

ARTICLE

“Old Methods Not Up to New Ways”: The Strategic Use of Advertising in the Fight for Pure Food After 1906

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This article considers how American food manufacturers used advertising and outreach to sway public opinion in the immediate years after the 1906 passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act. Although this federal legislation has long been heralded as a landmark victory for consumer protection, the new law was not a watershed moment for progressivism. Food production and consumption in the United States remained deeply fraught. In the absence of a clearly defined apparatus to enforce the new law and much contestation among policy-makers, business interests, and reformers, the food industry’s co-option of reform ideals and rhetoric exemplifies the increasing power of big business over both public policy and mainstream cultural discourse in the United States during the early twentieth century and beyond. While scholars have often framed the push to introduce federal food policy as a fairly linear institutional or political narrative, a cultural historical approach gives new insight into how unresolved questions about purity in food production and consumption have vexed Americans and stymied business interests and policy-makers in ways that have continued to reverberate into the present day.

In 1909, Philadelphia-based advertising agency N.W. Ayer & Son crafted a campaign for Parksdale brand butter that simultaneously highlighted and denigrated the “old methods” of making butter. Although folksy images of farmwomen toiling away with butter churns capture the eye initially, a closer look at the copy on these print advertisements reveals something markedly different. With the tagline, “Old Methods Not Up to New Ways,” one ad declared that the company had transformed butter-making from an “uncertain, haphazard branch of farm industry into a scientific business” that could be characterized by a uniform product manufactured in a modern, state-of-the-art facility (fig. 1).¹ Another boasted of the product’s germ-free and dust-free qualities and overall healthfulness and delicious taste. “The old-time farmstead, with its picturesque dairy maid, couldn’t compete with the ‘Parksdale’ process of today,” the ad declared.²

In a seemingly paradoxical manner, this ad and others like it celebrated what was new and modern—in this instance, mass-produced butter wrapped in a “patented package” to protect it from germs and odor—while remaining firmly tied to pastoral imagery and ideology. Though coupling the rural with the modern might at first seem like an odd marketing strategy, a deeper look at ads such as these reveals that this dualism made much more sense at a time when food production and consumption in the

692 E No. 5 1909



Old Methods Not up to New Ways

Parksdale Brand Butter is the perfect product of a perfect butter-making plant. It shows what New-Century Methods have done in changing butter making from an uncertain, haphazard branch of farm industry into a scientific business, with a product uniformly high-class.

Old methods have given place to new ways, and butter eaters get the benefit. Ask your grocer for Parksdale Brand Butter. He'll give it to you in a wonderful germ and odor proof package which keeps it sweet and wholesome until you're ready to eat it.

"Parksdale" is a butter you'll buy the second time, "and then some." Its fine flavor wins you away completely from the "open tub" variety, and yet—good as it is, it costs no more than other kinds. So don't forget

Parksdale BRAND

Butter

H. S. DUNBAR, Distributer, Phone No. 645

Figure 1. In juxtaposing the traditional with the modern, this 1909 advertisement for Parksdale brand butter exemplifies the seemingly paradoxical nature of food advertising during this period: new technologies and processes were venerated directly alongside pastoral imagery. Parksdale brand butter advertisement, 1909, folder 2, collection no. 59, box 27, N.W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency Records. Courtesy Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Washington, DC.

United States were particularly anxiety-ridden. By exemplifying what historian Laura Lovett has labeled “nostalgic modernism,” a phenomenon in which the era’s reformers “embraced the possibility of social change” while working to build a society “in the image of an idealized past,” food advertising can help us understand how corporate interests were able to redirect conversations about food adulteration and safety in ways that connected them to reformers wary about mass-produced food products.³ In other words, this advertisement and others like it reveal how food companies repackaged themselves not as the problem in the fight to introduce and enforce federal pure food legislation, but as part of the solution, alongside reformers whose own work depended in turn on the cooperation of business interests.

A wide-ranging grassroots campaign for federal legislation to safeguard the nation’s food products had led to the 1906 passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act, but by 1909, when the Parksdale butter ad appeared, it was still unclear how this new federal legislation would be enforced, by whom, and to what degree. Although it has long been

heralded by academics and cultural commentators and in the collective imagination as a landmark victory for consumer protection, food production and consumption in the United States remained deeply fraught in the immediate years after the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act. In the absence of a clearly defined apparatus to enforce the new law and much contestation among policy-makers, business interests, and reformers, the food industry's co-optation of reform ideals and rhetoric exemplifies the increasing power of big business over both public policy and mainstream cultural discourse in the United States during the early twentieth century and beyond. Though scholars have often framed the push to introduce federal food policy as a fairly linear institutional or political narrative, a cultural historical approach gives new insight into the ways that unresolved questions about purity in food production and consumption have vexed Americans and stymied business interests and policy-makers—quandaries that have continued to reverberate into the present moment.⁴ In other words, looking at how food manufacturers used advertising and outreach to sway public opinion reveals a more complex story about the 1906 passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act and its aftermath. Though the new law and the reform efforts that led to its creation have been widely considered a triumph of the Progressive Era, this article argues that the new legislation was not in fact a watershed moment in which reformers were able to control big business; rather, it is remarkable how quickly business was able to pervert the work of reformers, particularly in a landscape where enforcement of this new federal legislation proved difficult. While the campaign for pure food at a more grassroots level may have legitimized the power of the consumer via the state over corporations, these efforts ultimately served to concentrate more power in the hands of the commercial enterprises that were most able to bear the costs—particularly those that were able to fund large-scale advertising and marketing campaigns.

By 1909, the style of advertising that brands like Parksdale butter used was not novel: as a large body of historical scholarship has demonstrated, business interests had played a role in the battle for pure food practically from its outset in the 1870s. Most famously, the H.J. Heinz Company worked with advertising agencies like N.W. Ayer & Son on national print advertising campaigns that would implicitly tie the brand to the pure food cause by linking its products with intangible qualities like “goodness” and “wholesomeness.”⁵ With Heinz's entire product line described in one 1906 example as “pure in the strictest sense of the word,” the company's marketing was consistently paradoxical, embracing new equipment and processes that seemed to remove human involvement from the production process while concurrently romanticizing things done in “the old-fashioned way.”⁶ One advertisement for Heinz tomato soup prominently featured an illustration of the fruit ripening on the vine, with the accompanying copy boasting of “red-ripe tomatoes, grown on our own farms, from seed of our own cultivation.” Once picked, the tomatoes were cooked with “cream fresh from the dairies.” Descriptions of mechanical technology and antiseptic surroundings accompany this emphasis on the natural: “After cooking ... the perfect product, steaming hot, is conducted through silver-lined tubes to sterilized tins of special Heinz make.... Consider, moreover, the cleanliness of surroundings, the purity of materials, the painstaking care given to the smallest details.”⁷ By using the same language as their critics and reformers in their advertising campaigns, companies like these believed that they could assuage consumer anxieties in a way that would bolster their bottom lines. After all, as sociologist Donna Wood has pointed out, businesses wanted to use regulation to gain advantages over their competitors: accurate labeling and a ban on fraudulent substitution and adulteration in food products benefited consumers who wanted

safe and honest goods, and it benefited manufacturers who sought to profit from selling these goods.⁸ However, marketing and advertising played an increasingly prominent—though underexplored—role in the immediate years after the 1906 passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act amidst widespread confusion and heated debate about how this legislation would actually be implemented and enforced. Although we know something about how businesses may have benefited from regulatory legislation, and even pushed for it behind the scenes, much less has been said about how they communicated to the public that they were the guardians of purity and safety. By centering on the methods businesses used to convey this notion, this article builds upon Wood's work, and in doing so aligns with New Left historian Gabriel Kolko's seminal critique of progressivism, which argues that big business was the chief beneficiary of regulatory legislation meant to curtail it.⁹

