

June 20, 2013

Jennifer Rubin posts on the president's disappearing act.

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Turns out Israel has green weenie frauds too. Caroline Glick tells us about an electric car company with the hubris to call itself - Better Place. Then she writes about oil discovered in Israel.

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*Indeed, according to Channel 2, more than a hundred of the 900 owners of Better Place cars worked for the company. And the majority of the other owners purchased the electric car as a second or third car. ...*

USA Today with an OpEd providing another example of why you don't want to start a business in this country.

*As a mother of three who has struggled to stick to a family budget, I know the frustration parents feel as they watch children grow out of brand new clothes seemingly overnight. That's why in*

1997, I started a kids' clothing consignment business, a little like the ones that are everywhere now but also a little different.

What started as a small family business operating out of our home has grown to 22 states. Now, though, it might all turn out to be illegal, thanks to the bureaucratic thinking of the Department of Labor.

### **Help a mother out**

The business model that parents thought was an innovation, but that Labor sees as a menace, is simple but effective. You might have heard of it: cooperation.

We rent a large space for a few days, say an unused department store. Parents with clothes and children's items to sell sign up online, enter their items into a computerized tracking system and choose their sale price. Then they bring the clothes and other items to the sale location, label them with preprinted price tags and display the clothes. Parents keep 70%; we keep 30%. It is easier than a garage sale, makes more money for parents, and shoppers efficiently find good deals.

A big part of our success are the hundreds of parents — both consignors and shoppers — who voluntarily work brief shifts to help set up before the sale starts. In exchange, these parents get to shop first with more choices and better merchandise.

In January, though, the Department of Labor noticed all this cooperation going on. Months later, investigators concluded that volunteers are "employees" under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

This means paying the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, filling out IRS paperwork and complying with who-knows-what other rules. And all for a pop-up business that lasts days. ...

### **City Journal** article notes the changes to women's magazines.

Some of the most venerable brands in your grocery store sit not on the shelf but on the checkout line, where magazines like *Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Redbook* have been reflecting women's lives for decades. From one month to the next, little seems to vary; the celebrity interviews and fashion spreads blend into one another, creating the impression of a seamless, unchanging world.

Yet if you compare the women's magazines of today with their counterparts of 50 years ago, you'll find it impossible to miss how dramatically different they are—and how daily life has transformed along with them. For example, in 1963, *Good Housekeeping* could report that 40 percent of its readers were in the workforce; by 2010, roughly 75 percent of women aged 25 to 54 were. In 1963, the average age of first marriage for women hovered around 20.5; by 2012, it had risen to 26.6. Clearly, women's lives have changed enormously. But a historical journey through the checkout racks suggests that they haven't always changed in the ways you'd think.

Start with something that hasn't changed: American women's obsession with their figures. The January 1963 *Redbook* featured a cover line on a 10-DAY DIET TO HELP YOU RECOVER

*FROM THE HOLIDAYS; the February 2013 issue cajoles readers to “get to your best weight ever” and promises “the plan and the push you need.” The April 1963 Ladies’ Home Journal pledged ideas on how to “dine well on 300 calories”; the February 2013 issue offers a more cheerful take on weight control: “Yay! Retire your fat pants forever.” One shudders to think of the pounds lost and gained over five decades of readership.*

*Given current obesity rates, the readers of women’s magazines were probably thinner in 1963. But their magazines weren’t. Flip through the weighty 50-year-old issues, and you’ll soon feel, literally, a massive cultural shift in what women expect from their periodicals. In 1963, consuming a magazine could take days. Early that year, Good Housekeeping serialized Daphne du Maurier’s novel of the French Revolution, *The Glass-Blowers*, cramming much of it into a mere three issues. In May, GH ran a large portion of Edmund Fuller’s novel *The Corridor*, a feat that required stretching the magazine to 274 text-heavy pages. Redbook’s March 1963 issue featured Hortense Calisher’s novel *Textures of Life* and five short stories, a level of fiction ambition that even *The New Yorker* rarely attempts now. There is verse, too. At one point, a dense page of du Maurier’s text makes room for Catherine MacChesney’s “From the Window,” letting Good Housekeeping readers experience poetry and prose at the same time. Marion Lineaweaver’s ode to the coming spring in LHM (“The wind is milk / So perfectly fresh, cool / Smooth on the tongue”) was one of six poems in the March 1963 issue alone. ...*

