having to negotiate technical difficulties demonstrates Miller's adeptness with the image. This proficiency with the camera proved beneficial to Miller, who, during her time in Egypt, developed her own style of photography and adopted filters in her Egyptian landscape photography. Miller enrolled at the American University of Cairo to learn chemistry so that she could control the solutions used in the photographic processes.[195] The fact that she was to work with different styles of photography and demonstrated a concern with photographic methods articulates Miller's professionalism.

In approaching Miller's images from an alternative perspective, Alinder's book on Group *f*.64 is a useful source and an alternative to Penrose's discourse on surrealism. Like other modernist groups before it, *f*.64 set themselves up as an artistic movement with a manifesto expounding their photographic goals. According to Alinder, the group was a movement "that proved critical to the evolution of creative photography".[196] The group was also different in the sense that it promoted photography as an art form through photographic methods. As Alinder observes, it "defined photography by its unique properties, foremost that it is a lens based medium".[197] The "sharp focus, great detail, complete depth of field, rich tonalities, and everyday subjects" became the properties of the group's photography.[198] Their manifesto stated:

> … its members … are striving to define photography as an art-form … through purely photographic methods.
>
> The members of Group f.64 believe that photography, as an art-form, must develop along the lines defined by the actualities and limitations of the photographic medium, must always remain independent of ideological conventions of art and aesthetics that are reminiscent of a period and culture antedating the growth of the medium itself.[199]

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[194] Penrose, *Lives*, 28.
[195] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 154.
[196] Alinder, *Group f.64*, xii.
[197] Alinder, *Group f.64*, xii.
[198] Alinder, *Group f.64*, xii.
[199] Alinder, *Group f.64*, 88.

Through this, the group's members asserted that photography could be an independent art, distinct from the ancestral visual arts of the past. The aesthetics of straight photographers centred on the techniques of photography as an art. The beauty of the image was conveyed through its tones, form and texture, and they photographed the world from new perspectives by angling their lens upward, downward or even sideways.[200] This approach adopted by Group *f*.64 is comparable to Miller's approach to her Egypt images.

Mark Haworth-Booth's analysis of Miller's Egypt photography acknowledges this through his detailed analysis of her *Portrait of Space*. He analyses the methods she uses to obtain a desired image; for him, the progress in Miller's negatives from frame to frame conveys her concern for the image, its beauty and the finished product: ideas expounded by Group *f*.64. Haworth-Booth observes how, in photographing the monastery of Wadi Natrun, Miller demonstrates sensitivity to light and framing to convey the beauty of the structure. He writes:

> Lee photographed the delicate structure with its luminous walls with a subtlety of framing and sensitivity to light reminiscent (in sensibility if not in printing skills) of the way Paul Strand and Ansel Adams had photographed the adobe church of Taos, New Mexico, just a few years earlier.[201]

Miller's use of light, perspective and textures, as Haworth-Booth rightly identifies, is indicative of what Ansel Adams terms "a poetry of the real".[202] Through the photographic means of contrasting tones to render form, the compositional device of framing, and the use of unique angles, the beauty of the image as it is would be revealed.

As Miller possessed no darkroom whilst out on treks or walking through the streets, she used the viewfinder to compose her image.[203] Her Rolleiflex camera, which had a ground-glass viewfinder and was used by looking down with the camera at chest or waist height, provided a clear image of the scene and allowed Miller to make eye contact with the people she photographed in her social images. The flashbulb also allowed Miller a portable and controllable light source. This concept of composition was one that Adams termed "visualization". Taking landscape pictures of the American west, Ansel Adams realised that the image could be composed through perception; this allowed him to create his first masterpiece, which is entitled *Monolith, the Flame Face of Half Dome* (1927).

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[200] Alinder, *Group f.64*, 75.
[201] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 132.
[202] Ansel Adams, in *Ansel Adams: A Documentary*, directed by Ric. Burns (US: Steeplechase Films, Sierra Club Productions, 2002), DVD. Transcript accessed Mar 3, 2016, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/ansel/filmmore/pt.html.
[203] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 122.

Figure 3 Lee Miller, *Untitled*, Greece, 1938, Lee Miller Archives.

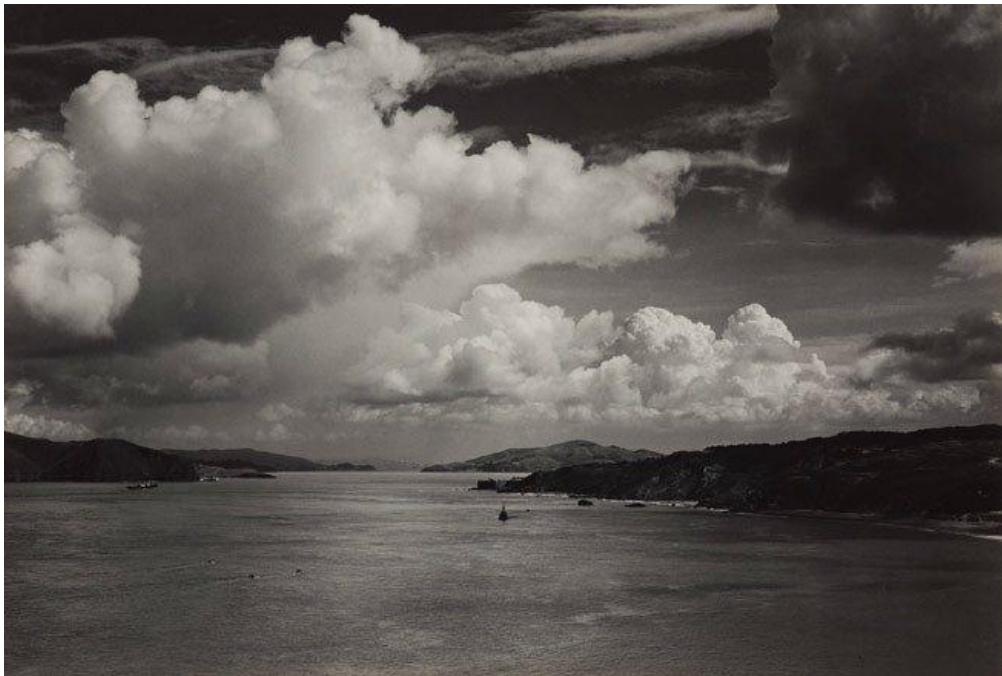

Figure 4 Ansel Adams, *The Golden Gate Before The Bridge*, San Francisco, USA, *c*.1932.

Seeing the image through his viewfinder, Adams realised he did not need to return to his darkroom to know how the image could be improved.[204] "Photography", declares Adams, "is really perception – the analytical interpretation of things how they are … Suddenly I saw what photography could be; a tremendously potent pure art form".[205] Miller acknowledged the importance of this, realising "that every object and every person is beautiful, and that the artist's job is to find the moment, the angle, or the surroundings that reveal that beauty".[206] Here Miller conveys an awareness of perception and vision that, as Sontag observes, finds "new ways to look at familiar subjects".[207] As a consequence of her adeptness with the art – her use of light, framing and sharply focussed images – Miller's landscape photographs are similar in composition and form to those produced by Willard Van Dyke, Ansel Adams and Edward Weston.

The love of technology that is evident in Miller's photography also anticipates her artistic endeavours in her post-war years at Farley Farm. Through her obsession with the latest equipment, Miller challenged the boundaries of art and food. Adopting food as the medium in which to express her artistic vision, Miller engaged with similar cultural trends relating to art, which I discuss in chapter six. Expressing what could be perceived as impermanent art, Miller engages in a discourse that is similar to that of the neo-avant-garde and their concern with the institutionalisation of art. Their philosophy of "art for all" echoes Group *f*.64's edict to undermine Stieglitz's approach to photography.[208] By declaring everything as art, neo-avant-garde movements, such as Fluxus and Eat Art, adopted the everyday as its subject matter. Straight photography, with its realistic depiction of daily lives, similarly presents *f*.64's concern with depicting the everyday as art.

As Haworth-Booth recognises, Miller's images of "an Egyptian cement works, a cotton farm in which the crop was guano from pigeons, dhows negotiating locks, new concrete roads beside power pylons, and the age-old irrigation technologies" demonstrate her skill in composition.[209] She took many photographic variants of sacks of cotton and clouds, one which she later enlarged (Figure 5, page 50). For Burke, this image harbours "A latent sexual energy…that associates woman and nature". Burke's reading of sacks bursting their contents at the seams is, therefore, that they are "stand-ins, or cover-ups, for feminine anatomy (the sacks resemble breasts with pointy nipples)".[210] Similarly, Penrose has adopted a Freudian reading of Miller's images, with

[204] Alinder, *Group f.64*, 57.
[205] Adams, in *Ansel Adams: A Documentary*.
[206] Lee Miller, "I Worked with Man Ray," Lilliput 9, no. 4 (October 1941): 315–24.
[207] Sontag, *On Photography*, 42.
[208] Alinder, *Group f.64*, xiv.
[209] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 123.
[210] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 150.

the domes at Wadi Natrun monastery also representing a woman's breasts.[211] This specific reading of these images relies heavily on a psychoanalytical interpretation at the expense of Miller's art.

For Haworth-Booth, the fact that Miller returned several times to the cotton farm emphasises her concern with composition and technique that focussed on the object or image, rather than on herself and her personal situation.[212] This, as Haworth-Booth recognises, not only evidences Miller's concern with the image but also expresses a concern with the country's industry during a time of economic decline. The price of cotton, Egypt's main export, fell from $26 per *qantar* in 1928 to $10 in 1931,[213] whilst per capita income and disposable income dropped by about ten per cent.[214] Moreover, her pictures of roads being concreted, concrete farms, and pylons set against irrigation works all highlight the country's changing cultural climate during a crucial decade in the development of modern Egypt.[215]

Another example of Miller's technical ability is her experimentation with composition in an image of an outside staircase beside a grilled window taken *c*.1936 (Figure 6, page 50). As Haworth-Booth observes, she made three variants, experimenting with different vantage points and framings.[216] This image, together with others of doorways, has been interpreted by Burke as an expression of Miller's feelings of claustrophobia and entrapment. However, through the conscious decisions to frame her images through doorways and openings, Miller's pictures convey an emphasis on composition rather than any inward unconscious reflection of her own situation. They also convey a concern with the living conditions of the fellahin. In Miller's image of a stairway (Figure 6, page 50), the eye is drawn to a window half-concealed by a shabby cloth and the crumbling condition of the walls of an apartment.

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[211] Penrose, *Lives*, 81.
[212] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 123.
[213] Arthur Edward Crouchley, *The Economic Development of Modern Egypt* (London: Longman, Green and Co. 1938), 215.
[214] Bent Hansen, "Income and Consumption in Egypt, 1886/1887 to 1937," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 10, no. 1 (Feb, 1979): 43–4.
[215] Jamal 'Abd al-Nasir, quoted in Gershoni and Jankowski, *Egyptian Nation*, 12–17.
[216] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 123.

Figure 5 Lee Miller, *Untitled*, Asyut, Egypt, 1939, Lee Miller Archives.

Figure 6 Lee Miller, *Stairway*, Cairo, Egypt, *c*.1936, Lee Miller Archives.

Adams also used openings to frame his images. His image of a doorway at a church in Taos Pueblo National Historic Landmark, New Mexico, 1942 and the view from Wawona Tunnel in Yosemite National Park (1938), which shows a view from inside a cave, convey similar conscious decisions to frame geographic and architectural structures. However, unlike Miller's work, his images are valued for their artistic merit alone. Focussing on Miller's biographical details as the only medium through which to interpret her pictures denies Miller a similar appreciation that Adams enjoys.

In an exhibition of Adams' work at the National Maritime Museum (9 November 2012 to 28 April 2013), reviewers acknowledged his status as "practically a god" in the world of photography. His reputation "as a visual poet of the wilderness"[217] is articulated through readings of his work that focus, as Charles Hagen observes, on Adams' "use of Modernist form and painstaking craft".[218] Favouring "sharp focus" and "intense detail", Adams is considered a leading figure in West Coast photography, alongside Paul Strand and Edward Weston.[219] This is in contrast with the reviews of Miller's exhibition at the Imperial War Museum. With a focus on Miller's personal circumstances, comments about her art as a photographer are few, even though her images present a similar artistic consciousness when approaching her subject.

Miller's photograph of a Giza pyramid (*c*.1938), taken from its peak, is one example of her use of depth of field and experimentation with angles (Figure 18, page 74). An image of a bus in an Egyptian street (1937) adopts a similar aerial angle, looking down on a crowded street with vendors displaying their wares to local people (Figure 13, page 64). The monasteries of Deir Simon and Deir Barnabus on the Sinai Peninsula also present unusual angles, with the camera again looking down from above. This experimenting with unusual angles epitomises similar ideas to those of Group *f*.64 and their promotion of pure photography as an art form. Miller, too, draws attention to the image and the beauty of the landscape from new and different angles.

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[217] Alastair Sooke, "Ansel Adams, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich/Cartier Bresson: A Question of Colour, Somerset House, review," review of *Ansel Adams: Photography from the Mountains to the Sea* by Ansel Adams, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, *Telegraph*, Nov 5, 2012, accessed Mar 23, 2016, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/art/art-reviews/9656066/Ansel-Adams-National-Maritime-Museum-Greenwich-Cartier-Bresson-A-Question-of-Colour-Somerset-House-review.html.

[218] Charles Hagen, "Photography Review: Why Ansel Adams Stays So Popular," review of Ansel Adams exhibition by Ansel Adams, James Danziger Gallery, New York, *New York Times*, Nov 10, 1995, accessed Mar 23, 2016, http://www.nytimes.com/1995/11/10/arts/photography-review-why-ansel-adams-stays-so-popular.html.

[219] Hagen, "Ansel Adams," http://www.nytimes.com/1995/11/10/arts/photography-review-why-ansel-adams-stays-so-popular.html.

Figure 7 Lee Miller, *Sand Dunes*, Egypt, *c*.1936, Lee Miller Archives.

Figure 8 Ansell Adams, *Sand Dunes*, California, USA, *c*.1948.

Moreover, Miller uses light and shadow (chiaroscuro) as textures, just as Adams' pictures create a "brilliant clash of dissonant textures".[220] Miller's images of sand dunes from 1935 to 1939 (Figure 7, page 52) are similar to Adams' Death Valley *c*.1948 (Figure 8, page 52). The angle of the dunes in both images is almost identical and the use of chiaroscuro accentuates the shadows on the dunes. Whereas Miller's image seems to highlight the lighter areas of the dune, Adams' image highlights the darker areas. Textures of the landscape feature in other images of sand from Miller's treks to the Red Sea. A close-up of the contours of the sand conveys a sharpness in image and composition that is also found in similar images by Adams. The scale and composition of her landscape photographs of mountains taken during her travels around Greece in 1938 (Figure 3, page 47) are also comparable to Ansel's mountain ranges of the American west (Figure 4, page 47).

Although straight photography promoted obtaining the image through no manipulation of the image seen, Adams also recognised the importance of the photographer's "personal tendencies" when approaching the object or subject to be photographed. He agreed with John Paul Edwards, who writes:

> The variety of approach, emotional and intellectual – of subject material or tonal styles, of style – which we evidence in our respective fields is proof sufficient that 'pure photography' is not a metier of rigid and restricted rule. It can interpret with beauty and power the wide spectrum of emotional experience.[221]

Edwards' promotion of the right of each photographer to proclaim their own path meant the movement was continually evolving. Whilst for some members of the group, such as Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange, the photo-document (depicting social portrait scenes) provoked an aesthetic response, for Adams, the beauty of a photograph lay in capturing the textures and tonal range of a landscape. This depiction of textures, according to Adams, reflected the perfection of the technical expression of the art and provoked an aesthetic response.[222] Consequently, Adams viewed filters as one way to heighten the beauty of the image.

Similarly, Miller adopted the use of filters to capture a comparable tonal range and texture in her images. This example of Miller's use of technology in her art disputes Antony Penrose's evaluation of Miller's images. His reading of Miller's Egypt images as simple and pure ignores the skill and ability of both Miller's vision and the philosophy of Group *f*.64. In aligning Miller with the European school of photography and surrealism only, Penrose has ignored, or perhaps

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[220] Adams, in *Ansel Adams: A Documentary*.
[221] John Paul Edwards, "Group *f*.64," *Camera Craft* 42 (Mar 1935): 106–13.
[222] Ansel Adams, *Making a Photograph: An Introduction to Photography* (London and New York: Studio Publications, 1935), 70.

has deliberately dismissed, the importance of straight photography in both Miller's work and, as Alinder identifies, the history of photography.[223] Consequently, Miller's work is located within Penrose's established narrative of her life, discouraging any alternative interpretations of her work.

On Miller's picture of the Roman ruins at Kaharaga, Haworth-Booth concludes that she must have used "an orange or red filter… [to] silhouette the extraordinary columns against a black sky".[224] Adams took a similar approach when photographing Half Dome, first using a yellow filter to "absorb the blue of the sky, reduce atmospheric haze, and to slightly darken the print".[225] He then used a wider-angle lens and a K2 yellow filter but realised that the tonal contrast was not satisfactory. The final plate used a deep red filter, which "shift[ed] the pale sky into thunderous black and the dull snow to crisp white, and released the shutter".[226] In both cases, Miller and Adams' photographic methods aim to capture the aesthetic beauty of the image, a view that John Paul Edward expounds in his article "First Salon of Pure Photography" (1934) in *Camera Craft*.[227]

In Miller's *The Native* (1939) the contrast in tones, as Roger Cardinal observes, highlights the bleaching of the stone to such an extent that he believes it to be snow (Figure 9, page 55).[228] Positioned against a cloudless sky in composition, it is similar to Willard Van Dyke's images of bleached bones set against a clear sky illuminated by bright sun. As Alinder observes, Van Dyke's images possess animistic shapes, his bone shapes seeming to have eyes, mouths or the "head of some long-extinct bird that might be capably described by Poe".[229] To Penrose, an image like this would be categorised as surrealist. However, when adopting Sontag's observations about a photograph, one realises it is not its surreal qualities that have produced such readings but the methods adopted to convey the image. This would be a better interpretation of Miller's images, especially *The Native* (or, as it was later called, *Cock Rock*). Although the image conveys Miller's art of composition and tonal contrast, the title, in this instance, dominates any reading of the image.

John Berger in *Ways of Seeing* (1972) recognises the power of language with (or titles of) images. He recognises the influence and dominance of titles over the image and that words can subsequently frame an image in a specific way. In looking at a series of landscape paintings and

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[223] Alinder, *Group f.64*, xii.
[224] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 132.
[225] Alinder, *Group f.64*, 56.
[226] Alinder, *Group f.64*, 57.
[227] John Paul Edwards, "First Salon of Pure Photography," *Camera Craft* 41 (Sep 1934): 418–23.
[228] Cardinal, *Surrealism in Britain*, 170.
[229] Alinder, *Group f.64*, 96.

the captions underneath them, he observes how "each image reproduced has become part of an argument which has little or nothing to do with the painting's original independent meaning. The words have quoted the paintings to confirm their own verbal authority".[230] In this instance, the image and its potential for a series of meanings becomes fixed.

Miller's *Cock Rock* (Figure 9) suffers in a similar way: its title influences any reading of the image. Although the original title was *The Native*, Antony Penrose (interviewed by Ian Walker on July 20, 2005) suggests *Cock Rock* was the title by which Roland Penrose would refer to the image after Miller's death.[231] Roland's own interest in phallic sculptures can be seen from the images he photographed on Delos but omitted from his book *The Road is Wider than Long* (1939).[232] This may also explain why he referred to Miller's image as *Cock Rock*, as both titles frame the image in a specific way.[233] Miller's original title draws attention to the landscape – the rock and its natural qualities – whilst Roland Penrose's title imbues the image with connotations of male dominance and, as the surrealists would refer to it, its *humour noir.* Antony Penrose adopts a similar stance when titling some of Miller's untitled work. He, like his father, highlights Miller's surrealist sensibilities and her surrealist humour, but by doing so he effectively contrives the effect of an image on its viewer.

Figure 9 Lee Miller, *Cock Rock* [also known as *The Native*], near Siwa, Egypt, 1939, Lee Miller Archives.

[230] John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: Penguin Books, 1972), 28.
[231] Ian Walker, *So Exotic, So Homemade: Surrealism, Englishness and Documentary Photography* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007, 71 (see Walker's footnote number 50 on page 71 in his book).
[232] Roland Penrose, *The Road is Wider than Long*, ed. Roland Penrose and E.L.T. Mesens (London: Bradley Press for London Gallery Editions, 1939).
[233] Walker, *So Exotic*, 85.

Miller's Blitz photography, especially her collaboration with Edward Murrow on the book *Grim Glory* (1941), is indicative of this. Penrose identifies these images as evidence of "one of Lee's most creative periods", the images and titles epitomising her surrealist and poetic sensibility.[234] Penrose's analysis of Miller's well-known images from this collection, including *Remington Silent*; *Non-conformist Church* and *Eggceptional Achievement*, explores the Bretonian idea of objective chance – an "event rigorously determined, but such that an extremely small difference in its causes would have produced a considerable difference in the facts".[235] Here the *object trouvé* – the surrealist practice of discovering, often subconsciously, an intriguing object and transforming it into an artistic subject – also defines Miller's work. Moreover, as Lynn Hilditch explores in a thorough analysis of Miller's Blitz imagery, Miller's black humour, the *humour noir*, is revealed.[236]

However, as the preface by Ed Murrow acknowledges:

> These are pictures of a nation at war. They are honest pictures – routine scenes to those of us who have reported Britain's ordeal by fire and high explosive … This book offers you a glimpse of their battle. Somehow they are able to fight down their fears each night; to go to work each morning. The pictures are selected with great discrimination. I would have shown you the open graves of Coventry – broken bodies covered with brown dust looking like rag dolls … This book spares you the most gruesome sights of living and dying in Britain to-day.[237]

This preface captures the purpose of the book, which was published as persuasive propaganda aimed at the Americans. The tone of the book is consequently light-hearted and ironic, as evidenced by Miller's images and their accompanying titles. The title, Burke explains, evidences ironic humour as part of wartime popular culture. This articulates the reappearance of surrealism during the war, which became more accessible and decipherable than its earlier incarnation during the 1920s.[238] As David Scherman observes, Miller depicts "odd juxtapositions" of a city at war, where the cityscape represents vistas from the world of the dream and the unconscious.[239] Leo Mellor (2011) and Ian Walker (2007) have identified this resurgence of surrealism as a

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[234] Penrose, *Lives*, 103.

[235] André Breton, *Mad Love* (*L'Amour Fou*), trans. Mary Ann Caws (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 23.

[236] Lynn Hilditch, "Wonder and Horror: An Interpretation of Lee Miller's Second World War Photographs as 'Surreal Documentary,'" PhD diss. The University of Liverpool, March, 2010.

[237] Ernestine Carter, ed. *Grim Glory: Pictures of Britain Under Fire*, preface by Edward R. Murrow, photographs by Lee Miller and others (London: Lund Humphries, 1941), 1.

[238] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 216.

[239] Scherman, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 216.

discourse to explain the irrational events that were happening to Londoners living in a city of war.[240]

In 1936 *The International Surrealist Exhibition,* held in the New Burlington Galleries from 11 June to 4 July, introduced the new aesthetic regarding art, politics and psychoanalysis to Britain. With Salvador Dali speaking from inside a diver's suit and Sheila Legge walking amongst the visitors with her face covered in rose petals, the exhibition presented the unconscious as a powerful tool to question and "break down bourgeois-taught prejudices".[241] However, press reports on the exhibition in June 1936 demonstrated a misunderstanding of the movement and its aesthetics. The *Daily Telegraph* described it as "poor jokes, pointless indelicacies and relics of outworn romanticism".[242] The *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Herald* ridiculed the movement, whilst the *Evening News* was harsh and critical: "Frankly, I don't see why a sense of world despair should make you want to construct a cup, saucer and spoon of rabbit fur… It is not worth looking at. I don't mind its being meaningless, but it is horribly clumsy as well".[243] Nevertheless, what was dismissed as incomprehensible and ridiculous in 1936 subsequently provided an explanatory tool for deciphering and engaging with wartime London.

Contemporary artists and writers of the period, who documented the strange and unusual in the everyday lives of Londoners, adopted surrealistic forms of discourse as a template around which to structure their work. Whilst Graham Greene and Elizabeth Bowen articulated the impact of the Blitz on individual and national consciousness in literature, artists Graham Sutherland, Paul Nash and Cecil Beaton took to the streets to capture the unusual sights using paint and photography. Miller's Blitz-time photography recorded these strange sights in a similar vein to Cecil Beaton in his work as a recorder of images for the Ministry of Information. Consequently, as Leo Mellor acknowledges, the movement became part of popular culture and indicative of the altered and fragmented lives of a nation at war.[244] Therefore, one could argue that it is not the images that are surreal but, as Mellor and Walker suggest, war itself. In this instance, the images are more of a social documentary in nature and are reflective of the bizarre lives that Londoners lived during the Blitz.

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[240] Walker, *So Exotic,* Leo, Mellor, *Reading the Ruins: Modernism, Bombsites and British Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[241] Roger Roughton, "Surrealism and Communism," *Contemporary Poetry and Prose* 4 (Aug–Sep 1936): 74–75.
[242] "Surrealism in Art," *Daily Telegraph*, Jun 12 1936, quoted in Kevin Jackson, *Humphrey Jennings: The Definitive Biography of one of Britain's Most Important Film-Makers* (London: Picador, 2004), 172.
[243] "Needed Pork Chop – To Complete Dress," *Daily Mirror*, Jun 12, 1936; "Here Are Marx Brothers of Art," *Daily Herald*, Jun 12, 1936; "Surrealist Art is Clumsy as Well as Meaningless," *Evening News*, Jun 12, 1936.
[244] Mellor, *Reading the Ruins*, 91-3.

Miller's images alone, absent of any titles, are, as the preface to *Grim Glory* outlines, "honest" pictures of "a nation at war" reflecting on actuality.[245] By recording the dislocation of Londoners, Miller's photographs have become cultural historical documents. The images, which adopt the methods of straight photography, also heighten the documentary nature of Miller's work. Miller's dissatisfaction with the text accompanying her images as they appeared in *Vogue* during the Blitz years reinforces her faith in the impact of the image alone. She believed that the text produced by copywriters "reduced the impact of the photographs and compromised her ideals of honesty and accessibility".[246]

Miller's Egypt and Balkan photography articulates a similar sensibility towards the image. Most of these pictures are either untitled or reference what appears in the image from a factual perspective. In so doing, the image is allowed to speak and becomes, "a potential object of fascination", not Miller's surrealist affinities or personal life.[247] The images ranged from "ravishing steep-steepled churches", their frescoes and natural stone forms to gypsy rites, peasants in traditional dress and scenes of dancing and eating.[248] As Haworth-Booth has also recognised, her Romanian work "sharpened her recording eye" and "trained Lee for her imminent documentary role in London in the aftermath of the Blitz".[249]

1.3. Miller's Photography as Social Documentary

From her time as a portrait photographer Miller had learnt the technique of how to produce a good image. She remarked that a good portrait catches its subject "not when he is unaware of it but when he is his most natural self".[250] Miller put this into practice whilst photographing scenes in Egypt and the Balkans and capturing culture. Hilary Roberts, curator and author of the exhibition catalogue for the Imperial War Museum's exhibition of Miller's work (*A Woman's War*) claims that Miller's transformation from fashion photographer to war correspondent, reporter and photojournalist occurred with *Vogue* during the Second World War. She posits that *Vogue*'s close relationship with the Ministry of Defence in documenting changes in women's lives during the war offers an "important account" of this personal transformation.[251]

However, Mark Haworth-Booth defines Miller's images of local Egyptian people going about their daily lives as "street photography".[252] This works on the premise of catching people in

[245] Carter ed. *Grim Glory*, 1.
[246] Penrose, *Lives*, 104.
[247] Sontag, *On Photography*, 23.
[248] Lee Miller, quoted in Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 146.
[249] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 146.
[250] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 94.
[251] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 57.
[252] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 122.

natural and everyday situations. Although Miller adopted surrealist methods of using chance encounters to capture the everyday, an approach that Haworth-Booth highlights in Miller's work, her images also engage with an "almost documentary" aim.[253] Street photography became popular as a result of Eugene Atget's photographs of Parisian streets and because of technological changes. The 35mm camera was crucial, as it was small, portable and unobtrusive. Henri Cartier-Bresson, known for his street photography in the 1950s, promoted the idea of the "decisive moment" (a fusing of the notion of instantaneity and story-telling with a single image) whilst Diane Arbus, a documentary photographer, brought methods of portrait photography onto the streets with her 6 x 6 cm film format of square images. Miller's experience as a portrait artist and her use of 6 x 6 cm negatives and Rolleiflex cameras is comparable to Diane Arbus' approach to her subject.[254]

Through the space of the street Miller offers a paradigm of work that engages with its subject in an immediate and subjective way, whilst other social documentary may rely on an objective and distanced approach. Miller's approach to her subjects is indicative of David Bate's definition of street photography in *Photography: The Key Concepts* (2009). He writes that street photography is "a balance between comment and criticism, description and inscription, where meanings [are] acknowledged as 'fleeting', as if meanings are in transition themselves".[255] John Grierson makes a similar observation:

> The only reality which counts in the end is the interpretation which is profound. It does not matter whether that interpretation comes by way of the studio [staged] or by way of documentary or for that matter by way of the music hall. The important thing is the interpretation and the profundity of the interpretation.[256]

John Grierson's evaluation of the medium recognises the photographer's *mediation* involved in staging the scene. By deciding on the position of the camera in relation to the event, composition involves the organisation of the scene to create a "reality" effect. This interpretation, for Grierson, is more important than "truth" or objectivity. For Grierson, the elements of a good documentary photograph are that it provides an interpretation of real life and that it "lights up the

[253] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 122.
[254] *The Radical Eye: Modernist photography from the Sir Elton John Collection* exhibition at the Tate Modern (10 November 2016 – 7 May 2017) curated by Simon Baker, and Shoair Mavlian with Newell Harbin charts similar cultural developments in photography. The section 'Documents' is particularly effective as it explores the development of the portable camera and roll film that allowed photographers to capture spontaneous moments. It presents street photography and documentary as opening up new perspectives socially as well as visually.
[255] David Bate, *Photography: The Key Concepts* (London and New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2009), 143.
[256] John Grierson, "Untitled Lecture on Documentary (1927–1933)," in *The Documentary Film Movement: An Anthology*, ed. Ian Aitken (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), 76.

fact".[257] This allows a variety of approaches, staged or not, and values both a subjective and an objective approach. What matters is interpretation and the witnessing of life.[258]

Miller's images of Egypt and, later, of Romania and Greece are concerned with people, food and culture. Her engagement with local people allowed her to witness and experience first-hand their behaviour in natural situations. Living amongst and staying with her subjects provided Miller with a unique insight into everyday struggle, ritual and routine. This proximity enabled her to capture the "moment" as Adams elucidates in his essay "What is the 'New Photography?". The "moment" was also important in Walker and Lange's photography in documenting Americans during the Great Depression.[259]

Dorothea Lange's pictures also influenced Willard Van Dyke's perspective on photography:

> Dorothea Lange has turned to the people of the American Scene with the intention of making an adequate photographic record of them … Her method is to eradicate from her mind before she starts, all ideas which she might hold regarding the situation – her mind like an unexposed film …
>
> … The scene is a panorama, constantly shifting and rearranging. For her it is transformed into a pageant of humanity across the ground glass … Suddenly out of the chaos of disorganized movement, the ground glass becomes alive, not in the human sense alone, but in the sense that only a photographer can recognize – a scene, a negative, finally a print that is itself alive. And here is where the photographer becomes the creator, feeling all the thrills and all the responsibilities of the creative artist. A dozen questions of possible technical failure flash simultaneously through the mind and resolve themselves into: "has the touch upon the shutter release killed something that was palpitating and real a moment ago, or has it preserved it for others to share and enjoy?"[260]

Van Dyke's evaluation of Lange's photography also articulates Miller's style of capturing social scenes and history in the making.

In 1936, whilst Miller was living in Egypt, the Khedive was recognised as king. British troops remained in the area to protect the Suez Canal, but a growing opposition to British rule meant that there was unrest. Israel Gershoni and James P. Jankowski in their book on Egyptian nationalism (2002) also acknowledge that an "elite-dominated and self-serving Parliament" was contributory to this unrest and maintained an unequal social-economic order.[261] Disillusionment

[257] Grierson, "Lecture on Documentary," 76.
[258] Bate, *Photography*, 59.
[259] Ansel Adams, "The New Photography," in *Modern Photography 1934–5*, ed. Geoffrey Holme (New York: Studio, 1934), 15.
[260] Willard Van Dyke, "The Photographs of Dorothea Lange: A Critical Analysis," *Camera Craft* 41 (Oct 1934): 461, 464; Richard Street, *Everyone Had Cameras* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2008), 169–73.
[261] Gershoni and Jankowski, *Egyptian Nation*, 4.

was felt by many Egyptians who, when faced with an undemocratic parliament, felt that people were unrepresented. Contemporary Egyptian intellectual Muhammad ‘Awad Muhammad commented that Egypt had a system of “parliamentary rule without real democracy”. Parliamentary laws, he wrote, “guard[ed] the material interests of the upper classes only”.[262] Ramsis Shahata made a similar observation, commenting that the masses were “exploit[ed] …most shamefully and vilely”.[263] Therefore, it is not surprising that Miller chose to photograph the peasantry rather than the Egyptian elite during this period of socio-political and economic unrest (Figure 10).

Figure 10 Lee Miller, *Market Stall*, Egypt, *c.*1936, Lee Miller Archives.

A few portraits and landscapes taken by Miller during her expeditions to “Palmyra, Baalbeck, Jerash, Kerak, Sergiopolis, the Tigris and Euphrates, Homs, Hama, Aleppo, Damascus and Antioch” were later published by Robin Fedden in *Syria: An Historical Appreciation* (1955).[264] However, the social and cultural significance of these images has been ignored; instead, they have been read as surrealist expressions of inner processes.[265] Both Miller and Lange have

[262] Muhammad ‘Awad Muhammad, “al-Dimuqratiyya bayna al-Shu’ub,” *al-Hilal*, Dec 1941, 22. Also quoted in Gershoni and Jankowski, *Egyptian Nation*, 4.
[263] Ramsis Shahata, “Da’wa ila al-Thawra,” *al-Majalla al-Jadida*, Mar 1, 1938, 49–51. Also quoted in Gershoni and Jankowski, *Egyptian Nation*, 4.
[264] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 146.
[265] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 146.

suffered from gender-specific readings of their work that look to personal details or feminine characteristics for interpretation. In commenting on Miller's work as a photojournalist during the war, Antony Penrose observes: "It's wrong to generalise, but women tend to have a more humanitarian, and more visceral, eye. They enter into a more emotional connection with the subject".[266] He provides a similar reading of Miller's images of Romanian peasants: "She photographed with care and sensitivity, as if the talisman of the captured image could somehow protect these innocent people from disaster".[267] Subsequently, attention is detracted from the skill of their work.

Linda Gordon, in her academic paper "Dorothea Lange: The Photographer as Agricultural Sociologist" in the *Journal of American History*, makes a similar observation about readings of Lange's work. She writes that "Lange's project has also been veiled by gendered clichés. Critics have often read the strong emotional content of her work as instinctive, in a way said to be characteristic of female sensibility".[268] This implication – that women are more interested in the emotions and characteristics of people because they are more intuitive – positions the female artist as best suited to portraiture work. The female artist, therefore, acts as a conduit through which these images are depicted; thus, they are seen as no more than passive recipients.[269] But, as Gordon argues, femininity is no more natural or instinctive than masculinity. Gordon analyses Lange's photographic style in reference to its sociological impact on both photography and American politics, albeit from a biographical perspective.

Whilst Evans' and Lange's images are concerned with political and social change and highlight the difficulties and hardship for families during the depression, Miller captured scenes of a disappearing way of life: the rituals and customs of Egyptian, Romanian and Greek villages. By making the conscious decision to concentrate on the lives of Egyptian peasants, Miller also demonstrated a concern with social issues. Her photographs consequently highlight the contrast in lifestyles between the peasants she photographed and the exuberant lifestyle of the Egyptian elite to which her husband belonged. Many of Miller's photographs are taken in the street and depict children playing or working (Figure 11, page 63): a girl washing dishes (Figure15, page 66), a woman with a camel, a potter, and an ox-drawn sledge in the Nile area (Figure 12, page 63). All depict fellahin in their traditional *galabiyyas* (an ankle-length robe with long arms),

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[266] Antony Penrose, quoted in Holly Williams, "The Unseen Lee Miller: Lost Images of the Supermodel-Turned-War Photographer Go on Show," *Independent*, Apr 20, 2013, accessed Feb 12, 2016, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/features/the-unseen-lee-miller-lost-images-of-the-supermodel-turned-war-photographer-go-on-show-8577344.html.

[267] Antony Penrose, *The Home of the Surrealists: Lee Miller, Roland Penrose and Their Circle at Farley Farm* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2001), 43.

[268] Linda Gordon, "Dorothea Lange: The Photographer as Agricultural Sociologist," *Journal of American History* 93, no. 3 (Dec 2006): 702.

[269] Gordon, "Dorothea Lange," 702.

contrasting with the Western dress styles of the upper and middle classes. For ‘Abd al-‘Aziz al-Bishri, the differing styles of dress in Egypt were indicative of the cultural division and social disharmony in Egyptian identity during the 1930s, which was compounded by the economic depression, political disharmony and oppression.[270]

Figure 11 Lee Miller, *Children*, Egypt, *c*.1936, Lee Miller Archives.

Figure 12 Lee Miller, *Ox Drawn Sledge*, Nile area, Egypt, *c*.1936, Lee Miller Archives.

[270] ‘Abd al-‘Aziz al-Bishri, “Hajatuna ila Tawhid al-Ziyy,” *al-Majalla al-Jadida*, Mar 1, 1934, 43–44. Also quoted in Gershoni and Jankowski, *Egyptian Nation*, 7.

Miller's image of a bus in a street taken from above a roof (1937) articulates this diversity in dress (Figure 13). It captures the traditional dress of Arab-Muslim culture mixed with Western trousers and jacket and (half-Western) fez. This characterised the *effendiyya*, a term used to describe the archetypal native, urban, educated middle-class Egyptian who imitated Europeans in their lifestyle and behaviour.[271] Photographs of local people in traditional *galabiyyas*, set against traditional historic buildings, continue this motif of a country's identity in conflict and flux. (Picturing subjects against vistas of historic interest is an approach that Miller later used in her post-war fashion shoots promoting fashion and travel in *Vogue*).[272] The emergence of a new *effendiyya* with a more Egypt-centred focus on national identity resulted in social unrest between the old and new generations, whose political, social and cultural outlooks on life were considerably different.[273] Miller felt this unrest first-hand when she was caught up in a crowd of demonstrators surrounded by police. Students managed to lead her away to safety.[274]

Figure 13 Lee Miller, *Bus in Street*, Egypt, 1937, Lee Miller Archives.

[271] Gershoni and Jankowski, *Egyptian Nation*, 7–22.
[272] Lee Miller, "In Sicily," British *Vogue*, May 1949, 54-61.
[273] Gershoni and Jankowski, *Egyptian Nation*, 7.
[274] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 155.

When documenting local people in their natural environment, Miller tried to capture them unaware, but, as Mark Haworth-Booth comments, Miller found this difficult. Local people would often appear smiling and willing to be photographed in front of her.[275] The negatives of a local Egyptian boy pulling water from a well (*c*.1936) evidence this (Figure 14). However, Miller used this to her advantage, staying with local people and gaining an intimate knowledge of her subjects and their culture. Both Carolyn Burke and Roland Penrose in *The Road is Wider than Long* (1939) tell of Miller being welcomed by Romanian local people to participate in some of these rituals. Miller's sensitivity to local people and her desire to experience their way of life first-hand is evident in her purchasing of an embroidered costume during her travels through Bucharest and Bulgaria in 1938. This allowed her to walk amongst the locals and photograph "gypsy" rites.[276]

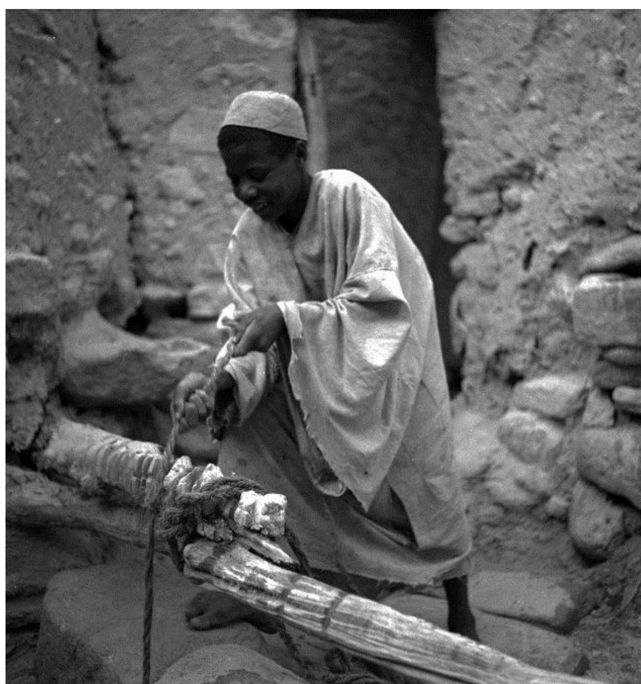

Figure 14 Lee Miller, *Boy Drawing Water from a Well*, Egypt, *c*.1936, Lee Miller Archives.

[275] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 122.
[276] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 188.

Figure 15 Lee Miller, *Unknown Girl*, Egypt, 1936, Lee Miller Archives.

Ian Walker, in his chapter "The Road is Wider – Penrose and Miller in the Balkans" from *So Exotic, So Homemade: Surrealism, Englishness and Documentary Photography* (2007), makes a similar observation: "Often in the photographs that Penrose took but didn't use, it is Miller who is engaging with the people they encounter".[277] Miller's Romanian images, in particular, are focussed predominantly on people. With the help of Hari Brauner, a professor of music and folklore at Bucharest University and brother of Roland's good friend Victor Brauner, Miller photographed the local folklore and traditions of "gypsies, priests, musicians [and] dancers" from the "mountains, the wide bare plains of Transylvania and the shores of the Black Sea".[278] Her switch from landscape and geographical subjects (the main focus of her photography in the 1930s) to local people is evident in the number of images she took during their travels; some five hundred negatives have survived.[279]

For Jane Livingston, however, Miller's Romanian photographs "on the whole lack either the emotional intensity or the compositional distinction of which she was so patently capable".[280] Although this may be true in some cases, Livingston is judging Miller's Romanian images against either her portrait studio work or her later wartime work. In her portrait and wartime work, Miller's expertise was assured: her portrait work through owning her own studio and

[277] Ian Walker, "The Road is Wider – Penrose and Miller in the Balkans," in *So Exotic*, Walker, 87.
[278] Penrose, afterword to *Road is Wider than Long*, ed. Roland Penrose and E.L.T. Mesens (London: Bradley Press for London Gallery Editions, 1979).
[279] Walker, *So Exotic*, 88.
[280] Livingston, *Lee Miller: Photographer*, 54.

working alongside other photographers, and her wartime work because of her experimental photography in Egypt and Romania. Her portraits, especially her image of an Arab woman in traditional dress, are powerful because of Miller's expertise in working with human subjects. When measured against these images, Miller's pictures of groups of people in social situations may not possess the same intensity; however, in my analysis of Miller's negatives of particular subjects, I believe her concern is with obtaining proficiency in this new style of photography and in producing images with empathy. In addition, the photographs have very different purposes and are published in different contexts.

Miller's Romanian negatives demonstrate a concern with obtaining the right angle and perspective in order to capture "the moment". In her image of two Romanian men and their performing bear (1938), Miller shot a whole film (twelve frames) from a variety of differing angles and distances.[281] In doing so, Miller is able to capture the bear in a motion shot with one paw raised in response to the Roma's music (Figure 16, page 68). Moreover, Miller's image of a dead child laid out at home before her funeral (1938) captures the poignancy that can be seen in her later wartime images. Published in Roland Penrose's book, Antony Penrose attributes this image, in particular, to Miller on stylistic grounds and the use of a more manoeuvrable camera.[282] Walker also makes an interesting observation about Miller's images during this time, which again reinforces Miller's concern with people and her new style of social photography. Walker suggests that Penrose's book, although written by Roland, was in fact a collaborative project between himself and Miller. He observes that "the influence of Miller is present throughout", highlighting the extent of Miller's proficiency when measured against Penrose's photographic skill.[283]

Roland Penrose's text, which accompanies some of the photographs in his book, taps into the emotions of the situation: both with Miller and his experiences with other people. This exploration in subject matter reinforces Gordon's point, contesting a female photographer's "natural" suitability for photographing people. Penrose's account of their travels is poetic and romantic:

> …dancing
>
> Young grass
>
> Children to sing for rain

[281] Walker, *So Exotic*, 89.
[282] Penrose, *Lives*, 87.
[283] Walker, *So Exotic*, 88.

Figure 16 Lee Miller, *Gypsy Musicians with Bear*, Romania, 1938, Lee Miller Archives.

Miller's account (in this instance, explaining a Roma rite) is more factual:

> In the gypsy rites to produce rainfall, a boy and a girl are dressed in leaves arranged like Hawaiian skirts. They prance around singing a primitive prayer ditty while the adults throw buckets of water over them. The peasants' ritual harks back to a ceremony as ancient as the oldest of Greek literature. The pure children (under the age of 10) fashion a moist clay doll in relief on a board. Gentians make blue eyes, and a scarlet petal the mouth. The sex is well defined. The offering is trimmed with blossom, laden with fruits carried by child pall-bearers to the nearest remaining water on the parched plains. Bearing lit candles and suitable prayers the sacrifice, a symbolic of one of themselves, is placed on the water where it floats away to death by drowning.[284]

Here Miller adopts an objective approach in her writing to record a disappearing way of life. The intention to document people and their environment is stated by Miller herself: "We made documentary photographs of all the frescoes painted on the outside of the ravishing steep-steepled churches of the Budkovina province".[285] This is also indicative of her writing as a war correspondent covering the liberation of Europe. As Miller outlines in a draft essay for *Vogue:*

[284] Lee Miller, from "Romania," unpublished manuscript, quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 87.
[285] Miller, from "Romania," quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 87.

> I am inclined to scream … when … people try to tell me that the bombed out Hifbrau haus won't make me an interesting picture because it is all destroyed, and that there is no use photographing the local monuments because they are all ruined … I'm busy making documents, not art …[286]

In 1985 Antony Penrose also makes a fleeting reference to Miller and Roland's intention to document a disappearing way of life: "Lee and Roland's travels to the remote parts of Greece and Romania had been partly motivated by the desire to see and record a way of life before it was destroyed by the inexorable march of the motor car and so-called civilization".[287] Read through a socio-historical lens, Miller's images of people and their folkways become more poignant. With Hitler's rise, it was only a matter of time before traditional Romanian people would no longer be able to continue their way of life. During his travels with Miller in 1939, Roland Penrose makes a similar observation about the Roma and their way of life. He writes:

> Nomads may not move their Tents
>
> The Markets are closed to them
>
> The Prefect has no time to waste
>
> Though I am obliged to listen to you
>
> I am not obliged to give you satisfaction
>
> Do not disturb me
>
> Let me get on with my Work.[288]

This treatment of Roma people articulates the contemporary socio-political climate and anticipates the treatment of Roma at the hands of the Nazis. When Hitler came to power, laws to deter Roma from roaming or camping in bands were introduced. They were later coerced into regular employment or faced being sent to do forced labour, which could last for up to two years. They suffered similar racial discrimination to the Jewish people. Hitler deemed them "nonpersons" who were work-shy, racially inferior and asocial. In 1941 and 1942, many Roma were deported from Romania and sent to extermination camps.[289]

After returning to Romania alone in 1946 as a war correspondent and tracking down Brauner and his partner, artist Lena Constante, Miller witnessed first-hand the devastation that the Nazis had wreaked on the country. Brauner and Constante had barely survived and Brauner told her of the sufferings of the peasantry, especially the Roma. Many of the Roma whom Miller had

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[286] Miller, quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 195. The published version, "Hitleriana" appearing in British *Vogue* July 1945, does not include this part.
[287] Penrose, *Lives*, 96.
[288] Penrose, *Wider than Long*, n.p. The red colouring is used by Roland Penrose in his book.
[289] Carmelo Lisciotto, "Sinti & Roma: The 'Gypsies'," Holocaust Education & Archive Research Team, 2010, accessed Mar 26, 2016, http://www.holocaustresearchproject.org/holoprelude/romasinti.html.

photographed six years earlier had been murdered by the Nazis. With the help of Brauner, Miller managed to track down the group in the dancing bear photograph she had taken in 1938. Miller photographed herself again with the bear, which appeared to massage her back. These images were published in British and American *Vogue* in May 1946 with an article by Miller describing the visit. Miller's engagement with social concerns is again evident in her inclusion of the way the Roma had been prevented from roaming, which echoed Roland's text and their visit some six years previously.

Miller also photographed Queen Elena and King Mihai in Peleş Castle, Sinai (Figure 17) and wrote about the influential politicians Lucreţiu Pătrăşcanu, Iuliu Maniu and Dinu Brătianu. Due to the political unrest, these politicians were either executed or died in jail a few years later. Moreover, Hari Brauner and Constante were imprisoned, mostly in solitary confinement, for more than a decade.[290] Antony Penrose acknowledges the documentary nature of Miller's *Vogue* article in a short text that accompanied an exhibition of Miller's Romanian photography: *Lee Miller: A Romanian Rhapsody* in 2014.[291]

Figure 17 Lee Miller, *King Mihai and Queen Mother Elena (Helen)*, Peleş Palace, Sinai, Romania, 1946, Lee Miller Archives.

[290] Antony Penrose, "Lee Miller's Travels in Romania," in *Lee Miller: A Romanian Rhapsody*, exhibition under the patronage of HRH The Crown Princess Margareta, curated by Dr Adrian-Silvan Ionescu, at the Romanian Cultural Centre, London, Jul 10 – Aug 17 2014.

[291] Penrose, "Lee Miller's Travels."

Whilst the subject matter of this exhibition on Miller's photography is new, Antony Penrose's literature and personal talks, "revealing personal memories of the two artists [Miller and Roland]" reinforce his dominant narratives surrounding Miller. Penrose's text "Lee Miller's travels in Romania" is preceded by a short biography of Miller's achievements as a model and war correspondent. Moreover, Penrose frames Miller's travels around Egypt and the Balkans from 1934 to 1939 with Miller's desire to find the "marvellous" in the everyday and "the inquisitive view of the explorer … influenced by her Surrealist passion". In referencing Miller's post-war return to Romania, Penrose presents Miller's 1946 *Vogue* article as a continuation of her activities as a war photojournalist, documenting the social and political consequences of the Second World War.[292]

Unlike Lange and Walker's photo-documents of the American people during the depression, which were designed to highlight hardship to effect political and social change, Miller's Romanian photography is more to do with "a mournful vision of loss".[293] Jack Kerouac, in his introduction to Robert Frank's book *The Americans*, highlights that the tradition of American photography lies in a mood of sadness.[294] Sontag makes a similar observation. In recording specific moments in time, American photography, writes Sontag, deals with "the familiar iconography of mystery, mortality, transience".[295] Here Sontag highlights the photographer's desire to record something before it changes. This desire is indicative of the mood of Miller's Egypt and Balkan photography and American photo-documents of the American west and its internal struggle.

Robin Fedden's book (1955), which is a historical appreciation of Syria and its people, history and culture, adopts a documentary style and includes Miller's Egypt and Balkan images.[296] Miller knew Fedden, who, as a guide and historian, accompanied her on treks to historic sites of interest. By including three of Miller's images in his book, he reinforces the documentary nature of her Egypt and Balkan photographs. Their captions are factual references to what can be seen in the images; for example, *A Nomad Family*. This further underlines the documentary nature of Miller's images. One image depicts a nomad family. The women are in traditional dress and surrounded by children. Their clothes are dusty and they sit in a camp with traditional blankets covering the floor. They all look to the camera, the mother as if caught unawares. Only the child in the foreground is smiling, whilst the others stare impassively at the camera. One Bedouin woman at the back of the image appears in another picture by Miller. In this picture, the woman

[292] Penrose, "Lee Miller's Travels."
[293] Sontag, *On Photography*, 67.
[294] Jack Kerouac, introduction to Robert Frank, *The Americans* (New York: Grove Press, 1959), 5.
[295] Sontag, *On Photography*, 67.
[296] Robin Fedden, *Syria: An Historical Appreciation* (Hertfordshire: Aldine Press, 1955).

is taken in portrait in a headscarf and robe. The nomad family is included by Fedden to accompany his chapter "Crusader Castles", which captures the country's past social and cultural structure and how it appeared in 1938–1939.[297]

Miller's Egypt and Balkan images of Roma (their travelling shows and performing bears) indeed epitomise the mystery, mortality and transience of people and events of the past, and they deserve to be recognised as such. Berenice Abbott's evaluation of the photographer – "The photographer is the contemporary being par excellence; through his eyes the now becomes past" – is suggestive of Miller's approach and development as a photojournalist, for which she is celebrated today.[298] It also places her very much as a photojournalist: as interested in her subject matter as she is interested in the art with which she can portray them.

1.4. Other Apertures

The extent to which American photography influenced Miller's development as a photographer cannot be denied. Miller's provocative and empathetic wartime images are indicative of her 1930s photography. Experimenting with proximity and interacting with people during her travels around the Balkans almost certainly informed her wartime documentary style, which Annalisa Zox-Weaver has described as "compassionate and intrusive, deeply sensitive, and provocatively curious".[299] Through straight photographic means, Miller's concern with documenting contemporary socio-cultural issues records the atrocities of war and its plight. This is explored in the following two chapters.

Miller's post-war photographs, taken for articles or just for pleasure, are also indicative of her Egypt and Balkan photography. Her pictures for a *Vogue* article, "In Sicily" (May 1949), see Miller's continued use of unusual angles and her skill at composition.[300] Taken outside, Miller positions models, in dresses and swimsuits, next to or in front of historic sculptures and columns (Figure 43, page 163). Although the models are the subject of the image, the eye is drawn towards the vistas. Becky Conekin notes that these images are suggestive of "the lingering artistic influence of Surrealism" and interprets them as expressions of Miller's unconscious processes. Conekin's description of a huge flying boat's nose threatening to topple over and crush a model is, for Conekin, an anticipation of Miller's later life at Farley Farm (Figure 44, page 164).[301]

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[297] Fedden, *Syria*, 146–71.
[298] Berenice Abbott, quoted in Sontag, *On Photography*, 67.
[299] Zox-Weaver, "Miller's War Reports," 133–34.
[300] Lee Miller, "In Sicily," British *Vogue*, May 1949, 54-61.
[301] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 195.

By noting how these images "evoke a sense of dread", Conekin succumbs to the dominant discourse on Miller.[302] However, the images owe more to Miller's 1930s social and landscape pictures than they do to expressions of trauma or internal turmoil. Miller's perceptive use of models posing with local people adds an element of realism to her images, whilst her composition of models against a background of historic ruins echoes her Egypt pictures of indigenous people set against historic buildings. Including local people and architectural historic sites in her photographs for a fashion and travel feature ("In Sicily") is more indicative of Miller's engagement with the country's social and cultural environment than of any surrealistic expression. This contextual approach is also comparable with other 1950s photographers and contemporary cultural trends within the medium. Tony Armstrong-Jones, Guy Bourdain and William Klein photographed models outside in everyday contexts.[303] The context of the picture is used to confer "image or status upon the clothes", with the models occupying a "subsidiary role in the picture".[304]

The unusual angles of Miller's Egypt and Balkans photography is also evident in her pictures of known artists, writers, museum directors and architects attempting daily household tasks at Farley Farm. Although Miller gave up professional photography after the war, she continued to take pictures of her life at the farm, some of which were used in an article for *Vogue* ("Working Guests", July 1953). In this, she humorously documents friends and family helping out with household chores. However, these images are overlooked when set against her war photography. In response to this, Richard Calvocoressi states in *Lee Miller: Portraits from a Life*:

> Miller's critics detect a loss of intensity in her photographs of the 1950s and 1960s. This is unjust. Although the sense of moral outrage is gone, her work retains its penetrating qualities… in order to disclose deeper psychological truths, as revealed in facial expressions, gesture and body language.[305]

Antony Penrose continues to read these images from a surrealist perspective; but, if read with a similar socio-cultural focus, Miller's post-war pictures and articles can be seen as documenting the effect of austerity on families in Britain. Within a domestic context, Miller captures the difficulty of trying to rebuild a home during a post-war climate of hardship. Her post-war articles articulate similar concerns as Miller negotiates a contemporary cultural hegemony that coerced women to return to the home. In redefining the domestic, Miller addresses Britain's social issues of class and gender after the disappearance of the servant class after the war. The relevance of

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[302] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 195.
[303] Valerie Lloyd, *The Art of Vogue Photographic Covers: Fifty Years of Fashion and Design* (New York: Harmony Books, 1986), 10.
[304] Lloyd, *Art of Vogue*, 10.
[305] Calvocoressi, *Portraits*, 15.

these articles is explored in chapters four, five and six. These concerns are expressive of Miller's 1930s social photography that documented local peasants at work, at leisure and in disappearing cultures.

1.5. Conclusion

Without the influence of Egypt – its environment, history and culture – it is debatable whether Miller would have engaged with photography again. Egypt and her Balkan travels encouraged her to experiment with outdoor geographical and social pictures. This versatility with the camera and photographic styles was not only essential to her time as a war photographer and correspondent but also to her post-war years at Farley Farm. Her inventiveness continued in her cooking, where she negotiated concepts of cuisine and art whilst adopting innovative use of gadgets. This approach, explored in chapters five and six, saw Miller continuing to engage with contemporary cultural ideas and concepts. Ultimately, Miller's 1930s photography is foundational to not only her transition and development as a photojournalist during the war (explored in chapters three and four) but also her post-war creative endeavours at Farley Farm.

Figure 18 Lee Miller, *From the Top of the Great Pyramid*, Cairo, Egypt, *c*.1937, Lee Miller Archives.

2.
Women, War and Work

> We shall not be unmindful of the changing times. If the new order is to be one of sackcloth and ashes, we think some women will wear theirs with a difference! *Vogue* will cut the pattern for them. (Edna Woolman Chase, 1940)[306]

This chapter explores Miller's wartime work as a fashion and war photographer. Its focus is Miller's documentation of women during wartime and their changing socio-political roles as active independent agents engaged in the war effort. Miller photographed women in a range of assignments and documented their response to wartime demands. The war, as Patrice and Margaret Higonnet posit in their paper "The Double Helix", produced unusual circumstances that allowed women's socio-political roles to change temporarily.[307] Whilst the war provided opportunities in terms of the type of work available to women, the authors argue that women's war work never equalled that of men. Whilst this change seemed to be temporary it nonetheless, in women's experience and their representation, enabled a questioning of women's roles, which was to inform future developments. Contemporary debates have focussed on individual narratives of women's war experiences, providing a more nuanced account of women's war work. Miller's career and her work as a war photographer and then correspondent (discussed in the next chapter) are vital to these debates. I argue that by documenting women's wartime work, she repositions women's achievements within the political historiography of war.

Becoming a permanent member of *Vogue*'s staff in January 1940, Miller photographed the war's impact on women's fashion and the economic constraints of rationing.[308] She earned a weekly salary of £8. In July 1941 Miller produced her first photo-essay on wartime life in Oxford. From September to October, her assignments covered women's contributions to the war effort. Her work "WRNS on the Job" was her first major photo-essay of women in uniform. Between March and July 1942 Miller continued with her fashion photography whilst producing photo-essays on the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA), the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) and factory workers for *Vogue*, a publication that supported conscription. In December 1942 Miller was accredited to

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[306] Edna Woolman Chase, Editor-in-Chief, American *Vogue,* quoted in William Norwich, "Fashion in Bad Times: Best Foot Forward," *New York Times*, Sep 16, 2001, accessed Feb 20, 2017, http://www.nytimes.com/2001/09/16/style/fashion-in-bad-times-best-foot-forward.html. In an article entitled "Total War, Total Defense, Total Crisis", Ralph Ingersoll, editor to PM (a newspaper started in 1940) had questioned *Vogue*'s relevance and predicted its demise. Chase responded by letter. PM closed in 1949.

[307] Margaret and Patrice Higonnet, "The Double Helix," in *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars*, ed. Margaret Higonnet, Jane Jenson, Sonya Michel and Margaret Collins Weitz (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987).

[308] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 204. The factual information in the rest of the paragraph is also taken from the same source, 204-210.

the US Armed Forces as an official war correspondent and in 1943 she began to write the text to accompany her photographs. Miller continued to photograph women in uniform and started to collate material for her own book, *Wrens in Camera.* From July 1944, Miller photographed US Army nurses in Normandy and covered the siege of St Malo in August 1944. Travelling around France and Belgium, Miller recorded the effects of liberation. Following the US forces, she entered Germany in March 1945 and photographed the Dachau and Buchenwald concentration camps. The photographs of herself and David Scherman in Hitler's bath were taken in her coverage of the destruction of Hitler's Berchtesgaden home. Miller then returned home and published *Wrens in Camera* in 1945.

Although Miller's wartime work has been the most widely researched, it has been read in a similar vein to her pre-war work. With a particular focus on the bomb damage during the Blitz, images from *Grim Glory* have dominated readings of Miller's work. Carolyn Burke, Mark Haworth-Booth, Jean Gallagher, Katherine Slusher and Antony Penrose have all interpreted Miller's war images through a surrealistic prism. Slusher writes, "Lee adapted the Surrealist technique of the *objet trouvé* (found object) to the photographic realm".[309] Her focus is on Miller's use of juxtaposition to depict the "transformed reality of life" during wartime. Any reference to Miller's work documenting women's involvement in the war effort is absent from her analyses.[310]

Whilst highlighting Miller's empathy with the women she photographed in the armed forces, Burke's examination of Miller's images similarly focusses on the "odd juxtapositions" of war.[311] This is also prevalent in her examination of Miller's Blitz images. Analysing an image depicting debris tumbling out of the door of a protestant church (*Non-Conformist Chapel* from *Grim Glory*), Burke suggests that it "plays with … thematic evocations of blockage". Here Burke adopts the surrealists' premise of unconscious processes to interpret Miller's images. She continues, "Lee's compositions also seem to express personal issues: ideas of stasis and release, a sense of blockage, or liberation, of body and soul".[312] This psychoanalytical methodology, although useful, is dependent on Miller's personal circumstances and biography to infer meaning, rather than on her skill of composition or her interest in contemporary social issues.

Haworth-Booth's observations on Miller's war photography are more positive, recognising the benefit of Miller's "years of training as a professional photographer" in producing "high-quality photographs – fashion, portraiture and documentary" for *Vogue*. But he also writes that "Lee's

[309] Slusher, *Green Memories*, 55.
[310] Slusher, *Green Memories*, 55–56.
[311] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 205.
[312] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 207.

war photographs were informed by … her participation in the heyday of surrealism" and argues that Miller's "appreciation of the photographic possibilities of bomb damage was obviously heightened by her Surrealist Sensibility".[313] He also focusses on her pictures that appear in *Grim Glory*.[314] Any examination of Miller's Blitz work focus on, as Antony Penrose has observed in his evaluation of Miller's wartime work, Miller's "Being a Surrealist artist". This, Penrose asserts, "must be the only possible training to enable a person to retain their objectivity in the face of the total illogicality of War". He continues, "Lee brought the Surrealist dimension to photojournalism in the same way that Humphrey Jennings did to film making".[315] Penrose's short foreword in Lesley Thomas and Chris Howard Bailey's book *WRNS in Camera* (2002) is the only consideration of Miller's work in documenting women's wartime experiences and contributions.[316] As I have discussed in the previous chapter, Miller's social documentary work in Egypt provided the foundations for her transition into photojournalism. I would argue that it is this, rather than her surrealist influence, that allowed Miller to bring another dimension to photojournalism in the pages of *Vogue*.