Business and grassroots reform efforts became intertwined almost from the outset of the fight for federal pure food legislation. Acutely aware of consumer fears and criticisms—as well as the growing significance of pure food reform efforts—manufacturers knew that many Americans had become extraordinarily concerned with the food they ate, particularly when they could not see how or where it was produced.¹⁰ Taking over the processing duties once done at home or by neighbors, large companies now made and transported food products nationwide by steamship and rail. New ways of producing and consuming meant that although manufactured and branded food products had become a common sight in middle-class American cupboards, consumers were anxious about their food in an unprecedented way. This was, as anyone who has read Upton Sinclair's 1906 political novel *The Jungle* can attest, an era marred by a number of scandals and scares about the quality of American food, particularly meat and milk. The "germ theory" of disease developed by French scientist Louis Pasteur had also become prominent beginning in the 1860s, and the concept that serious diseases were caused by microscopic bacteria was especially appealing to middle-class Americans, many of whom had been concerned with hygiene and personal cleanliness since the early nineteenth century.¹¹ Food and beverages became particular objects of scrutiny because they were thought of as "the main vehicles for germs entering the body."¹² As "dirt" became a synonym for "disease," domestic scientists and health officials increasingly warned Americans about the perils of purchasing food from dusty grocery stores and street vendors and preparing food with unwashed hands, and the propensity of the housefly to contaminate food and spread illness-causing germs.¹³ By the turn of the twentieth century, progressive reformers' calls for strong federal regulatory legislation on food had reached fever pitch.

Prior to 1906, a patchwork system of pure food laws existed at the state level with varying degrees of strength and capacities for enforcement.¹⁴ In Arizona, for example, it was illegal to sell adulterated products, but there was no agency in charge of actually enforcing the regulations or establishing penalties for those who broke them. In contrast, enforcement was more vigilant in Massachusetts, where the State Board of Health and the State Dairy Commissioner jointly oversaw state pure food laws.¹⁵ As food production began to incorporate, interstate commerce flourished, meaning that this hodgepodge of state laws became increasingly inefficient. For Alice Lakey of the National Consumers League (NCL), this "chaotic" system of regulation "[could] not be anything else" without federal legislation, and in a 1905 letter to delegates at the NCL's annual meeting, Lakey called upon "every consumer in this country to work for the passage of the Pure Food Bill."¹⁶ In the lead-up to its passage, it became increasingly apparent that business and reform both needed the other to succeed. The pure

food crusaders' sensibilities were undergirded by the Progressive Era compulsion to curtail corporate power through state intervention, but they had to tread carefully. To get regulatory legislation passed and enforced as smoothly and quickly as possible, reformers needed to quell potential opposition from the business community.¹⁷ Manufacturers, on the other hand, were compelled to draw from the language of reform to foster consumer trust at a moment when it was ebbing. Moreover, both parties depended on and benefited from their abilities to reach wide audiences. The universality of food and its necessity for human survival made the pure food fight compelling to a wide swath of people, echoing Michael McGerr's observation that by "invoking disparate Americans' shared identity as consumers," women's clubs, temperance organizations, religious organizations, state and federal chemists, public health officials, physicians, journalists, and politicians all mobilized behind this singular cause.¹⁸

The tenuous unity that these seemingly improbable allies forged in the years leading up to 1906 was centered on the issue of adulteration, which concerned reformers and manufacturers alike. Adulteration could happen in two ways. Firstly, injurious adulteration involved the addition of poisonous substances and culminated in a series of scandals, such as the one involving "embalmed beef," wherein a commanding officer's 1898 testimony to a commission investigating the Spanish-American War alleged that the canned beef supplied to troops was "responsible for the great sickness in the American army" and smelled "like an embalmed dead body."¹⁹ Secondly, economic adulteration involved the use of additives that altered a product's integrity. Less sensational than poisoning but much more widespread, food manufacturers adulterated their products to save money (for example, cheeses that contained skim milk in place of cream, or cocoa and chocolate containing flour and starch) in ways that were not a direct public health concern.²⁰ Rather, it was a business issue: some manufacturers feared that their prices would be undercut by competitors who used low-cost substitutions. Economic adulteration also affected consumer trust because many considered it fraudulent. Though product adulteration might be successful in the short term, revenues could ultimately suffer if consumers believed that they were being cheated or lied to.²¹ Consequently, the push for accurate labeling became a cornerstone of the pure food cause, as it appealed to the divergent interests of producers and consumer advocates working in both official and extralegal capacities.

Social class also played a crucial role in creating interdependencies between business and reform. On both sides of the battlefield, the pure food war was waged largely by what historian T.J. Jackson Lears has described as the "old-stock Protestant ... leaders of the American WASP bourgeoisie" who exerted a great deal of influence on the nation's commerce and culture.²² By the turn of the twentieth century, the increasingly powerful advertising industry and its practitioners—dominated by this class—functioned as "apostles of modernity," who, like town criers, "brought good news about progress."²³ However, advertisements for branded food products from this period reveal that this was a self-serving type of progress. The advertising industry was at this time dominated by "an extraordinarily privileged [and majority male] elite" which saw itself as having a responsibility to disseminate its apparently intellectually and culturally superior viewpoints to a mass audience.²⁴ Predominately female reform organizations and food experts came from similar backgrounds and shared this self-perception and intentionality.²⁵ For instance, Florence Kelley of the NCL was the Cornell-educated daughter of a founder of the Republican Party and member of the House of Representatives, and Ellen Richards of the American Home Economics Association was a pioneering research chemist and the first woman to be admitted to (and later

teach at) the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Driven by the same notion that education would create informed consumers and that their authoritative voices would help do away with “impure” foods at a time when production was markedly disconnected from consumption, male and female expertise overlapped and intersected with one another, resulting in a powerful commercial food culture based on its creators’ own self-images and desires that were disseminated from the top down.

With “the food question” vexing American consumers, the lines between activism and commerce became increasingly blurry.²⁶ Doubts, inconsistencies, and uncertainties about which foods and cooking techniques were healthful and which should be avoided gave rise to the food expert, who was regarded—and often promoted by the media and business—as an authority on nutrition, health, and the quest for pure food.²⁷ Articles on these topics appeared regularly in the popular press at the turn of the twentieth century. In a similar fashion to today’s celebrity chefs and diet gurus who provide consumers with best practices for their kitchens, prominent cookbook authors and food writers like Fannie Farmer, Mary J. Lincoln, and Sarah Tyson Rorer covered all areas of culinary and dietary practices in the turn-of-the-century United States, from meal preparation and menu planning to grocery shopping effectively and maintaining hygienic habits in one’s kitchen.²⁸ Like their present-day counterparts, these experts also functioned as intermediaries between producers and consumers. By endorsing products, editing periodicals and other publications like advertising recipe booklets, and giving cooking demonstrations at food expositions, these advocates targeted middle-class women in particular.²⁹ For example, Sarah Tyson Rorer founded a cooking school in Philadelphia in 1884 where she taught the principles of domestic science, and she also worked as a spokeswoman for Cottolene brand shortening, writing in a 1900 product cookbook that she found it to be a “pure and unadulterated article, and a much more healthful product than lard.” Likewise, Mary J. Lincoln authored a number of advertising pamphlets for food and cooking equipment manufacturers, including Jell-O, which she described as a “boon” for “the beginner in the culinary art and for the perplexed housekeeper in emergencies.”³⁰