Vogue's contribution to the war effort was significant. Widening its remit to cover all aspects of women's war efforts, from the domestic constraints of rationing to their active involvement in the armed forces, *Vogue* helped to support, mobilise and bring recognition of women's wartime contributions. Audrey Withers – editor of British *Vogue* from 1940 to 1960 and part of the London Fire Brigade as a volunteer and driver to senior officers during the war – recognised that Miller's work was different and that it helped broaden the magazine's remit during wartime.[317] From a high-quality, low circulation elitist fashion publication aimed at two distinct groups – "a few thousand ultra-fastidious women … constantly in touch with the latest style and fashionable goings-on [and those who] … derive a great deal of pleasure in reading about what the first is doing" – the magazine evolved into one that also reflected current affairs.[318]

With Withers' support, Miller helped to provide advice, encouragement and leadership to women during a time of economic hardship and changing social roles. Withers had studied politics, philosophy and economics at Oxford, and she was a strong advocate of social reform with regard to women's roles in society. British *Vogue*'s close collaboration with the Ministry of

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[313] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 152.
[314] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 155.
[315] Antony Penrose, afterword to *Miller's War*, 205.
[316] Antony Penrose, foreword to Thomas and Howard Bailey, *WRNS in Camera,* vii.
[317] Audrey Withers, *Lifespan: An Autobiography* (London and Chester Springs, PA: Peter Owen, 1994), 57.
[318] Mrs Morton, memo to Condé Nast, Mar 10, 1942, quoted in Howard Cox and Simon Mowatt, "*Vogue* in Britain: Authenticity and the Creation of Competitive Advantage in the UK Magazine Industry," *Business History* 54, no. 1 (2012): 67–87.

Information also provided Miller with opportunities to photograph women civilians and women in military service to convey the changes happening in women's lives during wartime.

The Imperial War Museum in its exhibition, *Lee Miller: A Woman's War* similarly acknowledges Miller's achievement as a photojournalist and correspondent. By looking at Miller's documentation of women's experiences of war, it introduces a new aspect to readings of Miller's work. Hilary Roberts, curator of the Imperial War Museum's exhibition, recognises that "Although she frequently photographed men, the majority of Miller's subjects were women, a fact that has been somewhat obscured by the understandable interest in her coverage of war on the front line".[319] Miller's coverage of women involved in the war was, according to Roberts, extremely diverse.

Photographing women from different social groups, Miller documents how war mobilised women from a variety of backgrounds to get involved in voluntary and military service. By examining her relationship with *Vogue*, I consider how Miller's wartime work is important as social documentary charting the changing socio-political landscape for women. By recording the war's impact on women, Miller, as a female artist, helps to modify women's social position and illustrate that identity is culturally constructed. I examine Miller's work, from her initial employment as a fashion photographer by *Vogue* in January 1940 to her work as a war photographer and correspondent in 1942, as socio-political and cultural documents charting the change, albeit temporary, in women's lives during war.

The first section explores Miller's relationship with *Vogue* in documenting fashion and its relevance during wartime. I ask what role women's magazines like *Vogue* played. During a time of rationing, why were Miller's fashion photography and *Vogue's* message about glamour relevant? The increase in *Vogue*'s wartime circulation demonstrated the need for *Vogue* and similar magazines to help women navigate the changing cultural, socio-economic and political landscape.[320] Moreover, *Vogue*'s response – to widen its remit to encompass advice on everything from fashion to household management – evidences clearly the magazine's importance for women during wartime. In December 1943, *Vogue* promised:

> Because the more difficult shopping becomes, the greater knowledge you need. The more precious new clothes grow the greater guidance you need. The more service your things must give you, the greater the forethought you must give them… Two and sixpence invested in *Vogue* will save many failures and many pounds.[321]

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[319] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 17.
[320] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 91.
[321] British *Vogue*, Dec 1943.

Fashion accessories, make-up and hats were used to offset fashion that was subject to simpler designs, less material and fewer embellishments due to economic constraints. Women's femininity was promoted more fervently than before against the "de-gendering" effect of wartime fashion. In some respect, femininity was emphasised, especially by government initiatives, so as to avoid the masculinisation of women wearing uniforms and performing in what were previously considered to be male jobs. This was known as "beauty and duty", by which women were encouraged to look feminine for the sake of returning soldiers on leave.

Pat Kirkham, in her work on beauty and duty during the Second World War (2005), observes how cosmetics and daily beauty routines remained important for women. Penny Summerfield, on women's oral accounts of their wartime experiences (1998), makes a similar acknowledgement.[322] Many women used the war to reassert their femininity, using cosmetics and accessories to compensate for the restrictive fashions of utility clothing. In this, I argue, *Vogue* had an important role to play: one that was advisory, helping women negotiate the constraints of wartime rationing. With features such as "Fashions for Factories" (June 1941), "Smart Fashions for Limited Incomes" (March 1942) and "Accessory Factors" (May 1942), utility clothing and overalls for factories were promoted to women as fashionable items of clothing. Miller photographed for these features, using her skills as a portraiture photographer to promote these fashions and help encourage new ones, such as short hair. Through her photo-journalistic articles, Miller documents the important relationship between war and fashion and the role *Vogue* played in interpreting these fashions for women during the war.

With her experience of outdoor photography honed during her years in Egypt, Miller took to the streets to record women actively involved in defending Britain. In November 1941 Miller's assignments included photographs on location of women in the armed forces. In 1942 after the death of Condé Nast, who disliked outdoor shoots, Miller, alongside Cecil Beaton, was one of the first photographers to use this outdoor style in British *Vogue.* Consequently, the second section of this chapter explores Miller's work in capturing women's social changing roles and addresses Patrice and Margaret Higonnet's argument that women's redefined social roles during the war were temporary. This is an argument that adopts the metaphor of the double helix to explain women's social positions in relation to men's. Women's place in society, they argue, cannot be measured in isolation and must be correlated to men's changing roles during wartime. This will always place women in the secondary or subsidiary position. For this to change, they

[322] Pat Kirkham, "Keeping Up Home Front Morale: 'Beauty and Duty' in Wartime Britain," in *Wearing Propaganda: Textiles on the Home Front in Japan, Britain, and the United States, 1931–1945*, ed. Jacqueline M. Atkins (New Haven, Conn., USA; London, UK: Yale University Press, 2005), 205–27.

suggest a revision of the "hierarchy of received historiographical categories" that have tended to focus on the impact of war on women.[323]

More recent debates have applied a more nuanced approach with regard to the mobilisation of women's labour during the war. Penny Summerfield's book, which is based on women's oral accounts of their wartime experiences, is helpful in this debate. By collating a range of women's wartime accounts from a variety of backgrounds, it gives women a voice. It includes individual narratives describing the type of work women performed and the effect of this on their sense of self and identity. Summerfield's work engages with post-structuralist feminists, who impress the importance of language within social relations. By using language and meanings that are culturally constructed, identity is constituted within the framework in which an individual acts. This draws on Judith Butler's theories of gender and identity; Butler writes, "Construction is not opposed to agency; it is the necessary scene of agency, the very terms in which agency is articulated and becomes culturally intelligible".[324] In this instance, women's wartime accounts cannot be understood separately from the controlling forces of the social relations in which they operate, whether these include the family, war work or post-war expectations. This is a more convincing argument, as it considers women's experiences within the context of "total war" and addresses contemporaneous and multiple discourses concerning women's wartime lives: the private and local on the one hand, and public and national cultural products on the other.[325]

I argue that by photographing individual women in the armed forces who are actively engaging in a variety of tasks, Miller visually collates women's changing socio-political roles within a context of total war. In documenting their efforts, Miller records the various responses to the cultural discourses surrounding women and their identity during wartime. Miller's documentation of the WRNS for *Vogue*, and then later in her own book, *Wrens in Camera*, repositions women's achievements within the political historiography of war. Using Miller's original publication with an introduction by Mrs Vera Laughton Mathews, DBE, Director of the WRNS (1945) and the republished version with an introduction by Antony Penrose (2002), I analyse Miller's presentation of women in the armed forces. Miller's book outlines the potential of women and the social expectations of them after the war.

Miller's wartime photography is important, as it makes visible women's changing social roles. Her images also document what this meant for individual women, personally. In building their

[323] Higonnet and Higonnet, "The Double Helix," 45–46.
[324] Judith Butler, "Identity, Deconstruction, and Politics," in *Social Construction: A Reader*, ed. Mary Gergen and Kenneth J. Gergen (London, California and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2005), 130. Also in Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge 1990), 147.
[325] "Total War" during the Second World War involved a national mobilization of the country's resources. Warfare was prioritised over non-combatant needs and civilian resources and infrastructure became military targets.

confidence and independence, many women re-evaluated their own positions in society. In this instance, the work that many women carried out during the war *did* have long-lasting effects for women, even though it may not have hastened the changing socio-political landscape of post-war Britain.

2.1. Fashion, Femininity and War

Miller's fashion shoots for *Vogue* (1941–1944) document the socio-political landscape that many women had to navigate during the war. Expectations to both be at home waiting for their men to return and "do their bit" in the war highlights the contradictory advice that women received at this time. Narratives encouraging them to be mothers and carers as well as soldiers and workers emphasise the tensions within the cultural constructions of women's identities between their private and public roles. At the outbreak of war, keeping up appearances was considered to help morale and be a woman's duty. But Miller's fashion shoots and the editorial in *Vogue*'s 1941 issue also indicated that fashion is a socio-cultural construct influenced by contemporaneous factors: "Our belief that fashion is of its period, not superimposed by it".[326] Pre-war frills were replaced by more practical shorter skirts and even trousers. For articles about fashion in factories and utility clothing, Miller photographed the change in women's lives during wartime Britain in terms of negotiating fashion, femininity and war.

Lynn Hilditch in her thesis on Miller, "Wonder and Horror: An Interpretation of Lee Miller's Second World War Photographs as 'Surreal Documentary'", written in 2010, posits that many women used "layering" or "de-layering" as a form of "de-gendering" during the war.[327] This "de-layering" involved the removing of elements of femininity and identity or the substitution of a more male façade as a means to appear equal to their male counterparts in war. This erasure or temporary masking of gender, according to Jean Gallagher in *The World Wars Through the Female Gaze* (1998), became necessary in order to perform in a masculine world of war and technology. In her analysis of Miller's photographs of models, Hilditch references Jean Gallagher in stating how women "seem[ing] to disappear inside their clothes or into the built environment, these photographs recall the mimicry, the erasure of boundaries between figure and environment".[328] This de-layering, according to Hilditch, was achieved by wearing uniforms that allowed women to adopt a more androgynous appearance.

[326] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 209.
[327] Hilditch, "Wonder and Horror," 48.
[328] Jean Gallagher, *The World Wars Through the Female Gaze* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998), 78.

When analysing how Miller staged her photographs of models, Hilditch states that by using an environment of war, Miller challenged gendered assumptions about identity. In her analysis of the photograph *Medium Price Fashion* (June 1940), Hilditch explores how the model's stance, with arms straight down and head turned to the right, resembles that of a soldier standing in line for duty (Figure 19). She also suggests that "the model could be viewed … [as] an attempt to blend, or *camouflage* her into the surrounding architecture – a kind of wartime disguise whereby the woman *becomes* a part of the environment".[329] In this way, it is her gaze beyond the frame that attracts the viewer. Hilditch posits that Miller's attempt to portray the model as invisible contests the culture of *Vogue* and fashion photography, which focusses on the main subject: the model and what she is wearing.[330]

Figure 19 Lee Miller, *Medium Priced Fashion*, London, England, 1940, Lee Miller Archives.

Antony Penrose makes a similar observation about Miller's photographs of women in the WRNS in the republished version, *WRNS in Camera*. He writes in the introduction that the uniform conveys "anonymity [to] blanket … their individuality, with helmets and gas-mask cases taking the place of hats and handbags".[331] If this was the case and women wanted to remain unseen and obscure their femininity, why did *Vogue*'s readership increase during the war?

[329] Hilditch, "Wonder and Horror," 55.
[330] Hilditch, "Wonder and Horror," 55–56.
[331] Penrose, foreword to *WRNS* by Thomas and Howard Bailey, vii.

I believe that Miller combines fashion and war in conveying gender as performative. Women performed masculine tasks *and* retained their femininity. Retaining femininity was an important factor, for some women, in influencing their sense of self and becoming confident and active individuals alongside their male counterparts.[332] Hilditch posits that women masked their femininity in order to fit into a masculine world but, as Peggy Summerfield observes, some women resisted this attack on "de-gendering" and used the war to reassert their femininity.[333]

Juliet Gardiner makes a similar observation in her book on wartime Britain (2004). She writes:

> a bright slash of lipstick, softly waved hair and a lingering trace of perfume could be seen to represent the persistence of the feminine in a masculinised world of war, a sparky message of defiance, a feisty semaphore of hope, seen at the lathe, in the fish queue, in the air raid.[334]

Gardiner's point is persuasive; it goes some way to explain why *Vogue*'s subscription figures increased during wartime and demonstrates the importance of women's magazines during the war.[335] As Conekin has observed, after the glamour of the 1930s and the wartime promotion of a different image of femininity that involved simpler designs and uniform, many women were happy to follow *Vogue*'s advice on make-up, stylish hairstyles and inventive accessories.[336] This argument is similarly convincing, because it acknowledges femininity as an important aspect of women's identity during a time of slowing fashions.

In September 1939 women were encouraged to make the most of their looks. As *Woman and Beauty* stated, "We can go on being beautiful, charming, graceful. Beauticians, couturieres, dieticians and shops are carrying on as normal".[337] Moreover, as an article in *Picture Post* on Lee Miller and the preparations for a fashion shoot observed in October 1940, "fashion pays for planes and supplies". Its author, Anne Scott-James, outlines the importance of fashion photography during a time of war. She states that British fashion "maintains Britain's position as the world's greatest exporter of fabrics".[338] *Vogue* promoted a similar message:

> We believe that women's place is *Vogue*'s place. And women's first duty, as we understand it, is to preserve the arts of peace by practising them, so that in happier times they will not have fallen out of disuse. Moreover, we believe that women have a special value in the public

[332] Summerfield, *Wartime Lives*, 6.
[333] Summerfield, *Wartime Lives*, 6.
[334] Juliet Gardiner, *Wartime Britain: 1939–1945* (London: Headline, 2004), 578.
[335] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 91.
[336] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 111. Also see "They Have Been Here Before," British *Vogue*, Oct 1941, 33.
[337] *Woman and Beauty*, Sep 1939, cited in Julie Summers, *Fashion on the Ration* (London: Profile Books in partnership with IWM, 2015), 23. Unfortunately I could not see the original at the British Library as there was something wrong with the copy.
[338] Anne Scott-James, "The Taking of a Fashion Magazine Photograph," *Picture Post* 26 (Oct 1940): 22–25.

> economy, for even in wartime they maintain their feminine interests and thus maintain, too the business activity essential to the home front.[339]

Through features such as "Make the Most of Your Face" (February 1942), "Make a Habit of Beauty" (Summer 1944) and providing regular advice on make-up, how to apply it and where to purchase certain items, *Vogue*'s message was that women's vital contribution to the war effort was to maintain their beauty, or "beauty and duty", as it became known.[340] Women were encouraged to embrace their femininity to offset the masculinisation that many feared would happen to women by entering and adopting the world of war.[341]

The double-edged tenets of "beauty and duty" can be seen as reinforcing gender roles during wartime, with femininity seen as a morale-booster for soldiers on leave. However, as Pat Kirkham has rightly argued, these wartime hair and beauty regimes "formed an important part of women's everyday conversations and culture".[342] When faced with the constraints of rationing and the lack of new fashions, cosmetics were a morale-booster for women. Juliet Gardiner refers to the reaction of Nella Last (a wartime Lancastrian housewife who wrote a diary for Mass Observation) on hearing bad war news. Cheering herself up consisted of "slip[ing] on a gay flowered dress, an old one but I love it for its bright colours. I put rouge and lipstick on – I needed them for I looked a haggard sight". Nella Last recognised how the war had transformed her from "a retiring woman" to one "who uses too bright lipstick, and on dim days, makes the corners turn up when the lips will not keep smiling".[343] Applying cosmetics, as Nella Last recorded, was a way for many women to reassert their sense of self. Official government surveys of the period demonstrate a similar message. Two-thirds of all women were using cosmetics, the highest proportion of these being women under thirty and office workers. This did not go unrecognised by the government, which chose not to subject cosmetics to rationing.

Consequently, fashion magazines, including *Vogue*, played a significant role during wartime and, in fact, widened their sphere of concern. They covered everything from hairstyles and clothing for factory workers, to rationing and clothing economy, to advice on economic ideas for make-up and house management.[344] Taking over the editorship of *Vogue*, Audrey Withers promised her readers "the usual charming, civilised articles on fashion, manners and other things

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339 British *Vogue*, Sep 20, 1939, n.p. and 23.
340 Conekin, *In Fashion*, 102.
341 Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, ed. *Women in Twentieth-century Britain* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001), 314.
342 Kirkham, "'Beauty and Duty,'" 205–27. Also cited in Conekin, *In Fashion*, 103.
343 Nella Last, quoted in Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 578.
344 Summers, *Ration*, 23.

beside".[345] She viewed *Vogue*'s role as facilitating advice and guiding women through the socio-economic constraints of wartime. In September 1939, Withers wrote:

> We dedicate our pages to the support of important industries, to the encouragement of normal activities, to the pursuit of an intelligent and useful attitude to everyday affairs – and to a determined effort to bring as much cheer and charm into our life as possible. This, we are convinced, is the best contribution we can make to national defence.[346]

The editorship of *Vogue*, along with those of other women's magazines, understood the pressures on women and quickly adapted the magazine's fashions to wartime conditions, outlining as early as November 1939 the "immense charm in the robustness and shrewd commonsense of day clothes".[347] Renovation was a key word in the period 1939–1945, and the pattern book published by *Vogue* provided suggestions on how to achieve sophistication when faced with austerity. Slacks – trousers – became fashionable and featured in *Vogue* in 1939: "And if people accuse you of aping men, take no notice. Our new slacks are irreproachably masculine in their tailoring, but women have made them entirely theirs by the colours in which they order them and the accessories they add".[348] Here the discourse is not one of obscuring femininity but of embracing it. Advice on using accessories and colour offsets the "masculine" tailoring and identifies how individuality was important to women. Promoted as being practical for women, the language used to describe "slacks" is also one of style. Recognising the importance of style to women, *Vogue* continued to promote it even with the introduction of rationing.

Clothes rationing was introduced on 1 June 1941, as fabric and labour were to be used primarily for military purposes. Sixty-six coupons were awarded to each adult a year and coupons were exchanged after purchasing an item of clothing. In 1942 individuals were issued with their own ration book for clothes; the coupons were colour-coded so that an individual could not use them all at once. Green coupons could be exchanged from June 1942 and brown ones from 12 October 1942; the red ones could not be exchanged until 1 April 1943.[349] This system became even more complicated in August 1944 when the number of coupons was equivalent to forty-one coupons a year, two-thirds of the original number.[350] The *Vogue* pattern book and the features "Bargain of the Month" and "Smart Fashions for Limited Incomes" that appeared in each edition helped to address these constraints. Miller photographed for some of these features, including the lead

[345] Withers in *Vogue*, Sep 20, 1939, 8.
[346] Withers in *Vogue*, Sep 20, 1939, 23.
[347] *Vogue*, Nov 1939, 20.
[348] *Vogue*, Apr 17, 1939.
[349] Summers, *Ration*, 82.
[350] Summers, *Ration*, 89.

fashion spread and the full-page colour feature, of which, by 1944, Miller was in charge.[351] "How is chic to be maintained on an income much reduced?" *Vogue* asked, echoing the thoughts of many women on restricted incomes (Figure 20).[352] Miller's photographs of models in utility products provided the answer.

Utility clothes, labelled CC41 – standing for Clothing Control 1941 – were introduced in 1941. They were designed to be durable and used a certain amount of material. Dresses were only allowed two pockets and five buttons. Trimmings and embroidery were banned, and skirts of woollen dresses were limited to six seams and two inverted or box pleats, or four knife pleats.[353] Miller's photographs of models in everyday settings wearing "Marlbeck suit[s] cut on classic lines in a smooth Glen check, brown, beige, green", a "skirt with an inverted pleat" and "wool all-day dresses" presented utility clothing as flattering (Figure 20).[354] Miller's skill at using light compliments the clothes to their potential. Women's need to still appear "chic" was also recognised by the Board of Trade, which enlisted high-end London fashion designers to design the prototypes of utility clothes.[355]

BARGAIN
OF THE MONTH

An all-in-one jumper suit of pure, soft wool, in a choice of three colours—grey, green or beige—all good mixers. As skirt and top are attached, it has the advantage of the lower coupon value of a dress, while giving the appearance of a street suit. The jumper fastens with wooden buttons, is half-belted behind. 6 guineas, 11 coupons, from Harrods

SMART
FASHIONS
FOR
LIMITED
INCOMES

'How is chic to be maintained on an income much reduced?' The answer to this *cri de coeur* is: Utility Clothes. They are pretty, very reasonably priced, but, of necessity, shorn of those tricks of finish and fashion still to be found in more expensive things like Vogue's Bargain of the Month—a wise long-term investment if you have a little extra money to spend

Left. Marlbeck suit cut on classic lines in a smooth Glen check, brown, beige, green. The skirt has inverted pleats. 68s. 2d., 18 coupons at D. H. Evans, London; Webber, Oxford

Centre. Dereta coat, half lined, cosy in green wool. It has padded shoulders, tie-belt. 83s. 11d., 15 coupons. At Fenwick, London; Bon Marché, Liverpool; McDonalds, Glasgow

Right. Harella suit in flecked tweed, 95s. 11d. 18 coupons at John Lewis, London. Photographed among cigar-boxes and humidors at Savory's cigarette shop in New Bond Street

Left. Sunrie suit in wine and blue checked tweed. 97s. 5d., 18 coupons. At Peter Robinson. Photographed in Coty's New Bond Street Salon, now opening shorter hours

Centre. Rembrandt wool all-day dress in several good colours, with contrasting belt and buttons. 62s. 10d., 11 coupons. At John Lewis, John Barnes and Peter Jones, London

Right. Selincourt plaid tweed coat half lined, in heathery red, green and mauve. 95s. 2d., 15 coupons. At John Lewis, Peter Jones and John Barnes, London; Caleys, Windsor

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The British Library

Figure 20 Lee Miller, *Smart Fashions for Limited Incomes*, March 1942, British *Vogue*, 58–59, British Library Archives.

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[351] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 83.
[352] "Smart Fashions for Limited Incomes," British *Vogue*, Mar 1942, 58.
[353] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 106.
[354] "Smart Fashions," British *Vogue*, 58–59.
[355] Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls, and Consumption, 1939–1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 51–52.

Miller photographed models in the *Vogue* studio and in outdoor locations. She positioned models next to a hat stand with military officers' hats (Figure 21) and posing with a globe looking at Europe in November 1939. In October 1941, she situated models in a field with barrage balloons in the sky behind.[356] In these examples Miller's art in composition helps to promote *Vogue*'s message of style and elegance. Her images also acknowledge the changing social roles of women and promote women's active involvement in the discourse of war. Patricia Allmer has provided an interesting reading of Miller's wartime fashion shoots. In her chapter "Reading Miller's War Photography" in *Lee Miller: Photography, Surrealism, and Beyond* (2016), she explores Miller's use of maps or globes as a recurrent trope (Figure 22, page 88). Her analysis of Miller's images is framed by an interactional relationship between Miller's photojournalism and her modernist aesthetics, relating to her work in earlier surrealist circles. The trope of the map, Allmer argues, portrays "the ideological implications during a time of war of maps as symbols of power and as expressions of the sense of nationhood".[357] Cartography became a mode, on both sides, in which to promote nationalist (and national socialist) propaganda. Allmer also recognises how using globes in the photography of the period was part of a "wider fashionable tendency", referencing Cecil Beaton's portrait of Sir Adrian carton de Wiart (1944), again photographed in front of a map.[358]

Figure 21 Lee Miller, *Model with Hat Stand*, *Vogue* Studio, London England, 1939, Lee Miller Archives.

[356] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 81, 94–95.
[357] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 154.
[358] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 154.

Figure 22 Lee Miller, *High Fashion for Pidoux*, London, England, 1939, Lee Miller Archives.

Vogue's close involvement with the Ministry of Information also helped women to navigate their wartime roles whilst focussing on both the practical and the stylish. The magazine's description of a design sold by Fortnum and Mason encourages the idea that a jumpsuit does not have to be unflattering: "streamlined from neckband to ankle cuffs and with patch pockets on seat. Goggles, smart as sunglasses are worn where sparks fly".[359] Miller's image of a model wearing a factory overall, headgear and goggles accompanying a feature entitled "Fashions for Factories" (June 1941) promotes a similar message (Figure 23, page 89). The jumpsuit, a necessity for factory wear and complete with hat and protective goggles, is presented as a stylish outfit and adds glamour to the context of war. The image has been taken from the back of the jumpsuit, with the model facing away from the camera. This allows the buttons down the back of the suit to be seen together with the hat, goggles and scarf used to tie up the hair. The model's pose is striking: her head is turned to the side, she faces to the left, and her right hand is placed artfully in one of the back pockets. Miller's use of a blank white background helps to heighten the appeal of the outfit and, as Summers observes in relation to outfits promoted in *Vogue*, its practicality.[360]

[359] *Vogue*, Jan 1940, cited in Summers, *Ration*, 61.
[360] Summers, *Ration*, 61.

Figure 23 Lee Miller, *Fashion for Factories*, *Vogue* Studio, London, England, 1941, Lee Miller Archives.

Kate McLoughlin, in her paper in the *Journal of War and Culture Studies*, makes an interesting observation about wartime clothing and women's identity. She writes that slacks, dungarees and women's overalls, although practical and a necessity for wartime, should not be seen as de-sexualising or masculine. In the light of second-wave feminism, she states that rather, they should be read as "liberatingly sex-neutral" and challenging of women's identity as culturally constructed.[361] *Vogue*'s negotiation of slacks helps articulates the freedoms women were beginning to experience in roles that were, until the start of the war, considered predominantly part of the masculine sphere.

Vogue's promotion of short hair was one such example documenting changing social attitudes. Long curled hair had been the fashion at the outbreak of war, but due to the dangers of working in factories with long hair, the Ministry of Labour called for a ban on such hair. "Fashions for Factories", published in June 1941, also helped to promote women's safety in the workplace. Miller photographed a model to encourage women to improve such safety. With the model's hair covered and tied back, Miller's image, with the support of her editor Audrey Withers, reinforces

[361] Kate McLoughlin, "Glamour Goes to War: Lee Miller's Writings for British *Vogue*, 1939–45," *Journal of War and Culture Studies* 3, no. 3 (2010): 338.

the government's propaganda posters that aimed to persuade women to protect their hair. Miller also photographed *Vogue* model Margaret Vyner, whose hair had been styled by Raymond of Grafton Street as part of a *Vogue* feature, "Short Hair Is News Again", in October 1941.[362]

Audrey Withers recounts how she was contacted by Whitehall to help out. She wrote:

> Women's magazines had a special place in government thinking during the war … So a group of editors were frequently invited to briefings by ministries that wanted to get across information … And they sought advice from us too – telling us what they wanted to achieve it. We were appealed to on fashion grounds. The current vogue was for shoulder-length hair. Girls working in factories refused to wear the ugly caps provided, with the result that their hair caught in machines and there were horrible scalping incidents. Could we persuade girls that short hair was chic? We thought we could, and featured the trim heads of the actresses Deborah Kerr and Coral Browne to prove it.[363]

In February 1942, Miller's appealing solarised images of Deborah Kerr, Coral Browne, Elizabeth Cowell (the BBC's first female television announcer) and *Vogue*'s features editor Lesley Blanch accompanied a feature entitled "Make the Most of Your Face".[364] Audrey Withers also ran features on turbans, sleek hairdos and draped cloche hats, announcing them as "the latest looks from Paris". The impact of this feature and similar ones, according to Harry Yoxall, *Vogue*'s managing director, was that "within a few months … accidents had disappeared from our workshops".[365]

Vogue similarly promoted hats as giving clothes a certain amount of elegance and style, as these also were not subject to rationing. Christina Probert, writing about 1940s headwear, states that it became "women's banner of individuality".[366] As Maggie Wood observes, hats allowed women "to bring a touch of individuality to their appearance".[367] Probert's and Wood's observations are significant in recognising how individual agency was important to women. *Vogue* addressed what Condé Nast had announced in New York: "the serious challenges that have been going on in the life, interests, and psychology of women".[368] Miller had photographed several shoots dedicated to hats. "Hats Follow Suit" (September 1942) features a series of models wearing hats

[362] "Short Hair Is News Again," part of a feature entitled, "They Have Been Here Before," British *Vogue*, Oct 1941, 36-37.
[363] Withers, *Lifespan*, 51.
[364] "Make the Most of Your Face," British *Vogue*, Feb 1942, 38–39.
[365] Harry Yoxall, *A Fashion of Life* (London: Heinemann, 1966), 153.
[366] Christina Probert, *Hats in Vogue Since 1910* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1981), 44.
[367] Maggie Wood, ed. *We Wore What We'd Got: Women's Clothes in World War II* (Exeter: Warwickshire Books, 1998) 5.
[368] Condé Nast, quoted in Caroline Seebohm, *The Man Who Was Vogue: The Life and Times of Condé Nast* (New York: Viking, 1982), 354.

positioned inside the centre of playing cards.[369] The images present women in profile wearing a variety of hats. They are promoted as being a versatile accessory that will go with any outfit, adding a touch of elegance. Her image *Today's Standard* (April 1943) captures a model in portrait wearing a suit, gloves and hat. The angle of view is from above the model in order to highlight the hat itself. The image promotes the impact that a hat can have on an outfit, and constitutes a powerful message that style is still possible.

Uniform became a popular stylish and fashionable statement for women. May Smith (a twenty-four-year-old primary-school teacher living in Derbyshire) recorded in her diary the effect that uniform was having on women: "Almost every girl and woman is swaggering around the streets in her khaki stockings and costume".[370] As *Harper's Bazaar* proclaimed in March 1942, "It's the fashion… to wear service uniform if you can, whether it's the ATS, the WRNS, the WAAF, the Red Cross or the WVS – you who wear it are the fashionables of today".[371] Here "classic chic" and practicality dominated fashion, and from January 1940 uniforms in *Vogue* were promoted as being the latest fashion, with a focus on style.[372]

The uniforms varied for each organisation but, with this focus on style, some were specially designed. The Women's Voluntary Service (WVS) was the largest women's organisation during the war and played a key role in the evacuation scheme in 1939. Lady Reading, believing in the necessity of a uniform for her volunteers, convinced the London couturier, Digby Morton, to design a uniform. This consisted of a suit, blouse and overcoat. She also approached Harrods asking them to make and supply the uniform. Members were eventually provided with both a summer and a winter outfit. Fortnum and Mason also catered for female officers. They developed and patented the 'Fortknee' garment for drivers; this was a short stocking knitted from the finest wool to be worn over the knee and thigh in case skirts rose up and exposed the driver's legs.[373] The Land Army's uniform consisted of seventeen different items of clothing and footwear. The recruiting posters, with fawn corduroy breeches (cut like jodhpurs) and khaki coloured dungarees, were designed to look appealing, as to see a woman in trousers was still unusual.[374] With the WRNS, silk stockings were part of the uniform. To be handed four pairs of stockings whilst living with coupons was an influential factor in joining the WRNS, as Colin McDowell, author of *Forties Fashion and the New Look* (1997), observes.[375]

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[369] Lee Miller, "Hats Follow Suit," British *Vogue*, Sep 1942, 50–51.
[370] May Smith, diary entry for Nov 28, 1939, in *These Wonderful Rumours!* Ed. by Duncan Marlor with an introduction by Juliet Gardiner (London: Virago, 2013), 57.
[371] *Harper's Bazaar*, "It's The Fashion," Mar 1942, 23.
[372] *Vogue*, Jan 1940, 6, 58, 59.
[373] Summers, *Ration*, 53.
[374] Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 523.
[375] Colin McDowell, *Forties Fashion and the New Look* (London: Bloomsbury, 1997), 56.

The most popular service was the WRNS; perhaps because, as Julie Summers recognises in her book on wartime fashions (2015), "Its members … got what was generally agreed to be the smartest kit – flattering and chic".[376] Looking at pictures of the uniform, one can understand its appeal: its lines are indeed flattering and its hat elegant. This is evidenced by the novelist Barbara Pym, who in 1943 joined the WRNS and wrote about her excitement at receiving her uniform: "My hat is lovely, every bit as fetching as I'd hoped".[377] Hilary Wayne, a fifty-six-year-old woman quoted in *Hearts Undefeated. Women's Writing of the Second World War*, edited by Jenny Hartley, articulated a similar response. She found dressing up in in her uniform for the first time exciting.[378] Barbara Cartland (a member of the ATS, St John's Ambulance Service and the WVS) similarly commented on the uniforms in her autobiography *The Years of Opportunity, 1939–1945*: "I thought the WRNS uniform very smart, the WAAF passable and the ATS hideous".[379]

The importance of the uniform to women is revealed in Miller's photograph of a female ATS worker (1940) commissioned by British *Vogue* at a time when the ATS was suffering a recruitment crisis. The portrait depicts a full body image of an ATS worker in uniform. Its composition is effective; Miller's use of lighting highlights the uniform complete with bag, helmet and pack on the back. The unknown sergeant is pictured in a sitting position from her right side. This aims to flatter the uniform as well as the ATS sergeant. Wearing the cap and complete with lipstick, the sergeant looks even more striking due to the blank wall she is positioned in front of and her slightly angled face looking away from the camera. This ensures the viewer's attention is drawn to the worker and her uniform. Here, as Hilary Roberts acknowledges, Miller "applies the techniques of fashion photography" in an attempt to encourage women to volunteer.[380]

Menial duties, poor conditions and "unglamorous uniforms" were contributory factors to the low numbers who volunteered for the ATS.[381] Recognising the need to improve conditions and smarten its image, newly appointed ATS directors launched a campaign to increase the numbers of women enlisting. This is evident in Miller's portrait of another ATS servicewoman taken later in 1941. Miss L. M. Stanley is photographed wearing her ATS uniform, the shot taken from the waist (Figure 24, page 93). Most notable is the change in hat. Instead of the soft cap with a peak,

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[376] Summers, *Ration*, 44.
[377] Barbara Pym, diary entry for Jul 20, 1943, in *A Very Private Eye: The Diaries, Letters and Notebooks of Barbara Pym*, ed. Hazel Holt and Hilary Pym (London: Macmillan, 1984).
[378] Hilary Wayne, quoted in *Hearts Undefeated. Women's Writing of the Second World War*, ed. Jenny Hartley (London: Virago Press, 1994), 112–13.
[379] Barbara Cartland, *The Years of Opportunity, 1939-1945* (London: Hutchinson, 1948), 163.
[380] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 67.
[381] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 67.

a smaller, more elegant diamond-shaped cap, peaked at the top, is worn to the side at an angle. Miss Stanley's hair is neatly tied up and complemented by the cap, conveying an image of sophistication. The cap is smarter and more stylish than its original, as is the rest of the uniform. In addition, as Becky Conekin notes, the image informs on the most appropriate hairstyles for enlisted women.[382] This had the desired effect, as by December 1943 the ATS had 200,000 women working as auxiliaries and 6,000 as officers and 80% of the Army's driving and vehicle maintenance was done by women.[383]

Figure 24 Lee Miller, *ATS Coffiere*, *Vogue* Studio, Paris, France, 1941, Lee Miller Archives.

[382] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 86–87.
[383] Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 505.

Elizabeth Arden introduced a glamorous red lipstick[384] and Cyclax named one of its lipsticks "Auxiliary Red", stating that it was "the lipstick for service women".[385] There was also a new make-up range for those "who had to stay in khaki" called "Burnt Sugar". Peggy Sage advertised "a discreet … subtle range of pale [nail] polish shades for those in uniform".[386] The introduction of these new make-up ranges further acknowledges the relationship between fashion, style and uniform, and *Vogue* provided tips on how to apply cosmetics for best results. Referring to the most effective way to apply lipstick, it advised:

> Our own pet way of using it is to apply a spot of cream underneath it, then the lipstick applied with a brush, then another spot of cream on top, then pat or two with a lip tissue. And we swear by it.[387]

This combination of glamour and war was promoted to women with the message: "Every woman's a heroine in these days, but with an undeniable hint of sex appeal".[388]

So popular were uniforms, that by 1940 *Vogue* was running advertisements for costumes for the home front "with a military touch". As Julie Summers records, the tailors C. & M. Sumrie offered to make clothes for women "tailored by a MAN'S house". Depicted alongside this advertisement was a dark blue woolly flannel trouser suit with a narrow calk pinstripe design.[389] Such images of femininity proved popular with women and this new fashion seemed to represent the ethos of the country, with women feeling empowered by their uniform: "all the smartest suits and coats … cut on military lines, with broad padded shoulders, straight fronts, and moderately flared skirts, which had a well-placed pleat at the back".[390]

Louis Katin – husband of Zelma Katin, who wrote an autobiography, *"Clippie". The Autobiography of a War Time Conductress* in 1944 – describes how attitudes towards his wife changed during the war as a result of her conductress uniform. He states: "She commands people. She directs and controls them. She has joined the great army of uniformed workers who minister to the public, and the postman and the policeman are her natural allies".[391] As Louis Katin notes, uniforms helped blur class boundaries and attitudes to women: "up till now you've

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[384] Paul Fussell, *Wartime: Understanding and Behaviour in the Second World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 149.

[385] Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 580.

[386] Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 580.

[387] British *Vogue*, Apr 1940, 52.

[388] Summers, *Ration*, 164.

[389] Summers, *Ration*, 56.

[390] Jane Waller and Michael Vaughan-Rees, *Women in Wartime. The Role of Women's Magazines 1939–1945* (London: MacDonald Optima, 1987), 86.

[391] Zelma Katin, *"Clippie". The Autobiography of a War Time Conductress*, in collaboration with Louis Katin (Ipswich: Adam Gordon, 1995; originally published by John Gifford, 1944), 103.

only seen her at work in the home … But now, all at once something big has happened”.[392] This also documents the effect that Zelma in uniform had on him personally; the uniform seemed to confer on her an unfamiliar persona of authority. Zelma also noticed the change in attitude towards her, realising how her uniform gave her status and commanded respect.[393]

As Zelma notes, wartime fashion, which negotiated femininity and the masculine world of uniform, was also significant in terms of class. Juliet Gardiner records that many women felt a sense of equality in wearing uniform, which led to a sense of comradeship amongst them. Uniform acted as a levelling force and promoted a unified approach of “being in it together”: a democracy that was for some “a great relief”.[394] The adoption of uniform by Princess Elizabeth, who joined the ATS, also helped to promote this ethos. Dressed in their uniforms, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret mixed amongst the crowd undetected during VE celebrations. Reflecting upon the event as Queen, Elizabeth stated that “it was one of the most memorable nights of my life”. She also recalled: “I remember lines of unknown people linking arms and walking down Whitehall, and all of us were swept along by tides of happiness and relief”.[395]

Julie Summers makes a similar observation about wartime fashion. She recognises that it “helped accelerate the growth of mass market fashion and … sat well with the changing social attitudes towards equality and benefitted society at large at all levels”.[396] Before 1939, slacks and trousers (except perhaps in London) were considered inappropriate and “rather racy”, but by the end of the war women in trousers were widely accepted.[397] Audrey Withers similarly recognised the impact of utility clothing on the history of British fashion in that styles were produced for a mass market, similar to how they are produced today.[398] The utility scheme, according to Withers, produced elegant simple lines and styles that had high-end designers involved for the first time.[399] As Kate McLoughlin observes, *Vogue*, “through its promotion of fashion and style, constructed an alternative set of expectations and possibilities for women”, all of which Miller captured in her wartime fashion shoots.[400]

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[392] Katin, “Clippie,” 103-104.
[393] Zelma Katin, *“Clippie,”* 102–3.
[394] Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 513–14.
[395] Guy Walters, “How a Young Queen Elizabeth Partied on VE Day,” *Telegraph*, May 8, 2015, accessed Aug 4, 2016, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sponsored/culture/a-royal-night-out/11592265/true-story.html.
[396] Summers, *Ration*, 177.
[397] Summers, *Ration*, 177.
[398] Audrey Withers, in Summers, *Ration*, 178.
[399] Summers, *Ration*, 178.
[400] McLoughlin, “Glamour Goes to War,” 338.

2.2. Documenting Women's War Work

During the war, Miller's documenting of women and their contribution to the war effort helped to demonstrate women's capacity. She documented women in the armed forces participating in essential war work. Photographing women mastering heavy manual work in factories and using guns, Miller presents the changing socio-political landscape of the war and its effect on women's social roles. I argue that by photographing women's wartime contributions, Miller gives voice to women's individual subjective experiences and celebrates, as Antony Penrose observes in his foreword to *WRNS in Camera*, "ordinary people doing extraordinary things".[401] This theme is continued in Miller's war correspondences (covered in the next chapter), which adopt a similar approach in her reporting on the French people and their resistance to occupation.

Miller's photo-essays of women in the armed forces, and her own book *Wrens in Camera* (1945), are instrumental in making visible women's wartime efforts. Her range of assignments allowed her to photograph women in civilian and military roles, and she travelled up and down the country to cover women's efforts on the home front.

Miller photographed the *Vogue* offices in September 1940, workers in Cadogan Square in July 1941 and women in Oxford in May 1941.[402] She travelled to Eversholt in Buckinghamshire in July 1941, on to RNAS Yeovilton, HMS Heron (Somerset) in September, and photographed members of the WRNS in Greenwich in November. In March 1942 Miller visited White Walton in Berkshire and in August she photographed the Women's Home Defence Corps (WHD) in London. From there, she travelled to RAF/USAAF Polebrook in Northamptonshire in October 1942 and to Camberley, Surrey in January 1943. She also photographed US Army nurses in Churchill Hospital in Headington, Oxfordshire, in the same month. In March 1943, Miller photographed the Land Army at Chessington, Surrey and ATS workers in London. Miller then visited Shoeburyness in Essex, RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire and the WVS in Cambridge in May 1943. At some point during 1943, she also photographed members of the WRNS in Scotland at an undisclosed location. She continued photographing the WRNS in March 1944 and at HMS Pembroke, Mill Hill in Barnet in June 1944. The British Red Cross sorting parcels office was one of the last locations that Miller visited (in July 1944) before going to France.

Margaret and Patrice R. Higonnet observe that whilst women's roles were redefined to address the onset of war, so were men's. They use the metaphor of the double helix to describe the position of women in wartime. In this model, gender relations continue to be binary: men are still

[401] Penrose, foreword to *WRNS* by Thomas and Howard Bailey, vii.
[402] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 204. The factual information in the rest of this paragraph is also taken form Roberts, 204-208.

leading women, even though women appear to have taken a step forward. The parameters alter to accommodate women's move from the home to the home front. In wartime, "women's productive capacity becomes more valuable than their role as a form of reproductive national property"; thus, they are enabled to enter the public world of work.[403] "War", claim Higonnet and Higonnet "alters the vocabulary of feminine dependence (as it moves from the 'home' to the 'home front'), and it may even improve the lives of some working women".[404]

Higonnet and Higonnet also argue that war strengthens gender segregation and "the symbolic politicization of women's reproductive function".[405] Consequently, although seeming to make moves forward socially, in comparison with the position of men, whose active engagement in war is represented as more important, women's position remains subsidiary or secondary.[406] Moreover, in studying the impact of war on women, Higonnet and Higonnet recognise women are presented as passive objects in the field of political historiography. Only by looking to the experiences of women can masculinist history – a physical or diplomatic event – be redefined. It is as agents and through a discourse of ideological struggle that women are given their voice and can redefine war's temporal limits.[407] More recent and contemporary debates, which have focussed on individual stories, provide a more nuanced account of women's wartime experiences.

As Summerfield discovered, many women found the war liberating, as it provided new opportunities and "freedom that we didn't really have before". They believed it had "changed" and "matured" them.[408] In the personal accounts that Summerfield has gathered, women who were involved in non-combatant and military roles, saw themselves as part of the heroic narratives surrounding women during the war. As one woman (Moira Underwood) exclaims, her work in the factory "added a bit of excitement to life".[409] Summerfield also highlights that women's own accounts express their frustration with the limits imposed on them: they wanted to be seen in combatant roles equal to men and to break free of the gendered definitions of their part in the war effort.[410] Using women's narratives as a starting point is a more effective approach, as it considers women's individual wartime situations and experiences.

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[403] Higonnet and Higonnet, "Double Helix," 36.
[404] Higonnet and Higonnet, "Double Helix," 35.
[405] Higonnet and Higonnet, "Double Helix," 37. They reference how women are encouraged both to become images of femininity, nurturing upholding family values and participate in what would have been considered male enterprises.
[406] Higonnet and Higonnet, "Double Helix," 35.
[407] Higonnet and Higonnet, "Double Helix," 46.
[408] Summerfield, *Wartime Lives*, 276.
[409] Moira Underwood, quoted in Summerfield, *Wartime Lives*, 101. Moira was born in 1908 and was supporting her widowed mother and herself as a hairdresser before the war.
[410] Summerfield, *Wartime Lives*, 82.

There is no doubt that Miller's work helps bring into focus women's desire and capability to take up what were considered men's jobs and roles in society. She successfully conveys to the viewer women negotiating their private and public roles. As discussed previously, Miller had already developed several approaches to photography during her time in Egypt, one of which was social documentary. This adeptness placed her in an advantageous position, as a proficient photographer, to develop her career as a war photographer and convey social images of women's responses to the Blitz. Portrayed in stoic and heroic positions, Miller documents them competently and effectively participating in their war work and aligns herself with these women, conveying empathy with their achievements. As Antony Penrose observes in his foreword to Thomas and Howard Bailey's *WRNS in Camera*, "Her own pre-war experience as a photographer enabled her to understand better than most the difficulties they experienced working in a male dominated world".[411] Audrey Withers recognises (along with Alex Liberman, American *Vogue*'s artistic director) that Miller helped transform *Vogue* into a magazine that reflected current affairs as well as fashion during the war.[412]

During Dorothy Todd's editorship (1922–1926), *Vogue* had adopted a similar approach in an attempt to humanise and broaden the magazine. To reflect the apparent taste of the British public, Todd included pieces form the Bloomsbury Group (Virginia Woolf, Clive Bell and Roger Fry).[413] Although *Vogue*'s covers embraced modernist designs, the magazine's reviews and criticisms were still fairly conservative. Under Dorothy Todd, *Vogue*'s reviews and criticisms "caught up with the modern aesthetic promoted by its covers" and reflected contemporaneous trends and issues.[414] Edna Woolman Chase recognised that Todd had a "gift, amounting to genius, for spotting winners. She was the first to show Cocteau's paintings in England and the first to both publish Gertrude Stein's verse and photographs of Le Corbusier's architecture".[415]

Miller's photo-essays in 1940, which supplemented her fashion photography, engage with the reader in a similar way by highlighting women's war work and their changing social positions. Miller portrayed the unglamorous but essential work of office staff to support British morale and, from 1941, she largely portrayed women in the armed forces. By using her knowledge of outdoor location shoots, Miller was able to present women in a variety of active roles: from members of the WHD holding guns to women in uniform in planes, in lorries, on merchant vessels and working with specialised equipment. The use of portraiture in these images draws the viewer's attention to the women and their wartime efforts.

[411] Penrose, foreword to *WRNS* by Thomas and Howard Bailey, vii.
[412] Withers, *Lifespan*, 53.
[413] Nicola Luckhurst, *Bloomsbury in Vogue* (London: Cecil Woolf, 1998), 18.
[414] Luckhurst, *Bloomsbury*, 11.
[415] Edna Woolman Chase in Luckhurst, *Bloomsbury*, 20.

The images also highlight the new circumstances in which Miller was photographing using the lightweight medium-format twin lens reflex Rolleiflex camera. This allowed more mobility, could be easily carried and captured photographs of women during wartime within everyday settings. Whilst American and French *Vogue* had adopted outdoor locations in fashion shoots since the 1930s, it was Miller and Cecil Beaton (another photographer for British *Vogue*) who were amongst the first to adopt this style of fashion photography in British *Vogue*. This move from the studio to outdoors, although revolutionary for the magazine, was a natural progression for Miller, who had mastered the Rolleiflex outdoors earlier in Egypt. The representation of "real women" in real situations can be seen as helping to bring about the shift in fashion photography from representing stylised unreal women to representing real women with purpose and involved in an active, intelligent life.

In order to analyse Miller's images concerning women's efforts on the home front, I have divided them into two categories: civilian work and women in the armed forces. I start with the images of civilian workers before moving on to photographs of women in the armed forces. This approach adopts a chronological order and traces Miller's continuing development in documenting women's social positions. Miller's coverage of women's wartime work is extensive, so I have focussed on a few images from each category. By reading them as social documentary, I argue that her pictures of women civilian workers in the Blitz capture the impact of the Blitz and convey their determination and the sheer strain of working in an environment of total war. Photographing women's participation in the armed forces portrays women's competence and potential when participating in sometimes physically demanding activities.

2.3. Women's Civilian Work

Penny Summerfield, in her collection of accounts of women during the war, recognises that the focus on women's war work has tended towards their efforts in the armed forces. Consequently, as Summerfield observes, this has led to "Women … who did not move into military service, or indeed alter their opportunities during the war … [being] perhaps the least remembered of all wartime workers".[416] Perhaps because these women did not ascribe to the heroic discourse outlined for women during the war, narratives on this type of work have been marginalised in comparison with those on the more active roles in which women participated. Hilary Roberts observes that by documenting such work, Miller has repositioned the importance of these women in the war effort as equal to those involved in military service.[417] Roberts' argument is

[416] Summerfield, *Wartime Lives*, 95.
[417] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 57.

convincing, as Miller's breadth of the home front of women not involved in the armed forces helps to visually promote the efforts of these women.

Miller's image of British *Vogue* staff working in a cellar of their Bond Street office in *Here is Vogue, in Spite of it All!* conveys the harsh conditions in which office staff had to work during the Blitz (Figure 25).[418] This image portrays the impact of the Blitz, which started on 7 September 1940. Roberts observes that this image sought "to inform the United States while supporting British morale".[419] There are two fold-away chairs, two women sitting on the stairs, three under the stairs and two at desks with typewriters. Seven workers are photographed in the small space under the stairs, four of whom are looking directly at the camera, the others working. Only one can be considered to be smiling; the others have almost blank expressions, which helps to emphasise how tired and weary they are. This resilience during the Blitz is evident in a letter that Miller wrote to her parents in December 1940 about the bombing of the *Vogue* offices. She writes:

> It became a matter of pride that work went on. The studio never missed a day, bombed once and fired twice – working with the neighbouring buildings still smouldering – the horrid smell of wet charred wood – the stink of cordite – the fire hoses still up the staircases and we had to wade barefoot to get in.[420]

Miller presents the strength and resistance of *Vogue*'s workers against the harsh reality of total war.

Figure 25 Lee Miller, *Here is Vogue, in Spite of it All!*, Bond Street shelter, London, England, 1940, Lee Miller Archives.

[418] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 78.
[419] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 78.
[420] Lee Miller, Letter to Florence and Theodore Miller, n.d. (probably Dec 1940) cited in Penrose, *Lives*, 108.

Elizabeth Bowen, who wrote the novel *The Heat of the Day* during the Blitz, records a similar experience in her essay "London 1940". Living through the Blitz herself, she writes how "resistance becomes a habit".[421] She describes what it is like to live with the imminent threat of bombing and death:

> We shall be due, at to-night's siren, to feel our hearts once more tighten and sink. Soon after black-out we keep that date with fear. The howling ramping over the darkness, the lurch of the barrage opening, the obscure throb in the air … No, these nights in September nowhere is pleasant. Where you stay is your own, how you feel is your fight … Fear is not cumulative; each night it starts from scratch.[422]

Bowen records the strange and unnerving atmosphere of the Blitz. She captures the intensity and the personal battle fought by individuals who wake up to "the theatrical sense of safety" and "these fuming glissades of ruin".[423] Bowen, writing from personal experience, captures the whole experience of the Blitz and its shattering impact on the city and its inhabitants. The verbs "tighten", "sink", "lurch" and "throb" emphasise the abject fear that exists in the atmosphere as Bowen describes living in the Blitz as an attack on the senses.[424] Her essay also articulates the devastation of an attack and the relief and numbness of having survived. It describes an appreciation of the moment, of "dahlias blaz[ing] out their colour" and "waterfowl" in "the sunshine".[425] Bowen also epitomises the sheer exhaustion of living and surviving when, on hearing a detonation go off somewhere else, "we have no feeling to spare".[426] Miller's contribution to *Grim Glory* (1941) highlights a similar message of suffering and quiet resilience. As I have discussed in the previous chapter, *Grim Glory* introduces "a dose of reality" in the hope of persuading the US to enter the war.[427]

Alex Liberman also observed how this approach to the Blitz was otherwise often lacking from the magazine. Whilst *Vogue* tried to keep an upbeat tone, its coverage of the Blitz was written, as Conekin observes, in "straightforward prose", adopting a journalistic style when reporting events.[428] As Condé Nast announced from New York when reflecting on the war, "we must not allow people to think of *Vogue* as a really frivolous periodical, unaware of the serious challenges … [facing] women".[429] Miller recognised this fact and sometimes felt frustrated by Edna

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[421] Elizabeth Bowen, "London, 1940," in *Collected Impressions* (London and New York: Longman, Green and Co. 1950), 218.
[422] Bowen, "London, 1940," 218–19.
[423] Bowen, "London, 1940," 219.
[424] Bowen, "London, 1940," 218.
[425] Bowen, "London, 1940," 220.
[426] Bowen, "London, 1940," 220.
[427] Edward Murrow, preface to *Grim Glory*, n.p.
[428] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 88.
[429] Condé Nast, quoted in Seebohm, *Condé Nast*, 354.

Woolman Chase's lack of understanding or empathy with their situation. Later, Miller wrote to her brother Erik and his wife, Mafy:

> I'll never forget wonderful Edna Chase, the doyeness – the goddess – the former of taste, discretion and elegance – sending a memo to us in the bombing, that she noticed we weren't wearing hats and she didn't approve that we dyed our legs and made lines up the backs to simulate stockings.[430]

Working in sometimes unpleasant and difficult conditions became part of daily life and a reminder of the constant threat that London's citizens faced; a threat that Naomi Mitchison – a Scottish writer and poet – records had become "a habit".[431]

Miller's images of civilian workers convey a similar message about working in difficult locations. Her image of a typist working in a stairwell at the British Red Cross headquarters in Cadogan Square (May 1941) makes use of the unusual angles she had previously deployed in her Egyptian photography (Figure 26, page 103). The focus of the image is the domestic environment (rather than an office space) in which the woman works. Highlighting the versatility of workers having to work wherever was necessary, this image also provides a contrast to the *Vogue* offices and the effect of being blitzed. It helps to highlight the different conditions in which women worked across the country. The space in which the worker in Cadogan Square is photographed is larger than the small cellar space of *Vogue* and depicts a bigger desk and a comfortable armchair just behind the typist. Although the photograph similarly presents a worker typing near a stairwell, it depicts a more pleasant working environment. However, as Roberts observes, it also conveys the mundane nature of office work when compared with work outside or in the armed forces.

By photographing women on location, Miller is also able to convey the opportunities that war afforded to many women. Her photo-essay of wartime in Oxford (May 1941) is indicative of the opportunities women had for studying as a result of the absence of male students (Figure 27, page 104). Miller's focus on the university's long corridor containing three women heightens the emptiness of college in wartime. The angle of the camera, slightly tilted upwards, helps to heighten the space even further and demonstrates Miller's adept use of the camera, angles and perspective to capture the loneliness of a once busy place. The silence is also something on which Bowen and other wartime artists remark as being indicative of wartime Britain. Bowen refers to it as "an enormous thing" that "appears to amaze the street".[432] Graham Sutherland – an

[430] Lee Miller, Letter to Erik and Mafy Miller, cited in Penrose, *Lives*, 109.
[431] Naomi Mitchison, quoted in Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 496.
[432] Bowen, "London, 1940," 217.

artist – references the silence associated with the stillness after a bombing. He states that he will "never forget … the silence, that absolute dead silence, except now and then a thin tinkling of falling glass".[433] Miller's image reflects Bowen's and Sutherland's experiences of the Blitz and records the loss and the void of wartime Britain: the loss of an individual's loved ones, home and personal possessions.

Contrasting the urban environment with what was happening in the countryside, Miller's photograph of Lady Mary Dunn at Castle Farm (July 1941) depicts Lady Mary running the family farm. Whilst running the household and looking after the children, she also cared for a young evacuee and hosted country breaks for traumatised and exhausted civil defence workers.[434] The three pairs of wellington boots in the foreground and the books on a chair behind Lady Mary emphasise the multiple roles she had to negotiate. The relaxed poses of Lady Mary and her son also portray a cosy home setting, which is indicative of a family portrait. By bringing together the public and private worlds of female workers, Miller presents both the social and political. Her use of documentary and straight photography is effective in recording the changes happening, and women's identity, as mobile and historically located.

Figure 26 Lee Miller, *Office Worker at Red Cross General Headquarters*, Cadogan Square, London, England, 1941, Lee Miller Archives.

[433] Roger Berthoud, *Graham Sutherland: A Biography* (London: Faber and Faber, 1982), 100.
[434] Lady Mary Dunn features in a story called "Rest Cure Through Your Hospitality – For Civil Defenders," British *Vogue*, Oct 1941, 38-39.

Figure 27, Lee Miller, *Female Students*, Oxford, England, 1941, Lee Miller Archives.

2.4. Women in the Armed Forces

This section analyses a collection of Miller's photographs of women in the armed forces, which she began to cover in November 1941. In order to emphasise the extent of women's contributions, Miller travelled all over the country, empathising in particular with the WRNS. Miller took photographs to portray "WRNS at work" for a *Vogue* feature and then spent two weeks in Scotland in 1943 at an undisclosed location. Here Wrens practised the skills of ship and submarine maintenance, Morse code and navigation. Her empathy is evident, as Burke observes, in her shadowing every aspect of their work. In his foreword to Thomas and Howard Bailey's *WRNS in Camera*, Antony Penrose observes how the photographs demonstrate an "intimacy … [which] shows a trust on both sides, and a shared sense of purpose".[435] In trying to get shots of the WRNS in action, Miller "nearly drowned", as she told her parents later, "or at least got damn wet stepping back to get a wider shot".[436] The importance of the WRNS' work is evident in Miller's photographs, some of which were held by the censors for security reasons.[437]

This interaction with the WRNs, along with David Scherman, a war correspondent for *Life* magazine, who worked on forthcoming books, inspired Miller to compile her own book on the

[435] Thomas and Howard Bailey, *WRNS*, vii.
[436] Lee Miller, Letter to Theodore and Florence Miller, Jan 23, 1944, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 2006, 217.
[437] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 217.

WRNS. Using some of the censored shots and those not published by *Vogue*, Miller titled her book *Wrens in Camera* (1945). Whilst this demonstrated her solidarity with them, as Carolyn Burke observes, it also helped Miller to solidify her status as a successful war photographer.[438] The book was published after Miller returned home from Europe; she was treated as a war hero by *Vogue* staff whilst her book helped to introduce her expertise to a larger audience. It was republished in 2002 with a foreword by Antony Penrose emphasising its continuing appeal. The final section in this version includes photographs of members of the WRNS today performing similar tasks and documenting the changes in tasks and training. One change included the use of weapons for security and ceremonial purposes in the 1990s.[439]

Although the text accompanying her photographs is not by Miller, it is probable that she would have had some editorial control, similar to *Grim Glory*. Miller divides her book into sections depicting the variety of roles and tasks in which the Wrens partake: "Pro. Wrens and Boats' Crew in Training", "Signals", "Orders and Observations", "The Housekeepers", "Supply and Demand", "The Technicians", "Transport", "Miscellany" and "Recreation and Quarters". By presenting the WRNS participating in a variety of roles previously associated with their male counterparts, Miller presents women as multifaceted and competent individuals. Antony Penrose observes "In her later shots Lee reasserts their [Wrens'] personalities as they appear in different roles" whilst observing that her earlier shots convey their anonymity.[440] For him, the uniforms remove any trace of their gender so that they can competently engage in a man's world. As I have outlined previously (in the section Fashion, Femininity and War), this was not the case. By portraying women in a variety of roles, Miller reinforces female capability and ideas of gender and its performativity. Consequently, male and female genders are not fixed in a binary position.

Carolyn Burke makes a similar observation about Miller's *Wrens in Camera*. She writes:

> She [Miller] photographed them welding, servicing planes, testing radio equipment, and casting gears in the glowing furnace of a submarine depot … women in touch with pure energy. The book fulfils its function as a morale booster, while honouring by formal means, its subjects' engagement with power.[441]

The introduction by Mrs Vera Laughton Mathews, DBE – Director of the WRNS – that appears in the original version of *Wrens in Camera* (1945) also outlines the capabilities of the WRNS. This does not appear in the republished version; only the portrait of Vera Laughton Mathews remains. Having served as the WRNS unit officer at the Crystal Palace Training Depot in 1918–

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[438] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 217.
[439] Thomas and Howard Bailey, *WRNS*, 93.
[440] Antony Penrose, foreword to *WRNS* by Thomas and Howard Bailey, vii.
[441] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 217.

1919, she was recommended by her predecessor, Dame Katherine Furse, for her leadership qualities.

Laughton Mathews' introduction is important for its contemporaneous context, as she acknowledges the achievements of the WRNS and "Miss Lee Miller", whose "beautiful photographs taken 'in camera' ... help tell the story" of, as Laughton Mathews refers to it, "the Silent Service".[442] Laughton Mathews recognises the importance of Miller's book in visually highlighting women's war work and the role they played in the war effort. She writes: "they could do not only the jobs expected of women, but all kinds of technical and mechanical work…".[443] By entering the world of war, women's achievements in the WRNS, as Laughton Mathews and Miller hope, "will lead them into paths they might otherwise have feared to pursue". The book, as Laughton Mathews testifies, demonstrates the "potentialities of women-power for the future".[444] It is these potentialities that Miller outlines in the book.

Wrens in Camera focusses on the training and newly acquired skills that would equip women, not only as members of the WRNS but also for civilian life. Miller presents the WRNS working with signals and as technicians, supply assistants and cooks. Through her photographs, the WRNS are presented performing physical and mental activities alongside male counterparts within the navy. In the photograph *Sailing Orders* (undated), the female boarding officer explains "routeing instructions" to the captain of a merchant ship. She is photographed in a standing position whilst the captain is seated next to her in his cabin; they are surrounded by technical instruments, which help to emphasise the working environment. The boarding officer's hand is pointing to the instructions and demonstrates the active role of the Wren in conveying important information.[445]

Miller's image *The Young Entry* (1943) conveys a similar message (Figure 28, page 107). Here a Wren officer is instructing a class of male sea cadets in aircraft recognition with an epidiascope, charts and models. Once more, the Wren is surrounded by technical diagrams of war craft. The angle of the image is such that the viewer is positioned as a member of the class, sitting amongst the sea cadets. The viewer's line of vision is drawn towards the instructing Wren, the only face that can be seen in the picture. She is serious and Miller places her in a central position to emphasise her importance.[446] In a similar image, *Naval Routine* (undated), Miller has photographed another classroom situation, this time showing the instruction of WRNS in distinguishing the badges of the service. In contrast to the previous image, Miller has taken the

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[442] Vera Laughton Mathews, introduction to *Wrens*, ix.
[443] Laughton Mathews, introduction to *Wrens*, viii–ix.
[444] Laughton Mathews, introduction to *Wrens*, ix.
[445] Miller, *Wrens*, 30.
[446] Miller, *Wrens*, 65.

picture from a side angle so that the viewer can see not only the face of the female instructor but also every face of those in the female class. Miller's intentions are clear: her images aim to make visible women's efforts and their ability to learn and be competent individuals.[447]

These images of members of the WRNS in a working environment signify a competent female presence within a masculine environment. By composing photographs of women in front of latticed windows and windows with more than one counterpane, Miller visually nuances the multifaceted nature of women's identity and their ability to adopt many different guises and roles. Miller's photograph *Window Day* (1944) evidences this premise.[448] A Wren is positioned half inside and half outside, whilst cleaning a tilted window. The cleaning of the window is a reminder of women's domestic responsibilities whilst participating in war work. Miller makes use of the same unusual angles she adopted in her Egyptian pictures. One week's domestic work was part of the training in which WRNS had to participate alongside training in new areas, such as working with technical equipment.

Figure 28 Lee Miller, *Wren Instructing Young Sailors in Aircraft Recognition* (*The Young Entry*), Scotland, 1943, Lee Miller Archives.

447 Miller, *Wrens*, 15.
448 Miller, *Wrens*, 16.

Miller's sensibility to the domestic is also evident in her depiction of the WRNS' living quarters in her picture, *War!* (1944) in the section "Recreation and Quarters" (Figure 29, page 109). Miller photographs a Canadian Wren's quarters, showing a bed and personal belongings. The angle of the picture emphasises the helmet of the Wren, which is next to a frame containing two photographs belonging to the Wren. The first is a wedding photograph of herself and her husband; the second depicts the Wren in her uniform: the fact that it sits next to her wedding photograph is an acknowledgement of its importance. By including the photograph frame in her image, Miller helps to illustrate the personal narratives of women involved in the armed forces in a similar way to Summerfield's inclusion of oral narratives.

The image also highlights the way in which many women had to negotiate their private and public lives, especially women who had dependents, such as children under fourteen or an elderly father. In this instance, some married women (those with dependents) were classified as "immobile" and would not be asked to leave home to contribute to war work. They could, however, work locally in factories or as tram drivers.[449] The need for labour led to the introduction of nurseries to allow mothers to work, although this caused concerns over women's role in caring for the family. Government-sponsored nurseries did rise from 14 in 1940 to 1,345 in July 1943, but they were closed after the war.[450] Grandmothers and neighbours were subsequently encouraged to care for the children of working mothers.

In *Hungry Wrens* (undated), Miller depicts the social side of life in the WRNS in a photograph of a group of six women chatting, relaxing and having tea in their Nissen hut.[451] They are visual signallers. The table is set in a domestic setting, the walls behind them corrugated iron and in juxtaposition to the cosy setting of the table set for tea. This Nissen hut is described by Miss K. M. Palmer as "both their home and their duty post".[452] The curtains at the window, the shelves of books and the vase of flowers to the right of the photograph signal domesticity and contrast with the harshness of the corrugated wall and the women's working environment. It is also a visual reminder of the benefits that women in the armed forces received: the regular three meals a day when their families had to live on reduced rations, free medical and dental treatment, three weeks' paid leave a year and free travel warrants.[453] The image conveys their work life and their comradeship with one another.

[449] Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 517.
[450] Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 519.
[451] Miller, *Wrens*, 76.
[452] Miss K. M. Palmer in Miller, *Wrens*, 68.
[453] Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 510.

Figure 29 Lee Miller, *War! Wrens' Living Quarters*, United Kingdom, 1944, Lee Miller Archives.

This comradeship is also evident in *Bunks and Counterpanes* (undated), in which the WRNS share sleeping quarters. For some women, and especially for girls aged seventeen, this was the first time they had spent time away from the family. Moreover, as Juliet Gardiner observes, some had not even slept in their own beds before joining the service and they experienced homesickness. Middle-class girls fared better, as they had often experienced a boarding-school education.[454] As Miller's photograph depicts, the WRNS slept in iron beds that were 2 feet and 6 inches wide and arranged head to toe. Twenty-four of these were usually arranged in one room with horsehair pillows and "biscuits" – mattresses made up of three straw-packed cushions.[455]

Miller also emphasises the equality amongst the WRNS, who shared quarters and slept in bunks.[456] Gardiner includes an account from a woman who joined the armed forces during the war. Stephanie Batstone – a clerk before the war – recalls the women with whom she mixed when training to become a visual signaller in the WRNS:

> Into the melting pot we all went – conscripts, volunteers, engaged, married, widows, single. Zara from Brazil, Rita from Balham, Cathy from Anglesey, Marianne from Barclay's Bank in Aberdeen, Joy from Sainsbury's cold-meat counter in Birmingham, Clodagh from milking her father's cows near Kinsale in County Cork, Maureen from being a hotel chambermaid in Dublin, with the bright lights and butter and German Embassy, Joan from helping her mother run a boarding house in Skegness, Judy straight form school, Pauline from an estate's agent's in Wood Green, Celia from the Prudential in Exeter, Vivienne, a second-

[454] Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 510.
[455] Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 511.
[456] Miller, *Wrens*, 70.

year nurse at Leeds General Infirmary, Patricia from a repertory company in Belfast, Betty who thought life was fun, Irene who wore glasses.[457]

Batstone's metaphor of a melting pot aptly describes the mix of women from different backgrounds who eventually came out "roughly the same size and shape". She continues: "We had entered the only real democracy. We weren't pretending to be equal, we were equal and might have to go on being equal for years and years. It was a great relief."[458] Miller's picture *An Unusual Breed of Wren* (1941) in the republished version of *WRNS in Camera* depicts a similar scene.[459] It is a group shot of women in their fire outfits, complete with hoses. Unlike the other photographs taken by Miller, this shot is staged and does not present the women in action. They are all smiling, which emphasises the comradeship between women as well as between men in the armed forces. It is a visual reminder that women were coming together from different backgrounds and experiencing the same training and treatment. At the same time, the image emphasises women's stamina, physical strength and power.

This positional stance of women's identity and power is reinforced through Miller's portrayal of WRNS members' interaction with equipment and technology. Due to the problems in Anti-Aircraft (Ack-Ack) Command in 1940, women had been employed in operational roles. They had proved their capability in manning searchlights and fire-control instruments. As Caroline Haslett, a distinguished engineer, stated when reassuring commander-in-chief General Sir Frederick Pile, "Women could … in fact, do almost everything except fire guns".[460] The manpower crisis had initiated changes in the WRNS and allowed women to participate in hazardous work, to train as welders and carpenters to repair ships, to work in communications, meteorology and radar, and, from 1941, to serve as crews on tug boats and harbour launches.[461]

Life Line (1943), depicting a Wren preparing and checking equipment, engages with images of empowerment; or, as Higonnet and Higonnet would suggest, when measured against their double helix model, it provides the illusion of empowerment. The image depicts WRNS working equipment and a woman working with machines that sometimes could be dangerous. Factory work also proved to be fatal for some women who worked with explosives. Mabel Dutton, who worked in an ordnance factory near Warrington, filled cartridges, bullets and bombs. She was nineteen years old when she started work and was assigned to group one, known as the Suicide Group. She worked with highly explosive gunpowder and recalls a terrible accident:

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[457] Stephanie Batstone, quoted in Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 513–14.
[458] Batstone, quoted in Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 514.
[459] Thomas and Howard Bailey, *WRNS*, 60.
[460] Caroline Haslet, quoted in Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 505.
[461] Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 508.

> I didn't know what I was carrying. There was a massive explosion and I dropped the box and was shocked to see a young woman thrown through a window with her stomach hanging out. Luckily the box, which contained detonators, did not explode or we would have had our legs blown off. I was sickened.[462]

WRNS workers also participated in preparing and checking charges – another dangerous job.

The section of Miller's book entitled "The Technicians" emphasises women being at one with the new technology involved with the duties of a Wren. Miller portrays WRNS workers operating machinery and equipment as if it is part of them or an appendage to them, which advances the potential of women when they are not defined by their gender. Another image that articulates this is *Wrens Signal by Aldis Lamp* (1944), in which two women are photographed on the deck of a ship using an Aldis lamp to signal out to sea (Figure 30, page 112). The woman using the lamp appears almost plugged into or fused with the lamp, the lamp becoming the means of her sight, whilst the other is holding a pair of binoculars, just about to look through them or having just looked through them. This engages both women with the active act of looking and, more importantly, looking at war. Constructed of metal and covered in wires, the ship itself appears to be mechanised; what is noticeable is how comfortable and relaxed the women appear, almost seeming to merge with and become one with the ship.

Amongst Miller's work, her image of Margaret Bourke-White at RAAF/USAAF Polebrook in October 1942 is particularly effective, as it depicts Bourke-White with camera in hand and constitutes a visual representation of women's mobility (Figure 31, page 112). Bourke-White was a war correspondent and became the first woman to fly on a US Army Air Force combat mission. Hilary Roberts has observed that Bourke-White represented everything that Miller wanted to be, inspiring Miller's determination to get the story.[463] This determination is reflected in Miller's image of Bourke-White crouched under the belly of an American B-17 bomber with her camera. The viewer is also conscious of Miller's own unusual position, crouched under the plane to take the picture of Bourke-White photographing a bomber plane. Bourke-White is framed by the plane's underbelly, which is evidence of Miller's own expertise in capturing images from unusual angles. This image represents Miller's portrayal of women's determination and capability in their wartime roles, and it also represents her own mobility, engagement and contribution.

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[462] Mabel Dutton, quoted in Gardiner, *Wartime Britain*, 521; also Mabel Dutton, "Working on the Suicide Squad: At Risley Royal Ordnance Factory," *WW2 People's War*, BBC Home, accessed Aug 20, 2016, http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/07/a2311507.shtml (2004).
[463] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 109.

Figure 30 Lee Miller, *Wrens Signal by Aldis Lamp*, England, 1944, Lee Miller Archives.

Figure 31 Lee Miller, *Margaret Bourke-White*, US Airforce base, England, 1942, Lee Miller Archives.

2.5. Conclusion

Not surprisingly, this period of Miller's life and work is one that many critics have thoroughly researched. However, Miller's relationship with women during wartime presents a new perspective on her work that is other than simply a surrealistic expression of art or trauma. Rather, her photography for *Vogue*, from wartime fashion to women in the armed forces, documents the changing socio-political and cultural landscape for women. By documenting women's war work "in camera", Miller makes visible women's individual contributions and capabilities.

By spring 1944 Miller was the leading photographer for *Vogue*. The May issue included five photographs by Cecil Beaton, three by Norman Parkinson and eight colour and fourteen black-and-white photographs by Miller.[464] However, Miller was frustrated by the text that accompanied her photographs and in August 1944, after badgering Withers, she began writing for British *Vogue*. Her first piece was on Edward R. Murrow, an American broadcast journalist in London. Miller found this a more difficult task than she had initially thought. She described her efforts as "imitating … writers, who I've been pretending are démodé".[465] As Withers discovered, and as I explore in the next chapter, Miller as a war correspondent would go on to write features that gave the magazine "validity in wartime".[466]

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[464] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 130.
[465] Lee Miller, "Citizens of the World – Ed Murrow," British *Vogue*, Aug 1944, 35, 82.
[466] Withers, *Lifespan*, 53.

3.
Writing the War:
Combat, Civilians and Collaborators

> The pattern of liberation is not decorative. There are the gay squiggles of wine and song. There is the beautiful overall colour of freedom, but there is the ruin and destruction. There are problems and mistakes, disappointed hopes and broken promises. (Lee Miller, 1945)[467]

This chapter explores Miller's achievement as a war correspondent. It continues the focus of the previous chapter on exploring women's war work but emphasises Miller's activities as a war correspondent. Miller's position, as Kate McLoughlin (2010) suggests in her academic paper on Miller's war dispatches in the *Journal of War and Culture Studies*, was unusual.[468] Miller was both "unseen", as a war photographer behind the camera and dressed like a male soldier, and "seen" due to her striking physical appearance as a woman. Miller's heightened visibility made herself the subject of news; she acknowledged that she was known as the *femme soldat* (female soldier), always first to arrive at scenes of conflict to cover a story. I argue that this mixing of glamour and war provides essential insight into women's visibility and vision during wartime. My reading of Miller demonstrates that she worked within a documentary framework and refutes the dominant modes of interpretation that continue to associate her work with narratives of surrealism and unconscious processes.

The war and Miller's work during this period are areas of considerable academic debate. Annalisa Zox-Weaver (2003) and Paula M. Salvio (2009) have studied Miller's war-zone work with particular focus on her use of surrealistic rhetoric and framing devices. Through this, Zox-Weaver and Salvio try to rediscover Miller and her role as image-maker. Zox-Weaver, in her paper "When the War Was in *Vogue*: Lee Miller's War Reports" published in the academic journal *Women's Studies*, describes Miller's work as attacking the conventions of photojournalism. For Zox-Weaver, Miller's images of the horrors of war, rather than of heroic, Allied soldiers, contest representations of the war as a unified narrative to "support military objectives and home-front sacrifices".[469] This is heightened by the close proximity of the viewer to images and it challenges the notion of an objective observer when recording and documenting war.

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[467] Lee Miller, "Pattern of Liberation," British *Vogue*, Jan 1945, 27.
[468] McLoughlin, "Glamour Goes to War," 341.
[469] Salvio, "Uncanny Exposures," 523.

Zox-Weaver describes Miller's approach as "compassionate and intrusive, deeply sensitive and proactively curious".[470] It is one in which Miller's presence as a subject and her intimate understanding of such horrors are exposed. Consequently, Miller's wartime accounts have been read as "coded scenes of suffering with personal meaning" by Zox-Weaver.[471] The photographs are certainly intimate and often uncomfortable, especially in her depiction of corpses at the death camps. However, I would argue that her subjectivity is more evident in the writing that accompanies her images. Through her dispatches, her voice is explicit and she engages with her subject matter in a more personal and political way. She provides context to her images, which articulates her engagement as a war correspondent with the scenes and events she has witnessed, heightening the documentary nature of her work.

Paula M. Salvio has similarly explored Miller's writing in terms of her insight into trauma. Salvio provides a psychoanalytical reading of Miller's work in her paper "Uncanny Exposures: A Study of the Wartime Photojournalism of Lee Miller" in *Curriculum Inquiry.* Salvio writes that the horrors Miller witnessed "allowed her the expressive power to represent traumatic experiences that resist being integrated into larger social and cultural contexts". In comparing Miller's work with surrealistic tropes, Salvio presents it as fragmentary, similar in nature to the effects of trauma.[472] For Salvio, Miller's writing conveys the horrors of a battlefield through a powerful emotional response that possesses all the intensities of traumatic memory. As Salvio observes, Miller's own experience of trauma allows her to present scenes of war as shocking and provocative, but she does so with empathy.

For Salvio, the use of portraiture in Miller's photographs also represents the trauma of war as "less unreal", its effects more penetrating.[473] Whilst helpful in identifying Miller's work as an unconscious expression of trauma that is unable to fit into any social or cultural narrative, this reading continues to locate her wartime work in the context of surrealistic photography and her own personal circumstances. To read Miller's work through a psychoanalytical lens, similar to that applied to her pre-war work, continues to present her as a passive agent with no control over her actions. It also ignores, or at least subsumes, the uniqueness of Miller's achievement as an artist and her skills as a writer and photographer.

Rather, as Becky E. Conekin has observed in her academic paper on Lee Miller ("Lee Miller: Model, Photographer and War Correspondent in *Vogue* 1927–1953"), Miller's writing focusses

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[470] Zox-Weaver, "Miller's War Reports," 134.
[471] Zox-Weaver, "Miller's War Reports," 134.
[472] Salvio, "Uncanny Exposures," 521.
[473] Salvio, "Uncanny Exposures," 531.

on the scenes around her and includes richness in sensory descriptions.[474] This reading is more pertinent to Miller's work and her developing career as a correspondent, as it acknowledges her previous photographic skills as influential on her writing. Her landscape scenes are described in their panoramic beauty, whilst her intimate stories of individuals are reflective of her social portraiture work. To read Miller's writing is to see and feel the diverse scenes, environments and people about which Miller wrote and in which she found herself.

Kate McLoughlin makes a similar observation in her paper on Lee Miller's wartime writing in "Glamour Goes to War: Lee Miller's Writings for British *Vogue*, 1939–45" (2010). She suggests that Miller's "professional experience brought to her understanding of visuality a depth greater than that found in works of other contemporary correspondents".[475] This situates Miller's photography within a documentary framework and challenges previous readings of Miller's work as simple expressions of surrealism. McLoughlin's paper is helpful here in positioning Miller alongside her male counterparts in the field in terms of experiencing peril and witnessing scenes of conflict. McLoughlin explores how *Vogue* utilised Miller's celebrity status as a *femme soldat* to cover the war. This exploration of Miller as both image and image-maker engages with similar concepts of celebrity today. Celebrity status has become a mode in which to engage in political issues in an attempt to enact change. Angelina Jolie is an example of this: she engages with decision-makers on global displacement and the plight of refugees. She was made a Special Envoy of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres in April 2012. Miller's celebrity status sees both Audrey Withers and Miller mythologising her role as image-maker who engages with contemporary socio-political issues.

As Audrey Withers observes, Miller's journalism gave *Vogue* "a validity in wartime it would not otherwise have had".[476] Under Withers' stewardship and vision, *Vogue* became "the Intelligent Woman's Guide to much more than fashion".[477] As she outlines in her autobiography, *Lifespan*:

> It was all very well encouraging ourselves with the conventional patter about keeping up morale, providing entertainment and so on, but magazines – unlike books – are essentially about the here and now. And this was wartime, Lee's photographs and reports taking the magazine right into the heart of conflict.[478]

Miller's articles were unlike any that had previously been published by *Vogue* and, as Withers observes, helped to take the magazine from its focus on fashion "right into the heart of the

[474] Conekin, "Lee Miller," 105.
[475] McLoughlin, "Glamour Goes to War," 336.
[476] Withers, *Lifespan*, 53.
[477] Withers, *Lifespan*, 57.
[478] Withers, *Lifespan*, 53.

conflict”.[479] As discussed in the previous chapter, Miller’s photo-essays of women’s war work helped to visualise and make prominent women’s war work. As war correspondent, her dispatches helped to confirm the importance of *Vogue* and its participation in the war effort. For Audrey Withers, Miller’s writing was “the most exciting journalistic experience of my war. We [*Vogue*] were the last people one could conceive having this type of article, it seemed so incongruous in our pages of glossy fashion”.[480] As Withers observes, Miller helped to contextualise *Vogue*’s contemporaneous importance in a similar way to Dorothy Todd during her editorship (1922–1926), who included essays from Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Group. Miller’s correspondences enabled Withers to transform *Vogue* into a current, influential and relevant magazine covering news journalism in addition to fashion for women.

This, I believe, securely aligns Miller’s work as social documentary. The first section of this chapter explores Miller as a *femme soldat* in her position as photographer, seeing and documenting war whilst being seen. Her striking appearance exposed her status as a female correspondent, which Miller enjoyed and used to her advantage. Along with other female war correspondents, Miller was subject to restrictions, one of which was the exclusion from combat zones. Miller’s disregard for the rules and her female presence as a war correspondent conferred on her a celebrity status. David Scherman, in his foreword to *Lee Miller’s War*, which was edited by Antony Penrose, is an important source in my reading of Miller as celebrity. As a contemporary war correspondent for *Life* magazine who was working alongside Miller, Scherman acknowledged that Miller was a “phenomenon”.[481] I argue that this celebrity status, coupled with her previous professional experience in fashion and photography, places her in a different position from other contemporaneous female correspondents who worked for newspapers or current affairs magazines.

After considering Miller’s position as *femme soldat*, I move on to exploring some of her war dispatches during the liberation of France: “Unarmed Warriors” (her first dispatch in France in September 1944, covering the work of US Army nurses), “The Siege of St Malo” (her dispatch in October 1944, which placed Miller in front-line action), and “Paris… Its Joy… Its Spirit… Its Privations” in October 1944.[482] With a focus on the social impact of war, I note that Miller’s early dispatches are similar to those of other female war reporters. Unable to cover front-line action, they focussed instead on local stories and the heroic exploits of nurses in the field.

[479] Audrey Withers, quoted in “Audrey Withers,” *Telegraph*, Nov 11, 2001, accessed Jul 16, 2016, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/1361096/Audrey-Withers.html.
[480] Audrey Withers, quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 118.
[481] David Scherman, foreword to *Miller’s War*, ed. Antony Penrose, 7.
[482] In American *Vogue*, these articles were entitled, “U.S.A Tent Hospital in France,” 204-211, 219, “France Free Again,” 92-94, 129-133, 136, 143, and “Paris,” 95-97, 147-148.

Miller's second report, "The Siege of St Malo", however, sees Miller reporting from a front-line position. Accidentally caught in the conflict due to misinformation received that the battle was over, she experienced the same threat as the soldiers and witnessed the first use of napalm. In her dispatch entitled "Paris… Its Joy… Its Spirit… Its Privations", I examine Miller's mixing of aesthetics, fashion and war as she reports on French women's use of fashion as a form of resistance to the Nazi soldiers. I also consider Miller's reporting of the treatment of female collaborators, who were often used as scapegoats.

The final section explores Miller's dispatches on entering Germany and the death camps, Buchenwald and Dachau: "Germany – The War that is Won" (June 1945) and "Hitleriana" (July 1945).[483] In these correspondences, I examine Miller's use of juxtaposition, in text and images, as a mode through which to articulate and intensify the German atrocities and deconstruct the Nazi myth. She contrasts the beauty of the land with the barbaric acts of its people, and the German people with the French citizens and prisoners of war to heighten further the unimaginable atrocities witnessed in the death camps.

Similarly, Patricia Allmer's book *Lee Miller: Photography, Surrealism, and Beyond* (2016) explores Miller's deconstruction of Nazi aesthetics in her chapter on Miller's wartime photography. Allmer explores Miller's recurrent trope of the map as a surrealistic device to challenge nationalist, national-socialist and patriarchal claims to territory. Allmer continues to explore this premise through Miller's use of modernist images of the Leipzig suicides and German landscapes. Allmer also identifies Miller's use of photojournalism to expose Nazi atrocities. This analysis is important, as she recognises the documentary nature of Miller's photography to record the historical moment and, as Allmer suggests, the "impossibility" of representation in the wake of Nazism.[484]

Scholarly research interrogating Holocaust images have also addressed the difficulty of documenting, giving meaning to and interpreting the Holocaust. These images create an "ethical abyss" rather than understanding. As Andrea Liss writes in her book on photography and the Holocaust, *Trespassing Through Shadows: Memory, Photography, and the Holocaust* (1998), "Such photographs do not always bring the viewer to look, to really see, nor can they be counted on to create emphatic bonds between the contemporary subject and the person from the unimaginable past".[485] Sharon Sliwinski's research published in the *Journal of Visual Culture* (2010) on Miller's death-camp photography makes a similar observation. For Sliwinski, Miller's

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[483] In American *Vogue*, the articles are slightly different, entitled "Germans are Like This," Jun 1, 1945, 102j, 192-193 and "BELIEVE IT," Jun 1, 1945, 103-105.
[484] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 164-165.
[485] Andrea Liss, *Trespassing Through Shadows: Memory, Photography, and the Holocaust* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), xii.

photography fails to provide a transparent view of the scenes witnessed.[486] Miller's writing is, therefore, important in providing context through which to understand Miller's images and the full extent of the horrors she witnessed. I argue that Miller's blunt text heightens the starkness of her pictures. It also enables the reader to make a more intimate connection with the images, as her dispatches add first-hand testimony to scenes that are sometimes beyond the scope of understanding.

Unlike her photography, which required an objective approach, Miller's writing is an extremely personal articulation of her own thoughts and feelings about the scenes that she witnessed. For Mark Haworth-Booth in *The Art of Lee Miller*, Miller's use of first-person narration is effective in that it allows readers to connect with her. This connection is important, as Haworth-Booth recognises, as it allows readers to trust Miller's accounts when documenting the atrocities of the war. Haworth-Booth reads her work as personal testimony that translates the impact of war. He explores the anger in and the visceral nature of her writing, which reflects dominant contemporaneous discourses of the time and acts as testimony to her photographs accompanying her later reports in Germany. Haworth-Booth's argument focusses on the documentary nature of Miller's dispatches and acknowledges Miller's voice in documenting the war, its victims and its atrocities.[487] This reading of Miller's work does not succumb to the over-psychologising that Zox-Weaver and Paul Salvio have adopted in their interpretation of her work. It also reinforces the personae and performativity of Miller through her writing, her association with the American soldiers and her celebrity status.

3.1. The Femme Soldat

Miller is celebrated as a female war correspondent in the exhibition of her work at the Imperial War Museum, *Lee Miller: A Woman's War*. Writing reports and experiencing first-hand scenes of conflict during the liberation of France, she occupied a similar position to her male counterparts. In doing so, she demonstrates the potential and capabilities of women to change their socio-political status during the war and for today. Receiving a certain amount of popularity, Miller was imbued with a celebrity status analogous to that of today's celebrities. For Kate McLoughlin, Miller's high visibility confers her unique status when compared with other women. In mixing glamour and war, Miller occupied a dual position of being seen and seeing.[488] Using this to her advantage, Miller experienced front-line action, photographing intimate images of the victims and perpetrators of war. Miller demonstrates the impact of being a female

[486] Sharon Sliwinski, "Visual Testimony: Lee Miller's Dachau," *Journal of Visual Culture* 9, no. 30 (2010): 391-392.
[487] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 176.
[488] McLoughlin, "Glamour Goes to War," 341.

celebrity and the opportunity it gave her to engage with and "voice" contemporary socio-political debates.

In December 1942 Miller was accredited to the US Armed Forces as a war correspondent for *Vogue*.[489] In July 1944 Withers asked Miller to write a story of US nurses working in the field hospitals in Normandy; it was entitled "Unarmed Warriors" and was accompanied by fourteen photographs in the September issue of *Vogue*. In September that year Miller experienced front-line combat when she covered the siege of St Malo and the liberation of Paris. Her dispatch "The Siege of St Malo" appeared in October's issue of *Vogue*. She set up base in Room 412 of the Hotel Scribe, which became her base of operations for the war. In September and October 1944 Miller covered the first fashion show in Paris since the war in her dispatch, "Paris… Its Joy… Its Spirit… Its Privations". The German surrender on the Loire was also covered: "How the Germans Surrender". In November 1944 Miller travelled to Belgium and Luxembourg. From January to March 1945 she covered conditions in Paris and Belgium and wrote "The Pattern of Liberation". She then photographed the liberation of Alsace in her dispatch "Through the Alsace Campaign" in April 1945.

Accompanying US forces, Miller advanced into Germany in April–May 1945.[490] She photographed and wrote her dispatch about the Buchenwald and Dachau concentration camps, "Germany – The War that is Won" (appearing in *Vogue* in June 1945). Miller and David Scherman photographed each other in Hitler's bathtub in Munich. She also covered the destruction of Hitler's Berchtesgaden home in "Hitleriana" which featured in *Vogue*'s July issue. Miller then made her way to Denmark and briefly returned home. From September to December 1945 Miller returned to Europe without Scherman and spent the autumn travelling around Austria and Hungary. Here she photographed dying starving children in Vienna and covered the execution of László Bárdossy – the Hungarian prime minister from 1941 to 1942 – in Budapest. In January 1946 Miller continued travelling around Hungary before visiting Romania. After her accreditation and funding were removed, she returned home in February 1946.

David Scherman, in his foreword to *Lee Miller's War*, states that Miller's story was by no means "apocryphal".[491] Seemingly invisible as a war correspondent behind the camera, Miller's physicality, with her bright blonde hair and blue eyes, promoted a tangible female force. A photograph of Miller in her uniform in Normandy in 1944 reinforces Scherman's observations.

[489] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 206. The rest of the factual information in this paragraph and the next is taken from the same source, 206-212.
[490] Drusilla Beyfus. "Lee Miller: On the Front Line," *Telegrap*h, Sep 8, 2007, accessed Feb 15 2017, www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/3667801/Lee-Miller-on-the-front-line.html. Miller approached the British Army but the British did not permit women soldiers to work close to the combat zones.
[491] Scherman, foreword to *Miller's War*, ed. Antony Penrose, 7.

She is presented in a way that makes her appear like any other military personnel, but her cut-away helmet (designed to help her take photographs more easily) and make-up announces her female presence. When she was first seen by soldiers or civilians, their initial reaction was one of shock and then acceptance. Scherman recounts an instance when Miller asked directions from a military policeman:

> "Beats the shit out of me, Mac!" the M.P. replied, then did a wide-eyed double take at the passenger's blond hair, brilliant blue eyes and shapely ski-slide nose, and in a slightly awed voice, amended: "Scuse me. I mean, beats the shit out of me, Ma'am".[492]

Antony Penrose has also focussed on the impact of Miller's appearance on soldiers and local people. He writes, "Her baggy combat uniform was chosen to divert attention from her sex, but the lipstick and stray wisps of blond hair gave her away. They gazed at her with amazement and adoration".[493] This delighted Miller, who, in correspondence with Audrey Withers on August 26, 1944, references this mistake when recounting a parade of female collaborators. She consciously reshapes her image as the female soldier, writing: "In that I was leading the parade … the population thought a *femme soldat* had captured them." She reinforces this by adding, "I won't be the first woman journalist in Paris, but I'll be the first dame photographer, I think, unless someone parachutes in".[494] Miller had made a similar boast on a previous occasion when she was put under house arrest for ignoring the terms of her accreditation and witnessing front-line action. Finding herself under house arrest, Miller was not contrite: "I was the only photographer for miles around and I now owned a private war".[495] Aware of her status, Miller continued to strengthen her own myth and persona during the war by highlighting her position as the only female photographer present on the scene.

McLoughlin explores this concept in more detail, stating that "Miller's femaleness renders her presence *doubly* different".[496] Similar to those who have posited that uniform had a masculinising effect on women, McLoughlin observes that Miller's invisibility comes from her uniform. However, Miller's cut-away helmet revealed otherwise. Her helmet was intended to aid Miller's position as photographer (and, thus, the viewer) but, as McLoughlin notes, it contributed to her status as being seen; that is, becoming the viewed.

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[492] Scherman, foreword to *Miller's War*, 7.
[493] Penrose, *Lives*, 139.
[494] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 228.
[495] Lee Miller, quoted in Nancy Caldwell Sorel, *The Women Who Wrote the War* (New York: Arcade, 1999), 252.
[496] McLoughlin, "Glamour Goes to War," 341.

Figure 32 David E. Scherman, *Lee Miller, Fall of Citadel St Malo*, Brittany, France, 1944, Lee Miller Archives.

Accredited to the US War Department in 1944, Miller was given the same status as other female war correspondents, such as Helen Kirkpatrick, Ruth Cowan, Martha Gellhorn and Margaret Bourke-White (to name a few) to cover the liberation of Europe. Helen Kirkpatrick, an American, had a background in international affairs and in 1935 wrote for the *Manchester Guardian*, the *London Daily Telegraph*, the *Herald* and the *Express.* She became a war reporter for the *Chicago Daily News* in 1939 and was based in London. She accompanied the armed forces during the liberation of France and covered the destruction of Berchtesgaden.[497] Ruth Cowan was the first women to be accredited to the United States Army and had almost nineteen years of experience as a reporter. She was sent to Europe to cover "a woman's angle of the war", which meant reporting on nurses, hospitalisation, and civilians (but not the battles) to give a social dimension to the war.[498]

Martha Gellhorn worked for *Collier's Weekly* and had reported on the rise of Hitler. She covered the war in Hong Kong, Singapore, Burma and England. Unable to obtain official press credentials, she hid in a hospital ship bathroom and impersonated a stretcher-bearer to cover the Normandy landings. She was one of the first journalists to cover the Dachau concentration camp after it was liberated.[499] Miller had already photographed Margaret Bourke-White in 1942, crouching under an American B-17 bomber of the 97th Bomb Group. Bourke-White was a

[497] Sorel, *Women Who Wrote the War*, 13-15.
[498] Sorel, *Women Who Wrote the War*, 180-4.
[499] Sorel, *Women Who Wrote the War*, 21-24, 211, 272, 340.

female war correspondent already accredited to the US Armed Forces. Working for *Life* magazine, she was the first woman to be allowed to enter combat zones. She covered Germany's invasion of Russia and photographed the Buchenwald concentration camp.[500] These were a few of the women who documented the war accredited to the US Army. At the beginning of the war, in total 127 were accredited by the US War Department compared to none by the British.[501] Miller was the only correspondent representing a woman's fashion magazine.

These women, Miller included, occupied a similar space to their male colleagues. However, in their attempt to cover the liberation of Europe, many female war correspondents had to demonstrate determination and strength of will due to the restrictions that were placed on them. Maurine Beasley observes that female war correspondents were excluded from press briefings and had to wait to submit their dispatches until the men had submitted theirs. They were also excluded from combat. The penalties for disregarding the rules outlined for female war correspondents were harsh. They would be sent home and stripped of their accreditation.[502] For Joyce Hoffman this highlighted the distinct difference in treatment between male and female reporters.[503] She states that a man disobeying orders would find himself on the front page of the news heralded as a hero or win prizes, but a woman would be sent home in disgrace.[504]

Consequently, many women had to cover the war from a different perspective – the social aspect – recording its effect on civilians. Maurine Beasley observes that whilst these restrictions limited female reporters, they also changed the notion of what a war story could be. The efforts of women's auxiliary military forces became the focus for many female reporters. This is certainly true of Miller's first dispatch, "Unarmed Warriors", which covered US Army nurses and doctors attending to wounded soldiers. Likewise, Ruth Cowan focussed on local stories. Martha Gellhorn also focussed on war's impact on individuals. She wrote from the perspective of the victims, capturing "the sacrificial nature of war".[505] This is evident in her article on Dachau. For Martha Gellhorn, her personal aim in covering the war in Europe was to get to Dachau, despite the regulations and restrictions placed on female correspondents. Miller also ignored certain

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[500] Sorel, *Women Who Wrote the War*, 43-48, 177, 349.

[501] Sarah Blake, "Women War Correspondents," *Telegraph*, Jul 12, 2010, accessed Aug 4, 2016, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/7872900/Women-war-correspondents.html.

[502] Maurine Beasley in Kathleen McNenny, "Ruth Cowan," in *No Job for a Woman: The Women Who Fought to Report WWII*, Hurry Up Sister Productions (2016), accessed Aug 4, 2016, http://nojobforawoman.com/reporters/ruth-cowan/.

[503] Joyce Hoffman, *On Their Own: Women Journalists and the American Experience in Vietnam* (Massachusetts: Da Capo Press Inc. 2008).

[504] Joyce Hoffman, quoted in in Kathleen McNenny, "Ruth Cowan," http://nojobforawoman.com/reporters/ruth-cowan/.

[505] Martha Gellhorn in John Pilger, "The Outsiders: Martha Gellhorn (1983)." *Johnpilger.com*. The Films and journalism of John Pilger, 1983, video, 26:05, http://johnpilger.com/videos/the-outsiders-martha-gellhorn.

restrictions covering front-line action, Buchenwald and Dachau. This contributed to her position of *femme soldat*: a position that *Vogue* recognised and celebrated.

Realising their advantageous position with Miller as their war correspondent, *Vogue* capitalised on this. The introduction to "Unarmed Warriors", states that "Lee Miller, of *Vogue*'s staff, first woman photographer to visit Normandy, brought back these pictures, this account".[506] Moreover, *Vogue's* narrative emphasises Miller's mobility, placing her at the heart of action. In 1945 the May issue of *Vogue* boasted:

> Lee Miller went into Cologne on the heels of the capturing force – she climbed a tower of the Hohenzollern bridge and from behind the scant shelter of its balustrade took shots across the Rhine (the Germans were still using the east bank towers as observation posts). Facing round, she photographed the cathedral – blasted but unhit, though the bombed railway lies a road's breadth away.[507]

The use of multiple verbs to describe Miller's activities reinforces Miller's role as an active participant. McLoughlin observes that "the piled-up verbs create a sense of rapid action" and characterise Miller as "a military unit" taking part in "the final exploits of the Forces".[508] *Vogue*'s presentation of Miller characterises her mobilisation as photographer intent on getting the picture. Antony Penrose makes a similar observation in *The Lives of Lee Miller*. He writes, "In this as in other campaigns, ordinary journalists were not obliged to take the same risks as their photographer colleagues … The only way photographers could go and find their pictures was to go and find the action". Penrose continues, "She [Miller] always felt most at home among the infantry up at the sharp end of the action".[509]

Recalling her career as a war correspondent in an interview with *Vogue* in 1974, Miller states:

> I became, I think, the first war correspondent. I was there as a photographer, not as a writer … I knew all the American war correspondents. There were men but no women in the European Theatre of War and I wanted to do something so I invented the job. They asked me what the rule should be and I said, "Just treat me like one of the boys", which they did. That was long before Women's Lib and I felt like a one-woman brigade.[510]

In her book revising Miller's wartime photography (2016), Patricia Allmer observes how this demonstrates Miller's "self-mythologisation" and conscious framing of herself, projecting "how

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[506] Lee Miller, "Unarmed Warriors," British *Vogue*, Sep 1944, 35.
[507] "Last Leap – The Rhine," British *Vogue*, May 1945, 51.
[508] McLoughlin, "Glamour Goes to War," 342.
[509] Penrose, *Lives*, 131.
[510] Lee Miller, quoted in Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, "How Famous People Cook: Lady Penrose, the Most Unusual Recipes You Have Ever Seen," American *Vogue*, Apr 1974, 186.

she will be perceived by readers".[511] In a photograph with other female war correspondents (Mary Welsh, Dixie Tighe, Kathleen Harriman, Helen Kirkpatrick and Yania Long) in 1943, Miller is clutching her camera, as Patricia Allmer observes, "overtly marking her professional status" and contributing to the documentation of women as war photographers.[512] Miller's comments also echo her own telegram to Withers announcing proudly her *femme soldat* status. In the photograph, telegram and interview, Miller contributes to the mythology of herself as a female war photographer and correspondent.

3.2. The Liberation of Europe

Miller's writing demonstrates an awareness of her unique position in a predominantly masculine environment. Analysing the opening sentence of "Unarmed Warriors" in which Miller compares herself to a "movie actress kissing a handful of earth", McLoughlin suggests that Miller's "self-conscious analysis" is linked to Miller's artistic perspective.[513] Conekin makes a similar connection in her article "Lee Miller: Model, Photographer, and War Correspondent in *Vogue*, 1927–1953", stating that Miller's sense of self is evident "in the way the text fuses aesthetics and news journalism".[514] Miller's correspondences were, as Conekin suggest, "direct, often shocking, and frequently witty" and filled "with rich descriptions of her sensual impressions of the scene of war … sounds, smells, and especially sights, which she frequently described in terms of high art, and the details of clothing, bodies and hair".[515] This is discussed in relation to her dispatches "Unarmed Warriors" (September 1944), "The Siege of St Malo" (October 1944) and "Paris… Its Joy… Its Spirit… Its Privations" (October 1944).

Miller's first story, "Unarmed Warriors", reported from a US Army field hospital (the 44th Evacuation Hospital) included photographs of wounded soldiers. When writing about the actions of a doctor giving medical attention to a wounded soldier, Miller adopts figurative language to convey his heroic actions and the condition of his patient. She writes, "The doctor with his Raphael-like face turned to a man on a litter which had been placed on upended trunks. Plasma had already been attached to the man's outstretched left arm … his face was shrunken and pallid under dirt".[516] The doctor, as Conekin observes, "is positioned as an artist" and compared to Raphael, whilst the soldier is rendered passive. By taking the photograph alongside the doctor, Miller aligns herself with the position of the doctor. Her picture and text presents herself as an

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[511] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 7.
[512] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 6.
[513] McLoughlin, "Glamour Goes to War," 344.
[514] Becky E. Conekin, "Lee Miller: Model, Photographer, and War Correspondent in *Vogue*, 1927–1953," *Fashion Theory*: *The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 10, no. 1–2, (2006): 105.
[515] Conekin, "Lee Miller," 103, 105.
[516] Lee Miller, "Unarmed Warriors," British *Vogue*, Sep 1944, 85.

artist, enhancing "the situation of the common soldier" and the "unarmed Soldiers" – the nurses – about whom she is writing.[517] Images of nurses at work attached to the 44th US Army Evacuation Hospital, to which Miller was sent for her first assignment, similarly present them in active positions, helping wounded soldiers or preparing casualties for evacuation.[518]

Miller's writing also positions her in the active act of looking and seeing:

> As we flew into sight of France I swallowed hard on what were trying to be tears and remembered a movie actress kissing a handful of earth. My self-conscious analysis was forgotten in greedily studying the soft, grey-skied panorama of nearly a thousand square miles of … freed France.
>
> The sea and sky joined in a careless watercolour wash – below two convoys speckled the fragile smooth surface of the Channel. Cherbourg was a misty bend far to the right, and ahead three planes were returning from dropping bombs which made towering columns of smoke.[519]

Conveying herself as a famous film actress, Miller is aware of her female presence in a context of war, instilling from the very beginning her unusual position and self-mythologisation. The text is infused with an appeal to the senses, with the beauty of the "soft, grey-skied panorama of France," the cold mist immersing Cherbourg and the sound of planes "returning from dropping bombs". Miller's use of metaphor reveals her artistic eye; the scene is described as a cinematic, panoramic or photographic image. Nancy Caldwell Sorel, in her book documenting the exploits of female war correspondent, makes a similar observation. She states that Miller's "mind worked on a visual plane, so that her story developed into a series of word pictures, brought into focus by her photos".[520] Becky Conekin observes how this highly sensory description is due to "Miller's extraordinary eye, honed by her experiences of the previous two decades where she often had been at the centre of the fashion and arts worlds, first as a model and then as a photographer".[521] Miller's writing certainly focusses on detail. Her dispatches frame her images in a way that provides personal insight into a war environment. As a consequence, Miller's own experiences of situations add another dimension to her photography, as the viewer is aware of Miller's own presence behind the camera.

Mark Haworth-Booth approaches Miller's work in a similar way, focussing on her descriptive skills. He states that Miller's dispatch, "take[s] us not only into the plane, across the channel and over France, but directly into the emotions".[522] Miller's writing helps viewers connect in a more

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[517] Conekin, "Lee Miller," 105.
[518] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 119–20.
[519] Miller, "Unarmed Warriors," 35. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 15.
[520] Sorel, *Women Who Wrote the War*, 246.
[521] Conekin, "Lee Miller," 105.
[522] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 171.

intimate way to the pictures that accompany her dispatches. Her gritty description of the work done by doctors and nurses and the operations taking place in the hospital helps readers. Her description acts as a written testimony to what Miller is experiencing and seeing. To explore this further, I analyse some of Miller's images in correlation with her text in the next section.

3.3. Documenting the Impact of War

Miller's pictures documenting operations in field hospitals and her images of wounded soldiers help present a realistic image of war in which close proximity to the subject provides no protective barrier for the viewer. Miller's first image accompanying the opening of "Unarmed Warriors", *Operating Theatre, 44th Evac Hospital* (September, 1944), focusses on an operation on a soldier. The focus is on a nurse attending to a soldier, who lies stretched before her on the operating table. Miller's proximity is intensely close, placing her in a position similar to that of the doctors surrounding the patient. The close-up shot captures the claustrophobic atmosphere of the tent and is a reminder of the difficult environment in which the doctors had to operate. Miller captures the difficulties in her writing, referencing:

> Discarded helmets … on the floor. Six groups of people were around six operating tables. It was crowded but unconfused. … The wounded were deposited on the tables on the same litters, in the same khaki blankets as they came from the front. A few wore their battle-muddy boots.

By drawing attention to these conditions, Miller also highlights the proficiency of the doctors and nurses: "unflustered, deft workers all of whom had been on duty for a steady, twelve hour shifts, often as much as eighteen hours a day since landing".[523] Throughout the dispatch, images of wounded soldiers recuperating reinforce this statement.

In particular, Miller's picture captioned *Bad Burns Case, 44th Evac Hospital* (American *Vogue*, September 1944) portrays the devastating face of war (Figure 33, page 128). Miller again makes effective use of a close-up of a soldier, whose head, body, one arm and both hands are wrapped in bandages. American *Vogue*'s original caption taken from Miller's text read, "A bad burn case asked me to take his picture as he wanted to see how funny he looked. It was pretty grim, and I didn't focus good".[524] The gaze of the soldier is intense, although no eyes can be seen. Her blurred portrait of the soldier is expressive of Miller's difficulty in contemplating the individual effects of war. Jean Gallagher reads the blurriness of the image as "deictic" – "an image that leaves traces of the moment of its making, gesturing back to the physical presence of the

[523] Miller, "Unarmed Warriors," 36. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 17.
[524] Miller, "U.S.A Hospital," 138. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 17.

artist".[525] She suggests that Miller felt empathy in response to the soldier, her shaking as a reaction to his wounds.

Miller's sympathy for the soldier is clear, but surely it points to the uncomfortable position in which the soldier places Miller by requesting a photograph that will visually confirm his changed and traumatised body to him. Moreover, his bravado is a reminder of Miller's female gaze on his broken body. Gallagher posits that the image is a refusal to perpetuate the patriotic discourse of other journalistic propaganda. This is true in some respects, as Miller dispels the myth of soldiers as "'knights in shining armour' but [as] dirty, dishevelled, stricken figures – uncomprehending".[526] The overall tone of the dispatch, however, attempts to convey an upbeat tone. In later dispatches, this gives way to anger, frustration and despair.

Figure 33 Lee Miller, *Bad Burns Case at 44th Evacuation Hospital*, near La Cambe, Normandy, France, 1944, Lee Miller Archives.

Sharon Sliwinski, in her paper on Miller's wartime photography in the *Journal of Visual Culture* (2010), reads Miller's images as a form of visual testimony of the events she witnessed, some of them indescribable. For Sliwinski, Miller's photographs convey "an optic" through which to grasp the horrors of the scenes she witnessed. The images depict Miller's act of seeing as a witness to such unintelligible acts and demonstrate that she felt responsible for communicating

[525] Gallagher, *Female Gaze*, 83.
[526] Miller, "Unarmed Warriors," 85. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 26.

such horrors to the public.[527] This is particularly poignant in her images of Dachau and Buchenwald, which I discuss in the next section. Here I suggest that Miller's articles help to articulate, or try to articulate, the extent of the atrocities that Miller is witnessing. Although the beginnings of this can be read in "Unarmed Warriors", it is her second dispatch, "The Siege of St Malo" covering front-line action that shows how Miller was really beginning to be exposed to the full impact of war.

Caught in the middle of a battle, Miller writes:

> My heel ground into a dead, detached hand and I cursed the Germans for the sordid destruction they had conjured on this once beautiful town … I picked up the hand and hurled it across the street, and ran back the way I'd come bruising my feet and crashing in the unsteady piles of stone, and slipping in blood. Christ it was awful![528]

The use of the active voice and the bluntness of the language convey the emotional intensity of the scene. Miller's act of throwing the dismembered hand away from her tries to bring about a distance between her and the horror, but the intensity of the scene threatens the objectivity of reporting. Miller's cry of "Christ it was awful" attempts to capture the intensity of the moment. The use of adjectives intensifies the description and acts as an authentic testimony to the images accompanying the piece. The writing coerces the reader into the action, providing imaginative detail alongside the images. This makes them seem more real; for Claude Lanzmann – a filmmaker – photographs can sometimes function as a veil. Rather than exposing the true horrors, they elicit a false sense of knowledge and, thus, protect the viewer.[529]

Miller's use of first-person narration presents Miller as an identifiable witness, which reinforces her photography. This is particularly effective in Miller's description of her witnessing of the first ever use of napalm during the siege of St Malo. By familiarising the destruction, setting it up like an air raid on London, Miller removes the comfortable distance between the viewer and Miller's experience of war: "The boy at the phone said, 'They hear the planes'. We waited, then we heard them swelling the air like I've heard them vibrating over England".[530] Miller adopts a similar approach when describing the assault on the citadel of St Malo. Miller, although initially watching from a distance and empathising with the soldiers who are part of the Allied attack, soon becomes part of the battle:

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[527] Sliwinski, "Lee Miller's Dachau," 392.
[528] Lee Miller, "The Siege of St Malo," in British *Vogue*, Oct 1944, 86. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 51.
[529] Claude Lanzmann, "The Obscenity of Understanding: An Evening with Claude Lanzmann," in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, ed. C. Caruth (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press 1995), 200–220.
[530] Miller, "St Malo," 84. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 48.

> … the building we were in and all the others which faced the fort were being spat at now – ping, bang – hitting above our window – into the next – breaking on the balcony below – fast rapid queer noise – impact before the gun noise – following the same pattern … [531]

The fragmentary nature of her text and her switch to present tense makes the destruction immediate. Through the use of onomatopoeia and sensory language, even the structure and containment of the text is threatened by the attack, with Miller's safety being called into question. It psychologically and emotionally connects with the reader, whose own experience of "total war" throws them into the attack. By heightening the peril Miller faces, her writing also, as Haworth-Booth acknowledges, presents Miller as being "like a superwoman to her readers", echoing *Vogue*'s own appraisal of Miller's activities.[532]

3.4. France, Freedom and Fashion

In Miller's article "Paris… Its Joy… Its Spirit… Its Privations," Miller casts "a daring group of young French resistance photographers" and the French people in the roles of heroes or superheroes. The page preceding Miller's piece entitled "Paris Regained" reinforces Miller's tone. It can be read as an allusion to Milton's *Paradise Regained* (1671), which presents the French in the role of protagonists and Paris as Paradise. Miller emphasises the courage and stoicism of the French resistance to the malignant force of the Germans. The opening of the dispatch combines the discourse of war propaganda, fashion and aesthetics to highlight French fashion as a form of resistance to the Nazis:

> The pampering of French women is finished … skirts billowing against the wind like bells for Victory; hair flowing, insouciant, and competent. The GIs gasped en masse at a town full of flying pin-up houris. They … settled for the evidence that good women and bad, the fast and loose and the prudes had all deliberately organized this style of dressing and living as a taunt to the Huns, whose clumsy, serious women dressed in gray uniforms, and were known as the *souris gris*.
>
> If the Germans wore cropped hair, the French grew theirs long. If three yards of material were specified for a dress – they found fifteen for a skirt alone. Saving material and labor meant help to the Germans – and it was their duty to waste instead of to save.[533]

Miller also comments on the smell in the air, which she says was filled with "perfume". The first three pages of the dispatch cover the French women's resistance to the Germans; she is aware of her audience but also the power of fashion and femininity as a force against the Germans. The

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[531] Miller, "St Malo," 84. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 48.
[532] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 176.
[533] Lee Miller, "Paris… Its Joys… Its Spirit… Its Privations," British *Vogue*, Oct 1944, 78. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 69.

strength of this resistance is reflected in the image of women leaving the Pierre et Rene hairdressing salon with wet curls under a turban in *Vogue*'s November issue of 1944 (Figure 34). Moreover, Miller's brief preface to a report appearing in January 1945 covering the first Paris collections and free demonstration of couture since 1940 reinforces a similar message of resistance against their occupation during the war.

Miller's report on the collections articulates the awakening of fashion as the awakening of Paris. She writes:

> Paris is wakening slowly, but surely, from the nightmare slumber that this beloved "Belle au Bois Dormant" has been plunged into for the last four years, and it is with a song in her heart and a smile on her lips that she sets to toiling and spinning to weave her cloaks of magic for hard working military and business women.[534]

The allusion to Sleeping Beauty emphasises the strength of Paris, which, under the curse of occupation, could not be destroyed. Here Miller represents femininity as a powerful weapon that cannot be subjugated by the brute force of the Nazis.

Figure 34 Lee Miller, *Leaving the Pierre et Rene Hairdressing Salon* (*Vogue*, November 1944) Pierre et Rene salon, Paris, France, 1944, Lee Miller Archives.

[534] Lee Miller, unpublished manuscript edited to form part of "Paris Fashion in Vogue," Nov 1944, 36. Also quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 128.

Conversely, Miller's coverage of female collaborators focusses on the stripping away of their femininity. In a telegram to Audrey Withers (August 26–27 1944) attached to her dispatch about the liberation of Paris, Miller writes:

> In Rennes today I went to a chastisement of French collaborators – the girls had had their hair shaved although the interrogation had merely confirmed that there was evidence enough for their trial later on. They were stupid little girls – not intelligent enough to feel ashamed. Two were sisters eighteen and twenty years of age and they'd been living with Hun boy friends … Later I saw four girls being paraded down the street … the victims were spat on and slapped.[535]

Miller's writing here articulates the discourse surrounding French collaborators, most of whom were women. Miller's reference to the former two women as "stupid little girls" documents the use of female collaborators as vulnerable scapegoats and their humiliation. Their treatment was brutal. Firstly, they were shaved publically and their hair was burnt as a mark of shame, or as Antony Beevor (author of *D-Day – The Battle for Normandy*) references it, "denuding a woman of what was supposed to be her most seductive feature".[536] They were paraded down the streets in the back of a lorry, sometimes to the beat of a drum. Some were stripped naked, daubed with tar, or marked with swastikas in paint or lipstick. Lastly, they had to "run the gauntlet" and were beaten as they went. This "ugly carnival" occurred after a town had been liberated (Figure 35, page 133). Antony Beevor observes how this misogynistic act of head-shaving in France, Belgium, Italy and Norway was a form of revenge on women expressed by many males who felt frustration and impotence at being occupied. Beevor documents that in Brittany, "a third of those killed in reprisals were women".[537]

Jock Colville (Churchill's private secretary) recalls watching such a scene in Bayeux. He writes, "I watched an open lorry drive past, to the accompaniment of boos and catcalls from the French populace, with a dozen miserable women in the back, every hair on their heads shaved off. They were in tears, hanging their heads in shame".[538] Colville articulates his disgust but reflects on whether he is the best judge of this scene, being British and not having experienced occupation. Miller's photograph accompanying her text is an intimate portrait of these women with shaved heads. Her proximity to one of the female collaborators is extremely close in her attempt to get a picture. This is recorded in her telegram to Withers. She writes:

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[535] Lee Miller, telegram to Audrey Withers, Aug 29, 1944, in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 65.
[536] Antony Beevor, "An Ugly Carnival," *Guardian*, Jun 5, 2009, accessed Jul 28, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2009/jun/05/women-victims-d-day-landings-second-world-war.
[537] Beevor, "An Ugly Carnival," https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2009/jun/05/women-victims-d-day-landings-second-world-war.
[538] Jock Colville, quoted in Beevor, "Ugly Carnival," https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2009/jun/05/women-victims-d-day-landings-second-world-war.

> Later I saw four girls being paraded down the street and raced ahead of them to get a picture. In that I was then leading the parade, the population thought a femme soldat had captured them or something and I was kissed and congratulated.[539]

By referencing the juxtaposition in attitudes, the extent of the hostility is amplified.

In the same telegram, Miller expresses her desire to experience "another battle" and continue documenting the "pattern of liberation" in France, Belgium and Luxembourg. She preferred describing "the physical damage of destroyed towns and injured people to facing the shattered morale and blasted faith to those who thought 'things are going to be like they were' [before the war]".[540] Following her entry into Germany in April 1945 and her photographing of Dachau and Buchenwald, Miller's dispatches underscored how things would never be the same again.

Figure 35 Lee Miller, *Women Accused of Being Nazi Collaborators*, Rennes, France, 1944, Lee Miller Archives.

[539] Lee Miller, telegram to Audrey Withers, Aug 26-27, in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 65.
[540] Lee Miller, telegram to Audrey Withers, Dec 4, 1944, in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 110.

3.5. Germany, Death Camps and Berchtesgaden

Switching her accreditation to the US Air Force, which gave her the freedom to go where she liked, and accompanied by David Scherman, Miller entered Germany. Documenting the German people's response to the Allied armies, Miller's writing becomes blunt, casting Germany and its people in the role of the villain. Her captions accompanying her pictures articulate a similar message. "This is a good German, he is dead…" reads the caption below an image of a dead soldier (Cologne, 1945).[541] This sentiment is extended to German civilians: Miller is incredulous at their overtly friendly behaviour towards the Allies. She is sickened by their "Well nourished" bodies and their "hypocrisy".[542] Her condemnation of them is of a nation repudiating their ignorance of and acquiescence in Nazi atrocities. Reading her dispatches as a modern reader is, at times, uncomfortable; however, placed in its historical context it is understandable. After witnessing the gaunt physique and despairing expressions of people throughout France and Belgium and then the horrific, indescribable scenes at Buchenwald and Dachau, Miller's reaction articulates the contemporaneous socio-political discourses surrounding "the enemy".

Miller's use of juxtaposition between image and text is effective in her dispatches describing entering Germany. This is particularly evident in the opening paragraph of "Germany - the War that is Won" (June 1945). The panoramic description lures the viewer into a false sense of security before delivering the horrifying reality of the situation (Figure 36, page 135). Miller's description of Germany evokes an almost fairy-tale vista with "every hill … crowned with a castle", "jewel-like villages", "vineyards" and "little girls in white dresses" to heighten the atrocities of its people.[543] It also sets up a direct contrast to the ruins of France and Belgium.

Miller's use of declaratives abruptly ends the tranquil beauty of the place and conveys her narrative voice with a sense of authority. Miller's first-hand experiences of Germany's atrocities shatter the illusion of scenic beauty. In referencing the German people, bluntly she declares, "all just like real people. But they aren't. They are the enemy. This is Germany and it is spring". The cluster of short sentences written like statements highlights Miller's harsh, blunt language, which is without compassion. In describing them sheltering in a vaulted basement for protection against the bombing, Miller's contempt is evident: "they were repugnant in their servility, hypocrisy and amiability. The underground cellars vomited out more worms, palely clean and well nourished on the stored and stolen fats of Normandy and Belgium".[544] The use of the verb "vomited"

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[541] Lee Miller, *Dead Soldier*, Cologne (Apr 1945), in Penrose, *Lives*, 134.
[542] Lee Miller, "Germany - the War that is Won," British *Vogue*, Jun 1945, 42. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 166.
[543] Miller, "Germany," 40. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 161.
[544] Miller, "Germany," 42. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 166.

emphasises her disgust. Referencing the lexis of food, eating and gluttony is also a reminder of and a direct contrast with the less favourable conditions of citizens living under occupation.

Figure 36 Lee Miller, *View of Berchtesgaden*, Germany, 1945, Lee Miller Archives.

Miller's use of first person is an effective way in which to compare the Germans, "they", with the victims and the "we" of the Allies, articulating the socio-political discourse of the war and a nation at war. Miller expresses incredulity at the amiability of the German people, who acted as if they had been "liberated" rather than "conquered". Her anger at their greeting her and "beg[ging] a ride in a military vehicle try[ing] to cadge cigarettes, chewing gum or soap" is expressed in a series of rhetorical questions that build in anger and intensity. In this, she is conscious of her readership, outlining her identification with the blitzed citizens of London, French citizens, prisoners of war, and the American pilots and infantrymen who were her "flesh and blood".[545] Miller makes use of sacrificial imagery, as deployed in her description of French citizens, to heighten the heinousness of Germany's crime.

Martha Gellhorn's dispatch "Das Deutshe Volk" in her book *The Face of War* (1945) articulates similar emotions in response to the Germans' repudiation of the crimes of the Nazis. She writes:

[545] Miller, "Germany," 42, 84. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 166.

> No one is a Nazi. No one ever was. There may have been some Nazis in the next village, and as a matter of fact, that town about twenty kilometres away was a veritable hot bed of Nazidom … Oh the Jews? Well, there weren't really many Jews in this neighbourhood. Two maybe, maybe six. They were taken away. I hid a Jew for six weeks. I hid a Jew for eight weeks. (I hid a Jew, he hid a Jew, all God's chillum hid Jews). We have nothing against the Jews; we always got on well with them. We have waited for the Americans a long time. You came and liberated us. You came to befriend us. The Nazis are *Schweinhunde* … No, I have no relatives in the Army. No, I was never in the Army. I worked on the land … Ah, how we have suffered. The bombs. We lived in cellars for weeks … We welcome the Americans … We have done nothing wrong; we are not Nazis.[546]

Gellhorn's writing is harsh. Whilst Miller's writing is angry and intense, Gellhorn adopts a cold, sardonic tone. By assuming the personae of the German people, she echoes their words in ironic imitation. She continues: "It should, we feel, be set to music. Then the Germans could sing this refrain and that would make it better. They all talk like this". Again Gellhorn's candour sets up a division between the "we" of the Allies and the "they" of the enemy. Gellhorn's dispatch goes on to describe her conversations with local German people as she tried to probe about when things had "started to go bad" and "what form of government they hoped for after the war".[547] This is interlaced with Gellhorn's personal thoughts and cynical responses, which are condemning and unsympathetic.

Accompanying Miller's text from her article "BELIEVE IT" for American *Vogue* (June 1945) is an intensely intimate photograph of emaciated corpses from Buchenwald.[548] Other photographs depict corpses piled up on one another in a heap; they are wearing ragged clothes, some with their eyes and mouths still open (Figure 37, page 138). Although the image is stark and brutal, without any text an intimate understanding of what is being seen and the events at the camps cannot truly be comprehended. Whilst readers today looking at such images still may not be able to comprehend fully such atrocious acts committed by the Nazis, their knowledge of events provides a contextual framework in which to interpret these images. As Sharon Sliwinski observes in her paper on Miller's death-camp photography, *Vogue* readers in 1945 would not have had this knowledge; the full scale and impact of the events was unknowable. Sliwinski observes that "it took several decades for the idea of the Holocaust to find expression in public discourse".[549] Although there was a profusion of photographs documenting the event, people did not fully comprehend what they were seeing. Sliwinski suggests that it was not until testimonies,

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[546] Martha Gellhorn, "Das Deutshe Volk," in *The Face of War* (London: Granta Books, 1993), 176.
[547] Gellhorn, "Das Deutshe Volk," 180.
[548] Miller, "BELIEVE IT," American *Vogue*, Jun 1945, 104.
[549] Sliwinski, "Lee Miller's Dachau," 390.

such as *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1951), Primo Levi's *Se questo è un unomo* (1947) and Elie Wisel's *La Nuit* (1956), appeared that the impact and understanding of the Holocaust became known.