It is not at all surprising that this new commercial food culture was molded to appeal to a female audience.³¹ According to the J. Walter Thompson Company advertising agency in 1918, women were responsible for “85% of retail purchases,” including food.³² Trade magazine *Ad Sense* reported in 1906 that women should be targeted accordingly since they were apparently “never too tired” to learn about products that could “add comfort and happiness” to their households.³³ In an age when many mass-produced food items were new to American consumers—such as cereal, canned milk, and canned meat—advertising created and enlarged demand for these products while minimizing fears about them, which meant that manufacturers quickly recognized its importance. Transcending its mid-nineteenth-century roots as a local and regional industry associated with “circuses and P.T. Barnum hokum,” advertising had by 1920 become powerful, respectable, and wide-reaching.³⁴ By 1910, corporations (including prominent food manufacturers like Borden, Campbell’s, and Armour) were spending more than \$600 million on large-scale national advertising campaigns, compared to just \$30 million in 1880.³⁵ For one advertising agency—Philadelphia’s N.W. Ayer & Son—food advertising revenues rose from just 1 percent of the company’s income in 1877 to 15 percent by 1901. By 1920, the food industry as a whole was spending more than \$14 million annually on marketing.³⁶

The onus long placed on women to prepare food for their families was as useful to reformers as it was to advertisers and the food experts who worked with them. This

specific gender role meant that it was socially acceptable for middle-class women to become interested in the politics of food, as it fell comfortably within the bounds of separate spheres of ideology that cast women as maternal caregivers.³⁷ Although membership in groups like the NCL—arguably the most prominent advocacy group behind the campaign for pure food—was not always single-gendered, their work on pure food made their organizations a seemingly natural fit for women.³⁸ In 1906, NCL co-founder Lakey observed that the turn-of-the-century woman was forced to reconsider her food purchasing and preparation habits after the industrialization of food processing made her aware that “what she was feeding her family did not meet the standards of human decency.”³⁹ As culinary historian Laura Shapiro has observed, domestic scientists and reform organizations like the NCL believed that since food adulteration was “an education problem rather than an industrial one,” women should be taught how to “shop carefully.”⁴⁰ The NCL declared that it was “the duty of consumers to find out under what conditions the articles they purchase are produced and distributed,” and warned consumers in urban areas against purchasing food manufactured and sold in tenement houses (described as “basement bakeries”) as well as items like ice cream sold by street vendors.⁴¹

In addition to initiating efforts to teach female consumers about the dangers of adulteration in foods, by 1905, the NCL had expanded the scope of the pure food cause by creating a national network of activists.⁴² In addition to uniting various groups at the national level, the NCL’s work was supported by sixty-three state-level leagues located in twenty-two states by 1907, and they set out a series of objectives on pure food to work toward.⁴³ At this time, one year after the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act, its members became particularly concerned with how these new federal laws would be enforced. The NCL’s Committee on Food Investigation detailed its plans to help ensure that the new legislation would be adequately enforced, which included public addresses by NCL members, more education and outreach efforts, and an alliance with the People’s Lobby, a powerful national political reform organization that aimed to influence legislation favoring the “public interest.”⁴⁴ This alliance, described by Lakey as the NCL’s “most important work in February 1907,” was formed to protest an amendment that the group feared would hamper the new law’s efficiency and prevent its enforcement.

After the Pure Food and Drug Act was passed, the Agricultural Appropriation bill set aside \$650,000 to enforce it. According to the *New York Times*, this was done with the understanding that “so small an appropriation could only be effective in obtaining the cooperation of State officers and experts.”⁴⁵ Subsequently—and with the pretext that it would prevent the federal government from diverting funds to state-level enforcement—Minnesota representative James Tawney tried to add an amendment that both the *Times* and the NCL said would “cripple the pure-food law.”⁴⁶ As Lakey pointed out at a 1907 NCL meeting in New York City, by forbidding the federal government from employing state officials to work with them to enforce it, the Tawney amendment would significantly drive up costs. Because the proposed amendment would require the creation of a new federal bureau to enforce the Pure Food and Drug Act, the government would have to budget for annual costs of \$5 million instead of the \$650,000 initially earmarked.⁴⁷

Although the Tawney amendment was not ultimately enacted, it was just “the first of numerous attempts” to weaken or even reverse the federal pure food law.⁴⁸ After the law was introduced in 1906, the laws that Congress eventually passed did favor the food industry’s interests over those of reformers like the NCL and U.S. Department of

Agriculture (USDA) chief chemist Dr. Harvey Washington Wiley, who vociferously pushed back against them. Citing cases like one in which manufacturers of glucose were given the legal right to label their product as “corn syrup,” Lakey remarked in 1911 that the act had been “hobbled” by “special interests” and vowed to combat its mandates through “publicity and education.”⁴⁹ Her efforts seemed futile, however: Congress did not authorize funds to enforce the Pure Food and Drug Act, and rather than have federal authorities determine violations of it, the USDA’s Bureau of Chemistry (which in 1927 became the modern-day Food and Drug Administration) was made responsible for taking individual offenders to court. Penalties for manufacturers that violated the new law were minor; political scientist Courtney I.P. Thomas has described the legislation that ultimately came into being as “a vague statute replete with weak language, loopholes, and imprecise provisions.”⁵⁰ Furthermore, these attempts to challenge the law reveal a crucial chink in the armor of the United States’ food safety regime that continues to resonate: the question of what the term “purity” actually means when it relates to the food we eat is only vaguely—and to many, unsatisfactorily—answered. Though purity was given a legislative meaning at this historical moment, it was and is fraught with a myriad of complex cultural underpinnings. As anthropologist Sidney Mintz persuasively explained in a 1996 essay, the term “purity” has two related (yet contradictory) meanings. Mintz asks an important question about how best to define purity as a concept: “Do we mean something that is natural, unaltered, unprocessed—an unspoiled product of nature’s agents: the unfettered action of sun, water, air, soil, and organic growth, unaltered by the action of humankind? Or do we mean something else—something that may be equally comforting though quite different: aseptic, scientifically clean, hygienic, chemically quantifiable, free of germs and microbes, guaranteed not to make us sick?” Both explanations are correct—many of us hold these dissimilar views simultaneously. Depending on the context, purity can be cast as something unprocessed or something that is heavily manipulated.⁵¹

This sense of uncertainty about food purity has been woven into federal policy since the Progressive Era, meaning that contrary to the pervasive cultural myth, the Pure Food and Drug Act was not a monumental turning point for food safety in the United States. As Thomas pointed out in her 2014 study on American food regulation, the federal government’s power to regulate microbiological food safety has been “extremely limited historically.”⁵² The regulatory framework that was enacted beginning in 1906 was broad, imprecise, and ultimately primarily intended to prevent commercial fraud rather than to safeguard public health against microbial, chemical, or physical contamination. In the words of Theodore Roosevelt’s Attorney General Charles Joseph Bonaparte, consumer protection from dishonest labeling was paramount: “[The Pure Food and Drug Act’s] first aim is to insure [sic], so far as possible, that [...] an article of food or of a drug shall contain nothing different from what [the purchaser] wishes and intends to buy.”⁵³ Even Dr. Wiley—the most significant single actor in the struggle for pure food and the author of a 1929 book about the ways the new law was “perverted” to protect manufacturers over “the health of the people”—thought that economic fraud took precedence.⁵⁴ As he remarked, “the injury to public health is the least important question.... The real evil of food adulteration is deception of the consumer.”⁵⁵ Indeed, the Pure Food and Drug Act itself reflected this belief. Poisonous substances added to food were not made illegal, but rather only had to be listed on the product’s ingredient label.⁵⁶ By focusing on deceit rather than on food safety, the law left open a powerful empty space that business would try doggedly to fill.