This is not altogether true, as in 1945 the BBC Home Service aired a series of short documentary programmes describing the "stark realities" of the death camps and the Nazis' "final solution". On 19 April 1945, Richard Dimbleby visited Bergen-Belsen after its liberation by the Allies. Similarly, Patrick Gordon Walker discussed his reactions to the camp in the form of a personal diary in a programme on 27 May 1945. In September 1945, Bergen-Belsen survivor Harold Osmond le Druillenec recalled conditions inside the camp.[550] These documentaries continued into the next decade and in 1955 a Polish artist, Mr Popek, retold his account of the time he had spent in the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. This was presented by Susan Ryder and broadcast by the Home Service on 10 August that year.[551] Likewise, Miller's text attempts to explain and capture the true horror and full impact of these atrocities, and it provides written testimony to her pictures.[552] Mark Haworth-Booth makes a similar observation about Miller's writing. These descriptions, he writes, are "not only to contextualize the photographs but also to evoke experiences beyond the photographable".[553] The headline for the same but edited article, which appeared in American *Vogue* in June 1945, emphasise this premise. Alex Liberman reprinted the words "BELIEVE IT" from Miller's telegram for a heading as it encouraged readers to accept the atrocities depicted in her images.[554]

Although the text of the original article that appeared in British *Vogue* was edited, the American version contained more shocking photographs of the death camps. Haworth-Booth notes that British *Vogue* declined to publish most of the photographs.[555] Audrey Withers later reflected that the mood was of liberation and jubilation in Europe and the focus was now on the post-war dispensation. America was still fighting the Pacific War.[556] The article in the American version adopts a visual juxtaposition in addition to a literary one. On the page opposite the text entitled "Germans Are Like This", there are four pictures. At the top of the page are two images next to each other. One image depicts German children, "well-fed" and "healthy", whilst the other is a picture of the "burned bones of starved prisoners." Below these are another two pictures

[550] "Harold Osmond le Druillenec," Home Service, BBC Archive, short, 00:01:46, circa Sep 1945, http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/holocaust/5106.shtml.
[551] "Forgotten Allies: Mr Popek," Home Service, BBC Archive, short, 00:04:05, Aug 10, 1955, http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/holocaust/5108.shtml.
[552] Miller, "Germany," 42.
[553] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 176.
[554] Miller, "BELIEVE IT" and "Germans Are Like This," American *Vogue*, Jun 1945, 102, 105.
[555] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 189.
[556] Audrey Withers, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 265.

appearing side by side. The same use of juxtaposition is deployed, with one image depicting "Orderly villages, patterned, quiet", the other "orderly furnaces to burn bodies".[557]

Miller's words, "BELIEVE IT", written in capitals, underscore the "unreal reality" of the unimaginable that was witnessed by those at Dachau and Buchenwald. Ed Murrow, after visiting Buchenwald, stated that "I have reported what I saw and heard, but only part of it. For most of it I have no words".[558] Martha Gellhorn reported a similar reaction in her dispatch for *Collier's Weekly* (23 June 1945). She writes how "everything about it was evil…"No one will believe us," a soldier said. They agreed on that: No one would believe them".[559]

Figure 37 Lee Miller, *Dead Prisoners*, Buchenwald, Germany, 1945, Lee Miller Archives.

[557] Miller, "Germans Are Like This," 103.
[558] Ed Murrow, quoted in Sliwinski, "Lee Miller's Dachau," 402.
[559] Martha Gellhorn, "Dachau: Experimental Murder," *Collier's Weekly*, Jun 23, 1945, 16, accessed Jul 30, 2016, www.oldmagazinearticles.com/war-correspondent-martha-gellhorn-at-DACHAU-death-camp-pdf.

Miller's initial reaction was one of disbelief also. Antony Penrose writes:

> Speechless and dumb, she could not accept at first the enormity of the carnage and wanton slaughter. Here and earlier at Buchenwald this reaction was shared by some of the GIs. Unprepared for the hideousness of political and racist crimes against civilians, they thought at first that the camp was a grotesque propaganda stunt by their own side.[560]

Miller herself reported that soldiers were becoming sick at the sight.[561]

In an attempt to document the atrocious spectacle, Miller again makes effective use of proximity in her photography. Entering Dachau on 29 April 1945, Allied soldiers noticed a train that had been sent from Buchenwald on 7 April. Opening its doors revealed box cars full of corpses. Of the three thousand people who had been sent, only twenty had survived. Martha Gellhorn recalls a similar memory of the train, commenting on the terrible stench.[562] Miller climbed into the train to photograph the horror from inside. Sliwinski notes that the image Miller took is the only picture of a view from inside the train: all the others were "taken from outside its borders".[563] Through her image and text, Miller is attempting to document the impossible, asking *Vogue* to "be on record as believing" and print one of her pictures.[564] As Patricia Allmer notes in relation to photographing dead bodies (in this case, the Leipzig suicides – corpses of Germans fearing reprisals from Allied troops), Miller's pictures highlight "the necessity – of photography within this historical moment".[565] It is also Miller's use of first-person narrative that gives authority to her images. They present Miller as an individual with whom readers can identify and in whom they can trust and believe. Consequently, the reader is encouraged to re-evaluate war through the eyes and experiences of Miller.

In her dispatch "Hitleriana", Miller continues to strip away the Nazi ideology. This focusses on exposing and removing any myth surrounding Hitler and Eva Braun. At the time when Miller was writing her article, she had been living in Hitler's private apartment and was there on hearing of his death. After being at Dachau and seeing its horrors, Miller and David Scherman secured a billet in the command post of the 45th Division at 27 Prinzregentenplatz. In a telegram to Withers attached to the dispatch, Miller wrote that through "talk[ing] to people who knew him

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[560] Penrose, *Lives*, 139.

[561] Lee Miller, Dispatch to *Vogue*: "Captions for Undeveloped Film" [taken at Dachau], dated Apr 30 1945. Lee Miller Archives (4 pages), Dachau Folder, Farley Farm House, East Sussex. Also quoted in Sliwinski, "Lee Miller's Dachau," 395.

[562] Gellhorn, "Dachau," www.oldmagazinearticles.com/war-correspondent-martha-gellhorn-at-DACHAU-death-camp-pdf.

[563] Sliwinski, "Lee Miller's Dachau," 402.

[564] Lee Miller, Dispatch to *Vogue*: "Captions for Undeveloped Film" [taken in Buchenwald and Weimer], n.d. Lee Miller Archives (4 pages), Buchenwald Folder, Farley Farm House, East Sussex. Also quoted in Sliwinski, "Lee Miller's Dachau," 403.

[565] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 165.

[Hitler], [digging] into backstairs gossip and [eating] and [sleeping] in his house", Hitler became "less fabulous … and … along with a little evidence of his having some almost human habits".[566] She references him as "an ape" and as someone without grace or charm.[567] Her description of his apartment reinforces the ordinariness of Hitler:

> It was an ordinary semi-corner old fashioned building on a Platz. The address was 16 Prinzregentenplatz, and there were no signs that anyone more portentous than merchants or retired clergy had lived there …
>
> Superficially, almost anyone with a medium income and no heirlooms could have been the proprietor of this flat. It lacked grace and charm, it lacked intimacy, but it was not grand.[568]

The use of adjectives "ordinary" and "medium" and the repetition of the negation "no" reinforce the portrayal of Hitler as no one special. It attacks the idea of Hitler as someone who is morally superior or associated with the Arian race, which the Nazi myth promoted. "No heirlooms" also attacks the Arian myth by conveying a man without history or a legacy and reinforces Jean Gallagher's observation of Miller's exposing the Nazi propaganda machine.[569]

Miller's description of Eva Braun's room is written in a similar fashion. In this, she mixes the discourse of fashion, the domestic and war:

> Quilted boxes probably once held stockings, veils, artificial flowers. Heavy crystal bottles and scent sprays were on the top shelves, empty like a lot of wedding presents. A carton of envelopes of a soapless hairwash for blondes, a few belts, a tweed beret and a douche bag were all that was left of her envied wardrobe and equipment.[570]

By describing the everyday routines that were similar to the routines of most women back home, Miller destroys the myth surrounding Braun. This detailed description of Braun's room and her possessions is, for Gallagher "a deadly serious play on the items that make up the visual and material field of commodity".[571] By referencing named brands, such as "Elizabeth Arden lipstick", Gallagher suggests Miller sets up a grotesque parody between Braun's environment and those inscribed in *Vogue*'s pages of advertisements. Gallagher recognises, as Zox-Weaver does, that Miller's correspondence coerces *Vogue*'s readership to question its rituals of consumption.

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[566] Lee Miller, telegram to Audrey Withers, quoted in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 188.
[567] Miller, telegram to Withers, quoted in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 188.
[568] Lee Miller, "Hitleriana," British *Vogue*, Jul 1945, 72. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 191.
[569] Gallagher, *Female Gaze*, 91.
[570] Miller, "Hitleriana," 74. Also in Penrose, *Miller's War*, 198.
[571] Gallagher, *Female Gaze*, 91.

Patricia Allmer has also contributed to this reading in her book by observing how the trope of advertising and fashion photography can be traced in Miller's photographs of Nazi interiors. She references Miller's picture of Braun's house, where girls from the street are using Braun's powder. Likewise, Miller's photographs of Braun's accessories "draw on her experience of fashion photographs of expensive accessories for companies such as Guerlain".[572] Presenting these fashion commodities in a context that encourages emotional responses other than desire, Miller exposes to the reader the reality of war alongside glossy pages advertising desirables. Through examining Miller's images of Braun's house, Allmer identifies Miller's photography as operating as "a powerful myth-debunker".[573]

Figure 38 Lee Miller, *Eva Braun's House*, 12 Wasserburger Straße, Munich, Germany, 1945, Lee Miller Archives.

Gallagher's reading of Miller's photograph and text on Braun's domestic interior also suggests that it exposes the workings of the fascist machine. She suggests, "The detailed verbal close-up reads as if Miller were using these items to expose the very interiors of the body of the fascist regime itself".[574] This observation highlights that through such vivid descriptions, Miller exposes

[572] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 171–73.
[573] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 180.
[574] Gallagher, *Female Gaze*, 91.

the face of evil and its banality.[575] Miller's staging of the photograph of herself in Hitler's bathtub, taken by Scherman, is a perfect example of this (Figure 39). The boots she had been wearing in Dachau and Buchenwald are covered in dirt and ash, a reminder of the Nazi atrocities. The staging of the shower tube, hanging behind Miller, also reminds the viewer of Dachau and the horrific fate that was met by those sent to the death camp. A statute of a classic Greek beauty is used to refer to the Nazi ideology that led to war and its atrocities. Ironically, in attempting to break down the myth surrounding Eva and Hitler, Miller's image of herself in Hitler's bathtub has become imbued with its own mythic discourse. As McLoughlin explores in her paper on Miller's wartime work, this image has cemented Miller's position as war correspondent, both seen and unseen. What it also points to is a disquieting "punctum", which does not bode well for its subject.

Figure 39 Lee Miller with David E. Scherman, *Lee Miller in Hitler's Bath Tub*, Hitler's apartment, 16 Prinzregentenplatz, Munich, Germany, 1945, Lee Miller Archives.

After the end of the war Miller continued to travel around Eastern Europe, documenting the devastating aftermath of the war on ordinary people. This, again, is an area that has been neglected in favour of her death-camp images. The exhibition at the Imperial War Museum included some of Miller's images from the period following armistice. This focussed on the

[575] Gallagher, *Female Gaze*, 91.

impact of war on local people in correlation with Miller's own wartime trauma. I have already discussed Miller's images of the Roma people in chapter one and the effect of war on their way of life. However, the most poignant image from this period, which epitomises Miller's work, appears in Antony Penrose's *The Lives of Lee Miller*. It is of a child dying in Vienna's children's hospital, which had everything but drugs. The image, taken in 1945, is extremely powerful: a close-up of a skeletal-looking child wrapped in blankets who is, in some ways, reminiscent of the skeletal bodies from the death camps. The eyes of the child look directly at the viewer as Miller again uses proximity to create an emotional connection. Miller writes of how she watched him die for an hour, and her anger is evident: "Tragedy is the fate of the undeserving, not the earned justice of the wicked Nazis".[576] Miller captures the pain and despair of a post-war world that had experienced atrocities never before imagined. Focussing on the innocent and the vulnerable, Miller questions the implications of this and what it meant for a post-war world in the process of rebuilding itself.

For Miller, this had its own implications. According to Antony Penrose, after Miller's initial return home to Roland Penrose in May 1945 before returning to Europe, she could not settle into domesticity. Antony Penrose cites the strain this had on Roland's and Miller's relationship, where Roland "wanted to clip her wings, and keep her at home." Miller's response, according to Antony Penrose, was "I'm not Cinderella, I can't force my foot into the glass slipper".[577] Miller ignored letters from Roland asking her to return; she was more intent on documenting Europe's transition from occupation to freedom. On January 7, 1946, Harry Yoxall (British Vogue's managing editor) also wrote to Miller informing her that her travels could no longer be funded.[578] Miller ignored this. However, after a telegram from David Scherman in New York which read "GO HOME!" Miller, as Antony Penrose observes, reluctantly decided to return.[579] It is not surprising that Miller felt reluctant. Like many women, she had experienced freedoms that had allowed her to question women's social and cultural positions. What this would mean for women in a post-war environment was unclear, and this is explored in the subsequent chapters.

3.6. Conclusion

Miller's wartime writing and photography raises many interesting questions; for example, about the role of celebrity and its impact on socio-political issues. Did Miller's status as the *femme soldat* provide her with a different perspective from and more independence than the other war correspondents in reporting? Did the mythologising of Miller by *Vogue* and herself contribute to

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[576] Miller in Penrose, *Lives*, 153.
[577] Penrose, *Lives*, 147.
[578] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 282.
[579] Penrose, *Lives*, 174.

how women in the public gaze today engage with politics to enact change? Her impetus to document the atrocities of war and highlight the plight of civilians in its aftermath certainly aligns her with today's celebrities (Figure 40, page 145).

As Antony Penrose suggests in his afterword in *Lee Miller's War*, "Immediacy was her oxygen, not from the point of thrill seeking, but from her need to be where the action was – where it mattered most".[580] Penrose suggests that Miller did not do this for any personal satisfaction but to expose the "truth" to readers. Female celebrities today have similar aims. By involving themselves with socio-political issues they heighten the public's awareness of certain issues and humanitarian causes: Angelina Jolie is Goodwill Ambassador for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in 2012, Christina Aguilera acts as a spokesperson for World Hunger Relief, Victoria Beckham spoke at the UN on eliminating the transmission of HIV and Aids between mothers and unborn children, and Emma Watson is a UN Women Goodwill Ambassador and has spoken for the HeForShe campaign.[581]

As Hilary Roberts observes, Miller photographed and wrote about "different nations, and social groups, in variety of styles, situations and genres, which ranged from theatrically posed high fashion in *Vogue*'s London studio to searing reportage in the ruins of Berchtesgaden and Budapest".[582] Miller's most touching and "wrenching war documentary, 'BELIEVE IT'",[583] written in 1945, evidences Miller's contribution in transforming *Vogue* into an influential wartime publication.[584] As Edna Woolman Chase, Editor-in-Chief, recalls in her memoirs:

> We held many conferences deciding whether or not to publish. In the end we did it and it seemed right. In the world we were trying to reflect on our pages, the wealthy, the gently bred, the sophisticated were quite as dead and quite as bereft as the rest of humankind. Anguish knows no barriers.[585]

Miller had dared to capture, in pictures and in words, what others had struggled to comprehend in the first place. As Audrey Withers observes, contemplating the socio-political changes that had happened to women during the war articulated this uncertainty and the need to remember women's importance, achievements and potential:

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[580] Penrose, afterword to *Miller's War*, 205.
[581] Helena Kealey, "Celebrity Ambassadors: Who Are They and What Do They Do," *Telegraph*, Sep 22, 2014, accessed Aug 22, 2016, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/features/11113545/Emma-Watson-Goodwill-Ambassadors-for-the-UN.html.
[582] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 18.
[583] Norberto Angeletti and Alberto Oliva, "Lee Miller: War Reports," in *In Vogue: The illustrated History of the World's Most Famous Fashion Magazine* (New York: Rizzoli International, 2006), 142.
[584] Roberts, *Woman's War*, 57.
[585] Edna Woolman Chase, quoted in Angeletti and Oliva, "War Reports," in *In Vogue*, 142.

> Where do they go from here, the Servicewomen and all the others … how long before a grateful nation (or anyhow, the men of the nation) forget what women accomplished when the country needed them? It is up to all women to see to it that there is no regression.[586]

For Audrey Withers, Miller's contribution as a war correspondent had pointed to the way.[587] Audrey Withers was right.

French *Vogue* made a similar observation in response to one of Miller's articles on liberation: "One essential fact strikes those who are waging war which will strike its historians – women's contribution in all areas, social, medical and military – their full participation in the immense effort that each nation is making". The war, as French *Vogue* recognised, had revealed women's strengths.[588] In reshaping how women were represented or seen during the war, Miller helped to modify women's position in society and framed their potential to redefine concepts of femininity. Although women did not continue to experience similar freedoms in the immediate post-war decade, which I explore in the next chapter, their wartime activities contributed to the choices and possibilities that women have today.

Figure 40 David E. Scherman, *Lee Miller Being Interviewed*, Paris, France, 1944, Lee Miller Archives.

[586] Audrey Withers, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 265.
[587] Audrey Withers, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 265.
[588] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 247.

4.
Fashion, Food and Farley Farm:
Discourses on Domesticity

> The 1950s proved to be a decade hallmarked by contradictions for women: on the one hand there was a growing ideology of homecentredness reflected in the proliferation and phenomenal growth of women's magazines spreading the gospel of consumerism during the period. On the other hand, the 1950s witness a steady significant rise in the number of women leaving their homes, particularly when children were old enough to go to school, and return to paid employment. (Carol Dyhouse, 1978)[589]

Carol Dyhouse's statement highlights the difficulties of Miller's post-war life. This chapter addresses the negotiation of the contradictory discourses that many women had to navigate after the war. Lee Miller's life experience, despite her celebrity, brings into focus the struggle and difficulty that many women faced during the 1950s. Whilst during the war women were encouraged to enter the war effort and adopt different roles outside the traditional feminine sphere of the home, post-war rhetoric promoted the opposite. The cultural discourse aimed at women, particularly mothers, changed to reflect the economic and political climate. It concentrated on the family and encouraged women to refocus their social role on motherhood as their contribution to work and post-war regeneration. Yet, whilst on the one hand motherhood was a part of patriarchal resurgence, on the other it was an emblem of the new freedoms that consumerism (in the image of America) offered. This, I argue, is evident in Miller's articles, in which she reshapes patriarchal metanarratives about motherhood and selfhood. By articulating her own lived experiences of motherhood and domesticity, Miller negotiates her position as artist, mother and wife.

The Imperial War Museum's exhibition is particularly telling in highlighting Miller's wartime celebrity status and what would happen to women (including Miller) after the war. The exhibition included a short from *The Making of Vogue Magazine* (March 1946), "Candid Camera With Lee Miller" for British Pathé News (September 1946), and an interview by Miller with Ona Munson for CBS Radio's *Town Tonight* (1946).[590] Examining these in detail, highlights a complicated ambivalence towards the social roles that women were being expected to inhabit,

[589] Carol Dyhouse, "Towards a 'Feminine' Curriculum for English Schoolgirls: The Demands of an Ideology 1970–1963," *Women's Studies International Quarterly* 1, no. 4 (1978): 308.
[590] "Candid Camera With Lee Miller," British Pathé New, short, September 10, 1946, 00:02:23, uploaded Apr 13, 2014 by British Pathé, http://www.britishpathe.com/search/query/%22candid+Camera%22+with+Lee+Miller. "The Making of *Vogue* Magazine," British Pathé short, 00:02:57, March, 1946, uploaded Jul 27, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTMLJEwMeUY. "Lee Miller," interview, *Surrealism Reviewed*, LTM Compact Disc, 2002, England, LTMCD 2343, number 10, 00:11:52.

and emphasises Miller's negotiation of these expectations. The Candid Camera short, with its narrative of Miller returning home as a war correspondent and taking her place alongside Roland Penrose (her second husband), is certainly indicative of the situation of many women who had to return to the home after the war. However, Miller's changing into a dress made from the lining of German soldiers' uniforms and given to her by the Danish underground is also significant and needs to be interrogated further (Figures 41 and 42).

Figures 41 and 42 *Candid Camera With Lee Miller*, British Pathé, September 1946.

The dress, on the one hand, can be read as a representation of women being coerced back into the home to become homemakers once again, but the fact it is made by the Danish underground cannot be ignored. It represents an interesting feminine twist on the spoils of war, whilst underscoring the idea of turning things inside out and exposing them to the light of day. The dress also connects Miller with a discourse of resistance, reminiscent of her work on Parisian women in her wartime dispatch, "Paris… Its Joys… Its Spirit… Its Privations". As I have explored in the previous chapter, Miller draws attention to the French women's adoption of fashion as a means of resistance against the Nazis. A similar discourse is being articulated here and later in Miller's article "The High Bed" (April 1948). The image of Miller changing out of her uniform and into the dress associates fashion with a discourse of performativity. I have discussed this concept of performativity in the previous chapter in the context of Miller's conscious crafting of herself as the *femme soldat* and in taking photographs of herself in Hitler's bathtub. I argue that this performativity of gender continues in her post-war life and is concurrent with Miller's post-war work. Adopting fashion and cosmetics as creative expressions, she reshapes concepts of social identity.

The final image in the exhibition of Miller in the kitchen at Farley Farm is similarly loaded with contradictory narratives of domesticity and creativity and bears further examination. For some, Miller's smile may represent her acceptance of women's expected social roles. It may also, as some have argued, illustrate Miller's post-war decline and loss of creativity.[591] However, as I argue in the final section of this chapter when analysing her article "Bachelor Entertaining" (March 1949), the domestic is a place of negotiation in which Miller blurs the boundaries of public and private gendered roles and activities. Miller's versatility is also evident in her new artistic venture at the farm: her cooking. Her experiences of austerity and living on a farm helped her create inventive new ways to bring flavour to food. She threw herself into country life by making butter from their cows' milk and curing pork and bacon from their own pigs.[592]

Miller also became a food columnist for *Vogue*, providing recipes and advice to her readers. One recipe, included for Withers' piece "International Hostesses", was her Muddles Green Green Chicken. In autumn 1952 she provided advice for the Christmas holidays, which included recipes. One recipe, which Burke refers to as "a Betty-Crockeresque 'master mix'", involved a batter from which scones, waffles and dumplings could be made.[593] Elizabeth David was another cookery writer who was hired by Audrey Withers and who eventually took over from Miller in May 1956. This mode of production (cooking), I believe in chapter six, should be viewed as another form of art.

Carolyn Burke, in her biography of Miller discusses Miller's post-war life as a decline and an appendage to Roland Penrose's life. Her reading of Miller's post-war articles is centred on Miller's personal circumstances and is brief. She dedicates only a paragraph to Miller's articles "The High Bed" (April 1948) "Bachelor Entertaining" (March 1949) and three paragraphs to "Working Guests" (July 1953).[594] In each case, Miller's mental and emotional state informs Burke's response and the articles are presented as expressions of Miller's inner turmoil, depression and decline.[595] Citing contemporary *Vogue*'s arts writer Rosamond (Peggy) Riley's assessment of Miller as having a "total disregard for her dress", Burke emphasises Miller's state of mind and loss of enthusiasm in her work.[596] This, as I argue in the next section of the chapter, is not the case. "The High Bed", in which Miller discusses fashion and glamour, is evidence of her engagement with contemporary cultural attitudes to fashion during a time of austerity. Her

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[591] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 333, Penrose, *Lives*, 194-196.
[592] Penrose, *Lives*, 187.
[593] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 320. Miller's recipe appears in her article "Plan for a Thirteen-Meal Christmas," British *Vogue*, Dec 1952, 116.
[594] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 303, 309-310, 321.
[595] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 311.
[596] Rosamond Bernier, interview by Carolyn Burke, Feb 20, 1997, in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 300.

writing is filled with figurative and sensory language, and it provides readers with colour and frivolity after the demands and pragmatism of wartime rationing.

Becky Conekin reviews Miller's post-war life during austerity at Farley Farm in her chapter "Lee Miller and the Limits of Post-war British Modernity: Femininity, Fashion, and the Problem of Biography" and her short paper "'She Did the Cooking with the Same Spirit as the Photography': Lee Miller's Life after Photography". In her revisionist reading of Miller's life at Farley Farm, Conekin provides a more "positive" narrative in relation to Miller. By placing Miller within the socio-historical context of post-war Britain, Conekin views Miller's entertaining at Farley Farm as another form of her genius.[597] The home, states Conekin, is promoted by Miller as a friendly, informal and open place "abuzz with people, food, games, drink, art and ideas", a premise outlined in "Bachelor Entertaining".[598] However, though referencing "The High Bed" very briefly and "Bachelor Entertaining" to inform her reading of Miller's cooking and entertaining style, Conekin is not acute enough in her reading of these articles as socio-cultural documents. Carol Tulloch in her "Response", appearing after Conekin's chapter in *Fashion and Modernity*, makes a similar observation. Unlike Conekin, Tulloch suggests that Miller's social and cultural critique of life was fading by the 1950s.[599]

Mark Haworth-Booth refers to Miller's post-war writing in *The Art of Lee Miller*, but as his focus is elsewhere, he does not develop this. He observes that Miller's articles demonstrate a new form of expression for Miller; he writes, "She developed a talent for writing articles that were conceived independently of photographic illustrations".[600] This is certainly convincing, as her post-war articles are well written. They demonstrate a confidence with writing after her professional activities as a war correspondent. This is also evident in her autonomy in suggesting topics for articles, through which I argue that she cultivates an image of herself as an exemplar of taste and the ideal consumer to her readers. Her close relationship with Withers would certainly have been an influential factor here. Haworth-Booth suggests, "Lee came up with various ideas for articles such as 'Bachelor entertaining'".[601] Articles focussing on the domestic reinforce Miller's engagement with contemporary socio-cultural concerns and *Vogue*'s post-war remit, which focussed on the home as a site of progress and renovation.[602] Haworth-Booth briefly references "The High Bed" and "Working Guests" and correctly identifies a "journalistic style" in the former.[603] His focus is primarily on "Working Guests" as "a kind of Surrealist wit"

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[597] Conekin, "Post-war British Modernity," 39.
[598] Conekin, "Post-war British Modernity," 54.
[599] Carol Tulloch, "Response," in *Fashion and Modernity*, ed. Breward and Evans, 63.
[600] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 203.
[601] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 205.
[602] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 205.
[603] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 203.

with which to frame his reading of the article.[604] Consequently, any reading of Miller's articles for their content or, as Haworth-Booth observes, her "journalistic style", continues to be marginalised.

Patricia Allmer, as I have argued in my introduction, has refocussed Miller's position as an artist. Her main focus is Miller's relationship with the ICA and the artist Picasso. This, she argues, demonstrates Miller's continuing artistic connections and activities during the post-war period.[605] Allmer's work has been very useful in outlining Miller's continuing creativity post-war and I build on this positive presentation of Miller by demonstrating how her writing is a continuation of her creative and artistic vision. Similar to her wartime writing, Miller consciously constructs a persona. As a sophisticated, independent woman involved with the ICA, Miller presents herself as a discerning critic and creative individual whilst reinforcing the magazine's relationship with art and fashion.[606] This persona, I argue, provides Miller with authority when advising women on how to escape the boredom and dreariness of austerity and the nursing home. Purchasing and discussing consumables, such as cosmetics and clothes, is presented as a creative enterprise through which women can express and satisfy their own desires.

Placed in the historical context in which they were written, "The High Bed" and "Bachelor Entertaining" document Miller's personal responses to, and lived experience of, the social, economic and cultural landscape of post-war Britain. I suggest that the context of the reassertion of patriarchal values in the 1940s and 1950s is crucial to any reading of Miller's post-war articles. This context recognises Miller's trauma as more than personal and reveals more about gender identity. Through her discourse on fashion, maternity and domesticity, Miller negotiates women's social roles and outlines a new aesthetic for the home as a space of creativity and modern design. This aesthetic is explored further in the following chapter, in which I analyse Miller's article for *Vogue*, "Working Guests" (July 1953). In this analysis, I identify how Miller engages with contemporaneous discourse on the home as the site of post-war reconstruction and a way to interact with culture as outlined by the Festival of Britain (1951) and the post-war Labour government.[607] Contrary to some critics who view Miller's creativity ending alongside

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[604] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 201.
[605] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 221-226.
[606] *Vogue*'s relationship with art was one that Condé Nast was keen to promote. See Angeletti and Oliva (2006). From the very beginning, the fine arts had been taken up indirectly, through its photography, layout and material culture (furnishings), and directly, through its covers, to which emerging and established artists contributed. Dorothy Todd's editorship (1922–1926) incorporated articles from the Bloomsbury Group. See Luckhurst (1998). Also, see Änne Söll's paper (2009) on fashion and art in *Vogue* in which she explores the use of Pollock's art in Beaton's 1951 photographs for American *Vogue*.
[607] Conekin, *Autobiography*, p.49, S. Macdonald, J. Porter, *Putting on the Style: Setting up Home in the 1950s* (London: The Geffrye Museum, 1990), n.p. A. Partington, "Popular Fashion and Working-Class Affluence," J. Ash and E, Wilson ed. *Chic Thrills* (London: Pandora Press, 1992), 145-61. *Brief City: The Story of London's Festival Buildings*, by The *Observer*, documentary, 00:18:44, Producer Richard Massingham and directed by Maurice

the end of the Second World War, domesticity produced new and different opportunities of creativity for Miller.[608] Miller articulates the female artist's negotiation of her public and private lives.

Through her creativity, Miller creates a vision of Farley Farm (purchased in 1949) as a space of opportunity, vitality and enthusiasm. By encouraging well-known artists, writers, architects and museum directors to perform a range of domestic chores, Miller continues to articulate post-war social concerns in desiring to build a better future. Miller is an important figure in bringing together an artistic community with like-minded goals and collaborating on artistic ventures to reshape Britain's post-war cultural landscape. The farm, as a surrogate family home for an extended community of artists, is one that, as I argue in chapter five, challenges the exclusivity of the nuclear family. It outlines not only the setting up of a home but also a space in which, through her art, Miller negotiates and redefines her own experience of the domestic, as well as the experiences of many artists who resided at the farm.

By encouraging a variety of guests at the farm to perform unfamiliar activities, Miller continued to negotiate the boundaries of gender and class identities. From H.D. Molesworth (keeper of sculpture at the V&A) covering chairs to Alfred Barr (former director of the MOMA in New York) feeding the pigs, Miller encouraged and promoted a blurring of separate spheres. Moreover, the fact that Miller lay asleep on the sofa whilst her guests completed all the chores conveys Miller's negotiation of her own role; she was liberated from the domestic chores "to do what she liked".[609] Miller continued to see life through a humorous and critical lens when faced with the new challenge of domesticity, which produced new and different opportunities for creativity.[610]

For Simone de Beauvoir, a contemporary of Miller, this expression of creativity is important for women to live free and liberated lives. Only then, writes de Beauvoir, are women better equipped to navigate their public and private lives. Writing her book *The Second Sex* in 1949, de Beauvoir experienced an aggressive French pronatalist approach: one that was not so straightforward in Britain. Her book is helpful in outlining the post-war influences and expectations that many women, including Miller, had to navigate. She explores how a person is not born a woman but is shaped by a myriad of external societal forces into becoming one.

Harvey and Jacques Brunes (1952), 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3BLyVwSi-TA. The narrative accompanying this short documentary adopts a domestic theme by describing the exhibition as being "planned intimately like a series of rooms … differ[ing] in size, shape, in colour, character and furniture." (00:06:41-00:07:26).

[608] Jane Livingston, quoted in Conekin, "She Did the Cooking," 158. Burke, *Lives*, 333

[609] Calvocoressi, *Portraits*, 15.

[610] Conekin, "She Did the Cooking," 158.

Denied any kind of independent work or creative fulfilment, a woman must accept a life of marriage and motherhood. De Beauvoir reiterates that a woman's situation is not by choice and is determined by her biological reproduction. For this reason, women's reproductive capacity has inhibited their productive ability and the possibility of a life outside the home in the work place.

De Beauvoir's work articulates the situation of many middle-class mothers who, from an economic viewpoint, were not expected to work. This is important, as Miller's article, "The High Bed" appearing in *Vogue* in April 1948, addresses and questions the concerns faced by these women. As middle-class mothers or housewives who were economically secure, contemporary social expectations required them to return to the home and become, as Michal Shapira (2012) has recognised, "the main caretaker of the nation's future citizens".[611] Shapira, in her paper on women's post-war roles as mothers, identifies the links between citizenship, home and children's mental health. The image of a "happy home" and a "normative" heterosexual family dynamic in which women were expected to embrace full-time domestic work was a dominant and influential force.[612] Therefore, Miller's article "The High Bed" discussed in the first section of this chapter, is important. It reaffirms Miller's entry into the public, educated economic sphere and negotiates her own position as mother and artist with her own needs and desires.

Miller's article discusses fashion, food tips and the high bed (in a nursing home where Miller had a caesarean) as the perfect way to be the centre of attention whilst having others look after you. The tone is light-hearted and her advice to women is similar to that of her wartime pieces in terms of providing ideas on the best make-up, its use and where to purchase certain products during austerity. Miller's wit and independent spirit are evident in her view of pregnancy as a condition in which to reassert one's individuality through "glamour": fashion and cosmetics. Carol Dyhouse's book on glamour (*Glamour: Women, History, Feminism*, 2010) is an important and helpful source when examining Miller's own discourse of glamour as an empowering force in helping women to assert their independence.[613]

By encouraging women to become conscientious consumers, Miller presents the mother-to-be as a subject in her own right. This image reshapes patriarchal narratives of the mother as a vessel protecting male subjectivity. As de Beauvoir recognises, in her maternal state a woman is cast as losing all subjectivity, as she is inscribed with cultural meanings rather than seen as a subject herself. By adopting Dyhouse's definition of glamour as linked to boldness, aspiration and

[611] Michal Shapira, "Psychoanalysis on the Radio: Domestic Citizenship and Motherhood in Postwar Britain," in *Women and Gender in Postwar Europe: From Cold War to European Union*, ed. Joanna Regulska and Bonnie G. Smith (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis, 2012), 79.
[612] Shapira, "Psychoanalysis," 73.
[613] Carol Dyhouse, *Glamour: Women, History, Feminism* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2010).

desire, I argue that Miller adopts her own lived experience as a discourse to negotiate the traditional ideals surrounding motherhood.

M. Jane Slaughter's chapter on consumerism in *Women and Gender in Postwar Europe* (2012) is helpful in articulating Miller's engagement with women as consumers and as a discourse of resistance. In exercising one's own freedom in the marketplace, Slaughter argues that consumerism offered women opportunities in which to negotiate a series of positions. Through the "technological modernization of the home" in post-war Britain, women could be released from the drudgery associated with the domestic sphere.[614] Slaughter suggests that women were both "targets and instruments of the modernization that consumerism promised".[615] This argument is a convincing one, and I argue that Miller, with her modernist aesthetics, engages with and adopts the role of conscious consumer to reshape traditional ideals surrounding motherhood. With an emphasis on the female subject as an independent consumer of fashion rather than motherhood as the means for contentment, Miller does not perpetuate patriarchal discourses that make natural connections between the state of motherhood or maternity and being contented. She repositions women within these discourses of motherhood as desiring and desirable subjects.

In the second part of the chapter I suggest that Miller's article "Bachelor Entertaining" (written two months before Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*) acts as a counterpoint to de Beauvoir. Whilst de Beauvoir argues for an equality of the sexes and promotes women entering the masculine public sphere of work, Miller encourages women to allow men to enter into the private sphere of the home.[616] Whilst de Beauvoir encourages women to enter male culture, Miller's message, encouraging men to enter and embrace the woman's domain of the home, can be read as a more nuanced and provoking discourse. Miller is not only promoting freedom from the confines of the domestic for women but also proposing a flexibility pertaining to aspects of masculinity by encouraging men into the kitchen.[617] With Miller having recently moved to Farley Farm, articulating the home as a negotiable space is a conscious attempt to navigate her own position within the private sphere.

Cooking had been an interest for Miller since she lived in Egypt with her first husband, Aziz Eloui-Bey. After writing her last article for *Vogue*, cooking became her "Work" and her new

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[614] M. Jane Slaughter, "'What's New' and is it Good for You? Gender and Consumerism in Postwar Europe," in Regulska and Smith, *Women and Gender*, 106.
[615] Slaughter, "What's New," 106. Also see Francisca de Haan, "Women as the "Motor of Modern Life": Women's Work in Europe West and East since 1945," in Regulska and Smith, *Women and Gender*, 93.
[616] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 737.
[617] Matthew Hall and Brendan Gough, "Magazine and Reader Construction of 'Metrosexuality' and Masculinity: A Membership Categorisation Analysis," *Journal of Gender Studies* 20, no. 1 (Mar 2011): 76.

creative outlet.[618] This cooking can also be seen as a form of production, similar to having children, and can be termed as a mode of consumption. During the 1960s, Miller continued to entertain at the farm, throwing dinner parties for twelve or more guests, and indulged in experimental cooking as art. Ninette Lyon (a good friend of Miller's, author and creator of *Vogue's* "Second Fame" series), her husband Peter Lyon, Bettina McNulty (a contributing editor to American *House and Garden*) and her husband Henry McNulty (author of cocktail books for British *Vogue*) and James Beard (food critic) became regular guests at the farm. Miller's cooking also allowed her to indulge in her love of technology. The experimentation she applied to different photographic and processing styles is continued with her purchasing of the latest technology in the kitchen to experiment with different approaches to food as an artistic medium. Ninette Lyon calls this "A Second Fame" in her article for American *Vogue* in April 1965. This became another influential force that drew individuals to the farm, which I explore in chapter six.

4.1. "The High Bed": A Desiring and Desirable Maternal Body

"The High Bed" articulates Miller's own domestic situation in 1948 as mother to Antony Penrose, who was born on 9 September 1947. For Whitney Chadwick, Miller's post-war life at the farm merges with Roland's.[619] This narrative removes any sense of Miller as a creative, autonomous individual. Moreover, Chadwick's account reinforces the narrative of Miller's disappearance in to domesticity and an acceptance of contemporary female social roles, which encouraged women to focus on becoming mothers. But Miller's discourse in this article is one of fashion and glamour that centres on the mother-to-be as a discrete and discerning independent consumer rather than a passive individual in the service of child and family. Through the purchasing and discussing of fashion and cosmetic products, Miller engages with the new emerging consumer culture and ideas about the new "modern woman". Empowered by the "democracy of consumption", Miller outlines women as desiring and active in order to reshape traditional discourses of motherhood.[620]

Reference to "glamour" by Miller in her article is a response to women's changing social roles within a post-war socio-cultural landscape of austerity Britain. Carol Dyhouse (2010) observes that the make-do-and-mend housewife of 1945 desired more, transforming from a woman dedicated to a collective wartime citizenship into an independent, autonomous and desiring subject.[621] As a Miss Norah Alexander wrote in a letter to the *Daily Mail* on 13 March 1948:

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[618] Miller, quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 201.
[619] Chadwick, "Lee Miller," www.sfmoma.org/explore/multimedia/videos/186.
[620] Slaughter, "What's New," 117.
[621] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 2, 105, 165.

> You'd think after all these austere years no one would grudge us this small token of pleasanter things to come. … Don't let anyone persuade you it's wanton to covet the sort of clothes they're wearing in the other cities of the world.[622]

Miller acknowledges a similar frustration. She writes:

> A few months before, the matron of the nursing home had sent me a printed list. It was headed in banner type, "PLEASE BRING RATION BOOK WITH YOU" and ended "Please have all baby's clothes ESPECIALLY NAPKINS marked in full". In between was no glamour whatever … No hint of dreams … Just, 4 woollen coats, 4 night gowns, safety pins, carrying shawl, bonnet, crêpe bandages, 2 brassieres, etc. Half the list had been crossed out to adjust the list to the minimum coupons …[623]

Indicative of the utility and practicalities of austerity, Miller's call for glamour also conveys the lack of dreams in everyday life, let alone in maternity and the expectations of motherhood. For Miller, glamour, expressed through the purchasing of desirables, counters the constraints of austerity and impending motherhood. Using a variety of figurative techniques, Miller's writing is filled with colour, texture and "trimmings" in answer to the drab and dreary post-war climate. Reference to "pink", "blue", "soft down cushions", "chiffon scarf", "soap with a very light scent", and "a few drops of … Atkinson's Eau de Cologne" and "Yardley's Lavender" to soften the water all appeal to the senses.[624] Miller indulges in luxury and comfort through the language of consumerism.

In exploring consumerism and its relationship with women's social roles in post-war Britain, M. Jane Slaughter observes that consumerism provided women with a certain amount of autonomy.[625] Although women had to balance their public lives with their responsibilities as wives and mothers, the post-war period, Slaughter posits, witnessed "a significant process of emancipation in the daily behavior of women, from consuming fashion to striking a pose in public".[626] Carol Dyhouse makes similar observations, recognising women as astute, rational and discerning consumers conscious of image and self.[627] Women's magazines, *Vogue* included, were filled with consumer advice that promoted women not as passive recipients of consumer culture, impulsive and easy to persuade, but as capable and thoughtful individuals whose pleasure and desire is expressed through the purchasing of consumables. The purchasing of

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[622] Miss Norah Alexander, letter to *Daily Mail*, Mar 13, 1948 cited in Pearson Phillips, "The New Look," in *Age of Austerity 1945-1951*, ed. Michael Sissons and Philip French (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 133–34.
[623] Miller, "High Bed," 83.
[624] Miller, "High Bed," 83, 111.
[625] Slaughter, "What's New," 108.
[626] Slaughter, "What's New," 117.
[627] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 165.

consumer goods, as Antony Giddens recognises in his book, *Modernity and Self-identity* (1991), allows the creation of "self-narratives" and concepts of self that are continually evolving.[628] Miller, I would argue, is articulating a similar message in which the consumption of fashionable cosmetics provides women with a mode of attaining pleasure and contentment.

By giving voice to her own lived experience of maternity, Miller critiques cultural assumptions of the maternal body being "mute" and socially confined to the private sphere. Writing a year after giving birth to Antony and talking from experience, Miller would have felt the emphasis that was being placed on motherhood, domesticity and housekeeping. By expressing her approaching motherhood as an analogy to losing one's head, Miller nuances her concern about her loss of agency. Referencing the basket next to her, in which her baby would be placed, Miller imagines the basket to be carrying a head and a trolley being wheeled past her room as carrying the body. She states, "As a stretcher trolley rumbled past the open door a frivolously gruesome thought flashed, of … Marie Antoinette or Anne Boleyn or somebody accompanying the basket which would soon carry her own head".[629] Motherhood, which could leave the mother "headless", is the fear of being left voiceless, or metaphorically dead; this is especially true for Miller who, as a war correspondent, had had an active role in reshaping women's socio-political roles during the war.

Miller's wartime articles reporting on the liberation of Europe, front-line action and the death camps, as I have examined in the previous chapter, saw Miller engaging with socio-political issues. Her personal accounts positioned her as an authority who reported the news alongside her male counterparts and soldiers. This earned her the status of *femme soldat* and she experienced something akin to a celebrity status. As such, when she returned to Britain she was celebrated by *Vogue*, which realised the unique contribution she had brought to the magazine during the war. Moreover, her photo-essays of women's civilian work and women in the armed forces, as I have argued in chapter two, provided personal accounts of women involved in the war effort. By documenting women's changing socio-political roles, Miller had made visible women's wartime contribution. It is not surprising then, that in this article Miller is articulating her fears about losing her agency and being socially alienated as an expectant mother.[630]

[628] Antony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-identity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).
[629] Miller, "High Bed," 83.
[630] de Beauvoir articulated similar fears in her book *The Second Sex*, published a year later in March 1949. In the section entitled "The Mother", de Beauvoir critiques the contemporary societal pressures placed on women to become mothers, especially in post-war France. Outlining what it meant to become a mother, de Beauvoir explores the lack of choice given to women where abortion was illegal. Her phrase "Forced Motherhood" is indicative of this dominant patriarchal discourse whereby "A woman often finds herself compelled to reproduce against her will" (546). This harsh view of motherhood that denies a woman subjectivity critiques a woman's lack of choice to terminate a pregnancy and societal ideas of femininity and female desire.

In *The Second Sex*, de Beauvoir critiques the dominant patriarchal discourse that maternity is a "natural" and happy state of existence by explaining the maternal body as a site of conflict. The praises of motherhood, as de Beauvoir observes, are articulated to women from childhood as "this marvellous privilege", a state in which the woman is told she has value.[631] De Beauvoir states this is an illusion: "she [the mother-to-be] does not really make the child: it is made in her".[632] De Beauvoir reinforces this through her description of the foetus as possessing and taking control of the woman's body. De Beauvoir's language heightens this conflict. Describing the foetus as "a parasite exploiting her", she explores the battle ensuing between what de Beauvoir terms "her and herself":

> She possess it and she is possessed by it; it encapsulates the whole future and in carrying it, she feels as vast as the world; but this very richness annihilates her; she has the impression of not being anything else. A new existence is going to manifest itself and justify her own existence, she is proud of it; but she also feels like the plaything of obscure forces, she is tossed about and assaulted.[633]

In highlighting the battle between the woman and her maternal body, de Beauvoir emphasises that the maternal body is a battleground on which the mother-to-be must fight for her own subjectivity. By adopting the language of alienation when describing maternity, de Beauvoir challenges socio-cultural ideas that reinforce women's biological role as her ultimate destiny, voiceless and powerless. De Beauvoir's articulation of motherhood may appear extreme, especially to women who choose and desire motherhood. Yet what de Beauvoir is emphasising is the importance of a woman's lived reality, in addition to her reproductive value, which allows women to negotiate these prominent discourses surrounding and defining them. As de Beauvoir claims, "But her body is not enough to define her; it has a lived reality".[634] It is this premise that I believe Miller articulates in her article.

Adopting glamour as the means to reshape concepts about motherhood, Miller presents the mother-to-be as a working speaking subject. Her pleasure and fulfilment are sought in glamour, rather than the "self-fulfilling" state of maternity. Glamour, as Dyhouse argues, is associated with "luxury, excess, power, sexuality and transgression", and can provide "a route to a more assertive and powerful form of female identity".[635] Consequently, as Dyhouse rightly observes, glamour, conveyed through a woman's dress and use of cosmetics, allows a woman to reassert her agency.[636] This articulation of woman as an autonomous, desiring individual is, as Dyhouse

[631] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 545.
[632] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 553.
[633] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 551–52.
[634] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 49.
[635] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 3.
[636] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 1-7.

rightly points out, a refusal to be defined by norms of class and gender and expectations of conventional femininity.[637] Glamour is both "risk and self-assertion" and a powerful discourse related to desire and pleasure. This boldness and defiance that Dyhouse associates with glamour can be seen as articulating women's socio-political position during the war. Becoming independent active individuals, women successfully entered the public world of work and war, negotiating their public and private roles. In calling for "glamour" in the nursing home, Miller presents women, herself included, as bold agents.

By encouraging women to purchase consumables (fashion products, make-up and cosmetics) as a mode in which to express their own agency as part of the role of motherhood, Miller is engaging with the idea of gender as performative. And, if gender is performative, then why not motherhood?[638] With tips about clothes and make-up, which are style-centred, Miller provides women with advice on how to become conscientious consumers as mothers-to-be. Miller presents herself as a cultured and style-conscious authority; her dialogue with fashion in her article creates images that women can identify with and interpret for themselves. Miller utilises her celebrity status as a war photographer and war correspondent to present herself (in this article) as an independent woman as well as a mother. *Vogue* capitalises on this by introducing her with the words, "Vogue readers will remember Lee Miller for her war reporting". This is reinforced with the words, "Here, based on her own experience in the nursing home, she gives tips, as wise as gay".[639] Having experienced maternity, childbirth and now motherhood, Miller presents a template for upper and middle class women who were having to navigate a myriad of post-war social roles.

Whilst vocalising her concerns about impending motherhood, Miller presents the stay in a nursing home as a break from the everyday routine and responsibilities of "being at home".[640] Miller references the pampering in which women should indulge during their time in the nursing home. This includes the nurse overseeing any requests and family members and friends answering to a woman's every need. Maternity and motherhood are presented by Miller as having "whatever I imagined I might want".[641] The use of the active voice is a discourse of independence and challenges contemporary traditional narratives of motherhood being passive. It also engages with the concept of the new woman after the war, who is conscious of her own

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[637] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 3.
[638] As Butler identifies in *Gender Trouble* (1990), all identities are social constructs in constant flux, always in the process of becoming. Butler's starting point is de Beauvoir's statement, "One is not born but rather becomes a woman." Gender identity comes into being through a series of repeated acts, through its performativity: "There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expression' that are said to be its results." (25).
[639] Miller, "High Bed," 83.
[640] Miller, "High Bed," 83.
[641] Miller, "High Bed," 83.

needs and image. With tips on products and where to purchase them, Miller presents an image of the expectant mother as a confident and assured individual. The detail in Miller's advice covering all cosmetics and how to adapt one's wardrobe during maternity reinforces her confident tone. Affordable glamour is presented with "The daytime blouses you haven't worn for the past five months, because the suit wouldn't fit are perfect for the occasion" topped "by a chiffon scarf". The use of multiple imperatives underlines Miller's authority in giving advice.[642]

Miller references particular "foundation" and "liquid rouge in two shades" from "Pomeroy, 174 New Bond Street" and advises how to apply it for best results. She writes:

> put it on with a delicate touch. It's a nasty sight … smears of make-up on a pillow … so use a minimum of foundation, in strategic places only, like for a shiny nose or a red chin, but remember, a foundation which is used locally must be better matched to your skin and a great deal finer in texture than one you'd use all over.[643]

The voice is one of experience; Miller utilises her own stay at a nursing home to give her authority. This is particularly evident in her next piece of advice. She writes, "get your eyelashes dyed dark a few days before the event". This, she ensures, will prevent "stinging, naked red-rimmed eyes to give you away" during those "tearful moments". Hair is also the subject of Miller's tips: she provides the name of a hairdresser who even does hair in the nursing home if permitted.[644]

Whilst it may be observed that feminine attractiveness is tied to patriarchal ideas of capitalism and objectification, Dyhouse argues that the wearing of cosmetics allows women to make choices and construct personal identities – or, as Butler would posit, a performativity. In performing different versions of self not connected to class or place, glamour represented possibilities beyond the everyday lived experiences.[645] This was reinforced on the big screen by Hollywood actresses (during the 1930s), whose wearing of cosmetics and luxurious clothes became associated with ideas of glamour. With the influence of Hollywood and the rise of big chain stores, such as Woolworths, selling affordable cosmetics, "film-star glamour" was promoted as an achievable reality.[646] As Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (2001) observes in her book analysing women's post-war social roles, female appearance was "revolutionized" during the inter-war years. Cosmetics were no longer associated with inviting lust, which was deemed unacceptable for respectable women, or confined to the highest social groups as a marker of

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[642] Miller, "High Bed," 111.
[643] Miller, "High Bed," 111.
[644] Miller, "High Bed," 111.
[645] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 72. Also see Carolyn Steedman, *Landscape for a Good Woman* (London: Virago, 1986), 47.
[646] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 63–64.

rank.[647] Make-up became respectable and connected with "the emergence of an assertive femininity" that made women more liberated than their nineteenth-century predecessors.[648]

With reference to lipstick, nail polish and perfume, Miller similarly liberates motherhood from its cultural and conventional associations. The maternal body, inscribed with patriarchal symbols of motherhood, predicates the mother as a chaste and de-sexualised being. As de Beauvoir states, "If he [man] wants to think of her as pure and chaste, it is … from the refusal to acknowledge her as a body".[649] Rather, he sees her as a comforting, nurturing and protecting being who is separate from carnal desire. Miller challenges this by connecting motherhood with assertive female sexuality and desire. Her reference to the painting of nails and toenails painted "blood-red" promotes a vision of sensuality as a form of female power and control.

According to Dyhouse, painted nails, especially red nails, had (and continue to have) cultural associations. Women related them to glamour and luxury, whereas men viewed them in contrary terms. A Mass Observation report from 1939 revealed that most men disliked painted nails on women, with one man exclaiming that red nails made him associate women with "Egyptian whores".[650] Another associated red nails with the talons of a bird of prey, and an insurance clerk associated them with the wicked queen in *Snow White*.[651] Softer shades, such as pale pearl or pink, and colourless varnish were more acceptable, as they were viewed as feminine, but red nails were deemed as a form of defiance. With advice to "Give them a beauty treatment … callouses pumiced down and fresh varnish", Miller provides indulgence and a similar defiance in maternity for "10s.6d." Images of sensuality were also ascribed to perfumes, marketed as luxuries during the war and austerity. By advising women to purchase small bottles of Goya scents, Miller presents a desirable image of the mother-to-be.

Valerie Steele in her book *Fetish: Fashion, Sex and Power* makes a similar association between fashion and sexual pleasure, whilst Angela Carter defines the reddened mouth as establishing glamour and its conventions in the twentieth century.[652] The putting on of lipstick, Carter identifies in her essay "The Wound in the Face" (1982), was associated with more than one meaning. Its association ranged from self-assurance and independence to provocation and

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[647] Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, "The Body and Consumer Culture," in *Twentieth-century Britain*, ed. Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska (Essex: Pearson Education, 2001), 188.
[648] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, "Body and Consumer Culture," 188.
[649] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 169.
[650] Mass Observation Report, Jul 1939, *Personal Appearance: Hands, Face and Hair* (A 21). Also in Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 68.
[651] Mass Observation Report, Jul 1939, *Personal Appearance: Hands, Face and Hair* (A 21). Also in Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 68.
[652] Valerie Steele, *Fetish: Fashion, Sex and Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). Angela Carter, "The Wound in the Face," in *New Society*, reprinted in *Shaking a Leg: Collected Journalism and Writings* (London: Vintage, 1998).

defiance.[653] Film icons like Marlene Dietrich, who used lipstick as a form of resistance, and advertisements promising women the look of film stars associated glamour with desirable women.[654] Glamour, as an advertisement in *Picturegoer* and *Film Weekly* observed in January 1941, was a desirable and saleable commodity.[655]

During the war, lipstick and powder, in particular, were deemed essential and necessary for morale by the Board of Trade. Wartime survey data shows that cosmetics were an integral part of women's lives. Two-thirds of women used cosmetics regularly, with women under thirty the most prolific consumers. Only thirty-seven per cent of women over forty-five used cosmetics regularly. This is corroborated by working women being the highest users of cosmetics, whilst cosmetic use was lowest amongst housewives, the retired and the unemployed. This relationship between cosmetics and morale was echoed in the advice women received from an advertisement in *Vogue* on purchasing lipstick in September 1942: "Lips with a purpose in life – coupon free accessories of your wardrobe … harmonious, glowingly warm, long lasting … GALA, but how worth the seeking".[656] Cosmetics acted as a counterbalance to the limitations on fashions, which focussed on utility and creating a greater uniformity in women's appearance.[657] In *Picture Post* in April 1947, Tattoo lipsticks conveyed a similar message: "provocative … ultra vivid … glamour-laden … and lastingly, reassuringly, serenely unmoved by time, teacups, cocktails, kisses".[658]

This discourse is continued by Miller and *Vogue* in negotiating the post-war (1950s) socio-cultural narratives of austerity and the social expectations that women should return to a more delicate, natural, fresh image. Valerie Steele observes in *Fifty Years of Fashion: New Look to Now* (1997) that women were presented as "*femmes-fleurs*" and, as Alison Settle mentions in the *Observer* in 1957, "The gentle look is in".[659] Dyhouse recognises how the "edgy exotic glamour of Iris March was now profoundly unfashionable; instead the trend was based on roses, fragility, and serenity".[660] Enshrined within this model of femininity were narratives of submissive patterns of behaviour, or to "act" like ladies and not to look too assertive.[661] Vera Brittain, describing a time when she attended the University Women's Club dressed looking glamorous

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[653] Carter, "Wound in the Face," 94.
[654] Carter, "Wound in the Face," 94.
[655] Advertisement for Bile Beans, *Picturegoer and Film Weekly*, Jan 18, 1941, 24 (back cover).
[656] GALA advertisement, "Lips with a dress Sense," in British *Vogue*, Sep 1942, 91. Gala was a cosmetics company.
[657] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, "Body and Consumer Culture," 188.
[658] *Picture Post*, Apr 26, 1947, 29.
[659] Valerie Steele, *Fifty Years of Fashion: New Look to Now* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), 11. Alison Settle, "Viewpoint," *Observer*, May 12, 1957, in Alison Settle Archive, University of Brighton Library. Alison Settle was editor-in-chief of British *Vogue* from 1926 to 1934 before becoming fashion editor to the *Observer*.
[660] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 87.
[661] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 93.

with painted lips and nails, waved hair and wearing foundation and powder, observes that she was viewed negatively by other middle-class women.[662] Whilst Miller's advice to upper and middle class women emphasises the importance of neatness, it also promotes a post-war image of chic that Vera Brittain associated herself with during the war.

Miller's advice on sophistication is reinforced by the hand-drawn illustrations accompanying her article, "The High Bed". Images of women in elegant dresses (made from rayon) are included on either side of Miller's text. The description of each design underneath the sketches promotes "the newest look", similar to Christian Dior's New Look that had been launched in 1947; by April 1948 (the same month as Miller's article), versions of the New Look were in all the shops.[663] Fashion magazines like *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*, Änne Söll argues, were significant in promoting these new styles to women.[664] The editor-in-chief of *Harper's Bazaar*, Carmel Snow, who strongly believed in the designer's talent, is reported to have said after Dior's fashion show on 12 February 1947, "It's quite a revolution, dear Christian! Your dresses have such a new look!".[665] This was then seized on to define Dior's new style. Whether or not this was the case, it evidences the magazine's support for Dior. In her analysis of the impact of the New Look, Jane Mulvagh in her *Vogue History of 20th Century Fashion* (1998) argues that, together with other socio-cultural aspects, it was, in some respects, evidence of a return to the feminine repressed with all its class-bound hierarchal associations.[666] But this was not all it came to represent, as Dior himself stated.

Expressing how his clothes were designed for "flower-like women with rounded shoulders, full, feminine busts and hand-span waists above spreading skirts", Dior added that he had brought back "the art of pleasing" after a period of practicality and durability.[667] After a period of rationing and demand for frugality, the New Look also represented possibilities: a femininity beyond the everyday lived experience of many women, and a look that Stafford Cripps (President of the Board of Trade) called frivolous.[668] Miller's photoshoot "In Sicily" a year later (May 1949) presents models in glamorous locations, wearing the latest styles.[669] Her photograph *White Pique Blouse Stripey Cotton Skirt by Breener at Jay's* (1950) promotes a full skirt worn

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[662] Vera Brittain, *Chronicle of Friendship*, ed. A. Bishop (London: Gollancz, 1986), 339.
[663] Eric Newby, *Something Wholesale. My Life and Times in the Rag Trade* (London: Harper Press, 1992), 187.
[664] Änne Söll, "Pollock in *Vogue*: American Fashion and Avant-garde Art in Cecil Beaton's 1951 Photographs," *Fashion Theory* 13, no. 1 (2009): 29–50.
[665] Maria Grazia Chiuri (Artistic Director), "The Story of Dior: The New Look Revolution," *La Maison Dior*, Jun 29, 2015, accessed Jan 26, 2017, http://www.dior.com/couture/en_gb/the-house-of-dior/the-story-of-dior/the-new-look-revolution.
[666] Jane Mulvagh, *Vogue History of 20th Century Fashion* (London: Viking, 1998), 276.
[667] Christian Dior, quoted in R. Lakoff and R. Scherr, *Face Value: The Politics of Beauty* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), 87.
[668] Alison Bancroft, *Fashion and Psychoanalysis* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2012), 76.
[669] Miller, "In Sicily," 54-61.

with fashionable sunglasses, conveying a chic woman abroad and a welcome escape from austerity Britain (Figure 43).

Moreover, her picture of a model stepping off a plane represents a fashionable feminine independence that echoes Bruehl's cover for *Vogue* during the 1930s and predates Bourdain and William Klein's 1950s photography, whose style mixed realism with imagination and fantasy.[670] In this photograph of model and plane (Figure 44, page 164), the amalgamation of sky and sea and the platform on which the model is standing all direct the viewer's eye towards the horizon. This is complemented by the model's stance, whose arm is raised to cover her eyes, drawing attention to the exotic vista beyond. The image represents emancipation, dreams and aspiration.[671]

Figures 43 Lee Miller, *White Pique Blouse Stripey Cotton Skirt at Breener at Jay's*, Sicily, Italy. 1949. Lee Miller Archives.

[670] Angeletti and Oliva, *In Vogue*, 165.
[671] Carolyn Steedman's semi-autobiography, *Landscape for a Good Woman*, describes her mother's wish for "the full skirt that took twenty yards of cloth", 47. Although her mother despaired that she could not afford it and was barely supporting two children, Dior's style articulates the socio-cultural importance of such a look that, for her mother, represented a life beyond motherhood and her own circumstances.

Figure 44 Lee Miller; *Arrival in Augusta*, BOAC harbour, Sicily, Italy, 1949, Lee Miller Archives.

Vogue's description of a "fresh blue and white printed rayon dress; high neck and short sleeves bow-tied" underneath the hand-drawn illustrations and presented alongside Miller's text in "The High Bed", presents a similar position after wartime constraints.[672] With its copious amounts of material, the design is accentuated by a full skirt and "cross-over bodice edged with frills" and highlights the magazine's own negotiation of changing fashions. American *Vogue* did the same. Their interpretation of Dior's New Look was "The New Soft Look", with photographs by Irvin Penn (March 1951) and a similar focus on "textures and materials". Cecil Beaton also photographed the new style, presenting an image of "grandiose elegance of the haute-couture of Dior, Balmain, Faith and Balenciaga".[673] Whilst orientated on Dior's New Look, the designs were "nevertheless exclusive designs of New York fashion houses".[674] As Söll observes, fashion magazines like *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* helped Dior's designs reach American women, allowing them to have either a "line-by-line copy of the design custom-made at exclusive department stores" or modified by tailors ready to wear (off the peg) at chain department stores.[675] *Woman's Own* also ran a series of articles on 24 January 1952, which included interviews with and about Dior.[676]

[672] Miller, "High Bed," 83.
[673] Söll, "Pollock in *Vogue*," 35.
[674] P. Garner, "An Instinct for Style. The Fashion Photography of Cecil Beaton," in *Cecil Beaton*, ed. David Mellor (London: Barbican Art Gallery/Weidenfeld and Nicholson 1986), 76–77.
[675] Söll, "Pollock in *Vogue*," 33.
[676] *Woman's Own*, Jan 24, 1952, cited in Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 85. I tried to see the original copy of *Woman's Own* Jan 1952 at the British Library but they no longer had this issue.

Whether or not Miller embraced this new look is not evident in "The High Bed". However, what is clear is her similar articulation of women's desire for style, independence and glamour, both in austerity and maternity. Together with Miller's advice on cosmetics, *Vogue* continues to convey women as highly conscious fashion individuals whilst highlighting the "rapid spread of mass production", and the consumer boom which accelerated during the 1950s.[677] *Vogue* encouraged women to recognise and develop their consumer identity. In its January issue of 1953 the magazine promotes autonomy through becoming discerning consumers:

> Wonderful, warming, seductive, flattery, "Oh-I-hoped you'd say that" adjectives. That's what every woman wants – if not most, then pretty high up on her list of wants – … this issue is dedicated to the greatest fashion and adjective of them all … "becoming".[678]

From "a narrow column of a coat that gives the illusion of slenderness" to "lipstick; a head of hair burnished with brushing; bright nail-polish newly applied; the flattery of a well-fitting … corset … There is flattery, too, in anything that casts a pale glow – strings of pearls", *Vogue* outlines the image of the new woman whilst presenting advice on how to achieve the look.[679] The list of fashion alternatives promotes the new modern woman of the 1950s as a confident, enthusiastic consumer of clothes and cosmetics.

In the same issue (January 1953), *Vogue* recognises, with a young Princess Elizabeth proving to be an icon of fashion, the potential of young women as conscientious consumers in addition to its target audience: women over thirty. Introduced in January 1953, its "Young Idea" pages declared:

> The days when young ladies arranged flowers until – oh happy release – he came along are over, and we are glad of it … We mean to photograph you wearing the clothes for the occasion – the young clothes for the young occasion.[680]

The Queen's younger sister, Princess Margaret, also became an icon of fashion during this time, photographed in Dior's New Look and fairy-tale dresses in the early 1950s but then adopting a more "cutting-edge" image as her life became more "scandalous". Her hair was cut in a petal-cap style and she wore eye-liner and a darker lipstick.[681] *Vogue*'s ability to reflect the times was also evident in its recognition of its audience's desire (whether they were young or old) for chic and luxurious style after the restrictions of wartime. The magazine had already extended its audience

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[677] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, "Body and Consumer Culture," 184.
[678] *Vogue*, Jan 1953, 27.
[679] *Vogue*, Jan 1953, 29.
[680] *Vogue*, "Young Idea," Jan 1953, quoted in Robin Muir, *Vogue 100: A Century of Style* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2016), 16.
[681] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 96.

in June 1948, when it had recognised the post-war emergence of a new style of woman who did not fit the general readership. Mrs Exeter was aimed at "our 50-year-old heroine" who also desired elegant and fashionable styles.[682]

In September 1943, when envisioning post-war fashion, Hardy Amies wrote in *Vogue*, "Her clothes will be rich and rather grand, but she won't be afraid to wear them; for she will feel confident that people will know that, like everyone else, she will have worked hard to earn them".[683] Fashioning images of independence and confidence, Miller presents the expectant mother as a creative agent who desires and is desired, an emancipated woman who, having done her part in the war effort, is now more visible than ever. The aim of this new glamour is not to please or attract a man, but to express her own identity. This discourse, as Dyhouse observes, was adopted in the following decade by other fashion writers and women working in the fashion industry.[684] Alison Settle's piece, "Mothers with a Pay Packet", appearing in the *Observer* in April 1957, highlights the socio-cultural changes that were beginning to happen for women as empowered mothers. Settle writes about a new type of woman who enjoys her own "spending power" and independent means of support. Asserting herself as a self-governing agent, she refuses to give up her autonomy in marriage and motherhood.[685]

4.2. Men in the Kitchen: Negotiating Domesticity, Gender and Identity

"Bachelor Entertaining", although seemingly just about food, establishes Miller's negotiation of the domestic by presenting the home as not exclusively a woman's domain. By engaging with social and cultural issues that encouraged women to become mothers and homemakers, Miller negotiates these boundaries by presenting an alternative. Rather than women returning to the domestic realm post-war, as promoted by the pronatalist discourse of the time, Miller presents a counter-stance – a return to the kitchen by men: "Ever since the king burnt those cakes, Englishmen have been frustrated and frightened of cooking".[686] Blurring the boundaries between masculinity and femininity, and their gendered activities, Miller negotiates what Bonnie G. Smith identifies as the "stark heterosexual culture of the post-war years".[687] In her introduction to *Women and Gender in Postwar Europe* (2012), Smith observes that this discourse aimed to re-gender roles, with prominence placed on encouraging women to become mothers and boost

[682] Angeletti and Oliva, *In Vogue*, 140. Mrs Exeter was a character who was aimed at an older reader. She provided advice on how to stay fashionable and elegant. She started as an illustration but then models began to personify her. Although Mrs Exeter was never accredited to any journalist, it was believed Audrey Withers was the author.
[683] Hardy Amies, British *Vogue*, Sep1943, 86.
[684] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 105.
[685] Alison Settle, "Viewpoint: Mothers with a Pay Packet," *Observer*, Apr 14, 1957, in Alison Settle Archive, University of Brighton.
[686] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 69.
[687] Bonnie G. Smith, introduction to *Women and Gender*, ed. Regulska and Smith, 3.

fertility.[688] This, in turn, led to an emphasis on domesticity for women, where a number of British psychologists promoted motherhood and housekeeping as “sites of freedom and expression for women”.[689]

Written in March 1949, Miller’s article is significant as it encourages a female readership to let men enter the kitchen.[690] Miller’s article can be read as a counterpoint to de Beauvoir, who contested hierarchal ideas about male cultural hegemonic concepts of gender and identity. In rejecting this hierarchal system of signification, which de Beauvoir believes confines women physically, psychologically and intellectually, de Beauvoir contests women being viewed as “other”[691]: “I find that it falls again into the masculine trap of wanting to enclose us in our difference”.[692] Rather, de Beauvoir promotes “a brotherhood” between men and women, one that goes beyond “their natural differentiation”.[693] Only through “a collective change”, a wider socialist change, where “she [woman] has to shed her old skin and cut her own clothes”, does de Beauvoir believe woman can “be left to take her own chances”.[694] This powerful discourse, which blurs the boundaries of social identities, is one that Miller adopts in her article.

By promoting a blurring of established boundaries, Miller, similar to de Beauvoir, implies that women can make themselves anew with choice and possibility. Unlike de Beauvoir, Miller also negotiates conventional gender-appropriate behaviour by presenting a series of modern middle-class men entertaining at home.[695] By writing about bachelors “cooking, serving, washing up included … all their own work”, Miller challenges the assumption that the domestic sphere is the natural place for women and entirely their domain.[696] By presenting young, successful and cultured men who have an interest in cooking, décor, wine, music and entertaining, Miller challenges ideas about gendered practices and male and female identities that provides security

[688] Smith, introduction to *Women and Gender*, 3.
[689] Donald Winnicott, BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham UK, Microfilm: T659/T660: Script “Their Standards and Yours,” (May 12, 1944), 2.
[690] During the war, the kitchen (and household) was promoted by the Ministry of Food as the forefront of the war effort for many housewives. Using militaristic discourse, women were conveyed in newspaper articles and MOF printed materials (Recipe cards “The Kitchen Front”, “Food Facts” and “The ABC of Cooking”) as being important and relevant. Although becoming part of the armed forces and working in roles that were previously considered as male, some women may have still found it difficult to let men into the kitchen, especially in a post-war climate that required women to relinquish their public role. For some, the kitchen represented their only means of influence within the domestic sphere, which is why I suggest Miller’s article is, in some aspects, more provoking than de Beauvoir’s.
[691] Sheila Rowbotham, introduction to de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, ix.
[692] de Beauvoir, quoted in Margaret A. Simons and Jessica Benjamin, “Beauvoir Interview (1979),” in Simons, M. A., *Beauvoir and The Second Sex*: *Feminism, Race, and the Origins of Existentialism* (Lanham and Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2001), 19.
[693] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 782.
[694] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 777, 768.
[695] S. Hester and P. Eglin, ed. *Culture and Action: Studies in Membership Categorisation Analysis* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1997).
[696] Miller, “Bachelor Entertaining,” 69.

of identity.[697] She opens up a space "for the negotiation and contestation of identities" of both masculine and feminine.[698]

Matthew Hall and Brendan Gough's academic paper in the *Journal of Gender Studies* (2011) examining gender and sexuality as negotiable concepts is particularly useful, as it establishes how identity implies "fluid" or multiple parameters.[699] Their study on metrosexuality, "Magazine and Reader Construction of 'Metrosexuality' and Masculinity", explores how men reimagine "their identities through their consumption choices" complete with "typical feminine attributes such as 'caring' and 'communicativeness', or interests in 'food preparation' and 'fashion'".[700] In adopting these concepts of gender, any socio-cultural ideas associated with public and private spheres can be redefined: a similar premise to Miller's article.

In this regard, Miller can be seen as engaging with postmodern ideas about masculinity and the "new man" or "metrosexual man", which emerged in the 1980s and 1990s. As Claire Harrison observes in her paper, this model of masculinity, interested in fashion and food preparation, is even today re-evaluating and reconstructing more hegemonic forms of masculinity.[701] By challenging women's need to mother the "lonely bachelor" who has "no one to darn his socks, no one to pour his tea for his guests; doomed to return hospitality by giving cocktails to a noisy and heterogeneous gaggle", Miller addresses male hegemony head on.[702] Presenting men as engaging in what are considered to be feminised activities, Miller contests the social boundaries of gendered identities in which readers "categorise and position themselves and others in relation to particular conceptions of gender".[703] Miller is able to highlight the extent to which, as de Beauvoir points out, women have acquiesced to servitude "by convincing them [men] it's [cooking] sissy … and a woman's job".[704]

In challenging this claim, Miller not only challenges the contemporary pronatalist discourse but also attempts to negotiate ideas of masculine-feminine identity as measured against today's cultural concepts. Her article is structured around three scenarios of four different lifestyles of men: a diplomat, a publisher and printer, a Royal Navy commander and a museum director. De Beauvoir's book follows a similar pattern in that she chooses different situations of women: "The Married Woman", "The Mother", "Social Life", "From Maturity to Old Age", and

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[697] Hall and Gough, "Metrosexuality," 78.
[698] Hall and Gough, "Metrosexuality," 78.
[699] Hall and Gough, "Metrosexuality," 74.
[700] Hall and Gough, "Metrosexuality," 69, 72.
[701] Claire Harrison, "Real Men Do Wear Mascara: Advertising Discourse and Masculine Identity," *Critical Discourse Studies* 5, no. 1 (Feb 2008): 56.
[702] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 69.
[703] P. Nilan, "Gender as Positioned Identity Maintenance in Everyday Discourse," *Social Semiotics* 4, no. 1–2 (1994): 139–63, (142).
[704] Rowbotham, introduction to de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, x. Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 69.

"Women's Situation and Character". In this regard, Miller's article, which presents men partaking in attributed feminised activities in the home, seeks to normalise these practices and thereby attempts to remove uncertainty surrounding them.[705]

Miller outlines the men in terms of their work and occupation. This is a deliberate attempt by Miller to engage with the socio-political roles of both sexes. She contests not only the claim that men who cook and entertain their guests at home are "sissies" but also the assumption that women are more naturally suited to the domestic sphere. In fact, Miller presents these bachelor men as leading the "vanguard" of entertaining at home as a "reaction to … the temporary lodgings" during the last decade (the 1940s).[706] By presenting these men actively engaging in cooking and entertaining and interested in interior design, Miller seeks to redefine what it means to be a heterosexual man in post-war Britain and redefines concepts of femininity that are tied to the domestic.

In viewing the post-war period as a potential time of change, Miller's negotiation of post-war social concerns reflects today's landscape of social change, which sees many men reconstructing "their ideas of what it means to be male".[707] If women can partake in what were considered masculine roles and responsibilities (during the war), then the opposite, as Miller postulates in this article, is also possible for men. By proposing that men enter the kitchen, Miller ultimately presents the home as an in-between space in which categories, such as masculine and feminine, can be negotiated.[708]

Miller's first model of masculinity in her article is Fred Bartlett, an American diplomat, who has set up a "homely" furnished flat in which he entertains friends. Complete with "books and his collection of modern paintings", Bartlett is presented as a cultured man living near the embassy in London. He expertly cooks in a kitchen "the size of my [his] bath tub" with an attention to detail and cleanliness; he "washes, dries, and wax-paper wraps all vegetables when he buys them". His style is described as "simple", without using "gadgets" to produce food that is "delicious" and "fun".[709] The only gadget he possesses is a "ten-inch Pyrex Syringe" so he can "reach in and baste oven dishes without moving them".[710] His expertise in the kitchen is

[705] Hall and Gough, "Metrosexuality," 75.
[706] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 69.
[707] Harrison, "Real Men," 56.
[708] These men who are presented as embracing domestic chores and setting up home, an area primarily presented as a woman's responsibility, would in today's world be termed as "metrosexual", coined in 1994 by Mark Simpson in the *Daily Mail*. By providing several models of masculinity, Miller engages with today's discursive construction of male identity explored in scholarly disciplines from masculine studies to psychiatry. These include Bordo, S. 1999; Gill 2001; Rohlinger 2002; Alexander 2003; Stern 2003; Stibbe 2004 and Hall and Gough, 2011.
[709] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 69.
[710] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 69,111.

reinforced by Miller listing his abilities and adeptness: "He can whisk off the top of the milk for cream in his morning coffee or sneak out juice from under fat from sauce making".[711]

Here Miller dispels the myth that men need gadgets to entice them into the kitchen: gadgets such as the new pressure saucepans and pressure cookers, which were introduced in 1949 and were easy to use.[712] According to the checklist used by Hall and Gough in their paper, this model of masculinity presents Fred Bartlett as a man who "is a modern single man in touch with his feminine side", has "an appreciation for … other arts", a "flair for cooking … [and] in choosing the perfect wine and music" has "an eye for interior design", is "a city boy" and "enjoys reading".[713] By modern conceptions and using the list adopted by Hall and Gough as a guide, today Fred Bartlett would be considered to be a metrosexual man. Anticipating the potential to elicit anxieties concerning masculinity in contemporary readers, Miller reinforces Bartlett's sophistication and culture and his occupation as a diplomat to counter this.[714] As such, Miller presents, to use Gough and Hall's words, "these conventional feminised practices as part of a concomitant heterosexual script".[715]

This discourse is also adopted by Miller when presenting John Tillotson, a publisher and printer. Tillotson also likes to cook but, unlike Bartlett, he possesses "tons of flashing modern machinery". His recipes are "exotic and subtle" and he "likes to cook for six people … [whilst] match[ing] his wines with tenderness and flair".[716] Miller's narrative emphasises Tillotson's skill and his breadth of culinary knowledge. She presents his "tenderness and flair" with food and with the women guests: he encourages them "to bring a sweet with them" and there is "great competition in that department".[717] By implying that women enjoy his company, Miller makes the feminine undertones in these men acceptable to contemporary readers.[718]

Miller's third and fourth models refer to the cooking exploits of a "red-bearded Commander of the Royal Navy" and a museum director. In her description of the commander's ability to make flaming crêpes and pastry sweets, Miller compares his menus and organisation of his meals to "a ship's operation".[719] Once again, by making a comparison between cooking and a military operation, which is ordered and precise, Miller makes evident the masculine traits of rationality,

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[711] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 114.
[712] Marguerite Patten, *Post-war Kitchen: Nostalgic Food and Facts from 1945–1954* (London: Hamlyn, 1998), 53.
[713] J. Brennan, "Are You a Metrosexual?" *Askmen.com*, 2007, accessed Mar 2015, http://uk.askmen.com/daily/austin_100/102_fashion_style.html.
[714] N. Stevenson, P. Jackson and K. Brooks, "Reading Men's Lifestyle Magazines: Cultural Power and the Information Society," in *Masculinity and Men's Lifestyle Magazines*, ed. B. Benwell (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing/Sociological Review, 2003), 112–31.
[715] Hall and Gough, "Metrosexuality," 76.
[716] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 111.
[717] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 114.
[718] Hall and Gough, "Metrosexuality," 76.
[719] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 116.

offsetting these against the feminised activities of cooking and entertaining. The museum director is presented in a similar fashion, with an attention to his "china and silver" offset against his technical skill in using "pressure cookers and a Frigidaire" to prepare food.[720]

By promoting a return to the kitchen by men, Miller critiques contemporary socio-cultural concerns in a similar fashion to de Beauvoir. As Miller outlines, women must be prepared to leave the kitchen just as men must be prepared to enter it. Just as Becky Conekin recognises that Elizabeth David's advice to women in 1951 was "giving upper-middle-class English women permission to care about food", Miller arguably gives the same permission to upper-middle and middle-class men.[721] However, it would be some time before this notion of a man cooking and entertaining for his guests would be readily promoted in the media.

4.3. Conclusion

Becky Conekin, in her paper on Miller at Farley Farm (2008), has observed that, after marrying Roland Penrose (3 May 1947), Miller made the decision to allow him to be the main breadwinner in the family.[722] This may strengthen the argument of some critics who see Miller's time at Farley Farm as one of conformity without any creative endeavours. But Miller's negotiation of the domestic, articulated through her post-war articles, tells a different story. An exploration of Miller's articles on domesticity evidences Miller's continuing vision and challenges critics who have favoured the narrative of Miller's post-war decline. She was a vital force in her relationships with *Vogue* and Roland Penrose and at the farm. The next chapter focusses on Miller's activities at the farm and how she continued to reshape her environment as a hostess. Her post-war life articulates an active individual whose creativity found new outlets and expression. As Becky Conekin has suggested, Miller's artistic vision is refocussed on different challenges and situations in her post-war life.[723]

As I have shown in this chapter, Miller's post-war writing, similar to her wartime writing, critiques the traditional narratives of women's social roles that were dominant at the time: those of mother and housewife. Just as I have shown in the previous chapter that fashion was adopted as a resistant force by women in occupied France, Miller shows a similar resistance in "The High Bed". Fashion provides a powerful discourse through which to negotiate and resist dominant contemporaneous narratives surrounding women's social roles. Beauty practices and choices about fashion are not just discourses of style but are also part of the construction of identity as a

[720] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 116.
[721] Conekin, "She Did the Cooking," 153.
[722] Conekin, "She Did the Cooking," 150. See Conekin's interview with Bettina McNulty and telephone conversation with another (anonymous) friend of Miller's and Penrose's (Aug 2, 2002).
[723] Conekin, "She Did the Cooking," 158.

continuing and creative process. By giving voice to the lived experience of many middle-class educated women after the war, Miller reshapes the dominant rhetoric of motherhood and the family as a deeply meaningful career. She articulates glamour as an expression of self-assertiveness and possession in order to challenge traditional models of femininity. Moreover, glamour, expressed as a sense of aspiration, allowed escape from the hardships of everyday life: something that was much needed after the Second World War.

By examining Miller's anecdotes about her bachelor friends doing housekeeping and cooking, I have also shown how Miller critiques the concept that the kitchen was predominately a woman's domain. By reshaping gender-associated activities, Miller envisages a post-war world of change and equality, a concept that she goes on to discuss in more detail in her article "Working Guests", which I explore in the next chapter. As *Picture Post*'s "Mrs Average" observes about women's situation: "She wants more leisure, more colour, more food and clothing, less weary work. But most of all she wants hope. That is why she is sadder now than during the war".[724]

Navigating a socio-cultural and economic climate that promoted women as mothers and conscientious consumers, Miller's articles convey the importance of women's creativity in becoming independent agents. They are, therefore, important in any research into Miller's post-war life, because they evidence her continuing engagement with contemporary social issues and demonstrate her progression and development as an artist.

[724] *Picture Post* Cited in Phillips, "New Look," 122.

5.
"Working Guests": Farley Farm as Social Space Creating New Modes of Living

> That isn't the way I want it or the way I do it, and I've devoted four years of research and practice to getting all my friends to do all the work. (Lee Miller, 1953)[725]

Written for *Vogue* in 1953, "Working Guests" is a "catalogue" of guests who stayed at Farley Farm since it was purchased in 1949. Miller documents the myriad of people who contributed or were coerced into undertaking household chores, ranging from cooking – "picking, slicing and salting runner beans … preparing a bumper crop for the deep freeze … [or] cake-icing" – to covering chairs and helping out in the garden.[726] By providing a socio-cultural reading of this article, I argue that it documents the changing post-war landscape that envisioned a better future through community, art and equality. Her encouragement of guests to engage in artistic projects whilst taking part in domestic chores portrays the home as a space of creativity and new artistic production. In this respect, Miller articulates the ethos of *Vogue* in the 1950s as "a time of renewal … rebirth of opportunity, vitality and enthusiasm".[727] "Working Guests" promotes an egalitarian community of artists coming together to produce new artistic projects and a vision that positions art and sociability as a powerful, transformational social force.

"Working Guests" is the only post-war article by Miller that has received any real attention from critics, but even this is brief compared with the attention given to her wartime writing. Antony Penrose's reading of this article in *The Lives of Lee Miller* is a witty take on domesticity, with Miller coercing her guests to partake in household chores. He writes, "the sight of others sitting around idle was unbearable to her; she insisted that they be involved in some task under her direction and with enormous ingenuity invented schemes to keep everyone occupied".[728] Penrose recognises Miller's sociability and creativity but goes on to say in his later book *The Home of the Surrealists* (2001) that the article "degenerates into rambling".[729] This is not the case; rather, as Mark Haworth-Booth observes in *The Art of Lee Miller*, it evidences Miller's craft in writing. For Haworth-Booth, "Working Guests" is Miller's "funniest piece for *Vogue* … [and] is the most extensively illustrated of her post-war articles".[730] Haworth-Booth dedicates a page and a half to Miller's article and the photographs accompanying it. He references some of the guests and the

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[725] Miller, "Working Guests," 54.
[726] Miller, "Working Guests," 55.
[727] Nicholas Drake, *The Fifties in Vogue*, with foreword by Audrey Hepburn (London: William Heinemann, 1987), 6.
[728] Penrose, *Lives*, 191.
[729] Penrose, *Home of*, 79.
[730] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 209.

tasks they were coerced to do. His focus is primarily on the images, and it is without any real detailed analysis. Richard Calvocoressi, in his book *Lee Miller: Portraits from a Life* (2002), is more analytical when identifying Miller's art in the photographs attached to the article. For him, they show "deeper psychological truths, as revealed in facial expression, gesture and body language" and demonstrate a continuing "intensity" within her photography.[731] Her images are indeed intense, able to capture individuals in the moment. However, I argue that they also reveal and document the contemporary socio-cultural and political landscape of post-war Britain. When read as social documentary, Miller's article is more than just a demonstration of what Haworth-Booth refers to as her "surrealist wit" and, as Whitney Chadwick and Carolyn Burke have suggested, her decline into domesticity.[732]

I identify Miller's discourse of the domestic in "Working Guests" as engaging with contemporary socio-cultural discourses that saw women as a central force in the post-war reconstruction. Jen Browne (2000) makes a similar observation in her chapter on women's domestic role in post-war Britain, "Decisions in DIY: Women, Home Improvements and Advertising in Post-war Britain".[733] This has been useful in identifying the home as a form of creative outlet for women who were encouraged to become conscious consumers for and within the home.[734] Material culture, as Browne observes, gave women more power in the home than "history often give them credit for".[735] M. Jane Slaughter also notes in her chapter on consumerism and women's post-war roles that in realising the importance of the home as this new mode of improvement, women were targeted as "instruments of modernity".[736]

The home became the means by which a better standard of living could be achieved and, as social historian John Benson has suggested in *The Rise of Consumer Culture in Britain 1880–1980* (1994), a means "to EMPOWER women who, as has been seen so often, exercised particular responsibility over household consumption".[737] By placing Miller's article within the context of this discourse, Miller's engagement with this new aesthetic is evident. Through food, entertaining, décor and art, Miller negotiates the domestic and the creative as the mode by which post-war living was to be improved and daily lives transformed.

[731] Calvocoressi, *Portraits*, 15.
[732] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 210. Burke, *Lee Miller*, 333. Chadwick, "Lee Miller," www.sfmoma.org/explore/multimedia/videos/186.
[733] Jen Browne, "Decisions in DIY: Women, Home Improvements and Advertising in Post-war Britain," in *All the World and Her Husband: Women in Twentieth-century Consumer Culture*, ed. Maggie Andrews and Mary M. Talbot (London: Biddles, 2000).
[734] Browne, "Decisions in DIY," 133.
[735] Browne, "Decisions in DIY," 144.
[736] Slaughter, "What's New," 106.
[737] John Benson, *The Rise of Consumer Culture in Britain 1880–1980* (London: Longman, 1994), 195–97.

In the first section of this chapter I explore Miller's role at Farley Farm. I argue that by amalgamating the creative and domestic, Miller opens up the claustrophobic world of the home, which defined and constricted women's expected and accepted roles. Miller redefines the role of the housewife as a "single-handed hostess" who "evade[s] offers of aid on household projects".[738] Adopting the active position of decision maker, she presents an alternative model that "harness[es] … guests to a working pattern that leaves the hostess no duties save those of slave-driver".[739] Through her artistry, Miller destabilises the idea of the hostess and its gendered associations by cajoling her guests into contributing to household tasks. I argue that by bringing people together, Miller initiates new creative discussions and projects at the farm. Her article demonstrates the sociological processes involved in understanding and co-ordinating creative collaborative circles and her crucial role within these processes.

Michael P. Farrell's book, *Collaborative Circles: Friendship Dynamics and Creative Work* (2001), which explores creative circles, is very useful when examining the sociological processes that happen within artistic groups.[740] Farrell identifies key individuals within these groups, one of whom is the gatekeeper: a role that I argue is epitomised by Miller at the farm.[741] The term "gatekeeper", however, has connotations of exclusion. For this reason I correlate Farrell's definition of gatekeeper with the hostess as depicted in literary sources. Using Virginia Woolf's Mrs Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse* (1927), Woolf's memoirs about her own role as hostess in the Bloomsbury circle, Hermione Lee's biography *Virginia Woolf* (1997) and Elizabeth Jane Howard's autobiography *Slipstream: A Memoir* (2003), I explore the role of the hostess and its social connotations for middle class housewives in the post-war period.[742] I argue that for Miller, the role of hostess becomes artistry. By creating moments of spontaneity, coherence and connection between individuals, she builds an artistic community dedicated to social and cultural change through art and sociability. This in itself must have been a particularly challenging task, especially with artists, since there is competition between them as well as creativity and a shared vision.

Keith Hartley, in his chapter in *The Surrealist and the Photographer* (2001), regards Roland Penrose as a leader of collaborative groups who led discussions about new artistic projects.[743]

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[738] Miller, "Working Guests," 54.
[739] Miller, "Working Guests," 57.
[740] Michael P. Farrell, *Collaborative Circles: Friendship Dynamics and Creative Work* (London and Chicago: The University of Chicago, 2001).
[741] Farrell, *Collaborative Circles*, 84-85.
[742] Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (London: Penguin Books, 1992). Hermione, Lee, *Virginia Woolf* (London: Vintage, 1997). Elizabeth Jane Howard, *Slipstream: A Memoir* (London: Macmillan, 2002).
[743] Keith Hartley, "Roland Penrose: Private Passions for the Public Good," in *The Surrealist and the Photographer: Roland Penrose and Lee Miller* (Edinburgh: Trustees of the National Galleries of Scotland, 2001). Published in

However, it is Miller's innate sociability, explored in the second part of this chapter, which promoted an open environment in which creative discussions were facilitated. Without the right kind of environment, as Farrell observes, "even the most effective leader could not make a collaborative circle work".[744] Through her American and surrealist contacts, Miller was an important figure in the history of the ICA and at the farm. As Jane Brymer, a neighbour, recalled years later, "Lee was the house and the house was Lee" and her presence or absence was "palpable".[745] By emphasising the importance of people and relationships and their impact on creativity, Miller fostered an environment of dialogue and interaction amongst her guests whilst ensuring their contribution to a variety of tasks. Within these collaborations, individuals, as Farrell observes, must feel "free to explore untried or even objectionable ideas, less distracted by guilt, self-doubt, resentment or jealousy".[746] Only then can creative collaborations take place to enact change.

I suggest that Miller presents the domestic as an influential force to reinvigorate life and art in a post-war Britain that, according to Anne Massey and George Muir in their study of the ICA in 2014, was "regimented and deeply conventional".[747] This attitude to the domestic represents the 1945 Labour government's contemporaneous social concern with improving Britain's cultural and economic landscape. Epitomising this ethos was the Festival of Britain (1951). Articulating modernist sympathies, Becky Conekin in *The Autobiography of a Nation: The Festival of Britain* (2003) observes that the Festival's adoption of "simple clean lines for interior and exterior design and household objects" promoted progress and colour.[748] Conekin's book is helpful in providing the socio-historical context of post-war Britain in which Miller and Roland Penrose were setting up home as an artistic community, contributing to a post-war regeneration through the arts.

Outlining a new cultural hegemony, the Festival promoted the idea that arts, science, politics, culture, leisure, visions of the future and imaginings of the past could construct a "modern, cultured citizenry".[749] Raphael Samuel observes in *Island Stories: Unravelling Britain. Theatres of Memory* (1998) that the Festival was, "determinedly Modernist in bias, substituting, for the moth-eaten and the traditional, vistas of progressive advance: a great looking forward after years

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conjunction with the exhibition of the same name, shown at the Dean Gallery and The Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh.

[744] Farrell, *Collaborative Circles*, 266.

[745] Jane Brymer, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 350.

[746] Farrell, *Collaborative Circles*, 7.

[747] Anne Massey and George Muir, *Institute of Contemporary Arts 1946–1968* (London: Institute of Contemporary Arts & Roma Publications, 2014), 11.

[748] Conekin quotes J. Gloag, "Furniture Design in Britain," in *Design in the Festival: Illustrated Review of British Goods*, ed. Council of Industrial Design (London: HMSO, 1951), 14.

[749] Conekin, *Autobiography*, 4.

of rationing and greyness".[750] These cultural goals were believed to unite the social classes, as the home was a site of aspiration for all.

It is these social changes that Miller documents in her article, and in the final section of this chapter I argue that Miller presents Farley Farm as a community of people who are dependent on each other rather than on class or status. Encouraging guests to contribute to the farm, Miller outlines something that is akin to an egalitarian community and engages with a post-war ethos of uniting the classes through culture. Miller also questions the division of labour that made housekeeping, as Alison Light observes in her book exploring the social changes between the wars, a female activity that was "performed, where possible, by women of the lower classes".[751] Miller's article in *Vogue*, which had a readership who were used to having domestic help, presents an alternative mode of living built on community and equality.[752] By writing about these activities at the farm, Miller also highlights the social-political changes that were happening within and between the classes. It encourages men and women to partake in a range of activities that are not gender-specific. Moreover, by encouraging her friends from upper-middle and middle-class backgrounds to participate in labour and DIY, Miller blurs the boundaries between gender and class.

Alison Light's book, *Mrs Woolf and the Servants* (2008), explores the changes in British society from the Victorian household in which domestic servants were a prominent feature to after the Second World War and the decline in domestic staff. Light charts these changes through Woolf's own experiences with her maid, Nellie Boxall, and through Vanessa Bell's life at Charleston farmhouse. Similarly, Miller's article documents these social changes, whereby life without servants became a reality for many middle-class housewives. I use Charleston as an analogy to Farley Farm. Quentin Bell and Virginia Nicholson's book *Charleston: A Bloomsbury House and Garden* (1997) and a visit to Charleston house have proved insightful in outlining the lives of these Bloomsbury figures and their essential friendships.[753] Moreover, the BBC Two drama, *Life in Squares* (27 July to 10 August 2015) has been a useful source in articulating life at Charleston.[754] Farley Farm and Charleston were both artistic communities documenting the social changes that were happening after the two world wars, and they both promoted a radical mode of living centred on art and equality.

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[750] R. Samuel, with A. Light, S. Alexander and G. Stedman Jones, *Island Stories: Unravelling Britain. Theatres of Memory*, vol. 2 (London and New York: Verso, 1998), 55.
[751] Alison Light, *Mrs Woolf and the Servants* (London: Penguin Books, 2008), 115.
[752] Angeletti and Oliva, *In Vogue*, 153.
[753] Quentin Bell and Virginia Nicholson, *Charleston: A Bloomsbury House and Garden* (London: Frances Lincoln, 1997).
[754] *Life in Squares*, directed by Simon Kaijser, written by Amanda Coe, BBC Two drama, (three episodes), Jul 27 to Aug 10, 2015.

Miller's role at the farm, which Penrose defines as that of hostess, should more appropriately be seen as that of an artist who is challenging masculine conceptions of art and femininity.[755] This was essential to the many circles of friendship and networks of creative collaborations that took place at the farm. In negotiating her role at the farm, Miller continued to express her own creativity, which challenged the boundaries of class and gender, and private and public, to produce an open, social atmosphere. Miller encouraged creativity to be lived and shared at the farm,[756] and this creativity did not depend on the passive position of a beautiful muse-like housewife addressing the needs of her male counterpart.

5.1. The Role of Hostess

With a vision of the home and the family as the means by which to heal a post-war society, women, as Jen Browne observes, were encouraged to become mothers and homemakers to the nation.[757] De Beauvoir observes that the home becomes a prison for a woman, cutting her off from the public world, essentially becoming, as Betty Friedan later identifies, "the end of life itself".[758] This applied particularly in America. Charlotte Amanda Hagood, in her paper on the nuclear family in post-war culture, observes that "in a geopolitical climate [post-war] in which 'containment was the key to security', a 'domestic version' of this foreign policy emerged … where 'the sphere of influence' was the home".[759] The home was promoted as the place in which harmful social forces may be tamed and where a fulfilling life to which men and women aspired could be achieved.[760] Consequently, a woman's domestic role was infused "with a sense of national purpose".[761] Donald Winnicott expresses a similar ethos about women's role as mothers in preparing children to become "stable citizens".[762] Miller questions and negotiates the foundations of this thinking. She voices a prescient feminist perspective of the home – a perspective that forms interconnections of friends, work colleagues and neighbours – and, as such, provides a critique of the home itself.

Through her article "Working Guests" and her artistry, Miller reshapes her role at the farm to present the home as a place of creative collaboration between equals. Roland Penrose articulates the socio-political role expected of women during this decade in his autobiography *Scrap Book:*

[755] Roland Penrose, *Scrap Book: 1900–1981* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1981), 186.
[756] Penrose, *Lives*, 190.
[757] Browne, "Decisions in DIY," 133.
[758] Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W. W Norton, 1963), p.191.
[759] Charlotte Amanda Hagood, "Rethinking the Nuclear Family: Judith Merril's *Shadow on the Hearth* and Domestic Science Fiction," *Women's Studies*, 40 (2011): 1013.
[760] Hagood, "*Shadow on the Hearth*," 1013
[761] Hagood, "*Shadow on the Hearth*," 1014.
[762] Donald W. Winnicott, "The Theory of the Parent-Infant Relationship," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 41 (1960): 589-591, accessed Feb 22, 2017, http://icpla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Winnicott-D.-The-Theory-of-the-Parent-Infant-Relationship-IJPA-Vol.-41-pps.-585-595.pdf.

1900–1981 under the heading “Lee as Hostess”. In this, Miller’s role at the farm possesses gendered associations tied primarily to “cooking [which] gave pleasure not only to her gourmet friends but also to the flow of weekend visitors”.[763] Penrose articulates the accepted social role that upper-middle and middle-class women were expected and even encouraged to play. With the disappearance of domestic servants, the 1950s hostess now had to learn to cook in addition to how to entertain. Her subsequent value or commodity was measured in terms of herself and her ability to take care of the home.

Practical Cookery for All (1953) by Blanche Anding and others sets out the qualities and skills that were essential to the hostess.[764] The book is aimed at middle-class women, with its tips and advice on purchasing conveniences. A horizontal type of electric cooker with raised oven, a refrigerator, a modern kitchen sink unit comprising of a metal sink and two draining boards, storage and work space, and venetian blinds are presented as creating the modern work space for housewives. The layout and design of the kitchen as “the heart of the home” is presented alongside the essential “tools of your [the housewife’s] trade”.[765] This book clearly encourages women to see their role as a trade and as part of their essential duty to society. Whilst for Jen Browne this focus on the kitchen re-establishes the definitions of male labour and feminine domesticity, it must also be noted that the purchasing of such modern appliances allowed women to escape the drudgery of domestic work.[766]

There is a whole section in Of *Practical Cookery for All* dedicated to the hostess, “Hints for the Hostess”, which advises women on how to manage the cooking alongside entertaining guests. Essential to this role is the ability “to be natural and to make her guests feel welcome and at ease … She should be free to devote as much time as possible to her guests, and this freedom is the result of careful planning and forethought” to ensure that everything runs smoothly and that guests’ needs are attended to.[767] Moreover, the hostess must avoid:

> … being continually on the move between the kitchen and attending to her guests so that she appears harassed and unable to follow the trend of the conversation. Not only will she suffer from a nervous headache, but she will communicate her lack of ease to her guests and make them feel uncomfortable. Therefore, always be methodical and make your preparations for entertaining well in advance.[768]

[763] Penrose, *Scrap Book*, 186.
[764] Anding, Blanche, Gweneth Chappell, Lydia Chatterton, Jessie Lindsay, André Simon, Josephine Terry and Nella Whitfield, *Practical Cookery for All* (London: Odhams Press, 1953).
[765] Anding et al., *Practical Cookery for All*, 7, 24.
[766] Browne, “Decisions in DIY,”133.
[767] Anding et al., *Practical Cookery*, 581.
[768] Anding et al., *Practical Cookery*, 581.

Included within this section is advice on table-setting and choosing the right wine. Advice on children's parties and carving is provided in other sections of the book, in addition to recipes and cooking instruction.

Another writer of the time, Elizabeth Jane Howard, in her autobiography *Slipstream: A Memoir* (2002), recalls these expectations whilst recounting her marriage to Arthur Koestler, another author. Howard writes that Arthur expected her to play the hostess even though she was working as a part-time secretary and chauffeur and trying to write, which reflects the socio-political role of the married woman in the 1950s. She writes how, according to him, the hostess "was a superb cook … dressed impeccably [and] … knew how to entertain".[769] However, for Howard, playing the hostess was "an ordeal" where she was expected to throw dinner parties "on weekday nights when … [she'd] been working all day".[770] She describes the pressure of having to produce a three-course dinner, lay the table and dress appropriately for the evening. In this situation, the home becomes, as de Beauvoir acknowledges, a prison and a place of alienation. Howard evidences this: "I wasn't an experienced cook. I became terrified of making mistakes, dreaded being openly snubbed by Arthur in front of his friends".[771] She also recalls that later, in 1968, whilst married to Kingsley Amis, she was under similar pressure of having to entertain at weekends, "getting in food, cooking it and cleaning up" for "twelve or more".[772]

De Beauvoir articulates similar expectations of middle-class women in her section entitled "Social Life" in *The Second Sex* (1949). In this, de Beauvoir expresses how women are expected to entertain and express delight "in showing off her home and even herself".[773] The role of hostess, thus, comprised of "beauty treatments and dressing" up, adorning herself and her home. This required "social obligations", such as calling on others and the entertainment of others in one's home. Conversation centred on "the weather, the latest novel, and a few general ideas borrowed from their husbands".[774] The hostess was required to:

> display[s] her treasures: silver, table linen, crystal; she dresses the house with flowers ephemeral and useless … blooming in vases, doomed to a rapid death … The table is laden with fine food, precious wines; it means satisfying the guests' needs, it is a question of inventing gracious gifts that anticipate their desires …[775]

[769] Elizabeth Jane Howard, *Slipstream: A Memoir* (London: Macmillan, 2002), 264.
[770] Howard, *Slipstream*, 264.
[771] Howard, *Slipstream*, 264.
[772] Howard, *Slipstream*, 375.
[773] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 585.
[774] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 596.
[775] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 596.

A woman's value, as de Beauvoir observes, lay in servitude in which she dedicated herself to her husband, children and others.[776] This negation of herself ensured that she provided happiness to others, dependent on:

> the soufflé, the roast, the butcher, the cook, the extra help; she is dependent on the husband who frowns every time something goes wrong; she is dependent on the guests who judge … and who decide if the evening has been a success or not.[777]

As de Beauvoir metaphorically acknowledges, the hostess is like the flowers in the vase, whose momentary existence is to provide pleasure to others: a role analogous to the accepted and expected roles of nineteenth-century women.

This image of hostess is one that Virginia Woolf imagines her mother played perfectly. In "Reminiscences", Woolf evokes her first attempt to write about her mother, who embodied the acceptable roles of a beautiful upper-middle-class woman:

> The date is around about 1860. It is a hot summer day. Tea tables with great bowls of strawberries and cream are scattered about the lawn. They are 'presided over' by some of the silk lovely sisters; who do not wear crinolines but are robed in splendid Venetian draperies; they sit enthroned and talk with foreign emphatic gestures – my mother too gesticulated, throwing her hands out – to the eminent men … rulers of India, statesmen, poets, painters. My mother comes out of the window wearing that striped silk dress buttoned at the throat with a flowing skirt … She is of course 'a vision' as they used to say; and there she stands, silent, with her plate of strawberries and cream…[778]

Although this extract is invoked with nostalgia for her mother and childhood, Hermione Lee observes in *The Novels of Virginia Woolf* (1977) that Woolf disliked the world of society hostesses, where powerful men would "talk a great deal of nonsense and the woman's place is decorative, entertaining and subservient".[779] Lytton Strachey called women such as Lady Cunard, Mrs Greville, Lady Colefax and Mrs Corrigan "shorn beings", "for whom the wind is not tempered - powerless, out of place, and slightly ridiculous".[780] Even Woolf seemed to snipe at hostesses who had grasped their way up the social ladder just to be "seen": "Surely in our time, something better than this 'seeing' people might be construed".[781]

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[776] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 591.
[777] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 598.
[778] Virginia Woolf, quoted in Hermione Lee, *Virginia Woolf* (London: Vintage, 1997), 86.
[779] Hermione Lee, "Mrs Dalloway 1925," in *The Novels of Virginia Woolf* (London: Methuen, 1977), 94.
[780] Lytton Strachey, quoted in Brian Masters, *Great Hostesses* (London: Constable, 1982), 10.
[781] Virginia Woolf, quoted in Masters, *Great Hostesses*, 11.

As a young upper-middle-class free-thinker in Bloomsbury – a group who reacted against the bourgeois habits and conventions of Victorian life – Woolf exposed and analysed the accepted roles that women had to play and the world which engendered them:

> We were full of experiments and reforms. We were going to do without table napkins … We were going to paint; to write; to have coffee after dinner instead of tea at nine o'clock. Everything was going to be new; everything was going to be different. Everything was on trial.[782]

By incorporating the austere private world of the domestic into her work as an artist, Woolf acknowledges the tensions between the artistic/creative and the domestic expectations of being a woman. In her book *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays* (1942), she attacks the idea of the Victorian Angel in the house who "sacrificed herself daily" and was a vessel with "no mind or wish of her own".[783] Woolf suggests that this sacrificial image of a woman excluded her from combining work and domestic life. In order for a woman to write, Woolf calls for the death of such a selfless phantom:

> I turned upon her and caught her by the throat. I did my best to kill her. My excuse, if I were to be had up in a court of law, would be that I acted in self-defence. Had I not killed her she would have killed me.[784]

Woolf reshapes the home as a space for creativity, a space for art and work, challenging current social rituals and behaviour, such as the calling card, the formal polite conversation, the morning visit, the marriage market and dressing for dinner.[785]

In killing the angel phantom, Woolf implies that a modernist feminist vision can be born in its stead: one that Woolf herself embraced and lived as a member of the Bloomsbury Group. Bloomsbury focussed on a more informal kind of relationship, individual pleasure, and, as Susan K. Harris observes in *The Cultural Work of the Late Nineteenth-century Hostess* (2002), "of creating fragile moments of unity among fragmented lives".[786] By bringing people together, Bloomsbury, as Woolf observed, created moments of social harmony. Woolf acknowledged that this underpinned the success of Bloomsbury. She concluded it was "having worked out a view of life which was not by any means corrupt or sinister, or merely intellectual; rather ascetic and austere indeed; which still holds, and keeps them [members of the Bloomsbury Group] dining and staying together, after 20 years".[787] In this circle, which met every Thursday evening in

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[782] Woolf, quoted in Lee, *Woolf*, 207.
[783] Virginia Woolf, *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays* (New York: Harcourt, 1980), 237.
[784] Woolf, *Moth*, 237–38.
[785] Lee, *Woolf*, 54–55.
[786] Susan K. Harris, *The Cultural Work of the Late Nineteenth-century Hostess: Annie Fields and Mary Gladstone Drew* (New York and Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 5.
[787] Woolf, quoted in Lee, *Woolf*, 268.

Woolf's home, conversation was, as Woolf observed, a liberated experience, "astonishingly abstract and not restricted to the idiotic social exchanges of the Duckworth social milieu".[788]

Bloomsbury conversations were, as Hermione Lee observes in her biography *Virginia Woolf* (1997), often compared to "orchestral concerts with Virginia Woolf as conductor".[789] Here Woolf plays the role she gives to her fictional characters Clarissa Dalloway and Mrs Ramsay, drawing people together to create moments of social agreement. Lady Ottoline's memory of Woolf in *The Early Memoirs* (1964) was of her "bell-like voice" leading her guests into "the lives of any she meet, or the world of poetry".[790] Dialogue and conversation, an essential aspect of the Bloomsbury Group, was important to Woolf, as it was through conversation that she assessed people's friendship.[791] Through her own role within the Bloomsbury Group and through her writing, Woolf articulates the difference between the late Victorian hostess and the hostess of the next generation. Ray Costelle, who befriended the Stephens – Virginia and Vanessa – through Marjorie Strachey, describes the first Bloomsbury party she attended in 1909:

> We sat round the fire in anything but gloomy silence … in fact we talked continuously of diseases and shipwrecks and other such frivolous topics. Then we somehow fell to making noises at the dog, and this awe-inspiring company might have been seen leaping from chair to chair uttering wild growls and shrieks of laughter … She [Virginia] was very friendly and told me about the way she lives and the people she meets and the things that seem important.[792]

Woolf portrays an image of a new woman emerging who is able to vacillate between her public identity as a socialite and her private self. At the heart of this art is an ability to understand people. In an academic paper in the *IUP Journal of English Studies* (2014), Deepali Prakash recognises that the new women in Woolf's writing demonstrated "a liberal version of consciousness raising whose aim was to awaken them to new possibilities of individual self-fulfilment".[793] Lee's reading of Mrs Ramsey's character from Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* (1927), who can shape "disparate entities – hostilities, reservations … into a coherent whole", presents an image of the hostess as an artist, initiating moments of creativity or art.[794]

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788 Woolf, quoted in Lee, *Woolf*, 211.
789 Lee, *Woolf*, 269.
790 Ottoline's memoirs in *The Early Memoirs*, ed. Robert Gathorne-Hardy (London: Faber and Faber, 1964), 178.
791 Lee, *Woolf*, 270.
792 Ray to Mary Costelloe, Nov 11, 1909, quoted in Barbara Strachey, *Remarkable Relations: The Story of the Pearsall Smith Family* (London: Gollancz, 1981), 247–48.
793 Deepali Prakash, "Emerging Image of Women in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* and *To the Lighthouse*," *IUP Journal of English Studies* IX, no. 2 (2014): 67.
794 Hermione Lee, "To the Lighthouse," in *Novels of*, 133–34.

Mrs Ramsay's artistic ability to structure and give form to scraps and fragments, to shape and fill space, is similar to Lily Briscoe's skill as a painter.[795] In this instance, Hermione Lee sees Mrs Ramsay as "a creator" who is searching for "significant form" from moments of time, analogous to Lily's search for significant shapes in her picture.[796] The analogy continues as Lee compares the way in which Mrs Ramsay "looks back on her dinner party as something that takes on a new perspective as soon as it is completed" in a similar fashion to how Lily looks at her completed picture. As Mrs Ramsay observes:

> Nothing need be said; nothing could be said. There it was, all around them … there is a coherence in things, a stability; something, she meant, is immune from change, and shines out … of such moments, she thought, the thing is made that remains for ever after: This would remain.[797]

This image of the hostess, as a cohesive force through which creativity and art happen, is indicative of Miller's role at the farm. Similar to Woolf, who aims for her writing to be analogous to a piece of art, Miller adopts an artistic discourse in "Working Guests" to present the working relationships not only in terms of labour but also as collaborative creative and poetic endeavours. She describes how "seed-drills, dung-spreaders and discharrows … have sculptural beauty" and "the reworked covers of grandma's moth-eaten gros-point chairs are masterpieces".[798] The everyday tasks of "plotting, pricking cut, pinching off, and puddling" (gardening activities) are described as "poetic words".[799] Miller re-arranges individuals like an artist does colours and shapes, bringing people together to enact the agenda she sets. In this regard Miller's article conveys a true experience of living in which the tensions and conflicts, filtered through a key individual, can help create art.

Michael P. Farrell in his book *Collaborative Circles: Friendship Dynamics and Creative Work* (2001), which explores the different roles played in forming collaborative circles, refers to this key individual as a gatekeeper. He defines the gatekeeper as:

> the foundation of the culture of the circle … [who] selects friends who are highly ambitious and committed to the same line of work – people who aspire to make a mark and gain recognition in their field … They see something lacking in the mainstream vision of their discipline and they want to do something about it. If the gatekeeper's criteria work well

[795] Lily Briscoe is a young girl and a painter staying at Mrs Ramsay's boarding house. She is friendly with the Ramsays.
[796] Lee, "To the Lighthouse," 130.
[797] Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse* (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 114.
[798] Miller, "Working Guests," 90, 92.
[799] Miller, "Working Guests," 56.

> as a filter, most members of a collaborative circle will share the gatekeeper's values and career aspirations.[800]

This is also helpful in defining Miller's role at the farm, as it in part articulates Miller's talent as a linchpin in gathering people together. The position of the old kitchen, which acted as an entry point to the house, also enabled Miller to bring individuals together: she was literally a gatekeeper whom guests had to pass. As Antony Penrose observes, "Few people arrived at the front door … Visitors usually came to the back door which opened into the old kitchen".[801] All were subsequently cajoled to help and prepare food, which appeared to be a prerequisite when staying at the farm. Visitors remember the warm ambience of the kitchen in which, according to John Craxton, a frequent guest at the farm, Miller was "the lure … an icon who represented … utter freedom".[802] The kitchen was the centre of the house, where so "furious was the pace of gossip", states Miller, that a guest will "reach for a handful of scalded broadbeans and start slipping off the skins … without even noticing".[803]

The term "gatekeeper", which Farrell adopts to define this crucial role within a group, possesses connotations of exclusion. This does not make reference to the artistry of Miller. Also referencing Woolf and her definition of this key individual in the character of Mrs Ramsay, the ability to give structure, cohesion and direction to a vision, acknowledges this role as creative and artistic.[804] The term "artist" is, therefore, more appropriate in describing Miller's ability to negotiate the creative against the accepted and expected roles of women in the 1950s. It also acknowledges her ability to coerce friends who stayed at the farm into conversation and collaborative projects. By initiating physical labour and the preparation of meals amongst her guests, Miller not only tries to create "moments", similar to Woolf's Mrs Ramsay, but also attempts to create an egalitarian, artistic community.[805]

5.2. Miller's Artistry at the Farm: Conviviality, Conversation and Creativity

With visits from Eileen Agar, Leonora Carrington, Paul Éluard, Max Ernst, Man Ray, Dorothea Tanning, (members of the surrealist circle that was formed in the 1930s), Pablo Picasso and new artists, such as Lynn Chadwick, Richard Hamilton, Eduardo Paolozzi and Bill Turnball, the farm became a place of reunion and new creative projects. Miller's article and her photographs of visitors to the farm document the variety of collaborative circles forming at the farm: circles that

[800] Farrell, *Collaborative Circles*, 278.
[801] Penrose, *Home of*, 102, 108.
[802] John Craxton, interview by Carolyn Burke, Oct 4, 1999, in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 338.
[803] Miller, "Working Guests," 56.
[804] Lee, "To the Lighthouse," 133-34.
[805] Lee, "To the Lighthouse," 133.

produced exhibitions, such as *Forty Years of Modern Art: 1901–1947* (10 February – 6 March 1948), *40,000 Years of Modern Art* (20 December 1948 – 29 January 1949) and *Wonder and Horror of the Human Head* (5 March – 19 April 1953) and others later exhibited at the ICA. Exhibitions such as *Parallel of Life and Art* in Autumn 1953, *Man, Machine and Motion* in 1955, *This is Tomorrow* in 1956 and *An Exhibit* in 1957 see the community at the farm engaged in new collaborative projects.[806] Miller's article is helpful in articulating a social environment where members of a community supported one another, not only in terms of new creative projects but also through personal crises. With humour and fun, Miller conveys a social community coming together to build a post-war better "quality of life" through creativity, desire and aspiration.[807]

By bringing similar artistically like-minded people who engage together in a series of untried and new household tasks – cooking, fixing furniture, building a pool and feeding the pigs – Miller promotes an environment that is conducive to creativity and encourages new ideas and projects. In these initial stages, Miller's influence is essential. By knowing each member individually, she, like Mrs Ramsay, is able to introduce guests to one another so that new friendships and networking can take place. When Miller states, "Tact and insight are essential in the allocation of jobs and in the grading of the working guests' experience", [808] she echoes the character of Mrs Ramsay:

> her [Mrs Ramsay's] eyes were so clear that they seemed to go round the table unveiling each of these people, and their thoughts and feelings, without effort like a light stealing under water so that its ripples and the reeds in it and the minnows balancing themselves, and the sudden silent trout are lit up hanging, trembling.[809]

Moreover, like the guests boarding with Mrs Ramsay, the guests staying at the farm for short periods of time helped to strengthen the new friendships to which Miller humorously refers in her article. She refers to the visitors, "sleep[ing] all the morning".[810] The practicalities of sharing and negotiating the same space in terms of sleeping arrangements and bathroom facilities would have certainly facilitated working relationships and collaborations of a different kind.

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[806] Eduardo Paolozzi, Nigel Henderson, Peter and Alison Smithson and Ronald Jenkins, *Parallel of Life and Art*, ICA, Sep, 1953, Richard Hamilton, *Man Machine and Motion*, ICA, July 1955, The Independent Group, *This is Tomorrow,* Whitechapel Gallery, Aug 1956, and Richard Hamilton, Victor Pasmore and Laurence Alloway, *An exhibit*, ICA, Aug 1957, in Massey and Muir, *ICA*, 171-185.
[807] Conekin, *Autobiography*, 10.
[808] Miller, "Working Guests," 92.
[809] Woolf, *To the Lighthouse*, 116.
[810] Miller, "Working Guests," 55.

The "acquaintances" divided into "work parties" to which Miller refers in the article would have had to learn to collaborate in terms of work and creative projects, and to live together, as they occupied and shared the same space.[811] Antony Penrose remembers in his book *Roland Penrose: The Friendly Surrealist* (2001) the Christmas of 1953, where "Farleys was crammed to bursting with Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning, Valentine [Roland's first wife], Timmie [friend] and Terry O'Brien, Dominique Eluard and her daughter Caroline, Patsy [Antony's nurse] and her mother Paula [housekeeper], Diane [Deriaz] and me", with the later addition of "James Dugan, the deep-sea diver and photographer".[812] In *The Home of the Surrealists* (2001), Antony Penrose recalls another occasion when he woke in the early hours of the morning, "to find the house literally rocking as Frank McEwen, the director of the National Gallery of Rhodesia, coached everyone in African drumming and xylophone music".[813] In this instance, more than a superficial conviviality is encouraged as individuals experience close-hand the different aspects of an individual's personality.

In orchestrating guests who happened to, as Miller writes in her article, "wander into the orbit of work" and found themselves "press-ganged", she was able to bring acquaintances together.[814] She then provided, as she observes, "the graded opportunities of creative effort, in partnership, or competition or as a lone artisan" at the farm.[815] Through providing these opportunities, Miller facilitates a group of like-minded people to come together in the initial stages of forming friendships and collaborations – a role more intricate than that of a hostess throwing a dinner party. Miller evidences this by describing how, during the course of a weekend or longer, she manages her guests by dividing them into two groups: those "who like semi-automatic work … which leaves them free from the neck up, to think, talk or listen, and those who prefer to have their minds on the job".[816] Therefore, Miller encourages, as Farrell observes, a "common language of discourse, and common attitudes towards success", which demonstrates an innate knowledge of each person's character.[817]

Miller's depiction of a community engaging with everyday tasks, DIY activities and unpaid work or services (a concept with which upper-middle and middle-class individuals would have been unfamiliar) presents the relationships between people at the farm as central to life and artistic endeavours. Miller re-imagines art as a living, breathing and collaborative process to

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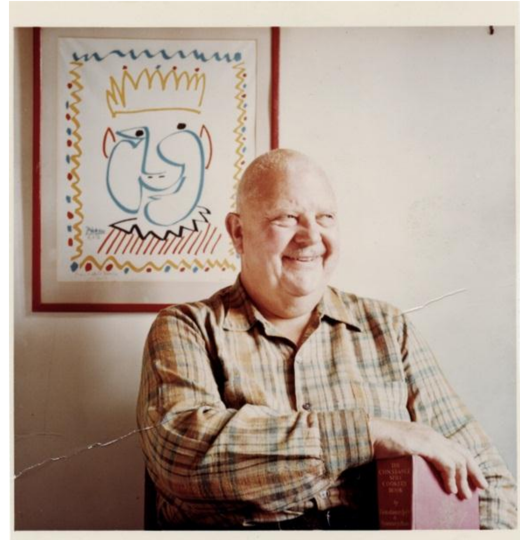
[811] Miller, "Working Guests," 92.
[812] Antony Penrose, *Roland Penrose: The Friendly Surrealist* (Prestel Verlag Munich: London, New York, 2001), 148.
[813] Penrose, *Home of*, 118.
[814] Miller, "Working Guests," 55.
[815] Miller, "Working Guests," 90.
[816] Miller, "Working Guests," 92.
[817] Farrell, *Collaborative Circles*, 19.

which guests contributed. Art, thus, becomes a collaborative process of doing or making: a process that is continuingly changing. Miller's artistry is demonstrated in giving form and structure to this process in which creativity becomes an appreciative, perceiving and enjoyable experience. This is reinforced in Miller's humorous slant on her guests attempting tasks with which they are "entirely unfamiliar". No matter what the state of the finished product, the farm, as Miller writes, is comprised of "the signature of [each] working guest".[818] Each person's work within the community is an expression of the shared vision filtered through his or her own personality.

Miller's informal, friendly exchanges, which mostly took part in the kitchen at the farm, ensured this open environment. Miller writes that conversations on "everyone's life and adventures since their last visit" took place, with others covering topics of "Romances, wardrobes, murder trials and political iniquities … thrashed out in the kitchen".[819] The informal atmosphere (reminiscent of Bloomsbury meetings) encouraged wide-ranging exchanges in addition to focussing on creative endeavours. Moreover, as these took place in the kitchen, it also meant sharing new ideas about food, a role which usually would have been singularly assigned to the hostess.

Antony Penrose remembers that "a chance remark by Peter Lyon one long weekend led to the feverish research necessary for the production of Confederate Soup".[820] All became involved as "knowledgeable friends were phoned and the whole scheme was plotted more carefully than the Battle of Gettysburg".[821] Pictures from The Lee Miller Archives (website) show Renato Guttuso, a Sicilian painter who exhibited at the ICA (1950) and Wells Coates, architect, writer and designer (1954) in the kitchen, cooking (Figure 45, page 189).[822] Renato Guttuso "demonstrated with finesse various pasta dishes" and Wells Coates was "an aficionado of Chinese dishes".[823] Others who visited are also pictured in the kitchen, from Jane Samuels labelling preserves (1950) to James Beard, the food critic with whom Miller shared many cooking innovations, sitting in front of an artwork that looks to be a portrait of Beard (Figure 46, page 189).

[818] Miller, "Working Guests," 55.
[819] Miller, "Working Guests," 90.
[820] Penrose, *Lives*, 200.
[821] Penrose, *Lives*, 200.
[822] Penrose Film Ltd. The Lee Miller Archives. 2001, accessed Feb 1, 2017. http://www.leemiller.co.uk.
[823] Penrose, *Home of*, 94.



Figures 45 & 46 Lee Miller, *Renato Guttuso*, Farley Farm House, 1950; *James Beard in Farley Farm House Kitchen*, undated. Lee Miller Archives.

In this informal environment, Miller promotes a spirit of adventure and challenge rather than the kind of "perfectionism" that was outlined in magazines and cookery manuals at the time. Miller's response "when everything goes wrong as it is sure to" is "I get as much a laugh as anyone".[824] No housewife is urged "to peel potatoes" and a male guest feels confident enough to try his hand at cooking.[825] Moreover, guests are invited "to add new dishes to our repertoire" or even "don the chef's cap, appoint his skivvies and show off his speciality or a complete meal".[826] Miller refers to the creation of new dishes taking place, which points to the larger artistic creative ideas being initiated at the farm. These are when "collaborative moments" – art – happens; when, as Farrell observes, all feel comfortable enough to share "their wildest, most tentatively held ideas" with others.[827]

This environment, which promoted openness, informality and, as Miller writes, "companionship and the discussion of art, politics", allowed the group to discover a common antipathy towards authorities in their field.[828] Only in this way could the group feel comfortable to discuss what they did not like and challenge the established order and conventions. Great debates of the day could be discussed and even argued; debates to which Miller refers in her article include crime and political issues. Antony Penrose remembers how "friendly arguments were a feature of any gathering" at the farm. He continues:

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[824] Miller, quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 64.
[825] Miller, "Working Guests," 90.
[826] Miller, "Working Guests," 90.
[827] Farrell, *Collaborative Circles*, 23.
[828] Miller, "Working Guests," 55–56.

> Lee's agile mind allowed her to hold her own with Professor Freddy Ayer, the philosopher or Professor Richard Gregory, who collaborated with Roland on the Illusion exhibition at the ICA. Sonia Orwell, George Orwell's widow, would become combative with literary critic Cyril Connolly, known for his equal measures of intellect and rudeness.[829]

Penrose also recalls long "intense conversations about art" between Picasso, Max Ernst and Miró and regrets that as a child he "didn't listen harder".[830] These discussions helped to establish a new vision: one in which all felt equal to partake.

Charleston farmhouse, the home of Bloomsbury member Vanessa Bell from 1916, provides a helpful comparison here with life at Farley Farm. Charleston, like Farley Farm, became, as Quentin Bell and Virginia Nicholson suggest in *Charleston: A Bloomsbury House and Garden*, a "magnet place" for artists, writers, and intellectuals, where creativity was a way of life.[831] They recall that there were "no rules and an understanding that members were free to say anything they pleased".[832] Visitors included Lytton Strachey, Desmond and Molly MacCarthy, Frances Marshall, Raymond Mortimer, T. S. Eliot, Jean Renoir, G. E. Moore and Charles Mauron amongst others and, of course, the Woolfs, the Keyneses and Roger Fry. Creativity and conversation were encouraged, similar to the Bloomsbury meetings held by Virginia Woolf, and became fundamental to their way of life.[833] Leonard Woolf wrote that "their chief recreation was conversation and their adored conversational speculation which usually led to argument … over the dinner-table, as almost always happened".[834] It was conversation of which, according to Virginia Nicholson, Clive Bell was often the initiator: "He loved to make provocative assertions to which Duncan would rise saying, 'But you don't really mean that Clive', then Julian or Quentin, less naïve, would retort, 'Yes but he does': And so it would proceed".[835]

Hospitality was central to life at Charleston in a similar fashion to hospitality at Farley Farm, as Virginia Nicholson suggests that Vanessa loved to "celebrate guests with the best hospitality she could afford".[836] Nicholson states, "at the centre of everything was Vanessa".[837] Vanessa was dedicated to her family and friends with whom she could be, at times, unconventional. Quentin Bell remembers a supper party in 1918:

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829 Penrose, *Home of*, 118.
830 Antony Penrose in Sophie Radice, "Surreal Lives," *Guardian*, Jul 13, 2002, accessed Jun 4, 2015, http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2002/jul/13/artsfeatures.features2.
831 Bell and Nicholson, *Charleston*, 6.
832 Bell and Nicholson, *Charleston*, 1.
833 Jans Ondaatje Rolls, *The Bloomsbury Cookbook: Recipes for Life, Love and Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2014), 12.
834 Leonard Woolf, quoted in Rolls, *Bloomsbury Cookbook*, 73.
835 Bell and Nicholson, *Charleston*, 37.
836 Virginia Nicholson, quoted in Bell and Nicholson, *Charleston*, 40.
837 Nicholson, quoted in Bell and Nicholson, *Charleston*, 62.

> Diaghilev and Picasso were present, when Clive, who could be a dreadful tease, tormented Vanessa mercilessly. She tried to silence him, to persuade him to stop, all in vain … She took a tart, as a player might take a cricket ball and threw with all the force that she could command so that it burst – as Maynard Keynes put it – like a shell, upon her husband's solar plexus.[838]

Human relationships are presented as central to life at Charleston and at Farley Farm, with groups of individuals possessing a shared affinity that transformed their environment. However, unlike Vanessa Bell, Miller questions contemporaneous assumptions about the home. Miller outlines a new framework in which barriers of class and gender are negotiated; thus, she questions the ideal of the private home as a place of exclusivity, negating ready-made "orders". In this respect, Miller denies and attacks accepted and expected social codes.

As Farrell suggests, an open egalitarian environment, one that encourages open communication, is, therefore, essential to a community's cohesion.[839] Miller understood this; through "Working Guests", although tongue-in-cheek in tone, with everyone enjoying "Joy through work", she outlines a community in which labour is used as an equaliser to transform life.[840]

5.3. Establishing an Egalitarian Community

In writing about the sociological processes that were happening at the farm, Miller outlines a modernist domesticity similar to the one Roger Fry had tried to express about "the kind of lives we live now" in a *Vogue* article of 1918 about Durbins.[841] Fry argues for a laissez-faire approach to life and living: "What if people were just to let their houses be the direct outcome of their actual needs, and of their actual way of life, and allow other people to think what they like?".[842] With all her guests – irrespective of class and status – contributing to the physical in addition to artistic building of a vision, Miller constructs what Fry can only imagine: a post-war society in which members are dependent on each other rather than on servants.