10 A P 1906

HEINZ

Wide-Open Kitchens

Man has not devised a more perfectly appointed establishment than that in which Heinz Foods are prepared.

Sunlight everywhere; spotless floors and walls; tables snowy white; shining utensils—all reflected in the excellence of



From beginning to end the work is clean by system, carried out with conscientious care by the neatly-uniformed "Gis in the White Cap."

Furthermore, every Heinz Product is pure in the strictest sense of the word. They are made not only to conform to, but actually exceed the requirements of all State and National Pure Food Laws.



HEINZ

Apple Butter

is delicious on bread, very wholesome for children—not as sweet as preserves—just tart enough to please the palate. It is made of selected apples, granulated sugar and pure spices. Buy it from your grocer in those cricks or tins of convenient size.

Let us send our booklet, "The Spice of Life."

H. J. HEINZ COMPANY,
New York Pittsburgh Chicago London

Figure 2. This 1906 Heinz advertisement is an example of how the company explicitly aligned itself with the pure food cause. Heinz, "Wide-Open Kitchens" advertisement, collection no. 59, box 248, book 447, N.W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency Records. Courtesy Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Washington, DC.

The H.J. Heinz Company's marketing efforts in and after 1906 best reflect this sense of ambiguity about adulteration in prepared food. A staunch supporter of the push for federal pure food legislation, the company appointed a staff of three to assist the president and Congress in securing these laws.⁵⁷ Less motivated by public health than by gaining a competitive edge in the marketplace, the company's founder believed that partnering with a federal regulatory agency was the best way to earn buyers' trust, underscoring sociologist Wood's argument about business's economically strategic use of public policy.⁵⁸ To ensure that consumers were aware of his company's collaboration with the federal government, company founder Henry Heinz again turned to advertising to communicate a message shaped by reform organizations like the NCL. With the help of N.W. Ayer & Son, these advertisements emphasized above all else Heinz products' apparent purity. As one proclaimed, Heinz goods were "made not only to conform to, but actually exceed the requirements of all State and National Food Laws" (fig. 2).⁵⁹ One ad titled "An Impartial Statement of Grave Importance to The Public Health" focused on the perceived dangers of benzoate of soda, and described the company's decision to publicly disavow the preservative substance and exclude it from their products.⁶⁰ More egregiously, another even tried to disassociate the company from its commercial interests altogether by describing the controversy surrounding benzoate of soda as "nothing more or less than an alignment of profit-seeking food manufacturers' interests against the health and physical welfare of the people."⁶¹ Overtly excluding itself from the category of "profit-seeking food manufacturer," this was a laughably deliberate attempt by Heinz to distance itself

from the Progressive Era view of the modern American corporation as avaricious and dangerous.

The controversy surrounding the use of benzoate of soda as a preservative—and Heinz’s savvy harnessing of it—was a pivotal moment amidst the confusion and push-back regarding how federal pure food legislation would be enforced. Though not prohibited under federal law, benzoate of soda was a preservative considered dangerous to human health by some (including USDA chief chemist Wiley) if present in large amounts. It was also associated with economic adulteration. For example, one Heinz advertisement claimed that benzoate of soda “permit[ted] the cheapest and most unsanitary methods of manufacture” by allowing food manufacturers to use low-quality components (like produce peelings and cores) that “would otherwise be thrown away.”⁶² Although the issue united Wiley and the Heinz company, it created a bitter rift between the USDA chemist and Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson. After the second ruling on the preservative in 1907 declared its use in prepared foods illegal, other manufacturers pushed back and asked for a special hearing before Secretary Wilson. With their hackles raised by this request, Heinz and Wiley went on the defensive: the Heinz company hired press agents to report favorably on Wiley and his work, and Wiley used his relationship with Heinz as a way of bypassing Wilson to go directly to the Oval Office, first during Roosevelt’s presidency and then Taft’s.⁶³ Tensions were further heightened in 1908 when Roosevelt, after consulting with Wilson, decided to appoint a board of scientific experts to examine benzoate of soda’s use as a food preservative. Headed by prominent chemist and Johns Hopkins University president Ira Remsen, Wiley considered the Remsen Board a threat to his authority, and its creation permanently soured his relationship with Roosevelt.⁶⁴ Moreover, a number of Wiley’s supporters, including Heinz and some members of the National Association of Food and Dairy Departments, were “willing to cooperate in attacking the Remsen Board and Secretary Wilson,” most notably at the Association’s 1908 convention at Mackinac Island, Michigan, where a resolution that condemned Wilson was passed.⁶⁵ Afterward, the press continued to depict the Remsen Board in a negative light, painting them as dishonest “agents of food dopers,” and an interest group called the Century Syndicate (which was financed by the Royal Baking Powder Company) hired former political operative Orville LaDow to craft a public relations campaign to boost Wiley’s profile while smearing Wilson and the Remsen Board.⁶⁶

These clashes went on for several years after the Pure Food and Drug Act was signed into law as concerns about the new law’s efficiency continued to solidify. *National Food Magazine* reported in 1909 that “foods drugged with chemicals and otherwise adulterated [were] still being sold in large quantities,” and would be until the “food adulterators” power could be curtailed.⁶⁷ A year later, Philadelphia-based newspaper *The North American* observed that the “health and food departments of many states have utterly cast aside the federal laws as virtually worthless” in favor of enforcing “their far better state laws.”⁶⁸ Prominent investigative journalist Samuel Hopkins Adams pointedly asked *Hampton’s Magazine* readers in 1910 “what [had] become of our pure food law?” It took seventeen years to pass, he pointed out, but just three years after it did, it had become “practically an inert machine ... destroyed by the old allies of fraud and poison.”⁶⁹ Other media outlets similarly reported that business’s more nefarious interests had “emasculated” the national laws, “vilified” the work of bureaucrats and reformers, and “fettered” the authority of officials like Wiley, Wilson, and Remsen.⁷⁰ Indeed, a 1909 article in *National Food Magazine* even claimed

that in spite of the hard work of physicians, women's organizations, and retail grocers, "the fight looked more like a losing one"—that is, apparently until the "makers of legitimate food" joined in.⁷¹

With other pressing political concerns pushing food issues off of the front pages and out of Americans' minds, an increasing number of food manufacturers began to position themselves as the last best hope to win the fading fight.⁷² For example, the Domestic Science and Pure Food Exposition at Madison Square Garden in the fall of 1910 was framed as a collaboration between national manufacturers and powerful domestic science and reform organizations. With each product's eligibility in the show dependent "upon absolute purity," the event showcased the increasingly cozy relationship that had developed between business and reform, with each side benefiting from the ostensible integrity of one another.⁷³ Characterizing the two interests as "allied forces," *The North American* remarked that "best of all for the public," the food manufacturers who attended the exposition would now have the support of an "army of men and women whose influence radiates throughout the entire country."⁷⁴

In the same year, a group of approximately twenty large manufacturers—including Heinz, the Shredded Wheat Company, and the Franco-American Food Company—formally incorporated under New York State Law as the American Association for the Promotion of Purity in Food Products (AAPFP).⁷⁵ They used product advertising as a way to boast of their membership in this self-established group, condemned the use of preservatives, supported national regulatory legislation, and worked toward improving sanitary conditions in their factories. It is not entirely clear if this organization was legitimately concerned with the creation and enforcement of regulatory legislation, or if it was formed primarily for marketing purposes, but its platform pledged that member companies would "severally and jointly give their moral and financial support and undivided influence toward upholding ... the administration of all laws looking to the elevation of the standards of the food producing interests of this country."⁷⁶ The press seemed to embrace the AAPFP's work with less skepticism than it might have in the years before the federal legislation passed.⁷⁷ While observing that it was "not so well known" in terms of its "personality" and "identities" within the cause as groups like the American Medical Association were, *The North American* described the AAPFP as "thoroughly in sympathy with state and federal pure food legislation," and noted that the group was working as hard as more grassroots organizations were to "procure pure food supplies."⁷⁸ *National Food Magazine* was even more enthusiastic in its coverage: "Nothing could be of greater advantage to consumers," it declared. "[The AAPFP] will make the food issue one of clearly defined lines, showing the people who are the makers of pure food and who are not, teaching [consumers] to distinguish between the brands of purity and impurity. It will cause all the wolves to remove their sheep's clothing."⁷⁹

Whether or not this was entirely true—and it seems unlikely that it was—it underscores the degree to which a symbiotic relationship had developed between business and reform in the years after the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act. Following Heinz's lead, advertisements for mass-produced food products after 1906 often blurred the lines between marketing and public service. For example, a 1912 advertisement that appeared in the *Evening World* newspaper in New York City at first glance appears to have been a public health notice: "Dr. Wiley Please Note," the tagline blared before referencing "[his] fight against benzoate of soda and other chemical preservatives and colors in foods." A closer inspection reveals that the document is an advertisement for Premier Food Products (fig. 3). Mentions of the product line's "delicious flavor" and

11, 1912.

Dr. Wiley Please Note

Doctor Wiley's fight against benzoate of soda and other chemical preservatives and artificial colors in foods is supported by our own experience that their use is not necessary when clean, sound, fresh, wholesome, perfect raw materials are employed.

We learned long ago that clean workers, clean kettles, clean kitchens and honest foods make all chemicals, "harmless" or otherwise, entirely unnecessary in producing delicious and attractive foods that will keep indefinitely.

there are no shadows of anxiety or doubt in the background to spoil the pleasures of the palate.

The Premier Pure Food Kitchens make a special point of reproducing utter honesty of surroundings. That is what our three graduate chemists are for. Cleanliness and scientific carefulness contribute undeniable delights to good cooking. Good digestion naturally follows. This is an important paragraph in the Premier Pure Food story.

The Sign of the Star on the independent grocery store front is the connecting link between the Premier ideals of perfection and a discriminating public. Behind that sign at least the six following Premier Products are obtainable, sometimes many more:

Premier
PURE FOODS

before a jury of exacting housewives would prove by their rich natural color, perfect anatomy, beautiful appearance, delicate and delicious flavor, that scientific cookery needs no artificial aid and wants none.

Our success in preserving foods by natural, old-fashioned methods affords all the vindication Doctor Wiley will ever need for his uncompromising stand on the pure food question.

Appetite is sharpened and digestion stimulated by skillful home cooking for the reason that

Premier Canned Corn
From the State of Maine only, where the world's finest sweet corn grows. Per can 15c.

Premier Macaroni
Made in Europe from the Russian Tabor and hard Alban wheat. Very different from domestic macaroni. Full pounds 12c.

Premier Perri-Walla Tea
Pure India and Ceylon, unspiced and uncolored. Retail 75c. Per lb. in, smaller 25c.

Premier Fruit Jams
Nothing but fresh ripe fruit and pure sugar, ground, for sound. Currant Jelly and Orange Marmalade by the same honest, old-fashioned rule. Per jar 25c.

Premier Olives
The rich, firm, crisp, meaty kind, good when they come out of the bottle because they were good when they went in. 25c. in 1.00

Premier Roasted Coffee
In sealed containers, preserving its fresh flavor indefinitely. Per pound 25c.

Premier Pure Foods are sold under our unqualified guarantee. If the quality is not entirely satisfactory get your money back at the place you made your purchase. We stand behind the goods and the grocer.

A 64-page book about Premier Food Products and the way they are made sent free to any housekeeper.

FRANCIS H. LEGGETT & CO., NEW YORK

Figure 3. Following Heinz's lead, advertisements for food products often blurred the lines between marketing and public service. This 1912 Premier Food Products advertisement directly addressed Dr. Harvey Washington Wiley, the USDA chief chemist who played an instrumental role in the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act. Premier Food Products advertisement, October 11, 1912, *Evening World*, box 207, Harvey Washington Wiley Papers, 1854–1954. Courtesy Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

“beautiful appearance” are contrasted against descriptions of the company’s hygienic and technologically advanced manufacturing processes. The advertisement does not contain any product photographs or illustrations; the only image depicted is an official-looking star-shaped logo (denoted as “the Sign of the Star”) intended to act as “the connecting link between the Premier ideals of perfection and a discriminating public.”⁸⁰

This advertisement and others like it should be understood as a microcosm for a larger cultural phenomenon. A direct byproduct of an urge to recapture the fading “realness” of American life amidst the emergence of industrial capitalism, mass production, and urbanization, the nostalgic modernist discourses present in these advertising campaigns reflect the beginnings of a fixation with concepts like “honesty” and “authenticity” that began during a time when fears about fraud (whether commercial, social, political, or aesthetic) “routinely [occurred], especially when [a] society becomes so large that one usually deals with strangers, not neighbors.”⁸¹ Particularly in the absence of a clear apparatus to enforce the Pure Food and Drug Act, it is understandable that manufacturers seized upon these uncertainties and started to work with advertising agencies, reform organizations, and public relations firms to create a symbolic association in consumers’ minds between branded food products and nostalgic modernist ideals.

Embracing the age’s industrial methods of production while also venerating aspects of “authentic” American culture perceived to be in crisis, the way that “pure food” products were marketed reflects a paradox that cuts to the very core of the American experience—namely that progress is celebrated, but also feared. By co-opting discussions about food production and consumption and taking advantage of consumers’ anxieties and ambivalence, many of the era’s advertisements for prepared food reveal that purity—and its attendant links to hygiene, public health, and consumer safety—swiftly became a commodity that could be purchased. With consumer trust at a low ebb because of ambiguous regulatory policy, repackaging nostalgic modernist ideals about food and disseminating them to a mass audience allowed American business leaders to seize a quintessential Progressive Era cause and manipulate it in a way that ultimately served their own economic interests. And as evidenced by today’s seemingly unending barrage of ads touting food products that are apparently “organic,” “natural,” and “artisanal” alongside alarmingly regular product recalls, outbreaks of foodborne illnesses, and news stories about how powerful lobbyists have repeatedly weakened the Food and Drug Administration, it is clear that their work haunts us still.⁸²

Notes

I would like to thank Susan Pearson for her encouragement, criticism, and support, and Andrew Johnston, whose guidance shaped this project in its earliest stages. I would also like to express my gratitude to the anonymous readers for their generous feedback and suggestions.

1 Parksdale brand butter advertisement, 1909, folder 2, collection no. 59, box 27, N.W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency Records, Courtesy Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Washington, DC (hereafter referred to as N.W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency Records).