Alison Light's book *Mrs Woolf and the Servants* is helpful in exploring the social changes that occurred from the late Victorian era to the 1950s, when domestic service in the form of live-in servants had almost but disappeared. In acknowledging that "houses are part of the wider social

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[838] Quentin Bell, quoted in Bell and Nicholson, *Charleston*, 57.
[839] Farrell, *Collaborative Circles*, 20.
[840] Miller, "Working Guests," 55.
[841] Roger Fry, "A Possible Domestic Architecture: A Challenge to Self-conscious Picturesqueness," British *Vogue*, Mar 1918, 51.
[842] Roger Fry, "Possible Domestic Architecture," 51.

environment", Light charts the changes in domestic arrangements and the relationships between master and servants, husband and wife.[843] She continues:

> houses are … a space shared with and serviced by others – be it in the street, a village or on an isolated hilltop. And inside the house the relationships which make up domestic life are often unequal. People who live side by side may just as well be on different planets or living in dimensions of time. There is never one kind of life "we live now". And there could never be a modern domesticity with servants still in tow.[844]

Life without domestic help would not become a reality until a further thirty years and another world war had passed. Promoting an almost egalitarian vision of living in a community of friends, Miller outlines a domesticity that is concerned with an improvement of quality of life after the Second World War. This vision of domesticity engages with the socio-cultural aims of the post-war Labour government and the Festival of Britain. Although they did not completely live without domestic help, Miller's portrayal of life at the farm encompasses a society that was learning to live without live-in servants. Whilst demand for women clerks and typists had risen during the Second World War, people looking to work in domestic jobs had declined. Subsequently, by 1952 the need for service, the live-in maid and the cook-general had disappeared from the vast majority of middle-class British households. Although the number of dailies or chars rose in the 1950s, office cleaning was preferable to personal service.[845] By the 1930s thousands of British middle-class households had learnt to do without live-in servants.

In Miller's vision, members of the artistic community and friends from upper-middle and middle-class backgrounds are encouraged to do actual labour: work that would have been associated with the working class and undertaken by servants employed by the upper and middle class. As Jen Browne identifies in her work on women's role in post-war homes, only the working class and lower-middle class participated in DIY activities.[846] This is evident in *Vogue*'s approach to the new domestic ethos. *Vogue* invited readers into the homes of an international set of individuals and into the private worlds of Christian Dior, Coco Chanel, Cole Porter and Cecil Beaton. These homes represented luxury and contained elaborately designed rooms.

In November 1953 Christian Dior's elaborate Parisian house was visited and photographed by *Vogue*. The magazine reported that his house contained "four separate talents and echoes of many epochs from Madame Bovary, Whistler, Louis XVI" and the "Augustan Empire".[847] Although seeming disparate, with each room containing Persian and Chinese objects, "the house

[843] Light, *Mrs Woolf*, 128.
[844] Light, *Mrs Woolf*, 128.
[845] Light, *Mrs Woolf*, 313.
[846] Browne, "Decisions in DIY," 132.
[847] "A House in Paris – The Home of Christian Dior," British *Vogue*, Nov 1953, 113.

had unity”. Bright shades of red, white and green connected the rooms and “repeated the use of textured fabrics for wall hangings and of Ormolu and silver for highlights”.[848] Other colours, from “plant greens from willow to palm, full reds, cherry garnet, amaranth”, signalled the theme of Cole Porter’s New York apartment on the thirty-third floor of the Waldorf Astoria hotel, which *Vogue* also visited.[849] Porter’s apartment had free-standing bookcases made of shimmery brass piping for the “tortoiseshell leather-walled library” designed by Billy Baldwin. The Porter workroom was also a feature and gave readers a unique insight into the creative environment in which Porter “write[s] words and music”.[850]

Browne notes that DIY tips, and advertisements for improvements to the home, became part of British culture with magazines such as *The Practical Householder* (October 1955) and *Do-it-Yourself* (1957) providing working-class families with tips on how to improve their homes. Middle-class home owners, however, left interior design to professional tradesmen. By presenting her guests doing DIY tasks, Miller’s article helps to challenge the status quo of accepted roles and “work” associated with class. Miller promotes a vision, which included all, to enact change in post-war Britain. Even the discourse that Miller adopts, although ironic in tone, references a socialist approach to life, where all the people are “merry workers” united in a joint vision. Fun and friendship are offered as a relief to post-war austerity, whereby all achieve “joy through work”.[851] Although humour and wit are the cementing forces of the article (Miller presents herself as a dictator,[852] perhaps parodying the Victorian mistress, “tormenting her accomplices”), the message is one of equality.[853]

Through a discourse of DIY and décor, Miller seeks new hierarchies, new differences, and political and social liberty. The boundaries of social status are negotiated, with every guest partaking in a range of jobs and activities, from sewing cushion covers to digging a pool. Reg Butler (a prize-winning sculptor) and his wife, Jo, are pictured slicing and preserving beans (1952). Vera Lindsay (Lady Barry) is cutting vegetables, complete with knife clamped in her mouth (1952), whilst Saul Steinberg wrestles with a garden hose (1952). Alfred Barr, director of New York’s MOMA, feeds the pigs (1952); Madge Garland (Lady Ashton), a professor at the Royal College of Art, rubs marjoram (undated), and even Henry Moore is photographed repositioning his own statue in the garden (1953).

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[848] “A House in Paris,”113.
[849] “A House in Paris,” 113.
[850] Drake, *Fifties in Vogue*, 52.
[851] Miller, “Working Guests,” 55.
[852] Miller, “Working Guests,” 92.
[853] Penrose, *Lives*, 191.

Together with many more, they are all grappling with new challenges, which are also designed not to be gender-specific (Figure 47). In fact, Miller encourages a blurring of such distinctions and boundaries as the means to challenge gendered roles and, in doing so, promote change (Figure 48). This discourse attacks the contemporaneous socio-cultural discourse, which promoted a strengthening of gendered roles after a war that was viewed as disrupting the family and its values. Post-war discourse sought to re-establish a husband's responsibility as provider, primarily tied to the public world of work, and a wife's responsibility as primarily tied to the domestic sphere.

Figures 47 & 48 Lee Miller, *Dorothea Tanning*, Farley Farm House, 1950; *Richard Hamilton*, Farley Farm House, 1951. Lee Miller Archives.

In her Farley Farm set-up, Miller articulates what Virginia Woolf in her diary accounts could only imagine and hope for. This was the destabilisation of "the complete English gentleman's home" with its "endless clean, well prepared rooms" and maid in cap and apron.[854] Concerned with how "altering the structure of society" was possible or desirable, Virginia Woolf noted the changes happening for the next generation and their servants in her diaries.[855] She recalls how the strict formality between master and servant was changing and servants were beginning to be seen as human beings. She observes that the austere, silent and formidable Victorian cook had been replaced by the Georgian modern domestic, someone more friendly who would ask for

[854] Virginia Woolf, *The Diary of Virginia Woolf*, ed. Anne Oliver Bell and Andrew McNeillie, vol. 4 of 5 (London: Hogarth Press, 1986), Sep 12, 1935, 340.
[855] Woolf, quoted in Light, *Mrs Woolf*, 243.

advice from their employers.[856] "All human relations have shifted", Woolf wrote: "those between masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children".[857] Cooperation now seemed to be the foundation of relations.

Although Virginia and Leonard Woolf never lived without domestic servants, Woolf was always excited by the idea of living in a house in which one could leave on a whim and without any responsibilities of servants: "a house should be portable like a snail shell. In future perhaps people will flirt [sic] out houses like little fans; and go on. There'll be no settled life within walls".[858] In 1934 the Woolfs eventually managed without live-in servants but not without dailies and, unlike her sister Vanessa Bell, who could perform the duties of mistress well, Woolf could never adopt the right manner with her servants when running a household: "She [Vanessa] began the morning at Charleston like a Victorian matron, sitting at the breakfast table issuing her orders to Grace [Higgens, cook and housekeeper], who stood waiting at the ready". Described as "gentle, patient … self-controlled"[859] and aloof "like a lady 'waving from a train' to women working in the fields," Woolf could never seem to achieve this with her own maid, Nellie Boxall.[860] Despite having tried on several occasions for a "complete renovation of domestic life"[861] with Nellie, whom she felt had encroached on her space, she was never able to behave with "any post of authority".[862]

As Alison Light observes, Woolf openly rowed with Nellie, which was indicative of Woolf's belief that the public and private worlds were inseparable. She wrote in *Three Guineas* that "the public and the private worlds are inseparably connected; that the tyrannies and servilities of the one are the tyrannies and servilities of the other".[863] Here Woolf explores the relationship not only between master and servant but also between husband and wife. For Woolf, as Light observes, "the tinpot dictator in the home was always male; aggression a masculine attribute", whilst women of her own caste were "dependent, vulnerable and sometimes servile".[864] Woolf

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[856] Virginia Woolf, *The Essays of Virginia Woolf: 1912-1924*, ed. Andrew McNeillie, vol. 3 of 6 (Florida: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988), 422. The Georgian cook is not in the original version printed in the *New York Post* in Nov 1923.
[857] Woolf, *Essays of*, 422.
[858] Woolf, *Diary of*, Sep 12, 1935, 340.
[859] Angelica Garnett, *Deceived with Kindness: A Bloomsbury Childhood* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1984), 91.
[860] Quentin Bell and Angelica Garnett, Vanessa Bell's Family Album (Norman and Hobhouse, 1981), 12.
[861] Woolf, quoted in Light, *Mrs Woolf*, 178.
[862] Regina Marler, ed. *Selected Letters of Vanessa Bell* (London: Bloomsbury, 1993), Feb 22, 1927. Also Woolf, quoted in Light, *Mrs Woolf*, 165.
[863] Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas* (London: Vintage Classics [1938], 2016), 270.
[864] Light, *Mrs Woolf*, 266.

also ponders how exclusion from the "great patriarchal machine" allowed them to refuse its values and remain indifferent to its rituals.[865]

Reshaping the domestic, a polemic that Woolf imagined possible, is the basis of Miller's "Working Guests". Miller highlights the changes happening in the 1950s with the decline in domestic staff and her own struggle in finding a live-in nanny and housekeeper. Trying to find someone who was consistent and willing to live-in was difficult. Burke writes, that in 1951, "Patsy Murray came to the farm for two weeks" to look after Antony and "unlike the others [nannies] she stayed".[866] Miller's relationship with Patsy was more familial, similar to that of friends, than the formal austere relationship indicative of Vanessa Bell and her servants at Charleston. As Burke writes, Patsy became "the heart of the extended family".[867] "Working Guests" subsequently documents the changing social environment, which saw middle-class households having to adapt and to partake in household chores.

Miller presents an image of the domestic that is analogous to today, encouraging all to attempt domestic chores, including men. In this regard, Miller promotes new experiences in which success is achieved through the innovation of "an unlikely person in an unsuitable job [which] is satisfying to the worker as well as vastly more fun to the onlooker".[868] One man "sewing his first seam ever" is, therefore, encouraged by Miller in her article, with mistakes becoming part of the fun and entertainment.[869] This premise for change, founded on a broader social concern, is promoted by Miller through fun and "team work".[870]

For Haworth-Booth in *The Art of Lee Miller*, Miller's humorous tone in describing such challenges emphasises the "splash of human colour" associated with the farm by visiting guests.[871] Miller's humour also strips away any pretensions and provides an insight into what Carolyn Burke observes in her chapter "Framing a life" in *The Surrealist and the Photographer* (2001): "Miller's sense that life is more amusing seen on the oblique, from an angle that may seem skewed to conventional spirits".[872] This approach, which challenges social norms, sees Miller outlining a community where all can share and contribute. Miller writes, "Guest workers must not only be willing to cut asparagus for their own lunch, plus a batch for the deep freeze,

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[865] Virginia Woolf, "Sketch of the Past," in *Moments of Being*, ed. Jeanne Schulkind (Harcourt Brace & Company, 1985), 155.
[866] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 319.
[867] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 319.
[868] Miller, "Working Guests," 90.
[869] Miller, "Working Guests," 90.
[870] Miller, "Working Guests," 92.
[871] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 207.
[872] Carolyn Burke, "Framing a Life," in *The Surrealist and the Photographer: Roland Penrose and Lee Miller* (Edinburgh: Trustees of the National Galleries of Scotland, 2001), 127–34. (On the occasion of the exhibition *The Surrealist and the Photographer: Roland Penrose and Lee Miller* at the Dean Gallery and the Scottish National Gallery from May 19 to Sep 9, 2001).

but, in passing, must water the strawberries growing in barrels for future workers to eat".[873] This inclusivity and feeling like a member of a community is central to forming a successful collaborative circle.

In promoting "team work", Miller's message could also be seen as echoing the desire of the Attlee government at the time, which envisioned a social-democratic society of "fair shares".[874] Becky Conekin in her book on the Festival of Britain (2003) observes that the post-war Labour government agenda was centred on "egalitarian notions … in the direction of a commitment to the diffusion of knowledge, 'culture' and tastes".[875] This is similar to the paradigm Miller outlines in her article. Moreover, the government's vision of progress and looking forward after years of rationing and greyness aimed to, as Conekin suggests, "stimulate our sometimes sluggish national imagination and without self-arrogance strengthen our self-confidence as a people and a state".[876] This also articulates Miller's description of activities and creative collaborations at the farm.

By encouraging contributions from everyone in all household tasks, Miller challenges contemporary social roles in a vision of a New Britain where, as Conekin observes, women's imagined role was "motherhood, redefined as in most welfare states as civic responsibility".[877] As I have discussed in chapter four, women's domestic role was presented as their public duty and domesticity was presented as work; thus, as something substantial, rewarding and important in the reconstruction of society.[878] The housewife/mother, according to the Beveridge Report, had different priorities and duties from those of the single woman, and these saw her couched in a sphere of domesticity.[879] Woman's status as mother was further promoted by figures such as Donald Winnicott and John Bowlby. Winnicott, a paediatrician and psychoanalyst, identified a relationship between the state of a child's welfare and the importance of the mother figure, whilst Bowlby emphasised the dangers of mothers going out to work and the impact this had on their children.[880]

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[873] Miller, "Working Guests," 90.
[874] R. McKibbin, *Ideologies of Class Social Relations in Britain 1880–1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 533.
[875] Conekin, *Autobiography*, 48.
[876] Conekin, *Autobiography*, 47.
[877] Conekin, *Autobiography*, 103.
[878] Stephanie Spencer, *Gender, Work and Education in Britain in the 1950s* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 9.
[879] Sir William Beveridge, Social Insurance and Allied Services [SIAS] (London: HMSO), Cmd. 6404, 6, accessed Feb 1, 2017, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/19_07_05_beveridge.pdf.
[880] John Bowlby, foreword by Allan N. Schore, *Attachment and Loss*, vol I (New York: Basic Books), 177, http://www.abebe.org.br/wp-content/uploads/John-Bowlby-Attachment-Second-Edition-Attachment-and-Loss-Series-Vol-1-1983.pdf.

Miller reshapes the construct of "housewife" and the nuclear family to offer an alternative to the married woman's "lot" and challenge the concept of the nuclear family. Through her artistry, Miller opens up the "restricted space" of the home. By instructing her "task forces" (consisting of men and women) in a variety of jobs, Miller in her article, similar to de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex*, calls for equality of both sexes, irrespective of class.[881] By offering an alternative to the monotonous world of the "housewife", Miller challenges the idea of the bourgeois home, its values and its faithfulness to the "happiness of the familial group" in which private and public are separated.[882]

Miller's "Working Guests" not only questions this division of labour but transforms the home into an inclusive space where friends and colleagues share the responsibilities of running a household (Figure 49, page 199). The photographs from the archives, taken by Miller of her friends and family at the farm, illustrate this: from A. J. Ayer, a professor of philosophy at Oxford University, bringing in the wood (1951) to Peggy Bernier and Peter Barden (the farm manager) curing ham in the old kitchen (*c*.1950).[883] One of Miller's few colour photographs shows her own father, Theodore Miller, who "became something of a landmark in his chair in the corner of the kitchen", preparing beans (1957).[884] A photograph (*c*.1952) of Antony Penrose as a small boy, making butter with Timmie O'Brien (friend) in the kitchen, shows the he was also involved with household chores (Figure 50, page 199).

Moreover, Miller's photographs depict a community with shared responsibilities and multiple roles: Antony Penrose with Paul Éluard (1951), Antony Penrose painting with John Craxton (1951), and Antony Penrose pictured trying to charm a grass snake with Valentine Penrose, who spent most of her life at the farm, (*c*.1954) are just some of the photographs that illustrate this. Perhaps the most symbolic of Miller's photographs is her image of Henry, Irina and Mary Moore and Antony Penrose with Henry's stone sculpture *Mother and Child* (*c*.1953). By bringing together two families connected by friendship, Miller depicts an image of family that goes beyond familial relationships. The fact that Georgina, Patsy's daughter, came to live at the farm in 1961 is another example of an inclusive familial structure. Roland Penrose, Lee Miller and even Theodore Miller formed a close attachment to Georgina, with Theodore referring to her as his "adopted daughter".[885] Claudia McNulty (daughter of Bettina and Henry McNulty, friends of the Penroses) also reflected on how Miller "had treated her like a daughter".[886]

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[881] Miller, "Working Guests," 90.
[882] de Beauvoir, *Second Sex*, 482.
[883] Penrose Film Ltd, The Lee Miller Archives (2001), accessed Feb 1, 2017, http://www.leemiller.co.uk.
[884] Penrose, *Lives*, 204.
[885] Penrose, *Lives*, 204.
[886] Claudia McNulty, interview by Carolyn Burke, Oct 2, 1999, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 350.

Figures 49 & 50 Lee Miller, *Reg & Jo Butler*, Farley Farm House, 1952; *Antony Penrose & Timmie O'Brien*, Farley Farm House, *c.*1952. Lee Miller Archives.

Miller engages with the idea that the extended family consists of not only family members but also friends from the art community and the local area. She provides an alternative model that is based on community, where interactions lead to friendship and supportive relationships. Community, for Miller, provides a range of interpersonal relationships outside the concept of the nuclear family. One of her most significant friendships was with Picasso.[887] Picasso is represented by Miller in another *Vogue* article ("Picasso Himself" in November 1951) as an uncle coming to stay.[888] He visited the farm on two occasions in 1950 whilst he was in England for the Sheffield Peace Congress. Miller's photographs demonstrate the friendly relationship that developed between Antony and Picasso. Antony Penrose is pictured sitting on Picasso's knee and in another with Picasso and the family bull at the farm called William. Miller writes in "Picasso Himself":

> Our three-year-old son Tony was in ecstasy. Picasso and he became great friends, telling secrets, finding treasures of spider webs and seed pods, roughhousing, and looking at pictures … Each meeting, here and in France, added to the repertoire; giggling ambushes from behind sofas, bellowing bulls, the olé olé of approval … through ear-twisting and kicking to biting. Picasso bit back sharply – "the biter bitten" and in the astonished silence which followed said, "Pensez! C'est le premier

[887] See Cowling, *Visiting Picasso*. The exhibition *Lee Miller and Picasso*, held at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery from May 23 to Sep 6, 2015 explores the long-lasting relationship between Picasso, Miller and Roland Penrose from their initial meeting in summer 1937.
[888] Lee Miller, "Picasso Himself," British *Vogue*, Nov 1951, 112–13, 160, 165.

> Anglais que j'ai jamais mordu!" [Just think! That is the first Englishman I've ever bitten!].[889]

The community at Farley Farm, therefore, is indicative of an extended family. It guided its members, sustained them with a variety of sensations and gave them awareness that they were living intense and purposeful lives.

Local people witnessed many visitors coming from and going to Farley Farm and staying for long periods of time. To the locals, as Burke suggests, Miller and Penrose appeared to live unconventional and eccentric lives.[890] This challenge to local life "became common place [so] that when Jean Dubuffet disembarked from a cross-channel ferry unable to speak a word of English, a taxi driver brought him straight to Farleys".[891] Valentine Penrose, who stayed for long periods, was "that Frenchwoman" wandering "the country lanes to no apparent purpose except to steal cuttings from gardens".[892] This contravention of the country manor as an upholder of traditional values found resistance in a local retired colonel. He informed Roland Penrose:

> that the local branch of the Conservative party were accustomed to using Farleys as the venue for their garden party. He gave Roland the benefit of his long experience: the cars would park over there; the guests would be received here; the speeches would come before the refreshments, and so on. In the first lull, Roland said quietly: "But Colonel, I always vote Labour". There was a pause, and the Colonel's face turned an interesting shade of puce.[893]

However, for Jane Brymer, a young girl of ten and neighbour, life at the farm was exciting. In being invited to Farleys to play with Claudia McNulty (daughter of Bettina and Henry McNulty), Brymer was exposed to strange foods and stories of Miller's travels. Claudia also describes the atmosphere as a "creative ferment"[894] that embraced all, especially at Christmas, including "the farm staff, the neighbours, and local shopkeepers at events like the end-of-year bell ringers' party … dissipat[ing] other people's class consciousness".[895] In this respect, life at Farley Farm was more radical than life at Charleston. Miller asserts a modern domesticity that not only articulates one envisioned by Virginia Woolf but also is a precursor to the vision expressed by Fluxus in the 1960s.

[889] Miller, "Picasso Himself," 160.
[890] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 350.
[891] Penrose, *Lives*, 191.
[892] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 249.
[893] Penrose, *Friendly Surrealist*, 145.
[894] Jane Brymer, interview by Burke and Antony Penrose, Jan 23, 2002, in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 350.
[895] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 346.

Fluxus, in their intention to bridge the gap between art and society, set up communes in the 1960s. Robert Filliou and George Brecht set up the first of these communes from 1965 to 1968 in Villefranche-sur-Mer.[896] These communes appealed to George Maciunas who wanted to establish collective workspaces, theatres and food-buying cooperatives in New York. In August 1966, an "Experimental Housing Bill" by the United States Government provided artists with the opportunity to buy their studios and workshops by borrowing federal funds. This new scheme allowed Maciunas to set up Fluxus cooperatives in the area of Manhattan during the late 1960s.[897] However, the project was subject to financial problems and confrontations with the local authorities and eventually ended with the death of George Maciunas in 1978. Although large Fluxus communities no longer exist in urban centres, the introduction of the internet has seen Fluxus communes develop in the form of online communities.[898] In the following chapter I argue that Miller's engagement with Fluxus' ideals is evident in her cooking, in which food was used as artistic medium.

5.4. Conclusion

By cajoling all guests to be, as Antony Penrose observes, "involved in some task under her direction", Miller opens up the claustrophobic space of the home to promote new social networks negotiating art and life together.[899] Through humour, friendship and embracing new challenges, they all built relationships with one another that contributed "experience, character and potential".[900] Even Roland Penrose, in his autobiography, acknowledges the effect that Miller had on him through fostering a collaborative environment. He writes, "Her [Miller's] ingrained sociability with everyone … abolish[ed] for ever the last remnants of my punctilious and puritanical upbringing".[901] This supported their vision for art and initiated new collaborative circles and friendships for Miller that would later promote her own creative endeavours in terms of her cuisine.

Mark Haworth-Booth makes a similar observation about Miller's cooking. He suggests that, by entertaining "a stream of international art-world friends and colleagues … Lee exercised the art of *haute cuisine*. Food had been a constant passion, but now Lee had the opportunity to try out

[896] Natilee, Harren, "*La cédille qui ne finit pas*: Robert Filliou, George Brecht, and Fluxus in Villefranche," *Getty Research Journal*, no. 4 (2012): 127-143.
[897] Thomas Kellein, *The Dream of Fluxus: George Maciunas: An Artist's Biography,* trans. Fiona Elliot (London: Hansjörg Mayer, 2007), 131.
[898] "Fluxus," *History of Graphic Design*, accessed Feb 25, 2017, http://www.historygraphicdesign.com/the-age-of-information/national-visions-within-a-global-dialogue/512-fluxus.
[899] Penrose, *Lives*, 191.
[900] Miller, "Working Guests," 92.
[901] Penrose, *Scrap Book*, 189.

her ideas on a grand scale and, on occasion, let her imagination rip".[902] Through food, Miller continued to transform the farm into an open, vibrant place of fun, diversity and creative ideas. Visits by Bettina and Henry McNulty also saw Miller establishing her own networks with regard to her cuisine, which she practised at the farm during the 1960s and 1970s.[903] Food was adopted by Miller to solidify friendships initiated at the farm and as a mode of creative expression. In the following chapter I explore how Miller uses food as an art form. I argue that she initiates a new mode of art, which engages with the discourse of the 1960s neo-avant-garde and challenges how art is to be perceived and received.

[902] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 205.
[903] See Henry McNulty, "A Christmas at Muddles Green," American *House and Garden*, Dec 1975, 102, 106–7 and Bettina McNulty, "How to Make an Art of the Happy Weekend: The Personal Strategy and Beautiful Food of Lee Penrose," American *House and Garden*, Jun 1973, 69–74.

6.
Lee Miller's Cooking: Negotiating Food, Austerity and the Avant-garde

> Familiar objects playfully placed in startling context are as important in Lee Penrose's cooking as the melting watch in a Dali painting. (Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, 1974)[904]

This chapter presents Miller's post-war cooking at Farley Farm as an extension of her continuing creative vision, which has been introduced in previous chapters. It traces her cooking from her years at Farley Farm during austerity to her exploits during the 1960s and 1970s. Miller's artistic endeavours with food have been acknowledged by contemporary Bettina McNulty – contributing editor of American *Vogue*'s *House and Garden* and Miller's friend – as "another form of her genius".[905] Little has been written on this aspect of Miller's life by current critics. The readings of Miller's culinary endeavours have focussed on Miller's post-war trauma, explaining her turn to cooking as a reactionary strategy. I do not dispute Miller's post-war trauma, but I do dispute the reading of her culinary art as a coping strategy. This reading diminishes Miller's continuing artistic vision and ignores her awareness of socio-economic concerns and contemporary avant-garde practices with food. This chapter, therefore, seeks to locate Miller within her own domesticity and explores her development as an artist, from experimenting with taste during austerity to her food art in the following decades. In this, I argue, Miller engages with similar objectives to those of the contemporaneous art movements Fluxus and nouveau réalisme, in particular Daniel Spoerri and his Eat Art movement.

Miller wrote her last article for *Vogue* in 1956, and few curators have shown much interest in her work since then.[906] Any research into her life at Farley Farm, as I have established in the previous two chapters, is dominated by a narrative of decline. Antony Penrose's biography provides the prominent discourse surrounding Miller's post-war activities and continues to influence interpretations of her work today. He writes about "the winged serpents" – Miller's trauma – taking hold of her and "satur[ating] Lee's consciousness", resulting in "depression".[907] Believing her to have become "a useless drunk", he states, "It was food that saved her life".[908] In his two books, *The Lives of Lee Miller* and *The Home of the Surrealists*, Antony Penrose presents a reading of Miller's cooking endeavours that is similar to his reading of her pre-war and wartime work as surrealistic expressions of art. Penrose's presentation of Miller aims to

[904] Gold and Fizdale, "Most Unusual Recipes," 160.
[905] Bettina McNulty, quoted in Conekin, "She Did the Cooking," 155.
[906] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 210.
[907] Penrose, *Lives*, 196.
[908] Penrose, *Lives*, 196.

portray her as a creative and dynamic individual, but it associates her post-war work with the same narrative limits to the scope of her creativity.

Carolyn Burke has similarly viewed Miller's post-war life as one of obscurity. She observes that whilst Roland Penrose maintained a busy life, becoming part of the establishment in 1956, Miller cooked and attended cocktail parties with her close friends Ninette and Peter Lyon. Burke references Priscilla Morgan – a young theatrical agent who met Miller in post-war Paris – to substantiate her interpretation of Miller. Morgan recalls that Miller was, in effect, burnt out. She told Carolyn Burke that Miller "was a hugely creative person who wasn't fulfilling her potential".[909] This is not the case, as I have already argued with regard to Miller's post-war writing and her engagement with contemporary social issues. Miller's creativity, I suggest, continues with her cooking and demonstrates her engagement with new and emerging contemporary artistic movements.

As Colin St. John Wilson recalls in an interview with Carolyn Burke, Miller was a supporter of young and upcoming artists. Wilson recollects a time in 1955 when the young artists Eduardo Paolozzi, Toni del Benzio and Reyner Banham conversed with Miller in the ICA bar. In her, they found a supporter of their art. According to Wilson, these younger artists called Roland's artistic vision "claustrophobic".[910] "The old guard", for whom surrealism defined modern art, was more reverently supported by Roland. Miller, he continues, was "open minded, in fact bloody-minded enough to support us [the younger artists]".[911] This alone demonstrates Miller's vision as progressive; she was aware of, and prepared to support, innovation in art and was not interested in keeping up old-fashioned conventions.

As I have referenced in the previous two chapters, Becky Conekin has revised Miller's post-war narrative at the farm. This alternative discourse also challenges Carolyn Burke's assessment of Miller's cooking as unsatisfying when compared with her previous life and work. Burke states: "A passion for cooking … was not a way of life".[912] Conversely, Conekin frames Miller within a historical context to provide a new interpretation of her life during this period. She explores Miller's activities as a gourmet cook and hostess entertaining weekend guests at the farm as relevant to and evidencing Miller's continuing creativity. Conekin writes, "For Miller, cooking was fun, creative and even a bit sexy".[913] Conekin's article is helpful in presenting Miller as an innovative artist, although she does not explore Miller's recipes or practices in enough depth. Her focus is predominately on Miller's entertaining of friends. Conekin echoes the presentation

[909] Priscilla Morgan, interview by Carolyn Burke, 1996, in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 329.
[910] Wilson, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 326.
[911] Wilson, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 326.
[912] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 339.
[913] Conekin, "She Did the Cooking," 157.

of Miller by contemporaries of Miller: Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale. In their article for American *Vogue*, "The Most Unusual Recipes You Have Ever Seen" (April 1 1974), they reinscribe Miller with a discourse of art rather than domesticity. This primary source and *Vogue* magazine have proved essential in presenting Miller as an active agent alongside contemporary new artistic movements. They are also beneficial in that they provide recipes written by Miller. As I was denied access to Miller's recipes by the Lee Miller estate, I have used the recipes that appear within these articles, ones that appear in British *Vogue* and those already available within the public domain.

Articles by Ninette Lyon in American *Vogue* (April 1965) and Bettina and Henry McNulty in *House and Garden* (1973, 1975) are also useful primary sources in addition to Miller's own domestic articles "The High Bed" (April 1948), "Bachelor Entertaining" (March 1949) and "Working Guests" (July 1953). These demonstrate Miller's culinary knowledge and her unusual culinary creations. Ninette Lyon – a painter and writer who wrote cookbooks, some of which were translated into English – encouraged Miller to take cooking seriously and accompanied Miller on trips and holidays that she won in cooking competitions. In 1957, during a six-month stay in Paris, Miller completed a course at the Cordon Bleu cooking school, which was a fiftieth birthday present from Roland.[914] Here Miller learnt the techniques of French cuisine.

Although Miller was rather critical of some of the techniques, this course proved beneficial in many ways. Completing her training in the early 1960s at the school's London branch, she met food professionals who would become good friends and visit the farm. Amongst them were Henry McNulty, Bettina McNulty and the food critic James Beard. Miller recalled how Bettina became an important friend during this time: "planning menus, shopping and cooking, we spent lots of time gossiping and giggling, talking about my travels for *House and Garden*".[915] A photograph by Henry McNulty of Lee Miller, Bettina McNulty, James Beard, Patsy Murray (housekeeper), Penrose's long-time personal assistant Julie Lawson and K. T. Laughton, taken at Farley Farm in summer 1966, portrays the importance of Miller's new artistic venture with food and her new circle of friends.[916]

The first section of this chapter positions Miller within austerity Britain and explores her engagement with the socio-economic constraints that many women had to negotiate. With reference to Miller's recipes and her *Vogue* articles on food ("Bachelor Entertaining" and "Working Guests"), aimed at upper-middle and middle-class women, Miller demonstrates the

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[914] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 329–30.
[915] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 340–41.
[916] Charlie Scheips, "The Art Set: Art and Food," *New York Social Diary*, Dec 13, 2013, accessed Jul 18, 2016, http://www.newyorksocialdiary.com/art-set/2013/the-art-set-art-food.

transformative potential of food and her resourcefulness with spices to infuse flavour. With rationing continuing until 1954, the prospect of release from makeshift dull meals, making do, and the constant need to be careful seemed bleak. Miller's article outlines to readers that inventiveness and imagination are powerful tools in providing an appetising and enjoyable meal. This draws on Miller's interaction with and interest in food during her time in Egypt.

As I have established in earlier chapters, living in Egypt from 1934 to 1937 after marrying Aziz Eloui-Bey allowed Miller to experience first-hand the country's culture and people. Having an Arabian cook introduced Miller to the tastes, flavours and spices that are fundamental to Egyptian cooking. In an article about Miller's artistic cooking by Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale for American *Vogue*, Miller references the impact of her Arabian chef. She states:

> We had an Arabian chef with Italian training and cooked all kinds of food … and I was delighted by the recipes, delighted too, by the wonderful Near Eastern dishes he prepared such things as cheese and cucumber salads, and meat balls with cinnamon and cumin.[917]

When Miller left Aziz and returned to England in 1939 (to be with Roland Penrose) at the outbreak of war, Miller's experience of spices and herbs proved significant in providing exciting and tasty meals under the constraints of rationing.

Miller's resourcefulness with food is also evident in her time at the farm. Despite the difficulty of post-war rationing, Miller transformed life at Farley Farm. As Antony Penrose notes, within the first few years of moving to Farley Farm in 1949, Miller developed a self-sufficiency plan. This articulated an approach to food and austerity similar to the one outlined by Elizabeth David. By providing Elizabeth David as an analogy, I argue that the similarity between these two cooks, who attempt to bring flavour and a new approach to cooking in post-war Britain, is unusually similar.

Lisa Chaney's biography of Elizabeth David (1998) is a useful source. Chaney presents David's cooking as new and innovative, inspiring many British upper-middle-class housewives to adopt a Mediterranean diet during and beyond austerity.[918] David's cook books have also been important primary sources. David published her first cookbook in 1950 (*A Book of Mediterranean Food*) and went on to write many more, which established her as a household name. Consequently, it is acknowledged that David influenced traditional British culture with regard to food. Unlike David, Miller only published articles and recipes in *Vogue* and *House and Garden*. However, as I explore later in this chapter, her cooking did more than influencing traditional British food

[917] Gold and Fizdale, "Most Unusual Recipes," 186.
[918] Lisa Chaney, *Elizabeth David: A Biography* (London: Macmillan, 1998), 266-267.

culture. Miller's engagement with food was similar to that of the neo-avant-garde, which is the focus of the following sections of this chapter.

In the next section, I present Miller's cooking as an engagement with an artistic discourse. Although Miller was not part of any art movement in the 1960s, with Roland Penrose establishing and continuing to be involved with the ICA (until 1976), she certainly would have been aware of the neo-avant-garde and its reappropriation of food as artistic material. I argue that Miller's own active involvement with the ICA and the new Institute of Contemporary Arts (IICA) in Chicago demonstrates her continuing connection with the art world and the new and emerging art movements of Fluxus and Eat Art. Patricia Allmer, in *Lee Miller: Surrealism, Photography, and Beyond* (2016), also explores Miller's connections with the ICA. This is extremely useful in establishing Miller's continuing connection with the art world after the war. Allmer focusses primarily on Miller's work in Roland Penrose's exhibitions at the ICA but does not consider Miller's engagement with the neo-avant-garde movements of Fluxus and Eat Art.[919]

This engagement is important to any reading of Miller's culinary creations because it acknowledges Miller's knowledge and awareness of artists who performed at the ICA, such as Alison Knowles, a Fluxus artist. Knowles performed her *Make a Salad* in 1962, followed by *Make a Soup* in 1962 and *The Identical Lunch* from 1967 to 1973. Other artists who explored the relations between culinary and artistic discourse also performed at the ICA during this period. Miller's American roots and her friendship with Alfred Barr – director of MOMA – also would have seen her relationship with the art world continue. With this in mind, Miller's experimenting with food as an artistic medium is no accident. By positioning Miller's artistic production alongside the contemporary artistic movements of Fluxus and nouveau réalisme (Daniel Spoerri's Eat Art, in particular) in the following two sections of this chapter, I argue that this further demonstrates Miller's diversity and her artistic approach to life and work.

Hannah Higgins' book on the Fluxus movement (*Fluxus Experience*, 2002) identifies the aims and concepts of the movement. Higgins recognises Fluxus as a movement that began in the late 1950s.[920] She argues that Fluxus was (and still is) grounded in experimental and educational experiences as art.[921] From events (minimal performances), Fluxkits,[922] paintings on canvas to chance experiments in music, performance and poetry, Fluxus defines art as part of life rather than "specialized products unique to elite culture".[923] Dorothée Brill (2010) identifies Fluxus as

[919] Allmer, *Beyond*, 219-221.
[920] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 1-2.
[921] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 1.
[922] Fluxkits were boxes filled with objects made by the artists to encourage a multisensory response. Objects appealed to all the senses from sight to smell to touch and hearing. No two Fluxkits were the same.
[923] Higgins, *Fluxus*, xv.

evolving on "both an intellectual and sensorial level with an interest in the renunciation of sense and triggering shock forms an integral part of this response".[924] For this reason, many Fluxus artists used food as an artistic medium and primary sensory experiences as their aesthetic. This, as Higgins has observed, has led to the marginalisation of such works: gustatory or olfactory senses have little value in a culture that asserts sight and hearing as primary indictors of aesthetics.[925] This may also go some way in explaining the lack of recognition of Miller's food art by others studying her work.

Cecilia Novero, in her book *Antidiets of the Avant Garde: From Futurist Cooking to Eat Art* (2010), also provides an in-depth study of the adoption of food as artistic material by the avant-garde. Rather than dismissing neo-avant-garde production from the 1960s to the 1980s as a useless and "empty" reappropriation of the classical avant-garde's "adoption of provocation", Novero postulates that the relations between the two movements are more complex.[926] This is similar to Hal Foster's argument in his book *The Return of the Real* (1996).[927] By exploring the neo-avant-garde's presentation of "itself as a minor language within contemporaneous languages of art and culture", Novero explores how artistic historical notions of order and stability are challenged.[928] Through the methods of multiplication and invention, the neo-avant-garde challenges hierarchical categorisation, which sees tradition and art history as ordered and stable. In this regard, as Foster observes in his academic paper "What's Neo about the Neo-avant-garde?" the idea that "the postwar moments [are] passive repetitions of the prewar moments" is contested.[929]

This complex relationship between the two avant-gardes is explored by Novero through the different and multifaceted approaches to food. Novero explores the culinary as a site that initiates artistic production and as the expression of an infinite series of everyday moments.[930] This has proved to be a convincing and influential argument. By focussing on Fluxus (and, in the final section, on Daniel Spoerri's Eat Art), I argue that Miller should be seen as adopting similar concepts surrounding food and the avant-garde as part of her negotiation of the role of housewife and hostess. I believe that Miller's novel approach to food, its presentation and the disruption of sensory perception extends the artistic vision of her earlier work, which negotiated the boundaries of photography, fashion and war.

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924 Dorothée Brill, *Shock and the Senseless in Dada and Fluxus* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 2010), 112.
925 Higgins, *Fluxus*, 46.
926 Cecilia Novero, interview by Nicole J. Caruth, "Antidiets of the Avant-Garde," *Art 21 Magazine*, Dec 2, 2009, accessed Mar 20, http://blog.art21.org/2009/12/02/antidiets-of-the-avant-garde/#.VQn_0I6sWJg.
927 Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, 1996).
928 Novero, *Antidiets,* 146.
929 Hal Foster, "What's Neo about the Neo-avant-garde?" *October*, vol.70 (Autumn 1994), 8.
930 Novero, *Antidiets*, 153.

In the final section of this chapter I suggest that Miller's food art as a form of production and mode of consumption also engages with concepts similar to those of Daniel Spoerri's trap-art paintings and his restaurant as part of the *Gastronoptikum*. Daniel Spoerri, the founder of Eat Art, was Romanian. His father was Jewish and a victim of the Nazis. Consequently, Spoerri lived a nomadic life, continually on the move and without any real roots or sense of belonging. For Spoerri, food, eating and cooking are social acts that strengthen an individual's sense of belonging in a group and society as a whole.[931] This, as I have argued in chapter five, is evident in Miller's role as hostess at Farley Farm. Focussing on his trap paintings (beginning in the early 1960s) that used the left-overs from finished meals as materials and arranging them like still lifes, Spoerri reflected (through his art) the recurrent nature of eating. By fixing meals he had shared with friends in his art work, Spoerri also attempted to preserve these key moments that played an important part in his life. This is similar to dining at Farley Farm, which initiated new friendships and strengthened existing ones.

Spoerri went on to open his restaurant in 1970, where he maintained his emphasis on food but with a focus on performative art. Here he played with synaesthesia, mixing and disrupting visual indicators of taste.[932] By displaying the refuse of meals and their leftovers, Eat Art also questioned what constituted art: its exhibiting and its consumption. Having explored Miller's relationship with consumerism in chapter four, I argue in this section that her food art is similarly a comment on consumer culture. Kim Tyler's article on Miller and her connection with pop art ("A Talent or a Muse? Lee Miller at the Birth of Pop Art") is useful here, as Tyler also makes the connection between Miller, art and consumer culture.

This connection between Miller and neo-avant-garde practices is important because it presents Miller as an artist who was testing culinary and artistic boundaries as well as engaging with the socio-political boundaries of women. In their articles from 1965 to 1975, Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, Ninette Lyon, and Bettina and Henry McNulty similarly present Miller as an artist challenging the concepts of how women are to be seen in the domestic environment of the home. Although there are subtle differences in the way Miller is framed, due to the influence of *Vogue*'s editorship at the time, Miller's culinary creations are presented as artistic practice in all articles. This strengthens my reading that Miller's cooking was not just a reaction to trauma or a result of her decline into domesticity. It presents Miller's practice as innovation, outlining the potential of food as an artistic medium and Miller as an artist.

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[931] Daniel Spoerri and Thomas Levy, ed. *Daniel Spoerri: Coincidence as Master* (Bielefeld: Kerber Verlag, 2003), 62.
[932] Novero, *Antidiets*, 192-193.

6.1. A Tale of Two Cooks: “Spicing it up” in Austerity Britain

Although Miller and David were acquaintances they never became close friends. Carolyn Burke records how Elizabeth David dined with the Penroses at the farm (invited by Bettina McNulty) during the 1960s but provides no exact date.[933] Bettina McNulty believes that David was “a sort of snob who had a bias against Americans, including the internationally acclaimed food writer James Beard”.[934] A friend of Miller’s (Katherine Reid), believes the fact that the two acquaintances never became friends was due to their similar situations.[935] Both were from similar backgrounds: they had lived in France and Egypt and had experienced the Mediterranean before settling in England during the war. Becky Conekin suggests that David may have felt that there was a rivalry between them, since David had replaced Miller in 1956 writing the regular food column in *Vogue*. Miller had written several cookery pieces before she stopped writing for *Vogue*.[936] These included, ““Bachelor entertaining” and Christmas menus in her article “Plan for a Thirteen-Meal Christmas” in December 1952.[937] “The High Bed” and “Working Guests” also included advice on cooking and entertaining.

In some ways, David’s cooking is analogous to Miller’s. Both appropriated using herbs and spices in recipes to liven up the English palette during austerity. Whereas David’s recipes were influenced by a Mediterranean rustic style of cooking, Miller’s reflected her time spent in Egypt and the Balkans, and adopted a Middle Eastern influence. Advising readers to embrace all things Mediterranean, such as olive oil, ointment of aioli, saffron and garlic, David promoted a simpler style of cooking; she was sceptical of food processors (*French Provincial Cooking* 1960) and haute cuisine. Miller, on the other hand, embraced the latest gadgets for the kitchen, using them in interesting and novel ways. In some aspects, their tales are very similar. Both were influenced by their travels around the Mediterranean and Egypt, both viewed cooking as an art, and both attempted to improve the English diet and tastes during a time of austerity and beyond. As Miller once commented, “In cooking you have to taste and taste. I taste everything. One day I’ll drop dead!”.[938]

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[933] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 340.
[934] Bettina McNulty in conversation with Becky Conekin (London, May 20, 2008), quoted in Conekin, “She Did the Cooking,” 152.
[935] Katherine Reid in conversation with Becky Conekin (London, May 12, 2004), quoted in Conekin, “She Did the Cooking,” 152.
[936] Roland Penrose sent a request to Audrey Withers asking Withers to stop contracting Miller’s articles. Becky Conekin (2008) writes that Miller was furious, and understandably so, but she then accepted that there was to be only one breadwinner in the family. However, I suggest that Miller’s cooking as art (explored in the last two sections of this chapter) continues to see her negotiating public and private. She redefines her cooking as “work” and, thus, blurs any distinction between her private role as “housewife” and the public world of work.
[937] Miller, “Thirteen-Meal, Christmas,” 116.
[938] Lee Miller, quoted in Gold and Fizdale, “Most Unusual Recipes,” 187.

In her biography on Elizabeth David (1998), Lisa Chaney writes of David's crusade for "finer and simpler food".[939] In her travels around the Mediterranean (1939–1940) and her visits to the markets of Marseilles, Nice and Naples, David marvelled at the intensity of the colours of the vegetables and the scents of "great bunches of glistening basil, silvery-grey thyme, marjoram and rosemary, brought down from the parched grey-green olive mountainsides".[940] David also marvelled at the variety of shellfish available.[941] As Chaney observes, this period saw David experimenting with and learning about cooking. By talking with local people, market stallholders and friendly restaurant proprietors, she appropriated recipes and added them to her growing repertoire.[942] Through this interaction, David adopted ideas and hints about cooking. These experiences would all be evident in her book *French Country Cooking* (1951) and her descriptions of food in *French Provincial Cooking* (1960).[943]

Continuing her travels with Charles Gibson Bowen on their boat *Evelyn Hope*, during the outbreak of war they visited Greece, the Isles of Greece and then Alexandria and Cairo.[944] Whilst in Cairo, David employed Suleiman, a Sudanese cook-housekeeper. David describes the expertise of her cook and the delicious dishes infused with flavour in "Fast and Furious", an article first appearing in *Spectator* (1960) and later appearing in her book *An Omelette and a Glass of Wine* (1984):

> For three or four years I lived mainly on rather rough but highly flavoured colourful shining vegetable dishes, lentil or fresh tomato soups, delicious spiced pilaffs, lamb kebabs grilled over charcoal, salads with cool mint-flavoured yoghurt dressings, the Egyptian fellahin dish of black beans with olive oil and lemon and hard-boiled eggs – these things were not only attractive but cheap.[945]

The appeal of her Mediterranean adventures and its food is evident in her highly sensory descriptions, capturing sounds, smells and colours in her book *A Book of Mediterranean Food* (1950).[946]

Whilst David was travelling round the Mediterranean with Charles, Miller was experiencing local culture around the Balkans with Roland Penrose (1937–1939). They visited the Aegean, mainland Greece, Bucharest, Prague, Bulgaria and Romania together, and whilst living in Egypt

[939] Chaney, *Elizabeth David*, 118.
[940] Chaney, *Elizabeth David*, 118.
[941] Chaney, *Elizabeth David*, 119.
[942] Chaney, *Elizabeth David*, 119.
[943] Elizabeth David, *French Country Cooking*, revised edition (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1958), Elizabeth David, *French Provincial Cooking* (London: Michael Joseph, 1960).
[944] Chaney, *Elizabeth David*, 246.
[945] Elizabeth David, "Fast and Fresh," in *An Omelette and a Glass of Wine* (London: Jill Norman-Robert Hall, 1984), 24. Originally published in *Spectator*, 1960.
[946] Elizabeth David, *A Book of Mediterranean Food* (London: John Lehmann, 1951).

Miller had travelled through Transjordan and Syria with her travelling companions Bernard Burrows and Robin Fedden.[947] As I have argued in chapter one, Miller's interaction with the local people exposed her to their food and customs, perhaps in an even more intimate way than David experienced. Miller's experience of local dishes and ingredients was also influenced by her life in Egypt as Aziz Eloui-Bey's wife from 1934 to 1937.

Miller explains how her passion for cooking in later life was sparked by her Arabian cook whilst she was living in Egypt: "I was delighted", she writes, "by the wonderful Near Eastern dishes he prepared, such as cheeses and cucumber salad … and meat balls with cinnamon and cumin".[948] Miller liked the local dishes, experiencing "round flatbread, charcoal-grilled lamb, mint and yoghurt sauce, okra and melokhia … and sweets made of apricots or scented with rosewater".[949] As I have explored in chapter one, Miller's treks to see and document the "real" Egypt as opposed to the expatriate community to which she belonged allowed her to experience local Egyptian Arab food rather than a westernised diet. These influences are evident in Miller's own recipes during austerity and later in the 1960s and 1970s. Her Cairo Cheese and Cucumber Salad mixes Greek feta cheese, Spanish onions and cucumber and mash, sprinkled with herbs to ensure flavour.[950] Boulettes (Near Eastern Meat Balls) also demonstrate a Middle Eastern and Mediterranean influence; she uses "cumin and cinnamon". [951]

CAIRO CHEESE AND CUCUMBER SALAD

½ pound Greek feta cheese (or cottage cheese, drained and lightly salted)
Juice of 1½ lemons
2 tablespoons finely chopped Spanish onion (or 4 scallions with some of the green (finely chopped))
3½ tablespoons olive oil
1 medium cucumber, peeled and diced
1 tablespoon minced green pepper
1 tablespoon, fresh parsley, dill, or basil, finely chopped
Freshly ground pepper

With fork mash cheese together with lemon juice and olive oil. Stir in onion, cucumber, and green pepper. Sprinkle with chopped herbs and freshly ground pepper. Chill and serve.

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[947] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 189.
[948] Miller, quoted in Gold and Fizdale, "Most Unusual Recipes," 186.
[949] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 154.
[950] Gold and Fizdale, "Most Unusual Recipes," 161.
[951] Gold and Fizdale, "Most Unusual Recipes," 186. Although some of Miller's ingredients are expensive, she also provides cheaper alternatives, demonstrating her awareness of a middles class audience. For example, where she includes foie gras as an ingredient, an alternative of liver paté is provided. When feta cheese is mentioned, there is also an alternative of cottage cheese.

BOULETTES
(Near Eastern Meat Balls)

1 pound chopped beef, chuck or top round
2 onions, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
¼ cup raw rice, pulverised in a blender or Miracle Mill
1 egg
1 cup parsley, very finely chopped
1 tablespoons powdered cumin
1 teaspoon each cinnamon, salt, and freshly ground pepper
¼ cup water

Sauce
1 onion, finely chopped
1 tablespoon powdered cumin
½ teaspoon each cinnamon, salt, and pepper
4 tablespoons tomato paste

In a bowl combine thoroughly all the meat-ball ingredients. Roll into balls the size of golf balls.

In a heavy skillet pour enough hot water to reach a height of ½ inch and add all the sauce ingredients except the tomato paste. Add the meat balls and simmer over low flame for 15 minutes. Turn the meat balls over carefully. Add tomato paste and simmer for another 30 minutes.

Remove meat balls to serving dish. Stir sauce, reduce if necessary (it should be fairly thick) and pour over meat balls.

Tip: For perfect rice, cook until still slightly firm, drain carefully, return to pot, poke three or four holes in the rice with your finger and put pot over the lowest possible heat for one minute. These ventilating chimneys will give you deliciously fluffy rice.

These experiences proved foundational to Miller and David's approach to food when, on returning to England, they were faced with dull and dreary fare intensified by the constraints of rationing and austerity. Miller had already lived through six years of rationing, experiencing its effect on the British palette, by the time David returned to England in 1946. David recalls the bland and tasteless food she encountered in her book *An Omelette and a Glass of Wine* (1984): "There was flour and water soup seasoned solely with pepper; bread and gristle rissoles; dehydrated onions and carrots; corned beef toad in the hole. I need not go on".[952] Marguerite

[952] David, *Omelette*, 21.

Patten makes a similar observation; however, rather than seeing the post-war period as "the low point in Britain's culinary history", she recognises there were also "culinary upsides".[953] Due to the Ministry of Food encouraging people to be more food-aware, states William Skidelsky in his reflection on food during austerity, people became interested in the nutritional value of food.

Well known for providing inventive recipes with rationed food, broadcasting advice over the radio on *Kitchen Front* during the war and in her own cookery programme with the BBC in 1947, Patten was considered an authority on food. Performing in front of audiences in venues such as the London Palladium, she was as popular as Fanny Cradock. She was also a writer: her book, *Cookery in Colour* (1960), which was filled with colour illustrations and recipes, had sales of 2 million.[954] When faced with substandard ingredients, she writes, people became more inventive: "the flour was often of such poor quality that it couldn't be used to make ordinary pastry, so people experimented with more crumbly toppings".[955] As such, this led to experimentation with new methods of cooking and many old habits, such as overboiling vegetables, were abandoned.[956]

By 1948 rations had fallen well below the wartime average. In her chapter "Snoek Piquante", Susan Cooper explores food and diet during austerity.[957] She writes:

> in one week, the average man's allowance was thirteen ounces of meat, one and a half ounces of cheese, six ounces of butter and margarine, one ounce of cooking fat, eight ounces of sugar, two pints of milk and one egg.[958]

Dried egg powder disappeared; bread was rationed, with its quality dropping to a greyish-coloured low-fat, high-chalk content.[959] Moreover, bread in restaurants was made "one of the maximum number of three dishes allowed at any one meal" so that a diner who requested bread would find they had forfeited their right to a pudding.[960] Eventually, in 1950, rationing was steadily eased. January saw the end of milk rationing and in May hotels and restaurants were freed from the five-shilling meal limit and the restriction on the number of courses served. Rationing on flour, eggs and soap was finally removed in the autumn, whilst meat rationing continued until June 1954.

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[953] Marguerite Patten, quoted in Skidelsky, "Spam's Finest Hour," 56.
[954] Tom Jaine, "Marguerite Patten Obituary," *Guardian Food and Drink*, Jun 10, 2015, accessed Apr 6, 2016, http://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/jun/10/marguerite-patten.
[955] Marguerite Patten, quoted in Skidelsky, "Spam's Finest Hour," 56.
[956] Skidelsky, "Spam's Finest Hour," 56.
[957] Susan Cooper, "Snoek Piquante," in *Age of Austerity 1945–1951*, ed. by Michael Sissons and Philip French, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 21-42.
[958] Cooper, "Snoek Piquante," 25.
[959] Cooper, "Snoek Piquante," 29.
[960] Cooper, "Snoek Piquante," 29.

Miller's reaction to the prospect of dull food at the start of the war was to rush to Fortnum and Mason to purloin a basket full of herbs and spices. Miller acknowledges the difficulty of purchasing flavourings, recalling that the manager replied that the only basket they had was a display basket, at which point she purchased it.[961] As Miller humorously acknowledges in a letter to Erik and Mafy Miller in 1942, "I figured if it were coming to … a diet of potatoes, field mice and snails, I might as well make them taste nice, so all the hoarding I did was truffles – pimentos – spices and all things nice".[962] David also acknowledges the difficulty of procuring herbs and spices in austerity Britain, advising housewives in *French Country Cooking* to grow herbs in pots in their gardens and providing recommendations on where to find spices for purchase.[963] Chaney observes that David identified her audience as those in the country who grew their own food and those in the city who "take trouble over their marketing, choose their meat and fish carefully … keep a good store cupboard and are equally interested … in good and interesting meals".[964]

Miller's self-sufficiency plan, which she invented within the first few months of moving to Farley Farm in 1949, similarly articulates household management plans for "housewives" facing the constraints of austerity. Her "ingenious organization" and determination are evident when faced with the adversity of rationing.[965] Antony Penrose writes in *The Home of the Surrealists* that "Lee was determined that food shortages would spoil her table no longer".[966] According to Antony Penrose, Miller attempted to "make butter from their [the family's] own milk" as a supplement to the rationed quantity allowed.[967] Moreover, the keeping of cows at Willet's (an adjoining farm now part of Farley Farm, in 1950) provided the farm with "two quart bottles of fresh milk a day" and augmented the milk ration.[968] Antony Penrose recalls that "the taste of our milk varied with the season: sweetest in the spring and summer, with the occasional hint of buttercup, and faintly rank with silage in winter".[969]

Advice given to country wives during the war about keeping rabbits, bees, hens and goats also proved essential during a time of austerity.[970] Miller kept pigs on the farm and sent "selected pigs for slaughter and the carcasses [were] cut up and cured for pork and bacon".[971] Offal, which had

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[961] Penrose, *Lives*, 99.
[962] Lee Miller, Letter to Erik and Mafy Miller (Aug 25, 1942), quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 201.
[963] David, *French Country Cooking*, 149.
[964] David, *French Country Cooking*, 8.
[965] David, *French Country Cooking*, 9.
[966] Penrose, *Home of*, 68.
[967] Penrose, *Lives*, 187.
[968] Penrose, *Home of*, 68.
[969] Penrose, *Home of*, 68.
[970] *British Vogue*, Sep 20, 1939, 44.
[971] Penrose, *Lives*, 187.

been considered as an "optional extra" and had to be queued for during the war,[972] was also appropriated by Miller, which demonstrates her ability to focus on the practicalities as well as the novel and new (Figure 51).[973] Advice for housewives in booklets like Good Housekeeping's *100 Recipes for Unrationed Meat* echoed this need to be frugal and practical. It outlined recipes that focussed on utilising every part of a chicken or pig and provided alternatives to rationed meats. Recipes such as Stewed Pig's Trotters with Caper Sauce, Stewed Pig's Haslet (heart, liver and other edible internal organs chopped and formed into a loaf, which would then be braised), Mock Goose (which used pig's fry: heart, liver and lights cooked or fried together) and Pig's Cheek illustrate this.[974]

Figure 51 Roland Penrose, *Lee Miller Bacon Curing* (with Peter Braden and unknown woman), Farley Farm House, *c*.1960, Lee Miller Archives.

[972] Gill Corbishley, *Ration Book Recipes: Some Food Facts 1939–1954* (Colchester: English Heritage, 1990), 8.
[973] Penrose, *Lives*, 187.
[974] *100 Recipes for Unrationed Meat Dishes* (Good Housekeeping institute, n.d.), 32–33.

Elizabeth David's advice to housewives after the war expressed a similar approach to food and running a household. She provides advice to upper-middle-class English women on how to produce "first-class food" with all the pressures of rationing and "the disappearance of servants".[975] As Becky Conekin observes in her paper "'She Did the Cooking with the Same Spirit as the Photography': Lee Miller's Life after Photography" (2008), David's reference to "large numbers of people with small farms in the country produce their home-cured bacon, ham and sausages; … those who have churned their own butter, fed their chickens and geese, cherished their fruit trees, skinned and cleaned their own hares, are in no mood to see their efforts go to waste"[976] echoes Miller's own self-sufficiency plan.[977] In this respect, David's approach to food equals Miller's interest in improving flavour. This is, perhaps, not surprising, as David became the regular food columnist in *Vogue*, taking over from Miller. She wrote her first of a series of twelve monthly articles on food in season in May 1956.

David's first article appeared in *Harper's Bazaar* in 1949, the same year that Miller's article "Bachelor Entertaining" appeared in *Vogue.* Both acknowledge the difficulties that upper-middle-class and middle-class women were facing. Acknowledging the disappearance of the servant class, David provided useful advice and tips for housewives who were not accustomed to cooking. Similarly, Miller's article provides useful tips and advice, with Miller expounding the cooking of her male friends in austerity Britain. Describing the cooking style of friend and diplomat Fred Bartlett, Miller writes:

> If chopped onion is part of the act, it's done well ahead of time and tightly wrapped to keep it from drying or fading. He'd bought a vegetable broth to boil and had shoved it on the corner of the one electric element to simmer. A very tough old hen had been steaming. He seasoned it, rubbed it in olive oil and put it in the oven to roast on a layer of carrot and onion. The top of the stove was then free for eighteen minutes of boiling and nine minutes of frozen pea boiling at the strategic moment. … We ended with a salad, the carefully proportioned dressing of which had been violently emulsified in a glass jar … Finally blue cheeses and fresh fruit.[978]

Amidst different narratives of bachelor friends, Miller offers housewives a variety of approaches to cooking, allowing for individual autonomy. As Bettina McNulty, observes about Miller's culinary style, "She abhorred manacles, whether political, social or domestic".[979] Having influenced Miller's approach to photography, this premise subsequently underscored her

[975] David, *French Country Cooking*, 8.
[976] David, *French Country Cooking*, 8.
[977] Conekin, "She Did the Cooking," 153.
[978] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 69.
[979] Bettina McNulty, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 340.

approach to her cooking and her role as hostess at Farley Farm, as I have explored in the previous chapter.

Both writers present cooking as an antidote to the demands, dullness and compromise of rationing and recipes as outlined in Ann Robbins' *100 Meat-Saving Recipes* (1943).[980] Through evocative description, David's articles for *Harper's Bazaar*, and then her book *A Book of Mediterranean Food*, conjure images of distant lands:

> The oil, the saffron, the garlic, the pungent local wines; the aromatic perfume of rosemary, wild marjoram and basil … the brilliance of the market stalls piled high with pimentos, aubergines, tomatoes, olives, melons, figs … the great heaps of shiny fish, silver, vermilion, or tiger-striped, and those long needle fish whose bones mysteriously turn green when they are cooked.[981]

David introduces her readers to a variety of exotic - colourful and aromatic - ingredients whilst advising in *French Country Cooking* on the "textual and colour of the dishes to be served in relation to each other".[982] Miller's narrative persuades readers to liven up their cooking through recounting the exploits of John Tillotson, printer and publisher. She writes how "he has searched out exotic and subtle recipes from all over the world and eats mentally while reading a cook book from his remarkable collection – the way a musician 'hears' a composition by looking at the score".[983] In this instance, Miller, similar to David, presents cooking as a form of escapism. As Chaney observes, although there had been many cookery writers with authority on French dishes, few were authorities on Middle Eastern, Greek or Italian ones.

Whilst David was compiling her books on Mediterranean food, Miller had begun collecting recipes, experimenting with and cooking dishes from "far-off land[s]". Antony Penrose observes: "If she [Miller] could find a native from a far-off land who would show her how to cook some ethnic dish that was bliss indeed".[984] By encouraging her international friends visiting the farm to show her how to cook dishes from abroad, Miller mixed colourful and aromatic ingredients from other countries with English dishes. This is articulated in her *Vogue* article "Working Guests" (July 1953). Antony Penrose recalls in his biography of Miller that her friend Stan Peters from Poland "used to spend hours with Lee making *bigos* and other traditional fare".[985] Renato Guttuso provided the inspiration for pasta dishes; the O'Briens, on having returned from

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[980] Ann Robbins, *100 meat-Saving recipes* (New York: Thomas Y. Cromwell Company, 1943).
[981] David, *Mediterranean Food*, v.
[982] David, *French Country Cooking*, 9.
[983] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 116.
[984] Penrose, *Lives*, 198.
[985] Penrose, *Lives*, 198.

Tenerife, provided Spanish rice dishes; and Wells Coates' passion for Chinese food found a "co-indulger" in Miller.[986]

A recipe for Chinese chicken by Fred Bartlett (an amateur cook who worked for the diplomatic service) appears in "Bachelor Entertaining" and evidences a concern for taste. Although chicken, rabbits and pigeons were more readily available in 1949 than in previous years, the quality could not be guaranteed.[987] Miller acknowledges this difficulty when referring to the chicken as a "very tough old hen".[988] However, Miller's description of the meal shows no sign of this hampering the taste:

> The unstuffed bird is packed in at least two inches of salt all around … not inside. It is covered tightly and cooked over a medium flame for exactly 65 minutes. It should be perfectly golden, savoury and full of juice.[989]

No one could visit without imparting some culinary knowledge to Miller. Experimenting with new ingredients, Miller writes in "Working Guests" that this process would take days when friends stayed at the farm.