2 Ibid.

3 Though her work deals with pronatalism, Lovett’s definition and use of the term “nostalgic modernism” is also useful in this context. In comparison to T.J. Jackson Lears, who describes this phenomenon as “anti-modernism,” Lovett’s terminology is more precise, as nostalgic modernism is not as staunchly traditional as the term “antimodernism” implies. Lovett observes that although traditionalists and nostalgic modernists both looked backwards to the past, only the latter “always moved forward” to embrace new opportunities, albeit cautiously and even at times critically. Laura L. Lovett, *Conceiving the Future: Pronatalism,*

Reproduction, and the Family in the United States, 1890–1938 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 10–12; T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

See also the work of Michael Kammen, who has argued that “dramatic or unanticipated alterations” often bring about a fetishizing of nostalgia in a given culture or nation. Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991), 295.

4 For example, Clayton Coppin and Jack High frame their argument around the economic theory of regulation, and view the introduction of pure food and drug laws as “the result of regulating competition in the food industry.” They also focus heavily on the work of USDA chief chemist Harvey Washington Wiley, whom they consider “the central figure in the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906.” James Harvey Young’s work shares a similar institutional approach, and places the bulk of its attention on the law as a piece of Progressive Era regulatory legislation intended to benefit the public interest. Lorine Swainston Goodwin emphasizes the grassroots roles of women and consumer activist groups in the fight for pure food. Like Young, she lauds the Pure Food and Drug Act for being one of the first pieces of legislation to “promote the welfare of the general public in the United States,” and remarks that it is often cited by scholars as one of the landmark achievements of Theodore Roosevelt’s administration and the Progressive Era as a whole. See Clayton A. Coppin and Jack High, *The Politics of Purity: Harvey Washington Wiley and the Origins of Federal Food Policy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999); James Harvey Young, *Pure Food: Securing the Federal Food and Drugs Act of 1906* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989); Lorine Swainston Goodwin, *The Pure Food, Drink, and Drug Crusaders, 1879–1914* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1999).

5 Nancy F. Koehn, “Henry Heinz and Brand Creation in the Late Nineteenth Century: Making Markets for Processed Food,” *The Business History Review* 73:3 (Autumn 1999): 361–62, 375. Koehn notes, however, that Heinz himself would have never used a quintessentially twentieth- and twenty-first-century term like “brand creation” to describe his efforts.

6 Heinz—1906 Records, collection no. 59, box no. 248, book 447, N.W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency Records.

7 Heinz tomato soup advertisement, 1906, N.W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency Records.

8 Donna Wood, “The Strategic Use of Public Policy: Business Support for the 1906 Food and Drug Act,” *Business History Review* 59:3 (Autumn 1985): 403–32. As the article’s title suggests, Wood describes business’s involvement in the fight for regulation as “the strategic use of public policy” and argues that it was central to the passage of the new law.

9 Wood raises a number of important arguments about the relationship between business and the pure food cause, but her article does not look specifically at the role played by the advertising industry. Her analysis fits in with one of the New Left’s key critiques on progressivism’s “corporate liberalism,” including Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900–1916* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963); James Weinstein, *The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State, 1900–1918* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968).

10 In a narrative that has been well documented by historians writing since the 1980s, innovations in manufacturing and transportation coupled with rapid urban growth profoundly altered the American diet in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A broad middle-class “revolution at the table” changed how many Americans produced, consumed, and thought about their food. From mass-produced food products to the influential domestic science movement, this was noticeably not a top-down or bottom-up revolution. Instead, change was propelled outward from the middle. Middle-class dietary reformers expressed concern about both the decadent eating habits of the American upper class who wanted to emulate European aristocrats, and the apparently unhygienic food practices of the urban working class, who at this point were often recent immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. See Harvey Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988). See also Donna Gabaccia, *We Are What We Eat: Ethnic Food and the Making of Americans* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Andrew Haley, *Turning the Tables: Restaurants and the Rise of the American Middle Class, 1880–1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

11 Victorian ideals that hygiene was linked to respectability and morality had taken hold among Britain’s and America’s middle classes during the nineteenth century. See Harvey Levenstein, *Fear of Food: A History of Why We Worry About What We Eat* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Nancy Tomes, *The*

Gospel of Germs: Men, Women, and the Microbe in American Life (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); E. Melane DuPuis, *Nature's Perfect Food: How Milk Became America's Drink* (New York: New York University Press, 2002).

12 Levenstein, *Fear of Food*, 6.

13 *Ibid.*, 6–12.

14 Between 1880 and 1900, most states had enacted pure food laws. More about the state pure food laws that preceded the federal Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906 can be found in Marc T. Law, "The Origins of State Pure Food Regulation," *The Journal of Economic History* 63:4 (December 2003): 1103–30. See also W.D. Bigelow and H.W. Wiley, *Food Legislation in the United States Reprinted from the Report of the Vth International Congress of Applied Chemistry, Berlin 1903* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag, 1904), box 189, folder 1904, Harvey Washington Wiley Papers, 1854–1954, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC (hereafter referred to as Harvey Washington Wiley Papers).

15 Law, "The Origins of State Pure Food Regulation," 1107–09. Law also notes the punishments that violators of some of these state laws could face. For example, in Massachusetts, offenders could be taken to court and fined up to \$500 for producing adulterated food, and in Minnesota, violators could face fines up to \$500, prison sentences of up to one year, or both.

16 Alice Lakey, "A Letter to the Delegates—Annual Meeting, National Consumers League, March 7, 1905, Philadelphia," container A4-A6, reel 3, National Consumers League Records, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, DC (hereafter referred to as National Consumers League Records).

17 Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America 1870–1920* (New York: Free Press, 2003), 160.

18 As McGerr observes, successful campaigns for regulation required "not only a powerful sense of urgency, but a broad, cross-class coalition." McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent*, 160–63. See also Goodwin, *The Pure Food, Drink, and Drug Crusaders*, 152 on how efforts by various reform organizations helped create a "unified consumer front" behind the common cause of federal pure food legislation.

19 "Gen. Miles on the Stand: Tells His Views to the War Investigating Commission," *New York Times*, December 22, 1898; Edward F. Keuchel, "Chemicals and Meat: The Embalmed Beef Scandal of the Spanish-American War," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 48:2 (Summer 1974): 249–64.

20 A comprehensive list of commonly adulterated food products can be found in the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce's *The Adulteration, Misbranding, and Imitation of Foods, Etc., in the District of Columbia, Etc.*, report no. 56-1426, May 10, 1900, 11–12.

21 Wood, "The Strategic Use of Public Policy," 408.

22 Lears, *No Place of Grace*, xiv–xv. According to Lears, this class of men were "some of the most educated and cosmopolitan products of an urbanizing, secularizing society." He describes them as "the 'point men' of cultural change" who "experienced and articulated moral and psychic dilemmas which later became common in the wider society."

23 Roland Marchand, *Advertising the American Dream: Making Way for Modernity, 1920–1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 1. Pamela Walker Laird has similarly described advertisers as "the new prophets of modernity," explaining that advertisers widely adopted the era's "prevailing progress discourse" in order to assert their legitimacy. Pamela Walker Laird, *Advertising Progress: American Business and the Rise of Consumer Marketing* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 6, 9.