By mixing ingredients from different cultures and incorporating them into English dishes, Miller negotiates the English palette in a different way from David. Whilst David, in most of her books (apart from *Spices, Salts and Aromatics in the English Kitchen*, published in 1970), lured readers away from English culinary dishes in favour of a Mediterranean diet, Miller mixed and experimented with ingredients that did not necessarily go together.[990] Whereas David focussed on simple, tasty and rustic food from the Mediterranean, Miller viewed ingredients in the same way as paint and created elaborate dishes that looked like paintings. Some of the projects she mentions were unsuccessful. This is evident in "Bachelor Entertaining", when she describes the experimental ventures of herself and a friend cooking hard-boiled eggs in Turkish coffee and olive oil. Attempting to mix English and Middle Eastern ingredients in cooking, Miller observes, "it didn't work and we found out later it should have simmered for at least twelve hours".[991] This is reminiscent of her approach as a photographer. Miller experimented with different styles (portrait and landscape/social, and European Expressionism and pure photography) and as a war correspondent she blurred the categories of fashion and war.

[986] Penrose, *Lives*, 198.
[987] Marguerite Patten, *Post-War Kitchen: Nostalgic Food and Facts from 1945-1954* (London: Hamlyn, 1998), 53.
[988] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 69.
[989] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 114.
[990] Elizabeth David, *Spices, Salts and Aromatics in the English Kitchen* (London: Penguin Books, 1970).
[991] Miller, "Bachelor Entertaining," 116.

The workspace and the equipment that Miller and David used also reflect their different approaches to food. David focussed on the importance of tradition and history against the onslaught of the modern world. She embraced English "recipes of a century ago" in addition to the food of the Mediterranean.[992] In *A book of Mediterranean Food*, David introduces readers to methods for preparing food used in regional France, provincial Italy and the Middle East, which had often changed little over centuries. David's promotion of French farmhouse and peasant dishes favoured the advantages of rustic clay cooking pots. Chaney observes David's own sensibilities in the extolling of these pots for "the agrarian-based, pre-industrial Europe of the south, a state long since lost to England".[993]

Miller favoured the use of gadgets in her cooking and used them in new and innovative ways. Her kitchen at the farm reflected this approach to cooking, with kitchen appliances and fitted cupboards covered in pale blue Formica, a new material in 1954.[994] This contemporary approach represents Miller's love of the modern: from her Formica kitchen, cabinets stretching to the ceiling, dishwasher (the height of innovation in the fifties) and one of the first microwave ovens in England to a variety of other gadgets in the kitchen. Her favourite amongst these was the blender: a tool designed for efficiency and speed. As Miller expresses in her interview with Ninette Lyon, "I can be dressed in an evening dress and while I am waiting for a taxi, I can, thanks to this marvellous instrument, make a chocolate mousse for ten people".[995] Miller also disliked dishes that would take a long time to cook in the oven: "I make things which don't require continual hovering around the oven before the meal".[996]

Friends Bettina and Henry McNulty promoted Miller's unique style in their articles in *House and Garden* in 1973 and 1975. They present her as more than just a housewife who is at home doing the cooking and reference her wartime activities and celebrity status to introduce her culinary exploits with food. They present Miller as an artist engaging with the latest gadgets, which I explore in more depth in the following sections of this chapter. This plays to Miller's strength; her adeptness with technology had influenced her photography and reflected a modernist approach to her art. This, as the articles impress on the reader, continued in her cooking.

Although there were differences in design and approach, the kitchen, for Miller and David, was their workspace in which they created and experimented – like a workshop or study. Chaney describes David's kitchen as "the hub of her house" and "her room for socializing".[997] John

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[992] Chaney, *Elizabeth David*, xxiii.
[993] Chaney, *Elizabeth David*, 269.
[994] Penrose, *Home of*, 82.
[995] Ninette Lyon, "A Second Fame," American *Vogue*, Apr 15, 1965, 140.
[996] Lyon, "Second Fame," 139.
[997] Chaney, *Elizabeth David*, 268.

Craxton makes a similar observation about the kitchen at Farley Farm, through which visitors had to pass in order to enter the house.[998] As mentioned previously, Miller's article "Working Guests" describes how guests were invited or coerced into participating in the cooking themselves, coalescing around the table in the middle of the kitchen. Antony Penrose, in his introduction to the catalogue *Lee Miller: A Woman's War* supporting the Imperial War Museum's exhibition in 2015, refers to how Miller viewed the kitchen as a studio, calling it her "Project Planning Room" in which she would plan new menus.[999]

Miller's recipes and articles on the domestic appeared in *Vogue* until 1956, after which point David replaced Miller as the regular food columnist. With a series of articles for *Vogue* and *House and Garden*, David became the more popular writer. Writing an article a month for British *Vogue*, David continued to promote the finest foods in season. This was accompanied by colour photographs and encouraged, as Chaney observes, "the art of living … of which food was a fundamental part".[1000] Although Miller could not contend with the popularity of David, whose impact influenced kitchen designs, Miller's articles set out a similar desire to change the domestic environment. As Bettina and Henry McNulty acknowledge in their articles on Miller and her style of cooking, Miller was just as innovative as David in challenging conceptions of art and cooking. David and Miller both aimed to introduce flavour to food during and after austerity and viewed the kitchen as a social place in which to create and entertain.

Figure 52 Roland Penrose, *Lee Miller in Her Kitchen*, Farley Farm House, 1954, Lee Miller Archives.

[998] John Craxton, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 338-339.
[999] Antony Penrose, introduction to *Woman's War* by Roberts, 12.
[1000] Chaney, *Elizabeth David*, 267.

6.2. Cooking as Artistic Practice

The previous section presented Miller's approach to food as centred on taste (in a similar way to David's) and influenced by her travels. This section explores Miller's continuing connection with the art world and its importance to any understanding of her food art. Unlike Carolyn Burke, who suggests that Miller's post-war life at the farm was one of obscurity, I argue that Miller was very much still involved with the latest innovations in art circles. I have explored in the previous chapter how Miller setting up Farley Farm as an artistic community encouraged new artists. This artistic community is significant, as it evidences Miller's creativity with food as connecting with new and emerging artistic practices. Moreover, her active involvement with the ICA is also important to establish here. Through this crucial role, Miller engaged with new and innovative artists, whilst helping Roland Penrose cultivate an environment that promoted unknown or new artists. In this instance, Miller's American and artistic connections were essential to Roland and the ICA.

Anne Massey and Gregor Muir, in their study of the ICA from its conception in 1946 to 1986, make a similar observation. They write, "Miller was an important figure in the history of the ICA".[1001] Again, this has been overlooked, with Roland tending to dominate any discussion of the ICA and its establishment. Miller contributed to the organisation of Roland's exhibitions at the ICA whilst also lending works from her own art collection. The catalogue for the ICA's first exhibition, *Forty Years of Modern Art 1907–1947: A Selection from British Collections* (9 February 1948) acknowledged her contribution.[1002] Miller again lent two further works – Klee's *Brother and Sister* (1930) and Miró's *Little White Horse* (1927) – for the ICA's second exhibition, *40,000 Years of Modern Art* (20 December 1948 to 29 January 1949). She reported on this exhibition for *Vogue* in January 1949, conveying her support to promote modern art as a part of British cultural life.[1003]

Moreover, Miller's support of new artists was indicative of ICA goals. The minutes of a meeting in January 1946 (where no name for the museum had as yet been agreed) outlined that "it will not be concerned exclusively with artists who are already recognised".[1004] Miller's preference for works with progressive leanings (in some instances, more so than Roland's) is evident in photographs and her review of the Biennale in Venice in the summer of 1948, which appeared in

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[1001] Massey and Muir, *ICA*, 65.

[1002] Lee Miller lent the exhibition, Paul Klee's *Sun and Town* (1928), Max Ernst's *Dejeuner sur l'herbe* (1936), Yves Tanguy's *The Questioner* (1937), Paul Delvaux' *The Call of the Night* (1938), Lam's *The Rite* (1945), and Man Ray's *Involute* (n.d.). See Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 220.

[1003] Lee Miller, "40,000 Years of Modern Art," British *Vogue*, 68-69, 82-83.

[1004] Museum of Modern Art Scheme, *Minutes of the First Meeting*, Jan 30, 1946, 2, quoted in Massey and Muir, *ICA*, 14.

American *Vogue* on 1 November.[1005] Furthermore, as I have referenced in the introduction of this chapter, Colin St. John Wilson (a friend of Miller's) recognised Miller's support of up-and-coming young artists. He recalls in an interview with Carolyn Burke (20 May 1996) that the younger artists, Eduardo Paolozzi (pop artist), Toni del Benzio (part of the Independent Group) and Reyner Banham (architect and designer) found Miller's ability to embrace new modes of art forward-thinking, whereas Roland's inability to see anything outside surrealism was viewed by them as "claustrophobic" and inhibiting.[1006]

Keith Hartley, in his chapter "Roland Penrose: Private Passions for the Public Good" in *The Surrealist and the Photographer: Roland Penrose and Lee Miller* (2001), makes a similar observation about Roland's support of new artists. Whilst Roland helped to promote their work, Hartley writes "there is no doubt that he [Roland] reserved most of his energies and enthusiasm for the artists he knew best and who were his friends – Picasso, Ernst, Miró and Man Ray".[1007] This did not go down too well with others. He writes, "to some younger members of staff at the ICA, … this favouring of an older generation was resented and criticised as going against the stated policy of the organisation".[1008] This is not to say that Roland's encouragement of new artists was not supportive: it was, but what this also demonstrates is Miller's significant support for new artists and their work.

Patricia Allmer, in her chapter "Afterimage" from her book on Miller (2016), also observes that Miller's connections with the art world contributed to the setting up of the ICA. This extended to the new ICA (the IICA) in Chicago in 1957, of which Miller became director. Miller was viewed as "an autonomous body with which the ICA in London could form a close foreign link".[1009] In an undated prospectus for the IICA, Miller is named the director and her bibliographical narrative clearly outlines her link with artistic circles. It reads, "Mrs Penrose is an American, born in Poughkeepsie, New York. As Lee Miller, she was internationally known as an outstanding photographer. She is very active in art and cultural circles on the Continent".[1010] Allmer also cites Miller and Roland's close relationship with Picasso as evidence of Miller's continuing creativity. This goes some way in establishing the ICA as a joint vision rather than, as always attributed, Roland's vision and achievement.

[1005] Lee Miller, "The Venice Biennale Art Exposition," American *Vogue*, Nov 1, 1948: 190-191, 193, 195.
[1006] Colin St John Wilson, interview by Carolyn Burke, May 20, 1996, in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 326.
[1007] Hartley, "Roland Penrose," 23.
[1008] Hartley, "Roland Penrose," 22.
[1009] Roland Penrose Archive (GMA A35/1/1/RPA230/1/2/3), Lee Miller (Lady Penrose), Draft Letter to Alfred Barr, Marcel Duchamp, and Others, typescript with MS corrections, n.d.
[1010] Roland Penrose Archive (GMA A35/1/1/RPA230/1/2/2/2), IICA Prospectus with MS annotations, n.d. Also cited in Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 219.

Miller's connection with the ICA would have centred her within, as Adrian Henri termed the new emerging art, "total art", which connected and represented everyday culture and experiences. These took the form of "Happenings" adopted by Fluxus. According to Catherine Marcangeli (curator and collaborator of the ICA's show of Adrian Henri from 27 January to 15 March 2015), Adrian Henri was the first to introduce happenings in the early 1960s; his first was in 1962 at the Hope Hall in Liverpool and was called "The Machine". These happenings drew on "reality" and focussed on the importance of the senses in a piece of art.[1011] Henri produced a leaflet with Roger McGough to introduce his happening 'City' to New York painters and musicians. A short newspaper article reporting on the event appeared in the *Daily Herald* ("Living Art – But It's All So Confusing") in 1962.[1012] Miller's American connection with the IICA in Chicago would also have proved beneficial in this instance (the *Daily Herald* was Chicago's largest suburban newspaper) and in placing her amongst contemporary artistic discourses.

Moreover, Carolyn Burke writes that in October 1967, Miller divided her time between New York and Poughkeepsie whilst Roland was lecturing at the MOMA. Visiting New York subsequently became an annual event.[1013] The exhibitions *Art of the Real: USA 1948–1968* (3 July – 8 September 1968), *Claes Oldenburg* (25 September – 23 November 1969) and *Pop Art Prints, Drawings and Multiples* (23 May – 31 August 1970) were just some of the events at the MOMA from 1967.[1014] *The Art of the Real*, explained by the press release for the exhibition as "the things we experience every day: the things we feel, knock against, and apprehend in normal physical ways", articulates the aims promoted by Fluxus through their Happenings.[1015]

This artistic approach is also evident in the work of *Claes Oldenburg* and the MOMA's exhibition which explored his work during the 1960s. Happenings "that he created himself" feature alongside works from his previous exhibitions: *The Street* (1959–1960), *The Store* (opened in December 1961) and *The Home* (1963). Examining Oldenburg's use of different environments, the MOMA presents his art as an "understanding of what is at stake in the art of

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[1011] Catherine Marcangeli, *Adrian Henri: Performance, Environments and Happenings*, 00:02:37/01:39:34, from a talk at the *Institute of Contemporary Arts,* London, Feb 28, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRZGBHMFqOQ.

[1012] "First Happenings Adrian Henri in the '60s and '70s," Resource pack supporting exhibition, 21 Jan – 15 Mar 2015, accessed 22/02/2017, *Institute of Contemporary Arts*, https://www.ica.art/sites/default/files/downloads/ICA%20Educator%27s%20Resource%20Pack%20Adrian%20Henri_0.pdf.

[1013] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 351.

[1014] "Exhibition History List," Museum of Modern Art Archives, accessed Oct 20, 2016, https://www.moma.org/learn/resources/archives/archives_exhibition_history_list.

[1015] E. C. Goossen (Guest Director), "The Art of the Real: USA 1948–1968," The Museum of Modern Art, press release, Jul 3, 1968, 1, accessed Oct 20, 2016, https://www.moma.org/learn/resources/press_archives.

the sixties".[1016] Works in *The Store*, which included *Two Loaves of Bread – One Cut* and *Pastry Case II* and the *Floor-Burger* (structures crafted in the shape of food) were intended to upset "traditional values", to "challenge … the viewer" and to redefine art.[1017] Through these everyday experiences, the neo-avant-garde promoted a multisensory approach to art that allowed the individual to experience things for themselves and connect with the world around them.

Consequently, Miller's connection with New York, the MOMA (through her friendship with Alfred Barr) and the IICA (as well as the ICA) placed her in an advantageous position, providing her with a unique insight into new and developing contemporary art movements. It also establishes Miller's movement within artistic circles and, subsequently, her knowledge of the neo-avant-garde. By interrogating existing art and culinary practices during the 1960s and 1970s, I locate Miller's food art as a creative practice that continues her other artistic pursuits. Developing her artistic vision and engaging with the contemporary artistic practices of Fluxus and the nouveau réaliste practices of Daniel Spoerri, I argue Miller appropriates food in a similar way to the neo-avant-garde. Their experiments with food and gustatory perception exemplified the importance of primary experience (senses) to secondary experience (mental concepts about something).[1018] Consequently, most Fluxus works function through taste and smell, not sight alone. I argue that, through adopting food as an artistic medium, which required an individual to rely on primary information to the senses (taste, smell and touch), Miller also engages with a reality-based art that was framed as experience.

Miller's contemporaries Ninette Lyon, Arthur Gold, Robert Fizdale, and Bettina and Henry McNulty all recognise the innovation of Miller's cooking, which tests conventional culinary and artistic practices. The word "test" best describes Miller's approach to food, as it connects her with Allan Kaprow's definition of neo-avant-garde practices in *Assemblages, Environments and Happenings* (1966). In recognising a line of reconnection between art and life, Kaprow seeks not to undo "traditional identities" but to test the "frames or formats" of contemporary aesthetic experiences of art.[1019] In this way Kaprow observes a flow in the relationship between the historical and the neo-avant-garde. This provides an alternative discourse to Peter Bürger's definition of the neo-avant-garde which, as Hal Foster observes in *The Return of the Real* (1996), refers to a narrative of "cause and effect, of lapsarian before or after, of heroic origin and farcical repetition".[1020] For Foster, the neo-avant-garde acts on the historical avant-garde in unforeseen

[1016] Alicia Legg (Associate Curator), "Claes Oldenburg," The Museum of Modern Art, press release, Sep 25, 1969, 3, accessed Oct 20, 2016, https://www.moma.org/learn/resources/press_archives.
[1017] Alicia Legg, "Claes Oldenburg," 1.
[1018] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 36–38.
[1019] Allan Kaprow, quoted in *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 1996), 17.
[1020] Foster, *Return of the Real*, 13.

and novel directions. Applying this to Miller, I argue that her artistic practice with food was similarly testing concepts of the cook as humble craftsperson and a woman's role as housewife. This personal reworking of avant-garde practices sees Miller engaging with the neo-avant-garde's aesthetics regarding contemporary cultural-political strategies and social positioning. According to Foster, this approach by the neo-avant-garde has proved to be the most effective project in art and criticism.[1021]

The articles written about Miller at Farley Farm, from 1965 to 1975, articulate a similar reworking of avant-garde practices. Written two years after Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, Lyon's article "A Second Fame" (1965) reinforces the celebratory status that Miller attained as a war photographer and correspondent. Lyon portrays Miller as a housewife negotiating the contemporary socio-political expectations of women and aligns Miller with an active discourse of art rather than domesticity. Miller is presented as an artist whose cooking is representative of her artistic lifestyle and interpersonal relationships: "Here Lady Penrose cooks, amusingly, inventively for guests in a large pleasant kitchen, surrounded by Picassos, by cookbooks from all over the world and the newest kitchen gadgets".[1022] Lyon extols Miller's unique style and positions Miller's latest creativity as a continuing progression in her artistic career. Also, Lyon's article, written for American *Vogue*, is, in some respects, indicative of *Vogue* magazine during Diana Vreeland's editorship (1962 to 1971). Writing for *The Washington Post*, Martha Sherrill Dailey has referred to Vreeland's vision as "avant-garde, exotic, psychedelic and very social". Vreeland loved "artifice" and "extravagance".[1023] Her vision for *Vogue*, observes Dailey was "very social", and is an aspect Lyon highlights in her piece on Miller's hostess skills at the farm.[1024]

The article written by Gold and Fizdale adopts a similar if slightly different approach. They depict Miller's artistic skills and her food as artistic creations filled with "nonconformity" and "personal strategy".[1025] Miller's culinary innovation is located within the revival of surrealism in the early 1970s and surrealism's impact on the avant-garde: "if there is such a thing as a surrealist cuisine, Lady Penrose invented it".[1026] Carolyn Burke identifies the revival of surrealism in 1971 as an "inspiration to the social upheavals of the late sixties".[1027] This

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[1021] Foster, *Return of the Real*, 21.
[1022] Lyon, "Second Fame," 138.
[1023] Martha Sherrill Dailey, "Grace Mirabella the Vagaries of *Vogue,*" *Washington Post*, July 26, 1988. Accessed Mar 30, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1988/07/25/grace-mirabella-the-vagaries-of-vogue/43209fed-bf88-4f67-8aa9-b53250
[1024] Dailey, "Grace Mirabella," https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1988/07/25/grace-mirabella-the-vagaries-of-vogue/43209fed-bf88-4f67-8aa9-b53250
[1025] McNulty, "Christmas," 102. McNulty, "Happy Weekend," 69.
[1026] Gold and Fizdale, "Most Unusual Recipes," 160.
[1027] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 357.

observation reinforces Kaprow's argument about the relationship between the two avant-gardes: not separate or independent but acting on each other, free of any temporal or historicist approach.

Gold and Fizdale present Miller's artistic production alongside "Dali's melting watch", Man Ray's floating lips and Cocteau's statue of Miller in order to present her culinary art as an analogous powerful force that interrogates existing artistic and culinary conventions.[1028] In this manner, Miller is conveyed as challenging the image of a woman tied to home and family, and the positioning of men and women in the history of art. Patricia Allmer identifies in her chapter on female artists in *Angels of Anarchy: Women Artists and Surrealism*, "art history" and tradition reaffirms and shapes "patriarchal myths of origination and originality". The artist is presented as male and women as passive muses and as inspiration for the male artist.[1029] Gold and Fizdale situate Miller within a discourse of art in order to present her as a creative individual engaging with contemporary artistic practices and the socio-political positioning of women.

Outlining her past creative endeavours of photography and her activities as a war correspondent, Gold and Fizdale convey Miller's life as articulating modernist sympathies and ground-breaking endeavours, from being "with the first American troops in the liberation of Paris" to being a culinary innovator.[1030] Presented as an active and intelligent woman, Gold and Fizdale's article also reflects the image of American *Vogue* that was promoted by Grace Mirabella, the magazine's editor-in-chief from 1971 to 1988. Evaluating Mirabella's editorship, Dailey writes, "[Mirabella] wanted to drop the image of *Vogue* as a "Ladies' magazine", to interest a new kind of reader, an intelligent and serious woman" whom she termed "The Modern Woman." Consequently, "working women - journalists, writers, actresses, artist, playwrights" became the focus of the magazine.[1031] Miller, having been three out of the five, epitomised Mirabella's promotion of the modern woman who negotiated her creative and domestic self.

This creativity is articulated through Miller's creative recipes within the articles and Bettina McNulty including colourful pictures of the dishes alongside images of artworks.[1032] The strange surprises that feature in Miller's recipes, the unusual naming of dishes and the importance of presentation and atmospherics for the diner are all indicative of Miller's aesthetics and acute visual sense translated into food. This aesthetic, I argue in the following sections, also connects Miller with other contemporaneous artists who set out to question the construction and

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[1028] Gold and Fizdale, "Most Unusual Recipes," 160.

[1029] Patricia Allmer, "Of Fallen Angels and Angels of Anarchy," in *Angels of Anarchy: Women Artists and Surrealism*, ed. Patricia Allmer (London: Prestel, 2010), 14-15.

[1030] Gold and Fizdale, "Most Unusual Recipes," 186.

[1031] Dailey, "Grace Mirabella," https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1988/07/25/grace-mirabella-the-vagaries-of-vogue/43209fed-bf88-4f67-8aa9-b53250

[1032] McNulty, "Happy Weekend," 71.

definitions of meaning according to established systems of signification. Fluxus and, in particular, the nouveau réaliste artist Daniel Spoerri adopted food as the instrument by which to question the institutionalisation of art and its commodification.

6.3. Food, Fluxus and the Avant-Garde

Founded by George Maciunas in 1961, Fluxus aimed to introduce experiences, everyday occurrences and shared experience as art. For this reason, Fluxus people, according to George Maciunas in a letter to Tomas Schmit (8 November 1963), "must obtain their 'art' experience from everyday experiences, eating, working, etc.".[1033] By focussing on the performative aspects of language and drawing on Dada, Fluxus sought to create new ideas for the experiences of art and "to unnerve a complacent, militaristic, decadent society by bringing art into direct confrontation with triviality and aesthetics".[1034] In declaring that everything is art, its members also appropriated the experiences of the everyday to democratise art and eliminate art as an institution. This, I argue, engages with the ICA's goals and Miller's food art at Farley Farm.

In a manifesto from 1963, Maciunas calls for liberation from "dead art, imitation, artificial, abstract art, serial art etc.".[1035] Fluxus' aim was to live art and convey it as part of everyday life, freed from concert halls and galleries, which stifled and segregated art. Unlike Dada, who used the art object as a "radical *anaestheticization of aesthetics*",[1036] Fluxus used the art object as a means to shift perception and initiate an aesthetic attitude to the reception of life.[1037] As Jon Hendricks observes in his Fluxus collections, art for Fluxus and other neo-avant-garde movements aimed to express "possibilities of experience" to "feel the world with innovated perception".[1038] By striving to remove the artistic expression of the established forms of signification and meaning, Fluxus aimed to redefine and transform consciousness. Events or happenings became popular modes of expression by which these experiences could be achieved.

Events, or Happenings, were multi-disciplinary and relied on improvisation (although key elements were planned) and non-linear narratives. They took place in America and Europe and adopted pop art influences, which used icons of contemporary culture to critique definitions of

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[1033] George Maciunas in a letter to Schmit, Nov 8, 1963, quoted in *What's Fluxus? What's Not! Why*, ed. Jon Hendricks, exhibition catalogue (Rio de Janeiro: Centro Cultural Banco Do Brasil, 2002), 160.

[1034] Jon Hendricks, ed. *Fluxus Codex* (Detroit: Gilbert and Silverman Fluxus Collection and Harry N. Abrams, 1988), 21.

[1035] "Fluxus: Magazines, Manifestos. Multum in Parva," *George Maciunas Foundation Inc*. accessed Mar 15, http://georgemaciunas.com/about/cv/manifesto-i/.

[1036] Richard Shusterman, "The End of Aesthetic Experience," in *Performing Live: Aesthetic Alternatives for the Ends of Art*, ed. R. Shusterman (New York: Cornell University Press, 2000), 31. First published in *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 55 (1999), 29–41.

[1037] Brill, *Shock*, 158.

[1038] Jon Hendricks, ed. *Fluxus Etc., Addendum I, Addendum II*, vol 3 (Detroit: Gilbert and Lila Silverman Fluxus Collection, 1981–1983), 51.

art. As Evelyn Weiss in *Pop Art: An International Perspective* rightly observes, Fluxus and nouveau réalisme/pop art during the 1960s were not exclusive of one another but interconnected in their engagement with contemporary culture.[1039] The Festival of Misfits (held in London from 23 October to 8 November in 1962), organised by nouveau réaliste artist Daniel Spoerri, is one example of this relationship between the two. Dick Higgins, Alison Knowles, George Maciunas, Ben Patterson, Emmett Williams, Ben Vautier, Robert Filliou, Addi Køpcke and Robin Page participated. The ICA, in connection with the Festival, also hosted a Fluxus concert called "The Misfits Fair".

Hannah Higgins (*Fluxus Experience*, 2002) makes a similar connection between Fluxus and pop art. To highlight the collaboration between the two, she provides examples of events at New York's Reuben Gallery during 1959 and 1960, which involved Dick Higgins (Fluxus) and Red Grooms, George Segal, Claes Oldenburg and James Dine (pop artists). Dick Higgins' own involvement with the Judson Church performances, "Ray Gun Specs", with Kaprow, Oldenburg and Robert Whitman is another example.[1040] Hannah Higgins has also identified that amongst many Fluxus artists there was a strong inclination to work with food and taste to interact with paradigms of production and consumption in art.[1041] However, because of the difficulties of analysing the works in theorising taste and smell, and because they fail to conform to a visual mode of artistic practice, Higgins believes that Fluxus food works have been marginalised. As Higgins rightly acknowledges, other Fluxus works tend to dominate areas of research. Perhaps this is also the case for Miller's food art. Higgins' exploration into Fluxus gustatory works is useful when analysing Miller's work. Miller adopts similar methods and approaches in terms of using food as a changeable medium and conveying an art that is representative of everyday activities that is to be experienced and enjoyed.

Fluxus' celebratory meals, or "Fluxbanquets", in particular, were effective in inviting multiple interpretations of ideas, performativity and the landscape for art's accessibility for all. Fluxbanquets happened on Christmas Day in 1967 and New Year's Day in 1968 and 1969. They then took place intermittently until Maciunas' death in 1978. Maciunas invited all to participate: "You may participate by contributing either a food or drink of your own invention, or make something from the list below".[1042] Miller's Egyptian-themed meal adopts a similar approach. This was inspired by a trip with the ICA to Lebanon and Egypt in 1963, perhaps as a twenty-year

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[1039] Evelyn Weiss, "Pop Art and Germany," in *Pop Art*: *An International Perspective*, ed. Marco Livingstone (London: Royal Academy 1991), 219–23.
[1040] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 135, 138.
[1041] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 48.
[1042] George Maciunas, quoted in Jon Hendricks, *Fluxus Codex*, (New York: Gilbert and Silverman Fluxus Collection and Harry N. Abrams, 1988), 67.

celebration for Lebanese Independence Day, which has been held annually on 22 November since 1943. Bettina McNulty joined the trip and accompanied Miller on her travels to Cairo. The menu featured Walnut Lamb (spiced with anchovies) and a dessert, Persian Carpet. The dessert contained orange segments and rose petals, candied roses, orange peel and rosewater, and was served on a silver tray.[1043] Miller's dish Persian Carpet, in particular, induces a variety of aromas from the use of rose petals, orange peel and rosewater.

Henry McNulty's article "A Christmas at Muddles Green", appearing in American *House and Garden* in 1975, captures Miller's sense of theatricality when describing a typical Christmas at Farley Farm. Set against a backdrop of "holly … and mistletoe completely hiding the walls", a "fantastic picture memory" is created for children and guests staying at the farm.[1044] As if it was a performance, the scenery transformed on Christmas Eve into an Aladdin's cave filled with "tinsel, stars, eggs, silver balls, strings of lights, and spirals of flashing silver paper", a process in which the guests were invited to participate.[1045] McNulty describes Miller's Christmas menu as full of invention and mystery. He writes about her mystery sorbet made from Coca-Cola and a Christmas Smorgasbord of "soused herring, fennel slices in lemon juice and oil, stuffed eggs, mushrooms à la grecque … cauliflower with pink mayonnaise, céleris rémoulade, rice salad, carrots râpées".[1046]

McNulty describes each course of food as part of the performance, adopting the rhetoric of the theatre (or a Fluxus event) throughout his article to portray the mystery and adventure of guests' dining experience at the farm. Miller plays with the idea of the traditional Christmas meal, mixing traditional elements with unusual ingredients. She stuffed the turkey with green rice or instead made vegetable purées: "carrots and parsnips or potatoes and turnips".[1047] Also, quoting Miller, McNulty writes that "to get away from that relentless red and green of Christmas", she coloured the brandy sauce blue.[1048] This articulates concepts similar to Maciunas' Christmas meals, which were produced as performative art and to be experienced through taste.

A similar experience exudes from Bettina McNulty's article, appearing two years earlier in American *Vogue* in 1973, when describing summer dining at the farm. Once again there is recognition of Miller's attention to atmospherics, where dining outside is reflected in the dishes created: "I like summer foods to be pretty – all the colors of flowers and decorated with

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[1043] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 342.
[1044] McNulty, "Christmas," 102.
[1045] McNulty, "Christmas," 102.
[1046] McNulty, "Christmas," 106.
[1047] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 346.
[1048] McNulty, "Christmas," 102, 106–7.

flowers".[1049] Dining becomes an explosion of colours and smells, where "Nasturtiums give brightness to a salad of Bibb lettuce … and borage and mustard blossoms decorate the crab crown".[1050] The importance of food and its presentation as part of the mise en scène to ensure the perfect dining experience, conveyed by Bettina McNulty in this article, reiterates Miller's own concept of dining as outlined in her article "Bachelor Entertaining". Both articles highlight that Miller's aesthetics of food and the artistry of a meal induce pleasurable dining experiences, drawing on fun, memory and desire.

Miller also experimented with the Fluxus idea of making one dish based around one ingredient. Maciunas' "monomeals" focussed on taste as an important method to distinguish food. Drinks such as "distilled coffee, tea, and tomato and prune juices", which were clear but retained their flavour, became part of a meal. Other meals involved "eggshells filled with cheese, brewed coffee, or noodles".[1051] Monomeals also included meals based around one ingredient, such as fish, ice cream, sweets, salad, tea, milk or pudding, and they would play with an individual's perception of food.[1052] Miller's contribution to a dinner celebrating a Man Ray retrospective at the New York Cultural Center in 1974 adopted the idea of a monomeal, but in terms of colour. Recreating Count and Countess Pecci-Blunt's Bal Blanc of 1930 (Miller and Man Ray, dressed in tennis whites, had attended and done the lighting and film show), the menu was designed around all-white dishes for one hundred special guests.[1053] John Loring, assistant to curator Mario Amaya, asked Miller to help him prepare the dishes. Courses included "*brandede de morue*" (cream, olive oil and codfish), veal with cauliflower, rice and endives, and vanilla ice cream with lychees.[1054]

Miller's "Chicken Upside-Down Cake" (appearing in Gold and Fizdale's article in 1974) also disrupted dessert conventions in a way that was similar to Maciunas' monomeals. For example, in monomeals, coffee and a savoury tomato-juice drink, both clear, would be presented in unexpected places during the meal: the coffee to start and the tomato juice to finish. A sweet made out of fish disrupted the conventional idea of a dessert.[1055] In Miller's recipe, she presents chicken in the form of a cake, associated with dessert. It not only looks deceptively like a cake, with a biscuit topping, but also mixes chicken with fruit. Visually, its design demonstrates Miller's artistry with food. This art is also evident in her dish entitled Penroses that required mushrooms to be cut and shaped in the style of roses.

[1049] Lee Miller, quoted in McNulty, "Happy Weekend," 71.
[1050] McNulty, "Happy Weekend," 71.
[1051] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 46.
[1052] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 46.
[1053] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 101.
[1054] Conekin, *In Fashion*, 206–7.
[1055] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 47.

CHICKEN UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

3 chicken breasts, boned, skinned, and cut in half lengthwise (6 pieces)
3 tablespoons each sweet butter and olive oil
1 teaspoon each salt, freshly ground pepper, and powdered thyme or rosemary
2 tablespoons brandy
1 small can mandarin orange sections (or 3 tablespoons canned pimiento strips)
⅓ cup dried currants or raisins
3 tablespoons Bar-le-Duc or other currant jelly for orange marmalade
⅓ cup finely chopped parsley or dill

Sauté chicken pieces in oil and butter for 10 minutes or until golden brown. Season with salt, pepper, thyme. Heat brandy, light it, pour it over chicken, tilting pan to reach all the chicken pieces till brandy burns down.

Arrange chicken in a pinwheel or other decorative pattern in a Teflon baking pan. Fill in the spaces with mandarin sections and currants. Coat chicken pieces with currant jelly or marmalade.

Make biscuit topping (recipe on page 160 in American *Vogue*, April 1974) roll out, and cover chicken, following procedures in the recipe above. Sprinkle with parsley before serving.

Guests, who regularly ate and dined at the farm, not just for celebratory meals at Christmas, participated in Miller's experimenting with ingredients that did not necessarily belong together, and which sometimes produced inedible results. Guests including Bernard Burrows and his wife, John and Ernestine Carter, Robin Fedden, Max Ernst and Dorothea Tanning, and John Craxton and John Golding, became regular visitors.[1056] Dishes presented before them appeared to be one thing but, on tasting, became something else. Only through a combination of seeing, smelling and tasting can food be discerned. Miller's Muddles Green Green Chicken (appearing in Gold and Fizdale's article) plays with visual perceptions of food; it is indicative of the neo-avant-garde's recognition of the creative possibilities of food to reignite sense perception. In an interview with Ninette Lyon in 1965, Miller recalls how her experimenting with ingredients brought this dish into existence:

> … three stalks of celery became three bunches, a sprinkling of parsley became a whole bunch, a few leeks became a bundle. I knew it was advisable to put a piece of bread in the cooking water of vegetables to keep down cooking odours. For some reason, I strained this bread along with everything else, celery, parsley, leeks, getting a thick green sauce, highly perfumed. This was the origin of my green chicken.[1057]

[1056] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 316–17.
[1057] Lyon, "Second Fame," 140.

Gold and Fizdale describe a similar occasion involving Cyril Connolly. After bemoaning the American diet of marshmallows and Coca-Cola, Miller presented him with a desert which "No one knew what it was".[1058] Only after her guests had consumed "every last mouthful, exclaiming how good it was" did Miller triumphantly announce they had just eaten marshmallow-cola ice cream.[1059] As the article clearly highlights, Miller delighted in causing shock and surprise amongst her guests and in de-familiarising their perceptive activity. These experiences initiated discussion and consequently strengthened friendships.

MARSHMALLOW-COLA ICE CREAM

24 marshmallows
1 can Coca-Cola (12 ounces)
Juice of 1 lemon
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons rum
1 cup heavy cream

Dissolve marshmallows in half the Coca-Cola over low heat. Add remaining cola, lemon juice, and salt. Whip together; freeze in ice cube tray. When frozen but still mushy, remove, add rum and cream, and whip again. Refreeze until solid, whipping once again after half an hour for a smooth ice cream. A Surrealist delight!

Miller's experiments with food did not always go down well with Antony and Roland Penrose. Antony Penrose observes, "Lee's own family were often less than sympathetic to her efforts. Roland Penrose would express his desire for English food, and Tony [Antony], on reaching an age when he could be involved in farm work, craved plain fare".[1060] As Miller explained to Roland, this was her work, similar to her photography and the articles she had written for *Vogue.*[1061] Miller's dedication to her cooking is evident when Burke writes about a time in the early 1960s when Princess Jeanne-Marie de Broglie came to visit. Miller was preparing a dish in honour of a Miró painting and, as Jeanne-Marie de Broglie stated, "She [Miller] had set her mind on the idea. We just had to wait".[1062]

[1058] Miller, quoted in Gold and Fizdale, "Most Unusual Recipes," 187.
[1059] Miller, quoted in Gold and Fizdale, "Most Unusual Recipes," 187.
[1060] Penrose, *Lives*, 198.
[1061] Miller, quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 201.
[1062] Princess Jeanne-Marie de Broglie, quoted in Burke, *Lee Miller*, 338.

Miller's dining experiences at the farm also promoted Fluxus aims to connect people "to a real world and to each other". Hannah Higgins expresses the importance of sensory experiences: through the process of sharing in the surprise and shock, conversation is initiated and, thus, social relations are formed.[1063] Through producing diverse primary experiences, Fluxus' works are, as Higgins identifies, experienced "*as* real" and subsequently strengthen an individual's sense of belonging to a place and group.[1064] For this reason, events that focussed on the performative aspects of art became important for Fluxus. These took the form of Happenings, events, action poetry, street performances, games and films, amongst others. They all encouraged the work of art as a site of interaction between artist and audience.

John Dewey also stresses the relationship between artist and audience. In *Art as Experience* (1934), he describes the artist as "the creator of experiences" and the audience as co-creators: "We become artists ourselves as … our own experience is re-orientated".[1065] Alison Knowles, a Fluxus artist working in the 1960s, included performance as part of her work. Working alongside Marcel Duchamp and John Cage, Knowles began producing scores: events that reworked everyday occurrences and actions into performances which incorporated music. Her most notable musical scores were *Make a Salad* and *Make a Soup*, originally performed at the Institute of Contemporary Art in 1962. In *Make a Salad*, Knowles presents the sounds of chopping and slicing in making a salad, to the sounds of live music, as a musical score. Once finished, she presents the salad to the audience.[1066] Knowles' *The Identical Lunch* (1967-73) also involved audience participation by inviting audience members to assemble and consume toast, butter, tuna fish, lettuce and soup or buttermilk.[1067]

Miller's own interaction with guests at the farm, who, in having to enter the farmhouse through the kitchen, usually found themselves part of Miller's culinary activities, is similar to Alison Knowles' Fluxus performances. As Miller writes in "Working Guests" and John Craxton remembers in an interview with Carolyn Burke (4 October 1999), guests congregated in the kitchen. Here Miller "share[d] the products of her imagination" and coerced everyone into getting involved: Miller stated, "it's fun to work in a group" and her guests, as Burke recognises, were "welcomed as sous-chefs".[1068] This was made even more exciting by being surrounded by Miller's collection of gadgets and the latest in kitchen design. With a fridge, dishwasher,

[1063] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 46.
[1064] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 59.
[1065] John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Milton Balch, 1934), 334.
[1066] Alison Knowles, "Performance: Make a Salad," at *Tate Modern*, from a performance recorded on Jun 20, 2008, 00:03:47, http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/video/performance-make-salad.
[1067] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 138-140.
[1068] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 338, 340.

microwave, fuel Aga and modern cooker (won from a cooking competition) situated around the table at the centre of the room, guests were not short of motivation or impetus.

Similar to Fluxus events, Miller aimed to impart some education and taught her guests to cook: "I want to get some cooking out of you", she exclaimed to John Golding, who was invited to create with the exotic ingredients he brought Miller from his trips.[1069] He recalls that some would partake in learning how to flute mushrooms whilst others were relegated into chopping and peeling.[1070] This can also be likened, in part, to Geoffrey Hendricks' staged two-day performance, which involved body-hair removal and labelling and Hendricks' eight-year-old son, Bracken. It was called *Unfinished Business: Education of the Boy Child* (3-4 December in a storefront at 3 Mercer Street, New York).

Dick Higgins taught Bracken a song whilst Geoffrey Hendricks and Scott Mendrick made instruments. It also involved the shaving of Scott Mendrick's beard and then getting a haircut from George Maciunas.[1071] In this respect, art and the everyday overlaps and is recontextualised as a product of social-democratic interactions. Katherine Reid, a friend of Miller's from the 1960s, reiterates a similar learning experience filled with the fun of a new experience and Miller's desire to change and improve lives: "I really feel one of the reasons she [Miller] taught me to cook was that she wanted to make my life more exciting".[1072] Or, as Becky Conekin observes about social relations at the farm, through Miller, the farm was "abuzz with people, food, games, drink, art and ideas".[1073]

6.4. Friends, Food and Eat Art

By providing Daniel Spoerri as an analogy, this section examines Miller's food art as impermanent art and the neo-avant-garde's explorations of art's temporality, popular culture and consumerism. Food, as an artistic medium, challenges the ways in which art is to be viewed and consumed.[1074] By emphasising the infinite possibilities of food, Spoerri's Eat Art reinforces the pop concepts of Claes Oldenburg, who opened *Store* in 1961, Manzoni's conceptual art involving bread and eggs, Warhol's pop art and Wayne Thiebaud and Erro's *Foodscape*. All appropriated food as the means to explore connections between the everyday and art and works on the avant-garde in different and unique ways.

[1069] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 338.
[1070] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 338.
[1071] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 102–3.
[1072] Conekin, "She Did the Cooking," 157.
[1073] Conekin, "She Did the Cooking," 158.
[1074] Novero, *Antidiets*, 256.

In attempting to redefine art, Daniel Spoerri's Eat Art, as part of nouveau réalisme, adopted everyday life and chance as subject matter through which to articulate contemporary living during the 1960s. Best known for his "trap pictures" (from 1961), which capture, fix and display a series of objects (such as the remains of a meal) to a table or board, Spoerri uses food as an important part of his artwork. Through this, he interrogates culinary and art institutions. For Spoerri, the fixing of reality by his trap pictures (also known as snare pictures) is also, he writes, a comment on "our constant confrontation with the final and ultimate fixation, death".[1075]

Spoerri presents food as a piece of kinetic art, which disintegrates by itself or by its consumer's teeth. Art happens, then, according to Roth, when free of the artist's hand.[1076] The artist can only attach his or her signature to the process; the work becomes art when it leaves the artist's hand. The artist's hands capture for a moment and "then puts on display only instances in the process of art's self-making".[1077] Likewise, Miller's food art can be read as an impermanent form of art. It, too, is subject to decay and disintegration by the consumer and articulates food and art as a site of temporality, subject to change and possibility. Although Alison Knowles' *Identical Lunch* is centred on people eating the same lunch, the focus is also on the private act of eating and consuming: an act that is not identical at all. Rather, as Higgins has identified, "it varies by place, by time, by distance between performer and the plate, and by taste".[1078]

In this instance, the mouth, in its ability to transform and as a tool with which to experience life, can be seen as a variation on the Dadaist simultaneist poem/collage, which articulates the unstructured, multi-layered excessive sensorial impulses of experienced reality. This focus on the senses expresses, as Georges Hugnet explains in his *Dictionnaire du Dadaism*, "an aesthetic expression to plurality instead of unity, to the plural instead of the singular and to the dynamism of modern times".[1079] Moreover, as a counter-aesthetic to the head and intellect, there is a shift "from an intellectual level of reception to the perceptive level of experience as a reaction to the observed conditions of modern life".[1080] Consistency, harmony and order no longer articulated the experiences of contemporary daily life.

Similarly, surrealists had adopted Dada's use of food metaphors, with Dali, in particular, appropriating Tzara's metaphor of the mouth in his penchant for the disgusting and decaying when representing food. Putrefaction featured heavily in Dali's paintings: *Blood is Sweeter than Honey* (1927), *Birth of Venus* (1927–1928), *The Great Masturbator* (1929) and *The Lugubrious*

[1075] Spoerri and Levy, *Coincidence as Master*, 62.
[1076] Dieter Roth, *Dieter Roth: Books and Multiples* Dirk Dobke ed. (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004), 15-18.
[1077] Novero, *Antidiets*, 177.
[1078] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 140.
[1079] Georges Hugnet, *Dictionnaire du Dadaïsme*, *1916–1922* (Paris: Jean Paul Simoën, 1976): 277–78.
[1080] Brill, *Shock*, 84.

Game (1929). As Robert Irwin observes in "The Disgusting Dinners of Salvador Dali" in the *Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery*, "Things drip, ooze or are smeared".[1081] Putridity, for Dali, represented a creative potential in which the "mouth is a stomach", a reference by Dali to not only Tzara but also, as Irwin observes, the works of Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim (1493–1541).[1082] Paracelsus, an alchemist, recognised the "efficacy of dead or rotten things to perform scientific and medical wonders".[1083] For Paracelsus, generation and putrefaction were one and the same, possessing great creative potential, which Dali harnesses in his work. As Irwin observes, for Dali, the mouth becomes the point of ingestion. The jaw provides the method by which we can become "aware of our own lust for life and the quality of reality, which is in fact only a giant reservoir of rot, of which our dining tables are cemeteries".[1084] Dali attacks out-dated tastes of the bourgeoisie, which have, for Dali, resulted in sterility. The mouth is subsequently used by Dali as a means of "knowing" the world and "food-as-a-tool-to-think-with".[1085]

Spoerri's *Gastronoptikum* (*c*.1971), a collection of objects associated with the kitchen and the culinary field, similarly emphasises the mouth as a medium through which to use experience as art. For Spoerri, these collections of curiosities, together with his restaurant (opened in 1970 in Dusseldorf) represent not only the everyday activities of eating and cooking but also the experimental possibilities "of production and transformation of art as well as life".[1086] Spoerri's restaurant, as part of the *Gastronoptikum*, presents a space in which art becomes a part of everyday life whilst testing sensibilities around what constitutes art. His menus offered meals that questioned gastronomic and aesthetic Western cultural taboos regarding taste. Horsemeat, snakes, ants and elephant meat were all on offer and diners could choose whether or not to taste these dishes. Diners could also choose to mix several dishes together and form their own menu.[1087] This also nuances consumerism and the effect of mass culture on choice in a different way from the historical avant-garde.

As I have argued in chapter four, Miller's acknowledgement of consumerism and its impact during the post-war period is evident in her relationship with *Vogue* and the subject matter of her articles for *Vogue.* Kim Tyler also provides evidence of Miller's engagement with consumerism

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[1081] Robert Irwin, "The Disgusting Dinners of Salvador Dali," in *Food in the Arts: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery*, ed. Harlan Walker (Totnes: Prospect Books, 1999), 105.
[1082] Dali, *Diary of a Genius* (London: Creation Books, 1994), 40.
[1083] Irwin, "Disgusting Dinners," 106.
[1084] Dali, *The Unspeakable Confessions of Salvador Dali*, Andre Parinaud ed. Harold J. Salemson trans. (New York: Morrow, 1976), 20.
[1085] Irwin, "Disgusting Dinners," 107.
[1086] Novero, *Antidiets*, 150.
[1087] Novero, *Antidiets*, 193.

in her article “A Talent or a Muse? Lee Miller at the Birth of Pop Art”.[1088] Tyler explores Miller’s involvement with Penrose’s *Horror and Wonder of the Human Head* exhibition, which was held at the ICA in September 1953 and included over two hundred works from the Palaeolithic period. In this, Tyler posits that it was Miller who “open[ed] the door by responding to popular culture as part of the function of an exhibition ostensibly about canonical art”.[1089] Assembled by Roland Penrose and designed by Richard and Terry Hamilton, the exhibition brought together photographs of works, rather than the works themselves, which reinforced the collage-like feel of the installation.

Kim Tyler situates this exhibition at the birth of pop art, with Miller’s insight and input as instrumental to the beginnings of the movement.[1090] Tyler advocates that the scrap books Miller compiled for the exhibition, consisting of commercial advertising and mass media images brought together, demonstrates Miller’s engagement with contemporary consumer culture. The series of illustrative scrap books contained images of heads, faces and advertisements for Gillette and Frères Lissac (a famous French optician), other representations of the human head from film and cinema, and images from popular culture. For Tyler, this was a precursor of pop art. She cites Roland Penrose’s acknowledgement that Miller’s contribution and inspiration was an influential force on the exhibition. This acknowledgement appeared in his separate pamphlet containing his catalogue essay: “To my wife, without whose help this essay could not have been written”.[1091] Miller’s contribution to the exhibition was extensive.

Tyler also explores the layout and installation of the exhibition. Miller’s display comprised popular advertising images of the head alongside other pictures, images and objects and text about the human head in art, which were pinned to the walls and vertical carousels in a random manner. This was seen as ground-breaking. This section of the exhibition was the subject of Robert Melville’s review of the exhibition in *Architectural Review* (1 May 1953):

> Miss Lee Miller added a group of popular images which included some astonishing recrudescences: a French poster for a hair-tinting preparation, a double-headed dark and fair image of a girl, formed a bizarre link with Byzantine triple-headed Christ, and the poster of a girl wearing a huge camera and staring through its lenses was an enormity which bought to mind a Zapotec funerary urn at the Tate, of a head burdened by immense decorations.[1092]

[1088] Tyler, “Talent or Muse?” 58.
[1089] Tyler, “Talent or Muse?” 57.
[1090] Tyler, “Talent or Muse?” 57–58.
[1091] Roland Penrose, preface to *Wonder and Horror of the Human Head* exhibition catalogue (London: Lund Humphries, 1953), 6. Published in conjunction with the exhibition of the same name, shown at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, London.
[1092] Robert Melville, “Exhibitions,” *Architectural Review* (May 1, 1953): 339.

As Melville identifies, Miller's section depicts popular images from the mass media alongside high art. Using images from mass culture, Miller's draws on her expertise as a model and photographer in the fashion world and demonstrates her understanding of the power of the commercial image. Patricia Allmer also notes the impact of Miller's section of the exhibition in terms of her photographic expertise. For Allmer, this contribution demonstrates Miller's "creative engagement at a moment where it seems secondary".[1093] This creativity, Allmer suggests, is demonstrated in Miller's collage arrangement in her scrap-book display. She observes that Miller's use of juxtaposition in these arrangements is illustrative of her previous photographic work.[1094]

More importantly, Miller's display demonstrates her engagement with contemporary consumer culture and its relationship with modern living. In addition to the innovation of the display, the layout, set up on a vertical carousel "like a shop display", reinforces this message.[1095] Although part of Hamilton's design for the whole display, there is acknowledgement of Miller's contribution to this: "The section of the exhibition devoted to representation of the head in Popular Art, Advertising, etc., has been planned by Lee Miller".[1096] The accepted approaches to the format of the art exhibition, both physical and intellectual, are ones that Hamilton and the Independent Group set out to challenge. Richard Hamilton and other key members of the Independent Group staying at the farm also establish Miller's continuing connection with the art world and contemporary ideas. This exhibition and Miller's involvement with it not only proved integral to the pop art movement, as Tyler argues, but also outlined similar foundations to Daniel Spoerri and his approach to his trap paintings.

Adopting the belief that art needs to be freed from the dead space of the museum, Spoerri's restaurant and his trap art demonstrate similar concerns regarding the way art is to be seen and displayed. Displays on the outside and inside walls of Spoerri's restaurant, which a diner viewed whilst waiting for a meal, drew connections between popular culture, art and the artist. Moreover, they posed questions about art's "digestibility, art's transformations and art as consumer's product".[1097] In the restaurant's ability to present a series of actions influenced by the everyday activities of artists and cooks, and as a meeting point for friends, the restaurant itself also becomes a living, breathing artwork, "a milieu-collage … in [a] constant process of

[1093] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 234.
[1094] Allmer, *Lee Miller: Beyond*, 234.
[1095] Tyler, "Talent or Muse?" 58.
[1096] Penrose, preface to *Wonder and Horror*, n.p.
[1097] Novero, *Antidiets*, 192.

renewal".[1098] Spoerri, in effect, explores how art is to be consumed and presents a space that contrasts with the dead space of the museum, which seeks to fix and segregate art.

Dorothée Brill also identifies the importance of synaesthetic perception within the neo-avant-garde and its interactive potential to achieve a "communal and communist spirit" integral to the movement's understanding of art.[1099] This identifies Ben Vautier's formulation, *Absolutely Anything Is Art*, as a key premise and is similar to the collaborative creative activities at Farley Farm.[1100] John Craxton's assessment of Miller's kitchen as a "heavenly place" full of constant activity and as "a breath of fresh air in a country where people tended, even *tried* to conform" presents a space of community and creativity.[1101] As I have argued in the previous chapter, Miller's article "Working Guests" which references friends helping out at the farm as "merry workers" in "a Soviet workers' propaganda film",[1102] is a forerunner to Fluxus' artistic vision that, as Higgins observes, produced art as a "psychologically, psychically, and intellectually pleasurable form of engagement between people".[1103] This engagement at the farm helped to spawn new ideas and artistic projects, strengthened friendships and contributed to an individual's sense of belonging. It also contributed to Miller's unusual food art. In short, the interaction that took place between individuals at Farley Farm was living art.

Roland Penrose's vision of a place in which to reshape a post-war society through art and social relations finds articulation through Miller's gastronomy. This is expressive of not only the post-war period embracing the everyday domestic as a means of transformation but also our understanding of food and the domestic today. Miller's culinary innovations and the poetics of dining can also be viewed as a precursor to modernist cuisine and chefs such as Heston Blumenthal, Thomas Keller and Ferran Adria, whose approaches to food incorporate sensory incongruity and multisensory dining.

6.5. Conclusion

Miller's cooking exploits continue to require further research. Although it is still seen to represent a period of little or no creative endeavours, Miller's post-war cooking at Farley Farm was an important part of her life. She viewed it as her work; therefore, this chapter has sought to present Miller as a professional individual who was continuing to develop her art. Miller's work demonstrates she was still aware of contemporaneous artistic practices involving the neo-avant-

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[1098] Heidi E. Violand-Hobi, *Daniel Spoerri* (Munich: Prestel, 1998), 58.
[1099] Brill, *Shock*, 137.
[1100] *Absolument n'importe quoi est art*, Oct 26 – Nov 8, 1962, Galerie A and Centre d'Art Total "Fluxus," Nice. Also quoted in Brill, *Shock*, 137.
[1101] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 338.
[1102] Miller, "Working Guests," 54.
[1103] Higgins, *Fluxus*, 61.

garde, especially Fluxus, with its American roots. By titling her article, "She Did the Cooking with the Same Spirit as the Photography", Becky Conekin also highlights Miller's professionalism and engagement with socio-cultural practices in art.

In 2013 an article appeared in the *New York Social Diary* by Charlie Scheips, who attended an evening dedicated to Miller's unique food art arranged by Carolin C. Young.[1104] Young is a writer, lecturer, editor and producer of events exploring the interconnections between food, art and culture and European history. She met Scheips whilst living in New York before moving to Paris in 2004. The party was held in the townhouse of her mother (Linda Graves Young) in the Boerum Hill section of Brooklyn. Scheips also knew Bettina McNulty, who Scheips writes "was a major source of the Lee Miller-inspired dinner … that night".[1105] They served Miller's Penroses, Persian Carpet and Gold Fish with Middle Eastern food, such as marinated grilled lamb, chicken skewers and grilled eggplant. Becky Conekin was invited, along with other members of the arts world, similar in some ways to the guests who would frequent Miller's weekend parties. Included in the article are pictures of Miller's dishes that were cooked. Scheips' experience of the evening is epitomised in her titling of the article "The Art Set: Art and Food", which reflects Young's presentation of Miller's dishes as art.

This party captures Miller's innovation, which continues to delight guests. Furthermore, if set alongside the culinary innovations of today's modernist cuisine and innovation by chefs, her dishes do not seem as bizarre. Rather, they seem to be in keeping with adopting food as expression and representation of art; namely, where chefs are seen as artists and food as theatre:

> Standing in Ferran Adria's kitchen at elBulli, it is easy to believe you have slipped down the rabbit hole. Adria, who would have been the caterer of choice for the Mad Hatter, invents food that provokes all the senses, including the sense of disbelief. His success is almost as amazing as his food.[1106]

As Nathan Myhrvold (author of *Modernist Cuisine*, 2011) observes, food is reassembled in ways never before imagined: "your intuition fails you completely, where food doesn't look like what it is".[1107]

Jerry Adler, in his article "Extreme Cuisine" in *Smithsonian* (2011) makes a similar observation about chefs today "whose leadership has, improbably devolved from artists, composers and

[1104] Scheips, "Art Set," http://www.newyorksocialdiary.com/art-set/2013/the-art-set-art-food. This evening was to celebrate Becky Conekin's new book *Lee Miller: In Fashion* (2013).
[1105] Scheips, "Art Set," http://www.newyorksocialdiary.com/art-set/2013/the-art-set-art-food.
[1106] A. Lubow, "A Laboratory of Taste," *New York Times*, Aug 10, 2003, accessed Jan 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/10/magazine/a-laboratory-of-taste.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm.
[1107] Nathan Myhrvold, quoted in Jerry Adler, "Extreme Cuisine," *Smithsonian* 42, no. 3 (Jun 2011): 61.

writers to the people who cut up chickens".[1108] Although his article is ironic in tone, Adler recognises the relationships between the cult of celebrity and cooking, and modern culinary approaches and the historical avant-garde movement. Adopting the discourse of an art critic, he compares a Mexican street-food snack of corn on the cob presented to him as "deconstructed, reimagined and assembled into an abstraction of flavors, a Cubist composition of brown butter powder freeze-dried corn kernels and powdered lime oil".[1109] Moreover, in calling Nathan Myhrvold's *Modernist Cuisine* "the movement's manifesto", Adler once more provides an analogy to the avant-garde.[1110] Whilst questioning the success and innovation of this new style of cooking, Adler provides a clear outline of the connections between chef and artist, and between innovation and artistic expression. This presents the continuing relevance and creativity of Miller, who engaged with contemporary concepts of art and food and today's inventive cuisine.

I explore Miller's continuing relevance in the following chapter. With the announcement in October 2015 that Antony Penrose's biography has been optioned as a film, I examine Miller's relationship with the cinema in her article for British *Vogue*, "What They See in the Cinema" (August 1956).

[1108] Adler, "Extreme Cuisine," 60.
[1109] Adler, "Extreme Cuisine," 60.
[1110] Adler, "Extreme Cuisine," 60.

7.
Revisioning Lee Miller: Her Life and Legacy

> It is difficult to think of another woman who has had such a far-reaching impact on a group of artists and their work … Miller's legacy is all the more compelling because she made her presence felt at a time when women were still struggling for equal rights. (Deborah Gribbon, 2003)[1111]

Two years after Bettina and Henry McNulty's article on Miller's cooking in UK *House and Garden*, Miller died at Farley Farm on 21 July 1977. She had cancer but treated this like any other adversity she experienced in her life. In July 1976 Tanja Ramm (Miller's friend) visited Miller at the farm on her way to London. It was then, over dinner, that Miller told her the news: "it's rotten luck – I've just been told I've got cancer".[1112] Antony Penrose writes in his biography of Miller that she had first seen her "end" two years earlier (before she was diagnosed with cancer) when visiting Erik and Mafy. Spending all night talking to Mafy, Miller reminisced about her life and, when boarding the London-bound jet the next morning, she "had made it quite clear that she did not expect to see either of them again".[1113] Whether Miller knew what was to come or not, the decline was swift. Antony Penrose writes that the last time Miller was able to come downstairs was on the Queen's silver jubilee on 7 June 1977. Miller had many visitors and always "rall[ied] herself to greet them and make a few wisecracks". She faced cancer with a similar courage to what had pushed her to contest boundaries throughout her life.

7.1. Miller on Film

On 14 October 2015 it was announced that Kate Winslet has been proposed to play Lee Miller in a film based on Antony Penrose's biography. This is a fitting celebration of Miller's life and work, whose relationship with the camera, in one shape or another, influenced her art. An exploration of Miller's last article, "What They See in the Cinema", written for British *Vogue* in August 1956 is, therefore, an appropriate way to end my thesis before my final evaluation in the concluding chapter.[1114] The article is a celebration of cinema, inclusive of all genres, in which Miller extols its diversity and its adventurous nature. Reading the article through a socio-cultural and socio-political lens, I suggest that it is indicative of Miller's continuing engagement with

[1111] Deborah Gribbon, quoted in, "Muse, Model, and Artist-The Iconic Influence of Lee Miller," Press release, *About the Getty*, Jan 24, 2003, accessed Mar 15, 2017, http://www.getty.edu/news/press/exhibit/sur_muse.html.
[1112] Miller, quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 210–11.
[1113] Miller, quoted in Penrose, *Lives*, 211.
[1114] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 210.

contemporary debates surrounding the film industry during the 1950s and reinforces her continuing creativity and diversity as an artist.

Miller is already the subject of three biographical documentaries: *The Lives of Lee Miller* (1985) directed by Robin Lough and appearing on Channel 4, *Lee Miller: Through the Mirror* (1995) by writer-director Sylvain Roumette and *Lee Miller: A Crazy Way of Seeing* (2001) directed by Sarah Aspinall and appearing on BBC Two.[1115] Winslet's proposed agreement to play Miller will intentionally reach an even broader audience. Hopscotch Features, the company involved with *Saving Mr Banks* (2013) and *The Water Diviner* (2015), have optioned the film. Antony Penrose, in an interview with the *Guardian*, has welcomed the news, stating "She [Winslet] is gritty, she's funny, she's tender and she's tough". He continued, "if it's true I cannot think of anyone better".[1116] Winslet, having played some strong female leads and campaigned against female celebrities being airbrushed in magazines, does indeed seem a good choice to portray Miller on film.

Interviewed in an article about her proposed role as Miller, Winslet spoke of her views on women and airbrushing. This is a campaign that Winslet feels strongly about:

> I think young girls, they want to be pretty, they want to feel loved and they look at images of people who are often not necessarily curvy or healthy – these kind of womanly things that I believe in – and it just bothers me that they aspire to look like that.[1117]

Urging young women to support other women, Winslet, through her views about women and their exposure to criticism by the media based on their looks, engages with contemporary socio-cultural issues in a similar way to Miller.[1118] It is hoped that this approach, if applied to her depiction of Miller, will bring another dimension to Miller's story: a story that goes beyond the muse and focusses on her art.

[1115] *The Lives of Lee Miller*, 58 minutes, aired on Channel Four, 1985. Directed by Robin Lough and written by Jonathan Mantle (Penrose Film Productions, documentary, 1985). DVD. *Lee Miller: Through the Mirror*, 55 minutes. Directed by Sylvian Roumette and written by Ruby Liang (Artemis Film, La Sept, Terra Luna films, 1995), video. *Lee Miller: A Crazy way of Seeing*, 60 minutes, aired on BBC Two, 2001. Directed by Sarah Aspinall (Producer Andrew Lockyer, documentary, 2001), DVD.

[1116] Antony Penrose, quoted in Mark Brown, "Son of WWII Photographer Lee Miller Welcomes Kate Winslet Biopic Role," *Guardian*, Oct 14, 2015, accessed Nov 11, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2015/oct/14/son-lee-miller-second-world-war-photographer-welcomes-kate-winslet-biopic-role.

[1117] Kate Winslet, quoted in Nancy Groves, "Kate Winslet in Frame to Play Photographer Lee Miller in Biopic," *Guardian*, Oct 14, 2015, accessed Nov 15, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/oct/14/kate-winslet-in-frame-to-play-photographer-lee-miller-in-biopic.

[1118] Kate Winslet, quoted in Nigel M. Smith, "Kate Winslet: It's Sad More Young Women Don't Complement Each Other," *Guardian*, Oct 7, 2015, accessed Nov 15, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/oct/07/kate-winslet-new-york-film-festival-younger-generation-women.

This art, I argue, is evident in her article ("What They See in the Cinema"), which is beautifully written and full of figurative language and passion. Introduced by *Vogue* as someone who has worked "with Cocteau in his early days … and [was]… a photographer and correspondent on *Vogue*'s staff", the magazine emphasises Miller's "professional" status concerning film.[1119] Miller's status is heightened further by being included alongside other writers such as Iris Murdoch, G.W. Stonier and Angus Wilson writing about their thoughts on the cinema. Only Mark Haworth-Booth in *The Art of Lee Miller* (2007) has recognised the art of this piece, stating "It is one of her finest articles". Reprinting the essay in full at the end of his book, he writes, is a "way of paying homage to an aspect of the art of Lee Miller ... This essay shows the verve of her writing".[1120] Whilst this addresses the article's lack of inclusion by any academic study, the piece is positioned at the back of his book as an appendix and without any examination, which still encourages its marginalisation. As Haworth-Booth rightly summarises, the article is indicative of Miller's "tremendous zest for life in all its variety", and her continuing engagement with contemporary art and its impact on culture.[1121]

I offer several readings of this article, in which Miller's discussion of cinema supports the British film industry during a decade that witnessed the introduction of television. She extols the art of the director and conveys her love of various films seen on the big screen to offset, as Nichols Drake observes (1987), the initial detrimental effect television had on cinema.[1122] In addition, I correlate Miller's debate on cinema with contemporary events in the American film industry. This sees Miller interacting with American politics, which witnessed McCarthyism (a campaign carried out by Senator Joseph McCarthy against alleged communists without evidence) dictating the types of films Hollywood could produce. With her American connections and political views, Miller's nuanced discussion encouraging variety and innovation in film is not surprising, especially after articulating the virtues of democratic socialism in her article "Working Guests" (1953). The inclusion of strong female leads in her article further continues her negotiation of socio-political expectations of women and their cinematic representations.

7.2. "What They See in the Cinema": Art, Auteurism and Autonomy

Opening her piece with her admiration of "Sarah Bernhardt … playing 'the greatest passages from her greatest roles'", which left her in a "whooping joyful, frenzy", Miller explains how her passion for the arts began at an early age.[1123] Within the same paragraph, reference is made to

[1119] Miller, "What They See in the Cinema," 46.
[1120] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 210.
[1121] Haworth-Booth, *Art of Lee Miller*, 210.
[1122] Drake, *Fifties in Vogue*, 101.
[1123] Miller, "What They See in the Cinema," 46.

film and the cinematographer who is able to convey the thrill of film. She discusses a range of films, from big Hollywood productions to melodramas and art cinema. She also articulates her personal experience of being involved in a film during Jean Cocteau's making of *The Blood of a Poet* (1930), in which she played a statue. Whatever Miller thought about her role as a mute statue is not evidenced in her article but, written years later, it focusses on the art of cinema. Her artistry is evidenced in her writing. Articulating her personal likes about film and celebrating contemporary films of the decade, her piece challenges the consensus that films in the 1950s were lacking innovation and powerful contemporary social messages.

Nicholas Drake in *The Fifties in Vogue* (1987) recognises the "low ebb" in which the British film industry found itself in the decade after the war. Having to compete with television, The Ealing Studios and Rank Organisation found it difficult to keep audiences, with Ealing Studios being sold to television in 1956.[1124] Moreover, as Roy Stafford in the *Journal of Popular British Cinema* observes, British cinema of the 1950s was considered to be "timid", "complacent", "safe" and "dim"; thus, the decade was known as the "doldrums era".[1125] Ian Mackillop and Neil Sinyard in their chapter "Celebrating British Cinema of the 1950s" make similar observations in their reappraisal of films in the immediate decade after the war. However, their revisionist reading challenges the consensus that the 1950s was "perhaps the most derided decade in British film industry" in which a lack of originality came to define national cinema.[1126] Their study rejects the argument that all post-war film was based on nostalgia. This nostalgic vision celebrated the creativity of films from previous decades when measured against 1950s films released at the cinema. By examining pictorial skill, their study celebrates British film.

This argument echoes Miller's own assertion in her article that there is "poetry in every motion picture", in "the melodramas", the "Cliff-hangers, tear-jerkers, and not just the big epics".[1127] Miller also addresses contemporaneous criticism that recognised a tendency within the film industry to produce films that were nostalgic. By referencing "old film[s]" of the past which caused "tears of confusion and embarrassment, not nostalgia", Miller highlights aspects of films beyond nostalgic recollections.[1128] By exploring the achievements of post-war cinema, her article disputes the consensus that nothing contentious or creative was emerging in the 1950s. This polemic is a clear indication of her support of contemporary films of the era. Miller's love of cinema emanates through her writing; it is a celebration of not only British film but also film as

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[1124] Drake, *Fifties in Vogue*, 101.
[1125] Roy Stafford, '"What's showing at the Gaumont?" Rethinking the Study of British Cinema in the 1950s," in *Journal of Popular British Cinema*, ed. James Chapman and Christine Geraghty (Wiltshire: Flicks Books, 2001), 95-96. Stafford includes a variety of quotations representing the views of British cinema from the 1950s.
[1126] Mackillop and Sinyard, *British Cinema*, 2.
[1127] Miller, "What They See," 46.
[1128] Miller, "What They See," 46.

an art. Placing art as the foundation for her text, she praises the visual success of contemporaneous films and their directors during the 1950s.

Miller's aesthetic approach to film celebrates the "director extraordinaire", whose vision is likened to that of a poet. By extolling the "flash of poetry in every motion picture … [in] the way an arm moves, a shadow falls, or some dust settles", Miller engages with the changes happening within European film during the same decade and recognises the importance of the director.[1129] Erik Hedling in his paper "Lindsey Anderson: *Sequence* and the Rise of Auteurism in 1950s Britain" recognises the importance of the auteur in developing British film and art cinema. Lindsey Anderson (editor of the journal *Sequence* and a successful director of British and American films) was, as Hedling argues, instrumental in promoting "influential auteurist philosophy of the 1950s".[1130] In his 1947 article "Angels of Approach", Anderson outlines a model for "art cinema aesthetics" in which each film's success is judged "by its own standards, and not by our preconceptions".[1131] He also calls for the director's prerogative to shape his work according to artistic patterns.[1132]

Anderson references Alexandre Astruc's *camera stylo* essay of 1948 to highlight the creativity of the director. Astruc writes about the camera as a pen and the film director handling the pen/camera as an artist expressing a personal vision in order to create a work of art.[1133] Directors Alfred Hitchcock, John Ford and Vincente Minnelli epitomised Astruc's articulation of the auteur and became popular names, as in designing, editing and writing, they articulated their own vision when interpreting scripts. The cult of the film director subsequently began to take hold in the 1950s, with film directors being presented as artists in their own right.[1134] Miller's inclusion in her article of her own experience with director Jean Cocteau in his film *Blood of a Poet* articulates her support of the director who, through artistic skills, transforms living environments.[1135] Summarising Cocteau's art, Miller writes: "He electrified everyone who had anything to do with the film".[1136] For Miller, film is a form of art that generates responses that

[1129] Miller, "What They See," 46.
[1130] Erik Hedling, "Lindsay Anderson: *Sequence* and the Rise of Auteurism," in Mackillop and Sinyard, *British Cinema*, 23–35 (25).
[1131] Hedling, "Rise of Auteurism," 26.
[1132] Hedling, "Rise of Auteurism," 27.
[1133] Alexandre Astruc, "camera stylo," 588.
[1134] Hedling, "Rise of Auteurism," 24.
[1135] In 1949 Miller photographed Lindsey Anderson with Gavin Lambert and Peter Ericsson (the editors of "Sequence"). The image appeared in British *Vogue* (June 1949, page 74) in an article entitled "London Spotlight" by Siriol Hugh-Jones. It was captioned as "The Editors of "Sequence."' In 1944 Miller also photographed Humphrey Jennings, a documentary filmmaker, whose films include *London Can take It!* (1940), *Fires Were Started* (1943), *Diary for Timothy* (1945) and *The True Story of Lili Marlene* (1944). Miller photographed Jennings whilst he was directing *The True Story of Lili Marlene* and her photograph appeared in British *Vogue* in April 1944, page 53. It accompanied an article entitled "The True Story of Lili Marlene" by Leslie Blanch. These images demonstrate Miller's continuing engagement with, and support of, film, cinema and innovative directors.
[1136] Burke, *Lee Miller*, 104.

are similar to the experience of reading a poem, gazing at a work of art or reading a piece of writing. Moreover, as Hedling observes, Jean Cocteau was "canonized" in the 1950s. Miller's piece, recounting her experience of working with Cocteau, similarly acknowledges his brilliance and artistic skill.

Whilst recognising a director's autonomy and engaging in the debates surrounding "cinematic authorship", the inclusion of Cocteau, in this instance, could also address those critics who failed to recognise cinematic film as forms of art.[1137] Cocteau's film is now, as Carolyn Burke suggests "a classic often seen in film courses… [and] an example of creative cinema…".[1138] This would certainly reinforce Miller's own thoughts in her article about art cinema, and film as part of popular culture. Miller's recognition of the relationship between popular culture and art is evident in her contribution to Roland Penrose's *Wonder and Horror of the Human Head* exhibition (1953) and later her food art. Moreover, by opening her piece with the first theatrical performance she attended as a young girl, and celebrating the "Motion Picture" in the same paragraph, Miller conveys her view that cinema and theatre have an interconnected relationship.[1139] This engages with contemporary debates of the time that viewed film as an inferior medium when compared to theatre.

As, Stephen Lacy observes, in his chapter, ('Too theatrical by half? *The Admirable Crichton* and *Look Back in Anger'*), the relationship between theatre and cinema was not an equal one.[1140] He writes, "Theatre occupied a higher cultural status than film, lending it a credibility and legitimacy that was needed by a medium conscious of its inferior status".[1141] Miller's inclusion of Cocteau's film, challenges these socio-cultural expectations of film.[1142] As a photographer Miller would have been aware of similar debates surrounding photography in the period between the wars. Her experimentation of techniques in her images learnt from Man Ray and then adopting similar practices to the avant-garde movement, Group *f*.64 in the 1930's, proved photography could indeed be art.

Miller's promotion of cinema in all its forms, art and popular, is reinforced by her referencing films such as *Reap the Wind* (1942) and the Soviet film of *Othello* (1955) side by side.[1143] By placing a contemporary Soviet film alongside an American one, Miller recognises the importance of variety in film. With McCarthyism prevalent in America, conveying her support

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[1137] Mackillop and Sinyard, *British Cinema*, 3.
[1138] Burke, *Lee Miller*, p.104.
[1139] Miller, "What They See," 46.
[1140] Stephen Lacey, "Too Theatrical by Half? *The Admirable Crichton* and *Look Back in Anger*," in Mackillop and Sinyard, *British Cinema*, 157
[1141] Lacey, 'Too theatrical by half?" 157.
[1142] Burke, *Lee Miller*, p.104.
[1143] Miller, "What They See," 46.

of both films may also be a reference to the ban Hollywood experienced during the immediate post-war decade. If so, Miller's support of "all" films and all genres can certainly be read as a political statement against the Un-American Activities Committee hearings dictating the types of film being made. Having their creativity curbed with any social criticism inhibited, Hollywood subsequently had to produce films that were non-controversial such as the Biblical and historical epic. Miller similarly references Biblical epics in her piece such as "*The Ten Commandments*", recognising their success, but she also highlights the need for "absurdities", "ambiguity, inaccuracy and all", to challenge the single narrative of the Biblical and historical epic.[1144]

With Miller's American connection, her need to express her views on McCarthyism is not surprising. Her socialist views were no secret, as articulated in her article "Working Guests" and the fact that she had communist friends, such as Sicilian painter Renato Guttuso and the soviet spy Wilfred MacCarthy. In 1941 MI5 opened a file on her after having received a tip-off that she was "a strong communist".[1145] Although there was no evidence that she had engaged in any communist political activity, her activities at Farley Farm were monitored until 1956.[1146] Moreover, Ed Murrow, who had written the foreword to Miller's *Grim Glory* (1941) and about whom Miller had written an article in *Vogue* ("Citizens of the World – Ed Murrow") in August 1944, was an influential opponent of McCarthyism and a friend of Miller.

As a well-known CBS newscaster and analyst, Murrow produced an episode of a series, *See It Now*, which aired on 20 October 1953 and explored the case of a reserve Air Force lieutenant who was accused of associating with communists. He also aired another episode of *See It Now* on 9 March 1954, which attacked Joseph McCarthy himself.[1147] For Miller to feel passionately about these issues and want to articulate this in an article is, therefore, not surprising and acknowledges her intelligence and her engagement with the politics of her native country.

Consequently, read from a socio-political perspective, the use of the words "serious" and "straight-faced" when referencing art students watching old films could also contain other connotations involving the Un-American Activities Committee and its restrictions on American cinema. When referencing the films from her childhood, Miller's mention of "Lina Cavallieri …

[1144] Miller, "What They See," 46.
[1145] Sanchia Berg, "The Lee Miller File," *Today Programme*, BBC Radio 4, Mar 3, 2009, accessed Jan 1, 2017, http://news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid_7919000/7919211.stm.
[1146] Berg, "Lee Miller File," http://news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid_7919000/7919211.stm.. Also see Joanna Moorhead, "Max Ernst? He's out picking tomatoes," *Guardian*, Mar 4, 2009, accessed Jan 1, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2009/mar/04/nationalarchives-surveillance. Moorhead writes that Miller's colleagues at *Vogue* were questioned. Harry Yoxall, *Vogue*'s managing director, told MI5 agents that Miller must have been a Communist because she was "eccentric and indulges in queer foods and queer clothes".
[1147] "See It Now: The Case of Lt. Milo Radulovich," Season 3, episode 1, (Columbia Broadcasting CBS, documentary for television, Oct 20, 1953), 00:30:00. "See It Now: A Report on Senator Joseph R. McCarthy," Mar 9, 1954, 00:25:50, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-YOIueFbG4g.

org[ing] her way through history" can also be read as a metaphor for freedom and imagination, a commodity much needed by Hollywood from 1950 to 1956.[1148] Living under the strict rule of nuns in a Roman Catholic orphanage, Lina Cavallieri ran away with a touring theatre group and became a successful opera singer and actress. Miller's endorsement of films outside the parameters endorsed for Hollywood is obvious in her incorporation of a variety of types of films in her article: "boy-meets-girl skirmishes … the improbable dialogue of the bright comedies" and films with "martyrs, chorus girls, heroes and crooks".[1149] Moreover, it highlights Miller's view that creativity is essential in cinema and needs to continue in new and innovative films.

Throughout her article, Miller's command of figurative language captures not only the beauty of cinema but also her own artistry and vision. It is indulgent and conveys her passion for film, its magnificence, and drama depicted on the big screen. Her repetition of "I love…" in sentence openings emphasises her joy of cinematic film in its "panoramic beauty" and its ability to awe, educate and entertain. Continuing to eulogise the splendour of film, she writes, "Mind, body and soul … [are] probed … and presented to extend our experience", a premise that is articulated in her writing.[1150] By recognising the importance of "visual literature" as an art, Miller also demonstrates her modern engagement with new technologies that allow audiences to experience "our shared world" through film.[1151] She is enticed by the possibility of "explor[ing] underwater worlds of Esther Williams" in Williams' "aqua-musicals".[1152] She continues, arguing that "invad[ing] the skies as Everest climbers … watch[ing] a bud unfold, [or] even leeches feeding on Miss K. Hepburn's thighs" can be experienced "bigger and better" in "black and white" or "full colour" at the cinema.[1153]

Miller's reference to Katherine Hepburn in *The African Queen* (1951), a British film adapted from a book by C.S. Forester (1935), when describing the marvel of cinema also highlights her support of strong women. Playing Rose Sayer, a British missionary in Africa at the outbreak of the First World War, Katherine Hepburn represents a woman of action. When faced with adversity, Rose demonstrates a strength and determination of will similar to that of her male counterpart, Charlie Allnut, played by Humphrey Bogart. In some aspects, her defiance when captured and interrogated by the Germans on the *Königin Luise* (a German gunboat) is stronger than Charlie's: when he is in a similar situation and believes Rose to be dead, he does not defend himself against accusations of spying.

[1148] Miller, "What They See," 46.
[1149] Miller, "What They See," 46.
[1150] Miller, "What They See," 46.
[1151] Miller, "What They See," 46.
[1152] Miller, "What They See," 46.
[1153] Miller, "What They See," 46.

Moreover, after experiencing life-threatening rapids, Rose's response is one of excitement and a wish to repeat the dangerous feat. Verbally, she engages with the politics of the First World War and ultimately persuades Charlie to get involved and destroy the German gunboat. In contrast, his only goal when faced with adversity is to flee and escape safely. References to other women (fictitious and real) are also included in the article; for example, Greta Garbo, Joan of Arc and Esther Williams, a successful and artistic woman. In total, Miller includes seven women in her piece, endorsing strong and successful women.

Writing this article in 1956, during a decade when female leads predominantly depended on "a child-like appeal", it is not surprising that Miller references active, independent leads.[1154] As Nicholas Drake observes, 1950s heroines focussed on types: "the doe-eyed" Leslie Caron and Audrey Hepburn, "the provocative babytalk of a succession of curvaceous blondes" or the "fragile perfection" of Grace Kelly.[1155] The cult of the baby blonde was epitomised by Marilyn Monroe in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953) and *The Seven Year Itch* (1955) and by Carroll Baker in her role as the provocative thumb-sucking child in Tennessee Williams' *Baby Doll* (1956).[1156] Whilst Drake is right in some respects, it must also be remembered that Grace Kelly offered women an image of glamour and elegance that was much desired after the constraints of rationing and austerity. In *Rear Window* (1954) and *To Catch a Thief* (1955), her style characterised chic and negotiated the many contradicting narratives that women had to navigate during the 1950s.

Although 1950s heroines depicted what Carol Dyhouse refers to in *Glamour: Women, History, Feminism* as "fairytale fashion" that enshrined narratives of "submissive patterns of behaviour", the characters Grace Kelly portrayed also conveyed spirited, independent and intelligent women.[1157] Prepared to face danger or become an accomplice to Cary Grant's character, John Robie, in *To Catch a Thief*, Frances Stevens is not fooled into believing he is an American industrialist. Realising he is a thief, she dangles her jewels before him in order to expose him. Miller's choice of strong female leads articulates and reinforces her own belief that socio-cultural roles can be negotiated and that cinema can allow an individual to experience possibilities beyond their lived experience.

[1154] Drake, *Fifties in Vogue*, 100–101.
[1155] Drake, *Fifties in Vogue*, 100–101.
[1156] Drake, *Fifties in Vogue*, 100-101.
[1157] Dyhouse, *Glamour*, 93.

7.3. Conclusion

It is fitting that in the decade when Miller died, the women's movement and second-wave feminism made revisioning women's social positions a mainstream discourse.[1158] Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch* (1970) and Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1970) had set out feminist goals for equality.[1159] Rethinking society from the perspective of feminist theory, the main issues of negotiation were equal pay for equal work, a nationwide abortion reform, promoting political participation, rethinking women's roles in nuclear family households and round-the-clock state-supported childcare to free mothers from domestic servitude.

"What They See in the Cinema" demonstrates a similar concern with women's social position and their representation in film whilst conveying a woman's ability to engage in political discourse. In this, Miller continues her encouragement of women as strong and autonomous agents, as expressed in her articles on domesticity. Moreover, the articles written about Miller by Ninette Lyon, Gold and Fizdale, and Henry and Bettina McNulty also situate her within this debate. Reinscribing her food as her art or her work, they reinforce Miller's continuing efforts to promote women's potential. Consequently, the post-war articles written by and about Miller help to frame the new discourse on women's roles that emerged in the 1960s and developed throughout the following decades. In addition to emphasising the significance of Miller's political awareness concerning the debates of her time and her efforts to modify women's social positions, this new discourse has provided new possibilities for re-examining Miller's life and work, which I evaluate in my concluding chapter.

[1158] Also fitting is that in the year when Miller died, another strong female lead hit the big screen in the form of Princess Leia (played by the late Carrie Fisher). As Fisher reflects in her memoir *The Princess Diarist* (London: Transworld, 2016), Leia was "a heroine for our time". Fisher could not be more right: her iconic status as Leia, especially in the wake of her death (Dec 27, 2016), continues to have meaning. Women dressed as Princess Leia and carrying placards that read "A Woman's Place is in the Resistance" in the Women's March on Saturday Jan 21, 2017 evidences her continuing relevance for many women in the twenty-first century. Leia, observed Fisher, was a figure who made both men and women "stop and ponder something actually important" (231). The same can be said of Miller and her work.

[1159] Friedan, *Feminine Mystique.* Germaine Greer, *The Female Eunuch* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1971). Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics* (Illinois: University of Illinois, 1970).

8.
Lee Miller:
A Reconsideration

> You have to be a little patient if you're an artist. People don't always get you the first time. (Kate Millett, 1988)[1160]

In the course of writing this thesis I have found Miller to be an inspiration due to her courage, her humour and her ability to challenge conventional expectations of women in the arts and in the home. She used the opportunities that her beauty gave her. She also used her intellect and abilities to challenge the image in which she could be (and sometimes was) trapped. Her work is the important thing here. Whilst not disputing the liberation that "surrealism" offered, I argue that this too became imprisoning. This was not least because Miller became (for a while) Roland Penrose's "muse". Whilst the difficulties of her life at Farley Farm have remained marginal to my thesis, it is important to register that the Penrose estate has controlled, and still controls, not only access to the material of her life but also the narrative of her existence.

My work began with an interest in British surrealism in the post-war period. My visit to Farley Farm in 2012 was an essential starting point. The visit is an invitation into the world of Antony Penrose and his family history. I was intrigued by how Miller, as such a key figure in twentieth-century art and politics, negotiated that domestic space. I was particularly interested in how her recipes could represent that negotiation. My requests to access these were refused.[1161] This made me wonder about the reasons why access to archives (something as small as a recipe) can be so significant, so important that a request from a student is refused.

The refusal of my request to access any of Miller's recipes has meant that I have examined her work through a range of contexts beyond the scope of the family and dominant discourses influencing key moments and periods in Miller's life. With an initial focus on Miller's post-war work and life, the scope of my project widened (during the course of my research) to incorporate the extent of her diversity. Her work was an inevitable consequence of the specificities of the culture in which she lived, but her relevance is not restricted to the time in which she worked. Although she was very much a product of her time, her significance still resonates today as a woman in a predominantly masculine sphere.

[1160] Kate Millet, quoted in Merle Hoffman, "Interview with Kate Millett: Breaking the Barriers," *On The Issues Magazine*, vol. 10, 1988, accessed Mar 15, 2017, http://www.ontheissuesmagazine.com/1988vol10/vol10_1988_4.php.

[1161] The response read the following: "The Lee Miller Archives and associated parties are actually currently working on a Lee Miller book that directly conflicts with your project and so unfortunately at this time cannot help with your project or grant access to visit the archives to view original recipes/ other documents." (Aug 18, 2015).

8.1. Reflections

Miller's popularity continues to grow, with the estate promoting current exhibitions and tours of the farm. These, along with the fact that her work is being exhibited nationally and internationally, evidence her contemporary relevance. *Sussex Modernism: Retreat and Rebellion* at Two Temple Place in Sussex explores the homes of local artists, including Roland Penrose and Lee Miller at Farley Farm (28 January – 23 April 2017), and a Picasso exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in London (*Picasso Portraits*, 6 October 2016 – 5 February 2017) is exhibiting Picasso's portrait of Miller and one of Nusch Éluard. Internationally, nine pieces of Miller's work are being lent to the Stadel museum in Frankfurt, Germany for an exhibition entitled *Battle of the Sexes: Franz von Stuck to Frida Kahlo* (23 November 2016 – 19 March 2017). This exhibition explores concepts of male and female as active/passive, rational/emotional and cultural/natural in modern art from the mid-nineteenth century to the end of the Second World War. Moreover, the Lee Miller website presents a multitude of photographic images, the breadth of which evidences Miller's creativity.

That said, the estate, in its private tours, frames its presentation of Miller as a woman who is synonymous with surrealism. This context, whilst useful in examining Miller's early influences, limits any understanding of Miller as an artist: then as now. This is something I have addressed throughout each chapter by positioning her work as the starting point and focus of any examination. I believe that Miller's landscape and social photography is vital to understanding her development as an artist and a photographer. The range of Miller's images engaging with people signifies her interaction with contemporary culture and the beginnings of her social documentary work, which, for many critics, started with her work as a war photographer almost a decade later.

By placing her Egypt and Balkan images in new and different contexts – socio-historical and economic ones – I have shown that Miller's work is more than just surrealist representation. In considering the avant-garde movement of Group *f*.64 and Miller's engagement with the movement's goals, I have shown how her work began to break free from dominant narratives. Whilst Miller was living in Egypt and travelling around the Balkans (1934–1939), her approach to local culture articulated similar concerns to those of other contemporary photographers belonging to Group *f*.64: Dorothea Lange and Walker Evans. By providing these artists and Ansel Adams' images as a comparison, I have highlighted, through an original approach, the importance of Miller's skill as a photographer during this period and shown that her social focus continued during her coverage of the Blitz and the liberation of Europe. This new reading further emphasises the importance of Miller's 1930s photography and its impact on the rest of her career

as a photojournalist. Without Miller's Egyptian and Balkan experiences, which inspired her to continue her photography, it is questionable whether she (as she herself stated) would ever have picked up a camera again after having had her Manhattan studio (1932 to 1934) and having grown tired of the art. Therefore, this is a significant period in Miller's oeuvre: one that I have identified was influential to the rest of her work.

Miller's engagement with similar foci and social issues during the war has highlighted her ability to capture what Henri Cartier-Bresson defines as "the decisive moment". For Miller, I believe this meant documenting the effects of war on the nation and, in particular, women's contribution to the war effort. Miller's passion for independence and her support of other women's autonomy were important to her. This is a relationship that I have explored throughout this thesis by examining Miller's wartime work and providing an original analysis of her post-war articles for *Vogue*, her personal negotiation of the role of hostess at the farm and her own cooking as artistic practice. "What They See in the Cinema" (August 1956), her article on film, which until now has not been analysed in any detail, also references strong female characters. Miller's relationship with women, however (excluding Hilary Roberts' exhibition at the Imperial War Museum), has thus far been overlooked.

Instead, any research on Miller has focussed on her relationships with men. Hilary Roberts notes that "Miller could be hypercritical of women where she felt they were not doing full justice to themselves or their gender" but "she was enormously respectful to women she respected".[1162] This passion and drive has been evident in her work and her enduring friendship with Audrey Withers (Miller's editor). As Alex Beggs writes in *Vanity Fair* (the magazine that in 1934 had identified Miller as one of the seven "most distinguished living photographers" of that year), "Don't Let History Forget This Incredible Female World War II Photographer".[1163] By exploring her work for *Vogue* in chapter two, which combined fashion, politics, liberation and eyewitness accounts, I have contributed to Miller's recognition as a successful war time photographer and emphasised Miller's significance to the magazine during the war. With the support of Audrey Withers, who included Miller's photo-documents of women's war effort and her coverage of the liberation of Europe, the magazine was able to interact with socio-political debates of the day. Miller's photo-essays helped women to negotiate their identity and fashion during a time of socio-economic constraints and encouraged women to affirm their femininity when faced with the threat of masculinisation posed by uniform and the practicality of utility clothing.

[1162] Hilary Roberts, quoted in Brown, "Son of WWII Photographer," https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2015/oct/14/son-lee-miller-second-world-war-photographer-welcomes-kate-winslet-biopic-role.

[1163] Alex Beggs, "The Indestructible Lee Miller," *Vanity Fair*, Sep 30, 2015, accessed Feb 4, 2017, http://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2015/09/female-wwii-photographer-lee-miller.

The importance of Miller's relationship with women is nowhere more evident than in her documentation of women in the armed forces, especially her coverage of the Wrens. Through this and her own publication of *Wrens in Camera* (1945), Miller's work has been important in modifying women's social position, in representing their potential in the public world of work, and, subsequently, in contributing to women's historiography. Her efforts to convey women's potential visually, I believe, constitute a debate that is not exclusive to her time. Women's socio-political struggle for recognition within the workplace is still relevant today. Miller's message, therefore, still resonates and is proving to be appropriate for many women in the twenty-first century.

This focus on women's potential is something that I have also highlighted in chapter three. Miller's own activities as a war correspondent and her celebrity status (she was known by the French as the *femme soldat*), continued to promote women as active agents. This status has been referenced by other critics, but it has not been a focus with which they have fully engaged. Considering that Miller became the subject of several news reports (CBS Radio's *Town Tonight*, a short of *The Making of Vogue Magazine* in March 1946 and *Candid Camera* for British Pathé News in September 1945) and was popular with *Vogue* readers at home, I have reinforced how her position highlighted her contribution to revising women's social position.

Capturing in words the atrocities that many struggled to articulate, the importance of Miller's war writing, in addition to her pictures, I believe, cannot be overlooked. My examination of her war writing has securely situated Miller's work within a documentary framework and provided a significant context in which to understand her images and the full horrors that she witnessed. Miller's first-hand testimony, as Withers observed, gave the magazine validity during wartime. Miller articulated contemporary political discourses of the day. Her writing was extremely subjective and translated the war's atrocities and its effect on victims. Moreover, Miller's dispatches covering the liberation of France and the Paris Collection since liberation presented femininity and fashion as a powerful discourse of resistance against the Nazis. In this respect, Miller engages with the debates of today on women's fashion and identifies how fashionable dress can function as a potential statement and arguably becomes a credible language to disrupt or challenge. This discourse of fashion as self-assertion is one that I have also focussed on in a new reading of Miller's post-war articles for *Vogue* in chapter four.

"The High Bed" (April 1948), "Bachelor Entertaining" (March 1949) and "Working Guests" (July 1953), relatively ignored by critics and researchers, have been important in illustrating that Miller's post-war story was not one of passivity or decline. Through an innovative examination of these articles, I have identified how she helped middle class women to negotiate their social

positions within a post-war society that deemed women as passive homemakers and wives. Navigating the conflicting discourses that saw them as not only predominately homemakers but also conscientious consumers who could encourage economic growth, Miller advised women on how this could be achieved whilst keeping their own agency. The language Miller uses is bold, adopting the active voice and a discourse of glamour to voice middle-class women's desire for colour, elegance and independence: a self-expression through fashion to assert autonomy.

Miller's article on bachelors entertaining, cooking and setting up home similarly addressed post-war debates that encouraged women to return to the home. In this first detailed examination of this article, I believe, she provided alternative narratives for women and men, challenging contemporary discourses that aimed to solidify gender roles after the war whilst exploring issues about gender that are pertinent to today. Miller's exploration of the home as a mutable space in which roles were shared and boundaries permeable expressed perceptions of male and female as not exclusively confined to private and public spheres. Her articulation of men entering the kitchen, I have asserted, prefigures the modern metrosexual man, who is comfortable to discuss cooking, décor and entertaining at home. Karren Brady's interview in the *Radio Times* in May 2013 expressed a similar arrangement and articulates the relevancy of Miller's work today: Brady continued her business career whilst her husband had the role of househusband.[1164]

Miller expressed a similar negotiation of roles in her article "Working Guests" (July 1953), blurring gender and class boundaries and expectations. My new reading in chapter five of this article describing Miller's experience of setting up home has located her discourse within a post-war socio-cultural landscape, focussing on the home as a site of modernisation and progress. This innovative reading has explored Farley Farm as a space of openness and sociability, in which Miller encouraged all guests from an upper-middle class and middle-class background to partake in manual labour and a number of household chores. In this, Miller's position as more than housewife is clear, as she navigated her own position as hostess to encourage others to contribute to an overall vision. Through examining her discourse of art and sociability, I have emphasised this article's significance in expressing the post-war Labour government's goals of promoting culture as a means to unite the classes and as a force with which to rebuild Britain. This egalitarian approach, I believe, is one that Miller was articulating in her article and has positioned her within the political, cultural and artistic discourses of the day.

The artistic continues in Miller's cooking. As Bee Wilson observes, in a short article appearing in the *Telegraph*, "cooking employed her hands, her eyes and her creative focus … Friends described her at the stove, laughing and swearing, sprinkling saffron and hibiscus, with the same

[1164] Janice Turner, "Hire Me ... The *RT* Interview by Janice Turner," *Radio Times*, May 4–10, 2013, 10–13.

spirit of freedom she had once shown behind the lens".[1165] Locating her food art in new and different contexts has opened up many possibilities and alternative positions from which to engage with Miller's cooking and her role at the farm. Identified as art, her exploits challenged (and can still be seen to challenge) the idea of the male artist as creative and women as muses/inspiration for the male artist: a view of Miller's work that was promoted by Gold and Fizdale in their article for American *Vogue*. In addition, this allows her cooking to be situated alongside the artistic practices of Fluxus, Eat Art and the professional world of recent "modernist" innovations in gastronomy by chefs such as Heston Blumenthal, Ferran Adria and Thomas Keller. This first-hand reading of Miller's cooking has repositioned her within the public, masculine world of work and has presented her as more than just a mother and wife and hostess in the service of others.

Today's culinary perception of food articulates a similar artistic approach to cooking, which is evident in the popular programme, *The Great British Bake Off*. Nadiya Hussain (the 2015 winner) included showstopper pieces of a peacock made from chocolate and a suspended Coca-Cola bottle with liquid seeming to flow from it. She, along with the 2016 winner Candice Brown, are subsequently enjoying a celebrity status, such is the popularity of the show. As Nadiya Hussain recognises in an interview with *Hello* magazine (October 2015), she has become a "very modern role model. "It seems I'm representing Muslims, Bangladeshis, Luton, Leeds, stay-at-home mums, wives, mothers, the list seems to get bigger," says Hussain. "But it's actually a fantastic thing that so many people on so many levels can relate to me. That feels like quite a privilege".[1166]

Because of her work, Miller has made it possible for women today to become campaigning ambassadors for their sex. This new aspect to Miller should not be overlooked. As Antony Penrose has rightly observed (but failed to examine in any depth) in an interview with Holly Williams, "I find it very touching that she's still relevant to young women who regard her as a role model".[1167] This "unseen" Lee Miller I have discovered during my project. Through her *Vogue* articles, her achievements as a war photographer and correspondent and her role at Farley Farm, she encouraged women to become independent, confident agents, which is still proving to be significant to women's socio-political struggle.

[1165] Bee Wilson, "From Catwalk to Kitchen: The Life of Lee Miller," *Telegraph*, Mar 7, 2014, accessed Feb 2, 2017, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/foodanddrink/10678408/From-catwalk-to-kitchen-the-life-of-Lee-Miller.html.

[1166] "Nadiya Hussain Tells *Hello!* about Her Bake Off Win, her 'Dreamboat' Hubby and How Life has Changed," *Hello!*, Oct 19, 2015, accessed Feb 2, 2017, http://www.hellomagazine.com/cuisine/2015101927751/nadiya-hussain-gbbo-hello-exclusive/.

[1167] Antony Penrose, quoted in Williams, "Unseen Lee Miller," http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/features/the-unseen-lee-miller-lost-images-of-the-supermodel-turned-war-photographer-go-on-show-8577344.html.

Miller's social democratic approach blurred both gender and class boundaries, and has been a leitmotif that runs throughout her work and this thesis. From her support of the fellahin to her support of women's social positioning during and after the war, Miller's disposition ensured she challenged contemporary accepted and expected views of what being a "woman" meant and what constituted as "women's work". For many critics, Miller's engagement with motherhood, fashion, make-up, cinema and cooking, has placed her securely within the less important sphere of domesticity. But Miller's ability to outline alternatives and possibilities for women within the home, I believe, situates her within the politics of the everyday. In cooking the recipes myself, I can attest they demonstrate both Miller's engagement with the creative and the practicalities of everyday life, an engagement that the title of "Lady Penrose", for many, may dispute.

Whilst this title, received in conjunction with Roland's knighthood, may locate Miller within the upper echelons of society, her money (her own money), associated with such a position, seems an ambiguous point of reference. Most of Miller's art collection was gifted to her.[1168] So what money she did, in fact, own is a mystery, and perhaps this explains why Miller never ventured out independently without the support of a husband. Placing Miller within her time and a cultural hegemony, that only recognised women as wives and mothers, may also explain why Miller stay married; the only way to influence male culture was from within.

Miller's marriage to Roland may have acted as a buffer in some respects, providing her with opportunity and money, but it must be remembered that Miller's artistic vision and resolve allowed her to carve out her own path in life. Boldly, she announced to Man Ray that she was to be his assistant, turned up every day at the *Vogue* offices to volunteer her services during the war and reshaped ideas about what constituted as art.[1169] Miller's work is the legacy here. Her ability to realise the creative attests to her modern aesthetics: she challenged accepted ideas of class and culturally inscribed feminine roles. Moreover, it ensured she outlined the potential of women then and for today.

Lee Miller continues to inspire many women, and she has inspired me. In writing about Miller's life, her diversity cannot and should not be reduced to any pattern. She was more than her gender dictated: as Betty Friedan announced in 1963, "The only way for a woman, as for a man, to find herself, to know herself as a person, is by creative work of her own. There is no other way".[1170]

[1168] Allmer, *Beyond,* 220.
[1169] Penrose, *Lives*, 22, 98.
[1170] Betty Friedan quoted in Janann Sherman ed. *Interviews with Betty Friedan* (Mississippi: University of Mississippi, 2002), x.

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Appendix

Miller's Recipes

Appearing in Carolyn Burke, "Lee Miller: On both Sides of the Camera" (2006) in Appendices.

PENROSES

(Referenced in Gold and Fizdale April 1974)

16 very fresh, closed mushrooms, about 2 ½ inches in diameter
Olive oil
Salt and pepper
Madeira or Marsala
Mousse de foie gras or other delicately flavoured liver paté
Paprika
16 slices white toast
1 bunch watercress
Thin strips or zests of carrot, for garnish

Remove the stems from mushrooms by cutting carefully; do not pull them out, as the mushrooms will collapse in cooking. To retain juiciness, sauté´ open side down first, then outside down. Add salt, pepper, and Madeira or Marsala to taste, and cook until tender. Cool.

Pipe or fill caps with a spiral of pale, pinkish mousse de foie gras or other paté, sprinkle into the grooves.

Butter and carpet bread with watercress, arrange mushroom roses on top; sprinkle with a few strands of raw carrot. Serve two per person.

GOLDFISH

1 whole codfish weighing 5 or 6 pounds, including head
4 ½ pounds carrots, coarsely grated
1 ½ pounds onion, slices
8 ounces sherry, half to season inside of fish, half to sprinkle on fish
Juice of 1 lemon
3 ounces of butter
3 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and pepper

Put carrots through an electric or hand rotary-disk grater with large holes. Slice onions to approximately the same size. Sauté the vegetables in butter and oil until tender. Season with salt and pepper. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Season the fish inside and out with salt and pepper and 4 ounces sherry. Butter a pan to fit fish (if pan is too wide for the fish, lay foil, grease it, and pull up the sides to make a narrow foil pan).

Place some of the carrot-onion mixture on the foil. Place the fish on top and mound the rest of the mixture over the entire fish. Pour remaining 4 ounces sherry over the fish and sprinkle with lemon juice. Bake about 45 minutes, being careful not to burn the top; cover loosely with foil if necessary.

If you wish to expose the cod's head, after cooking push back some of the carrots, or garnish it with chopped parsley or water cress on the plate.

BURGHUL

1 cup finely chopped celery
1 cup finely chopped onion
5 tablespoons butter, divided
3 cups bulgur wheat
1 handful finely chopped parsley plus more for garnish
Salt and pepper
Grated rind of 1 lemon
Juice of ½ lemon
6 ½ cups fluid, half tomato juice, half water
Chopped fried almonds or pine nuts

In a large skillet, sauté celery and onions in 2 tablespoons butter until limp. Add 3 more tablespoons butter and bulgur, parsley, salt and pepper, and lemon rind and juice. Add liquid, bring to almost a boil and simmer about 30 minutes. The liquid should be absorbed and the grains separate, well-cooked but not mushy or sticky.

Sprinkle with chopped almonds or pine nuts and bake uncovered at 275 degrees for about 10 minutes to brown. Garnish with more chopped parsley.

Appearing in Lee Miller, "Plan for a Thirteen-Meal Christmas," British Vogue (December 1952), 85, 114, 116.

POPCATAPETL

Sauce for re-heating Turkey

In 2 tbsps. olive oil or butter, sauté until tender, but not brown, the following, all finely chopped: 2 de-seeded tomatoes, 4 de-seeded peppers, (or equivalent, canned), 2 medium onions, 2 cloves garlic. Add two small hot red peppers, a *bouquet garni* and 3 or 4 cups of turkey broth (pressure-cooked from bones). Simmer until vegetables are mushy, remove *bouquet* and rub through a fine sieve. Add a ¼ tsp. ground cloves, ¼ tsp. grated nutmeg, ¼ tsp. bitter cooking chocolate. Add a large handful of finely ground almonds and the thin yellow peel of an orange cut in *julienne*. Season with salt, freshly ground pepper and a dash of Tabasco (cayenne pepper dissolved in vinegar). Let simmer five minutes and thicken further with cornflour dissolved in water, or more almonds, until like thick cream. Re-heat turkey gently in sauce and serve with rice and (roughly chopped) fried almonds.

MASTER MIX

Will save three quarters of the time usually taken for measuring out these things.

9 cups flour (not self-raising) measured after sifting

4 tsps. Salt

2½ tsps. cream of tartar

One-third cup baking powder

2 cups good quality white cooking fat

Mix dry ingredients thoroughly, and re-sift twice into a bowl. Cut fat into mixture until finely granular. Store tightly covered, in cool dry place. Measure by piling lightly into cup and levelling off with knife. Never re-sift.

Scones

3 cups Mix, ⅔ cup milk. Add milk all at once and stir until Mix is moistened. Knead with a dozen strokes on lightly floured board. Roll ½ inch thick, cut and bake on metal sheet 10 minutes in hot oven (450º to 475º). Makes about twelve 2-inch scones.

Pie or Cobble Topping

1½ cups Mix, ½ cup milk. Add milk. Stir until moistened. Should remain lumpy. Don't beat. Drop on to top of hot meat stew or fruit cobbler. Cook twenty to thirty minutes in hot oven (425º). 1 tbsp. sugar can be added to Mix, before adding milk, for sweet topping.

Waffles or Pancakes

3 cups Mix, 1½ cups milk, 1 egg. Beat egg, combine with milk, add to Mix, stir until moist. Makes 6 large waffles.

Dumplings

2 cups Mix, ½ cup milk. Add milk to Mix, stir until moist. Don't beat. Drop from spoon on top of simmering stew: Cover and cook 12 minutes. *Don't peek.* Also don't hesitate to add herbs or whatever. But remember to add them either to the milk or Mix.

Cookies

3 cups Mix, 1 cup sugar, 1 tsp. flavouring extract (vanilla or almond), 1 egg, ⅓ cup milk. Add sugar to Mix. Combine other ingredients and stir into Mix until well blended. Drop by the teaspoon on to greased baking sheet and bake in medium oven (375º) for about ten minutes. Chuck in anything handy for variety … chopped nuts, chopped chocolate bar, preserved ginger, candied peel, dates or currants or coconut. Not suitable for elaborate decoration.

CRUMBLY OIL PASTRY

Known to us as "Clumsy Clot Pastry" also "Dumb Cluck" ... as anybody can make it successfully.

Heat oven to 425º. Into a graduated measure sift 2 cups flour (not self-raising). Mix it well with 1½ tsps. Salt and re-sift into bowl. Measure exactly ¼ cup cold milk and add ½ cup oil (salad or frying oil, not olive). Without mixing them together turn oil and milk into flour and stir with wooden spoon until mixture leaves side of bowl. Divide ball and place half on a 12-inch sheet of waxed paper (such as comes or wrapped bread, inside cereal packets or is sold for deep-freeze packaging). Cover with another sheet, press down slightly, and roll to edges of paper. Add no extra flour. Peel off top sheet and picking up pastry by corners of bottom sheet lower it, pastry side down on 9-inch pie pan. Peel off paper, fit into pan and trim edges to rim. If pastry breaks or tears mend without using water by pinching together or patching. Fill with chosen mixture and follow same procedure for top. Press together or flute edges, trim to rim, cut several slits in top. Bake 45 minutes to 425º. As it uses no flour for rolling, the receipt is mess proof – as well as foolproof.

The resulting pastry is crumbly and light. Several of these can be made at a time and stored in their wax papers in the fridge.

I (Miller) located one brand of waxed paper on sale to the retail public. It's made by DEEKO and is called Greaseproof Foodrap, continuous roll, retails at 1s. Barker's stationery department, Kensington High St. Basement is fully stocked. Note: an inclination to slipping when rolling can be corrected by dampening the table under the bottom sheet of paper.

Appearing in Ninette Lyon, "A Second Fame," American Vogue (April 15 1965), 138-140.

SESAME CHICKEN FOR MIRÓ

4 ½ pounds broiling chicken
½ cup sesame seeds
1 cup dry bread crumbs
¼ pound butter
Salt and pepper

Cut the chicken in quarters, removing the carcass bones from the breasts. Remove the skin.

Heat the sesame seeds in small amounts in an ungreased skillet. When they explode, remove to a bowl. When all are done, add bread crumbs to bowl. Season with salt and pepper.

Melt the butter and dip the chicken in the butter, then roll in the sesame-seed-and-bread-crumb mixture. Place in a roasting pan to fit, dot with butter or pour the remaining melted butter over it. Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 35 minutes or until crisp and golden, or broil under a hot flame for 10 minutes on each side.

GUACAMOLE FOR EIGHT PEOPLE

4 avocadoes
2 tomatoes, skinned and seeded
3 tablespoons lemon juice
Salt to taste
¼ teaspoon chilli powder

Peel and mash avocadoes. Dice one tomato and add to the avocado purée. Season with lemon juice, salt and chilli. Cut remaining tomato in long strips and arrange in a criss-cross pattern in a mould or bowl. Press in the avocado mixture and chill several hours. At serving time unmould on a serving dish.

SPINACH OR SORREL ROULADE FOR FOUR PEOPLE

3 pounds spinach, well washed with stems removed
5 tablespoons butter
4 eggs, separated
3 tablespoons dry bread crumbs
4 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese
Salt and pepper

Plunge the washed spinach in a large quantity of boiling salted water. Boil 5 minutes and drain thoroughly. Chop coarsely and place in a large bowl. Add the butter and season with salt and pepper. Add the yokes one by one, beating well with each addition. Beat the whites stiff and fold carefully into the spinach. Oil a chocolate roll pan and line it with waxed paper. Butter the paper well. Sprinkle with bread crumbs. Pour the spinach mixture over the bread crumbs smoothing it lightly to even it. Sprinkle the Parmesan over the spinach and bake in a 350° preheated oven for 10-15 minutes. Meanwhile make the stuffing:

½ pound mushrooms
6 tablespoons butter
¾ cup milk
Salt and pepper
1 good pinch nutmeg
¼ cup heavy cream

Slice the mushrooms fine and sauté in hot butter for 3 minutes. Sprinkle with flour and stir to cook evenly 2 minutes more, adding butter if needed. Add milk and stir until thickened. Season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Stir in the cream. Remove spinach from the oven. Place a large sheet of buttered waxed paper over cooked spinach roll and invert gently on a heated platter. Remove top paper. Cover spinach with stuffing, spreading it evenly. Gently pull under paper, making the spinach roll on itself. Sprinkle with lemon juice and melted butter.

GREEN CHICKEN FOR EIGHT PEOPLE

(also known as Muddles Green Green Chicken)

2 4-pound chickens
1 large bunch parsley
2 whole bunches celery
4 large leeks with green tops
3 slices toast
Salt and pepper
2½ cups heavy cream
2 cups cooked with small peas

Coarsely chop the well-washed vegetables. Place them with the chicken in a large soup pot along with the toast. Add enough water to cover. Season to taste, but lightly. Bring to a boil, turn the fire down and poach gently for an hour or until chickens are tender. Drain the chickens and remove skins and carcasses. Pass the vegetables through a food mill. Return them to the broth and replace on low fire. Add the cream and heat without letting broth boil. Serve the carved chickens in heated soup plates, with the broth and a sprinkling of hot green peas. Serve with hot scones, to sop up sauce.

Appearing in Bettina McNulty, "How to Make an Art of the Happy Weekend: The Personal Strategy and Beautiful Food of Lee Penrose," American House and Garden (June 1973), 69-74.

MANGO VELVET

3 cups canned or fresh puréed mango
1 cup sugar (less if canned in syrup)
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 envelope unflavoured gelatin
¼ cup cold water

Combine puréed mango, sugar, lemon juice. Soak gelatin in cup of cold water and dissolve over low heat. Add to fruit and cool. Freeze. Beat and refreeze.

FRUIT FOOL

Puréed sweetened fruit
Heavy partially whipped cream
Varity of fruit (Mangoes, Gooseberries, Raspberries, Apricots and Blackberries, Strawberries)
Lemon juice
Pinch of salt
If Gooseberries, apricots or blackberries are used, cook before puréeing; raspberries and strawberries need only be sieved.

Add lemon juice to the cream to help it thicken and a pinch of salt for flavour.

Mix fruit and cream together.

SUMMER SALAD

Bibb lettuce added with Nasturtium Blossom for brightness. The Nasturtiums can be eaten too.

Appearing in Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, "The Most Unusual Recipes You Have Ever Seen: How Famous People Cook: Lady Penrose," American Vogue (April 1 1974), 160-161, 186-187.

ONION UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

2 onions, peeled and sliced horizontally in rings ¼ inch thick
2 tablespoons each sweet butter and olive oil
1 teaspoon each salt, freshly ground pepper, and curry powder
1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh ginger or ½ teaspoon powdered ginger (optional)
3 tablespoons canned red pimiento strips
½ cup dried currants or raisins
½ cup chopped parsley or dill

Biscuit Topping:

2 cups flour
4 teaspoons baking powder
¾ teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons butter or shortening ⅔ to ¾ cup milk
1 teaspoon scraped or grated onion

Sauté onion rings very slowly in butter and oil till softened. Do not turn them and do not let them brown. Remove carefully with spatula to a round Teflon baking pan, arranging them in a single layer in a circle with 1 slice in the middle. Sprinkle with seasonings and ginger. Fill in the spaces decoratively with pimiento and currants. Set aside and prepare biscuit topping.

Sift together dry ingredients. Cut in shortening. Quickly stir in with a fork enough milk to make dough. Stir in scraped onion. Knead for about 30 seconds on a lightly floured board. Roll out in to a circle $^{3}/_{8}$ inch thick. Trim dough, to size of baking pan and lay over onions. Bake at 400° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven. Cover the pan with an inverted circular platter, holding it carefully in place, turn the pan and platter upside down. Carefully lift off Teflon pan. Serve sprinkled with parsley.

Lee Penrose's Tip: When a small amount of grated onion is needed, it's easier to make "scraped onion". Simply cut an onion in half and scrape with a spoon.

LEE'S NO-DOUGH PIZZA

Crust:

1 tablespoon olive oil
2 teaspoons scraped onion
1 pound chopped beef (top round or other lean beef)
½ teaspoon each salt and freshly ground pepper

Filling:

2 cups tomatoes, peeled, seeded, squeezed dry, and chopped coarsely (or 2 cups canned Italian-style tomatoes, carefully drained and chopped)
1 tablespoon capers
10 olives, black and green, pitted and halved
1 tin flat anchovy fillets
1 teaspoon basil or oregano
Mozzarella, thinly sliced, enough to cover the "pizza"

Preheat oven to 400°. Spread oil in 9-inch pie plate. Mix meat, onion, salt, and pepper and spread mixture evenly in pie plate building up the sides to form a "crust." Cover meat with tomatoes, then capers, olives, and anchovies in a decorative pinwheel pattern. Sprinkle with herbs. Bake 25 minutes. Remove from oven, cover surface with mozzarella. Bake 5 minutes or till mozzarella melts. If liquid has collected, remove with a bulb baster and discard. Serve hot in pie shaped wedges.

CHARLOTTE DE TOMATOES

You will need a metal charlotte mold (6 cup capacity, 3½ to 4 inches high)

Filling:

1 onion, finely chopped
2 tablespoons olive oil
6 cup canned Italian style tomatoes, drained before measuring
6 tablespoons tomato paste
1 teaspoon each salt, sugar and freshly ground pepper
1 teaspoon caraway seeds, pulverised in a blender or Miracle Mill
2 teaspoons dried basil or tarragon

Crust:

10-12 slices square rye bread with caraway seeds (4-inch square, ¼ inch thick)

Sauté onions in oil till golden. Mash tomatoes and drain again, discarding juice. Mix together all filling ingredients. Cook over low heat stirring carefully so that it does not stick until purée is thick enough for a spoon to stand upright in it. Preheat oven to 425°.

Remove crusts from bread slices. Cut square and 4 semicircles to fit bottom of mold exactly. It should be a tight fit. Sauté in 3 tablespoons of the butter, turning once. Fit into bottom of mold. Cut remaining bread into strips 1¼ inch wide. Dip strips in melted butter and line sides of bowl with overlapping slices. Spoon in tomato purée to half the height of mold. Cover with scraps of bread. Add remaining purée to within ½ inch of top of mold. Cover completely with more bread strips. Press top crusts down lightly. Trim ends of upright strips with kitchen scissors, the top should be level and not rise above height of mold.

Bake 30 minutes. Remove. Test by running knife around the sides of mold If bread is golden and comes away from sides easily, charlotte is ready. If not, bake until it is. Cool 15 minutes. Reverse mold onto serving dish. Unmold gingerly, raising mold 2 inches only and waiting to see if charlotte threatens to collapse, if it does, lower mold again and test again in a few minutes. When sides have cooled sufficiently to hold their shape, remove mold and serve.

CAIRO CHEESE AND CUCUMBER SALAD

½ pound Greek feta cheese (or cottage cheese, drained and lightly salted)
Juice of 1 ½ lemons
2 tablespoons finely chopped Spanish onion (or 4 scallions with some of the green finely chopped)
3½ tablespoons olive oil
1 medium cucumber, peeled and diced
1 tablespoon minced green pepper
1 tablespoon, fresh parsley, dill, or basil, finely chopped
Freshly ground pepper

With fork mash cheese together with lemon juice and olive oil. Stir in onion, cucumber, and green pepper. Sprinkle with chopped herbs and freshly ground pepper. Chill and serve.

MARSHMALLOW-COLA ICE CREAM

24 marshmallows
1 can Coco-Cola (12 ounces)
Juice of 1 lemon
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons rum
1 cup heavy cream

Dissolve marshmallows in half the Coco-Cola over low heat. Add remaining cola, lemon juice, and salt. Whip together; freeze in ice cube tray. When frozen but still mushy, remove, add rum and cream, and whip again. Refreeze until solid, whipping once again after half an hour for a smooth ice cream. A Surrealist delight!

BOULETTES

(Near Eastern Meat Balls)

1 pound chopped beef, chuck or top round
2 onions, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
¼ cup raw rice, pulverised in a blender or Miracle Mill
1 egg
1 cup parsley, very finely chopped
1 tablespoons powdered cumin
1 teaspoon each cinnamon, salt, and freshly ground pepper
¼ cup water

Sauce

1 onion, finely chopped
1 tablespoon powdered cumin
½ teaspoon each cinnamon, salt, and pepper
4 tablespoons tomato paste

In a bowl combine thoroughly all the meat-ball ingredients. Roll into balls the size of golf balls.

In a heavy skillet pour enough hot water to reach a height of ½ inch and add all the sauce ingredients except the tomato paste. Add the meat balls and simmer over low flame for 15 minutes. Turn the meat balls over carefully. Add tomato paste and simmer for another 30 minutes.

Remove meat balls to serving dish. Stir sauce, reduce if necessary (it should be fairly thick) and pour over meat balls.

Tip: For perfect rice, cook until still slightly firm, drain carefully, return to pot, poke three or four holes in the rice with your finger and put pot over the lowest possible heat for one minute. These ventilating chimneys will give you deliciously fluffy rice.

CHICKEN UPSIDE-DOWN CAKE

3 chicken breasts, boned, skinned, and cut in half lengthwise (6 pieces)
3 tablespoons each sweet butter and olive oil
1 teaspoon each salt, freshly ground pepper, and powdered thyme or rosemary
2 tablespoons brandy
1 small can mandarin orange sections (or 3 tablespoons canned pimiento strips)
⅓ cup dried currants or raisins
3 tablespoons Bar-le-Duc or other currant jelly for orange marmalade
⅓ cup finely chopped parsley or dill

Sauté chicken pieces in oil and butter for 10 minutes or until golden brown. Season with salt, pepper, thyme. Heat brandy, light it, pour it over chicken, tilting pan to reach all the chicken pieces till brandy burns down.

Arrange chicken in a pinwheel or other decorative pattern in a Teflon baking pan. Fill in the spaces with mandarin sections and currants. Coat chicken pieces with currant jelly or marmalade.

Make biscuit topping (see recipe in Onion Upside-Down Cake) roll out, and cover chicken, following procedures in the recipe above. Sprinkle with parsley before serving.

ANTONIO'S SWEET-SWEET

Meringue

1 cup hazel nuts (filberts)
4 egg whites
$^1/_8$ teaspoon salt
$^1/_8$ teaspoon cream of tartar
1 cup sugar

Filling and topping

2 cups dried apricots
2 tablespoons apricot brandy, kirsch, or rum
1 tablespoon sugar
2 cups heavy cream
1 ounce bitter chocolate

Toast nuts in hot oven for a few minutes. Remove and rub in a coarse towel till most of the skins come off. Pulverise with nuts in a blender. Beat egg whites till frothy. Add salt and cream of tartar. Beat till stiff. Add sugar gradually, beating constantly, till stiff and shiny. Fold in nuts.

Lightly butter only bottoms of 3 8-inch cake pans with removable side rings. Spread meringue evenly on the 3 cake tins. Place into side rings; bake in 225° oven 1 hour. Remove from oven. Separate cake-pan bottoms from side rings. With a spatula or knife carefully remove meringues from pans. Invert them onto cookie sheets; return them to oven to dry as slowly as possible for another hour or 2. Remove and cool on cake racks.

Cook apricots in water to cover till soft. Drain. When cool, put into blender with brandy and sugar and blend thoroughly. Whip cream till stiff. Fold half of cream into apricot mixture.

To assemble put 1 meringue on cake plate; spread with half the apricot-cream mixture. Cover with second meringue and remaining apricot mixture. Top with third meringue. Spread with remaining whipped cream. Decorate torte by using a vegetable scraper to shave chocolate all over the top.

Appearing in Henry McNulty, "A Christmas at Muddles Green," American House and Garden (December 1975), 102, 107-108.

BIGOS

2 pounds sauerkraut
2 bay leaves
boiling water
1 ½ pounds cabbage, cleaned and slices
2 dried mushrooms
½ pound pork, lean
Salt
7 tablespoons Polish sausage, skinned, thickly sliced
2 ounces tomato purée
1 cup red wine
pepper

In a large pot, place sauerkraut, bay leaves, and a small amount of boiling water. Boil until tender, (if using canned sauerkraut, this is not necessary).

In another large pot, boil cabbage in small amount of water until tender. Soak the dried mushrooms in water, clean and cook them in boiling water until tender; cut in strips and add to cabbage.

Wash pork and dry on paper towels, sprinkle with salt and fry in 3 tablespoons lard until brown. Cool and cut into thin strips, add with the bacon to sauerkraut and simmer until tender. Fry onions in remaining lard and add to cabbage.

Mix cabbage with sauerkraut. Add ham and sausage, tomato purée, and wine. Season well with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, cover, and simmer gently for 1 ½ hours on low heat.

Cool and leave in the refrigerator for 24 hours. This dish gets better on the second and third reheatings!

CARROT PURÉE

1 pound carrots, scraped and chopped
2 medium potatoes, peeled and chopped
2 onions, peeled and chopped thyme, fresh or dried
salt
pepper
1 tablespoon butter
2 tablespoons heavy cream

Combine carrots, potatoes, onions, thyme, salt, pepper, and butter in a saucepan with a little water. Cover loosely to encourage evaporation and cook over moderate heat 45 minutes or until very tender. Remove thyme and mash to purée, including water in pan. It should be a thin purée. Add cream, salt and pepper to taste. Serves 5-6.

POTATO AND TURNIP PURÉE

2 pounds potatoes, peeled

1 ½ pounds young yellow turnips, peeled

¼ cup milk

salt, pepper

$^{1}/_{8}$ pound butter

1 egg

Paprika

Cook the potatoes and turnips in water until tender. Soft mash together with milk, salt and pepper to taste, butter and egg. Place in well-buttered ovenproof serving dish and bake until browned. Decorate with paprika.

Note: An easier variation is to boil turnips cut in chunks in water until tender. Drain and mash with instant potato powder or flakes, milk, butter, and plenty of black pepper until you have a good creamy texture.

To make a celeriac and potato purée follow the same method using celeriac in place of turnips. Serves 6-8.

CELERY PURÉE

1 pound, 3 ounce cans celery hearts

2 tablespoons parsley

¼ cup tablespoons powdered potatoes

5 tablespoons butter

In a blender, purée celery hearts with their juice, parsley and onion. Heat mixture in a saucepan. Add powdered potatoes, stir until excess liquid is absorbed, then add butter. Heat until fluffy and serve.

NESSELRODE NUMBER I

5 eggs, separated
$^{2}/_{3}$ cup confectioners' sugar, sifted
½ cup rum or any good liqueur except mint, or use vanilla
1 envelope unflavoured gelatin
¼ cup cold water
2 cups cream, whipped, plus more for decorating
3 tablespoons candied fruit, finely chopped, per layer of mousse, plus whole one for decorating
cognac

Beat egg yolks in blender with sugar. Add rum or flavouring.

Soften gelatin in the cold water and dissolve over low heat. Add to yolks. Fold in the whipped cream. Whip egg whites stiff and fold into mixture.

Soak candied fruit in cognac. Pour a layer of mousse into a serving bowl or dish and sprinkle with the soaked fruit. Alternate layers of mousse and fruit ending with a layer of mousse. Chill in the refrigerator.

Just before serving, decorate with piped, whipped cream and more candied fruit.

NESSELRODE NUMBER II

2 egg whites
pinch salt
¼ cup sugar
1 cup cream, whipped
¼ cup Grand Marnier or similar liqueur
liqueur-soaked candied fruit
berry purée

Beat egg whites, salt and sugar until stiff. Fold in whipped cream and liqueur. Assemble as in first recipe but freeze for a few hours.

Unmold and service the nesselrode with a sauce, preferably a purée of berries.

PATSY'S CAKE

1 cup butter
1 cup sugar
4 eggs
4 drops vanilla
2 cups self-raising flour
strawberry jam or whipped cream
confectioners' sugar

Cream butter, add sugar, and cream well together. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add vanilla. Gently fold in flour. Pour into two 8 inch greased and floured cake tins. Bake at 375° for 25 minutes. Fill with jam or whipped cream or both. Dust with confectioners' sugar.

CHICKEN UPSIDE
DOWN CAKE

PENROSES

LEE'S NO-DOUGH
PIZZA

BOULETTES

Photographs in “Creative Cuisine” have been taken by Gillian Stacey.

Miller’s recipes as cooked by Gillian Stacey.