24 In his study of the advertising industry, Lears notes that by the early 1910s, the biggest and most influential agencies were staffed by a homogenous group of college-educated (usually at prestigious Northeastern schools) white, native-born men: "They were the sons (only 3 percent were women) of the late-nineteenth-century liberal Protestant elite, and they clung to a secularized version of their parents' worldview: a faith in inevitable progress, unfolding as if in accordance with some divine plan." T.J. Jackson Lears, *Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 154, 220–21. Lears also argues that practitioners of advertising used their social position to construct "the category of 'knowledge'" according to their "particular ideological agendas" and tended "to cast themselves in a key redemptive role."

25 According to Lears, "the rationalization of the kitchen" undertaken by advertisers and advocates of scientific cookery alike "expressed the ethnocentrism of Northeastern WASP elites." *Ibid.*, 184.

26 "The food question" is a term that appeared regularly in American periodicals referring to the complex relationship(s) between diet, health, and nutrition. One writer, Emma Ewing, opined in an 1894 issue of *New England Kitchen Magazine*, "as yet, we know comparatively little of either the art of cookery or the

science of nutrition.” Until these gaps could be filled in, Ewing argued, “we will lack the information necessary to enable us to supply the missing link on the food questions.” Emma P. Ewing, “The Missing Link in the Food Question,” *New England Kitchen Magazine* 1:4 (August 1894): 220. See also “Some Hints on the Food Question,” *The Healthy Home Quarterly* 4:4 (February–April 1905): 17–21, collection no. 60, box 28, Warshaw Collection of Business Americana, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Washington, DC (hereafter referred to as Warshaw Collection).

27 Much has been written on the rise of domestic science and scientific cookery in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The study of home economics and domestic science has and continues to be an important part of American women’s and gender history. See, for example, Marilyn Ferris Motz and Pat Browne, eds., *Making the American Home: Middle-Class Women and Domestic Material Culture, 1840–1940* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1988); Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); Megan J. Elias, *Stir It Up: Home Economics in American Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

28 Fannie Farmer is best known for her 1896 culinary text *The Boston Cooking-School Cook Book*, which was one of the first texts to recommend the use of standardized and level measurements when cooking. Mary J. Lincoln was also a cookbook author associated with the Boston Cooking School; she also endorsed products and edited *New England Kitchen Magazine*. Sarah Tyson Rorer founded the Philadelphia Cooking School and edited *Table Talk* and *Household News* before becoming a staff writer for the *Ladies’ Home Journal*. These writers were informed by what Levenstein refers to as the “New Nutrition”—the emerging idea that food was made up of nutrients like fat, protein, and carbohydrates and that each performed specific physiological functions. See Levenstein, *Revolution at the Table*, 46; see also Kiyoshi Shintani, “Cooking Up Modernity: Culinary Reformers and the Making of Consumer Culture, 1876–1916” (PhD diss., University of Oregon, 2008) for a discussion of how scientific cookery helped modernize American cooking and eating habits.

29 Shintani, “Cooking Up Modernity,” iv–v.

30 Both of these examples are from product cookbooks found in the Product Cookbooks Collection, collection no. 396, box 4, N.W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency Records.

31 It hardly needs to be repeated that consumerism—particularly as it pertains to food—has long been gendered female. In the words of two noted historians of consumer culture, “[s]ince Eve reached for the apple, and so led Adam astray, Western women have been seen as more covetous than men. Classical philosophers and Christian moralists have long associated men with the rational world and women with the material.” John Styles and Amanda Vickery, introduction to *Gender, Taste and Material Culture in Britain and North America, 1700–1830*, eds. John Styles and Amanda Vickery (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 2.

32 “Women in Advertising,” J. Walter Thompson Company (New York), 1918, “Emergence of Advertising in America: 1850–1920” collection, Duke University Libraries Digital Repository, Durham, NC.

33 J. Ellsworth Gross, “The Woman Buyer and the Photograph,” *Ad Sense* 20:5 (May 1906): 395–96, collection no. 60, box 5, Warshaw Collection.

34 William Leach, *Land of Desire: Merchants, Power, and the Rise of a New American Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), 42. See also James D. Norris, *Advertising and the Transformation of American Society, 1865–1920* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990).

35 Leach, *Land of Desire*, 42–43. This growth was caused in large part by the rise of mass circulation print media.

36 Katherine Parkin, *Food is Love: Advertising and Gender Roles in Modern America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 2.

37 Barbara Welter’s seminal 1966 article delineates this ideal. It is important to note that this domestic ideology had begun to erode as the nineteenth century came to a close; ironically, women’s participation in social reform causes like the campaign for pure food would ultimately play a significant role in the formation of the so-called “first wave” of feminism and in the suffrage movement of the early twentieth century. Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood 1820–1860,” *American Quarterly* 18 (1966): 151–74. See also Linda Kerber, “Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman’s Place: The Rhetoric of Women’s History,” *Journal of American History* 75:1 (June 1988): 9–39.

38 The National Consumers League was founded in 1899 by a group that included notable Progressives Jane Addams and Florence Kelley and initially focused on protecting women and children in the garment

trades from exploitation and unsafe working conditions. The organization turned to the pure food cause after receiving support from the General Federation of Women's Clubs for its work on labor. As Lorine Goodwin notes, the NCL was happy to reciprocate when the Federation sought its help on pure food in return: The pure food cause "expanded [the NCL's] base of operation and was a logical companion cause to [its] work in the garment industries." Goodwin, *The Pure Food, Drink, and Drug Crusaders*, 156.

39 Alice Lakey, *Federation Bulletin*, November 1906, 87, quoted in Goodwin, *The Pure Food, Drink, and Drug Crusaders*, 48.

40 Laura Shapiro, *Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1986), 196.

41 "Constitution," *National Consumers League Tenth Annual Report for Two Years Ending March 2, 1909*, 5, container A4–A6, reel 3, National Consumers League Records; Mary Sherman, "Manufacture of Food in Tenements," *National Consumers League Seventh Annual Report Year Ending March 1, 1906*, 35, container A4–A6, reel 3, National Consumers League Records. The NCL believed that foods like these were purchased mainly by the poor and those with poor judgment: "Those who can afford to buy food in the cleaner and better stores feel safe when buying nuts in glass jars, peanut butter from a health food bureau, cakes on Fifth Avenue, and candies wrapped in paper and apparently spotless." There were also distinct racial and class-driven elements behind such warnings, since the venues that so offended reformers were located in working-class neighborhoods and the manufacturing processes were often carried out by recent immigrants to the United States. Mary Sherman, "Manufacture of Food in Tenements," *National Consumers League Seventh Annual Report Year Ending March 1, 1906*, 35, container A4–A6, reel 3, National Consumers League Records.

42 Goodwin, *The Pure Food, Drink, and Drug Crusaders*, 155–56.

43 Regarding the NCL's increasingly central role in the movement, the secretary's report in 1907 boasted of how the NCL had helped transform the campaign for pure food from an interstate to a national effort. "Report of the Secretary," *National Consumers League Eighth Annual Report Year Ending March 5, 1907*, 14, container A4–A6, reel 3, National Consumers League Records.

44 Alice Lakey, "The Committee on Food Investigation," *National Consumers League Eighth Annual Report Year Ending March 5, 1907*, 46–48, container A4–A6, reel 3, National Consumers League Records.

45 "To Save Pure Food Law: Consumers League Making Efforts to Kill Tawney Amendment," *New York Times*, February 12, 1907.

46 Goodwin, *The Pure Food, Drink, and Drug Crusaders*, 276–77; "To Save Pure Food Law."

47 "To Save Pure Food Law."

48 In the twelfth chapter of her book, Goodwin discusses some of these efforts in more detail. Goodwin, "The Augean Stables Are Still Unclean," *The Pure Food, Drink, and Drug Crusaders*, 266–88.

49 "Hobble the Pure Food Law: Special Interests Do as They Please, Consumers' League is Told," *New York Times*, February 9, 1911; "Wants Pure Food Law Enforced," *New York Times*, May 27, 1911. Wiley took an even more strident view. In his 1929 book looking back at the pure food fight, Wiley declared that the "perverting" of the Pure Food and Drug Act was an "amazing crime." In his words, there was "no need" to educate consumers or try and persuade food manufacturers to follow the law after 1906. Rather, officials needed "to brush away all the illegal restrictions which were fastened around the Bureau of Chemistry, and to execute the law as it was written, and as it has been interpreted by the Supreme Court." Harvey Washington Wiley, *The History of a Crime Against the Food Law—The Amazing Story of the National Food and Drugs Law Intended to Protect the Health of the People, Perverted to Protect Adulteration of Foods and Drugs* (Washington: Harvey W. Wiley, 1929), 396–97. See also Courtney I.P. Thomas, *In Food We Trust: The Politics of Purity in American Food Regulation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 21.

50 Thomas, *In Food We Trust*, 21.

51 This "unresolved ... polarity in our thinking" has links to deeply rooted religious and cultural beliefs across various societies and time periods. As Mintz writes, "every religious system must deal in some way or another with the problems posed by the issue of purity in the process of defining itself." Sidney Mintz, "Color, Taste, and Purity" in *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions Into Eating, Culture, and the Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996): 85–86. Anthropologist Mary Douglas wrote about similar ideas. In her classic 1966 study *Purity and Danger*, Douglas notes that almost all cultures have conceptions of what is considered pure and what is considered impure, and argues that humans have long had a need to categorize, maintain, and police the environment around us, which is manifested by labeling certain

things as clean and others as taboo and then regulating and ritualizing people's interactions with them. Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Purity and Taboo* (New York: Routledge, 1966).

52 Thomas, *In Food We Trust*, 12.

53 Bonaparte quoted in Henry Beach Needham, "The People's Lobby and its Pure-Food Work," minutes of the Eleventh Annual Convention of the Association of State and National Food and Dairy Departments held at Jamestown Tercentennial Exposition, July 16–19, 1907 (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1908), 249.

54 This refers to the subtitle of his book, cited in endnote 49.

55 Wiley quoted in Mark Pendergrast, *For God, Country, and Coca-Cola: The Unauthorized History of the Great American Soft Drink and the Company That Makes It* (New York: Scribner, 1993), 111.

56 Ibid.

57 According to his biographer, Henry Heinz was "one of the few leaders in the canning and preserving industries who openly supported" the pure food cause. Robert C. Alberts, *The Good Provider: H.J. Heinz and his 57 Varieties* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1973), 171.

58 Ibid. Most businesses that were affected by the possibility of federal pure food legislation "expressed support for the *idea* of a federal law but opposed various particulars in the many bills that were presented to Congress. Support, opposition, and ad hoc objections alike arose from businesspeople's perceptions of how the law would affect their own operations." Emphasis is in original. See also Donna Wood, "The Strategic Use of Public Policy," 413.

59 Heinz, "Wide-Open Kitchens" advertisement, collection no. 59, box 248, book 447, N.W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency Records.

60 Heinz, "An Impartial Statement on the Grave Importance to The Public Health" advertisement, collection no. 59, box 248, book 447, N.W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency Records. Capitalization is in original.

61 Heinz, "The Food YOU Eat!" advertisement, collection no. 59, box 248, book 447, N.W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency Records. Emphasis is in original.

62 Heinz, "An Impartial Statement on the Grave Importance to The Public Health" advertisement.

63 Clayton Coppin, "James Wilson and Harvey Wiley: The Dilemma of Bureaucratic Entrepreneurship," *Agricultural History* (Spring 1990): 177–78.

64 Ibid., 178. James Harvey Young also discusses this contentious relationship and notes that Wiley's dealings with President Taft were "scarcely less difficult." James Harvey Young, "Food and Drug Regulation under the USDA, 1906–1940," *Agricultural History* (Spring 1990): 137–38.

65 Coppin, "James Wilson and Harvey Wiley," 178–79.

66 Ibid., 179. According to *McClure's Magazine*, LaDow was a "dapper old man" who had "been around politics in one way or another since he was private secretary to the first Secretary of Agriculture. George Kibbe Turner, "Getting Allyn: A Record of Truth," *McClure's Magazine* 48 (November 1916) 87.

67 "The Reactionaries are Exuberant," *National Food Magazine*, December 1909.

68 "Dooming the Food Poisoners," *The North American*, September 5, 1910. The publication also wrote about the "lowering by the national government of the high pure food standards set up by Dr. Wiley." Beginning in 1909, *The North American* also hired an independent chemist to test supposedly pure food products. If a product passed their test, it would then be listed in the newspaper's thrice-weekly "Honest Foods" column. See, for example, "Food Products of Tested Purity Are Put on Honor List," *The North American*, December 7, 1909.

69 Samuel Hopkins Adams, "What Has Become of Our Pure Food Law?" *Hampton's Magazine*, February 1910, 234–35.

70 "The Poisoners' Latest Insolence," *The North American*, October 7, 1910; Alfred W. McCann, "Why Is Doctor Wiley Hated?" *The North American*, November 20, 1910.

71 "Credit to Whom Credit Is Due," *National Food Magazine*, December 1909.

72 According to *The North American*, "the great questions" of the Payne-Aldrich Tariff Act of 1909 and conservation of resources like timber, coal, and water power had overshadowed the pure food cause. "Dooming the Food Poisoners."

73 "Dooming the Food Poisoners"; "Only Honest Foods Will Be Shown at This Big Exhibition," *The North American*, September 5, 1910; "A Year's Fight for Honest Food," *The North American*, December 15, 1910.

74 "Dooming the Food Poisoners"; "Throng Cheers as Expert Denounces Benzoate as Fraud," *The North American*, September 22, 1910.

75 "Big Firms to Incorporate in Great Pure Food Fight," *The North American*, November 9, 1910.

76 American Association for the Promotion of Purity in Food Products, “Platform Subscribed to By Members” (1909), Purity in Food Products, collection no. 59, box 411, series 02, N.W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency Records.

77 Several newspaper and magazine articles lauded the AAPPFP for the “renewed energy” it lent to the “fighters” for pure food. See “Credit to Whom Credit Is Due.” See also “Big Firms to Incorporate in Great Pure Food Fight”; “The Association for the Promotion of Purity in Food Products,” *National Food Magazine*, August 1910. The former discussed how the association called for resolutions, including the establishment of a federal department of public health dealing with food issues, and the latter fawned over the association, proclaiming that “the consumers of food in the United States [owed] a lasting debt of gratitude” to its “honorable” and “honest” corporate members.

78 “Pure Food Makers Uphold New Laws; Issue a New Warning,” *The North American*, January 2, 1910.

79 “Credit to Whom Credit Is Due.”

80 Premier Food Products advertisement, October 11, 1912, *Evening World*, box 207, Harvey Washington Wiley Papers.

81 Miles Orvell, *The Real Thing: Imitation and Authenticity in American Culture, 1880–1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), xv.

82 Though the term “pure food” is not used as frequently as a marketing tool today as it was at the turn of the twentieth century, the same sentiments remain, albeit with slightly different terminology. For example, words found in contemporary food advertising such as “natural,” “wholesome,” and “goodness” can be considered synonymous with the Progressive Era’s “purity” and “pure.”