**MS Magazine** writer, and anti-gun activist decides to carry a gun for a month.  
*My hands are shaking; my adrenaline is surging.*

*No, it’s not from the latte I just inhaled or because this is the first time in two years I’ve been in a Starbucks since declaring a boycott on its [open-carry gun policy](#).*

*What’s got me jittery this morning is the 9mm Glock that’s holstered on my hip. Me, lead gun policy protester at the 2010 Starbucks [shareholder meeting](#). Me, a board member of the [Brady Campaign](#). Me, the author of a book about the impact of gun violence, [Beyond the Bullet](#).*

*Yes, I bought a handgun and will carry it everywhere I go over the next 30 days. I have four rules: Carry it with me at all times, follow the laws of my state, only do what is minimally required for permits, licensing, purchasing and carrying, and finally be prepared to use it for protecting myself at home or in public.*

*Why? Following the [Newtown massacre](#) in December, the NRA’s Wayne LaPierre, [told](#) the country, “The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun.” I wondered what would it be like to be that good guy with a gun? What would it be like to get that gun, live with that gun, be out and about with that gun. Finally, what happens when you don’t want that gun any more?*

*I decided to find out. ...*

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## Right Turn

### Obama's disappearing act

by Jennifer Rubin

There are certainly different *styles* of leadership. But President Obama is suffering the results of poor choices (passing a huge new entitlement on a party-line vote) and of what can only be described as a lack of courage.

Brit Hume says it as well as anyone: "When the issues are difficult and the options unappetizing he tends simply to go away."

Obama practically disappeared from the scene (no calls to Cabinet officials, no convening in the Situation Room) on the night of the Benghazi, Libya, attack. He seems more concerned on the NSA flap with distancing himself from conservatives whom he loathes ("I am not Dick Cheney") and in Syria on protecting his self-image (he ends wars, doesn't start them) than in taking the heat from Democrats. When coverage is not glowing, he becomes cranky with the media (as does his spokesman). He is most at ease campaigning before a crowd (whether it is an election or not) when he can accuse opponents of ill-will and flail away at straw men with no interruption.

Contrast that with a happy warrior like New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie who is delighted when engaging opponents and takes pleasure not only in confronting critics but also winning them over:

Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) makes his arguments with PowerPoint and raw data. Even with (especially with!) right-wing critics, Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) is polite to a fault while making his arguments in a lawyerly fashion.

There is no single leadership style a president must embrace. To be successful, however, often requires a politician to get out of his party's cocoon (as Christie is forced to do every day, as Ryan had to do in moving the party on fiscal issues, as Rubio is doing on immigration) to achieve big things and take on the mantle of leadership. If you simply turn up the volume on the conventional wisdom of one's own party (unless you are a radio talk show host), you are unlikely to succeed. To impress those outside the party or to stand out from the crowd *within* the party often requires willingness to undertake considerable criticism and risk losing the affections of the most stubborn wing of your party.

Indeed partisans too often think that leadership amounts to the most voracious expression of party dogma. That of course is recitation, not leadership. Leadership means taking people from here to there, even when they are uncertain or ignorant about the best course. A party chairman rallies the faithful; a president widens his gaze to embrace the entire country and to win over political opponents.

Obama is floundering, in part because his leadership was superficial (play to the base, mouth platitudes) and in part because he is a mediocre leader when things are going poorly (i.e. when it matters). Perhaps uninterrupted success in politics after one defeat in a congressional race and the echo chamber of continual applause from the left provided him with a false sense of his ability to persuade and of the world's willingness to fall in line. In proudly telling voters that the

White House counsel tried to “protect” the president from involvement in the IRS scandal, we learned much about a White House turned inward toward self-protection rather than outward to plow new ground.

In any event, when events spin out of control or complex crises hit, Obama tends to complain that decisions are “hard” or situations are “complex.” Presidents adept at leadership and attuned to resolving actual conflict don’t talk that way. If the questions are easy or simple someone else can deal with them. The country deserves better than an AWOL president.

## Jerusalem Post

### [Oil brings us to a better place](#)

***Unlike the situation with Better Place, economic laws of supply and demand work in favor of Israel's energy solution.***

by Caroline Glick

By all accounts, Shai Agassi, the founder and original CEO of Better Place, Israel’s bankrupt electric car company, is an extremely charismatic man. His charm had politicians, venture capitalists, celebrities and non-automotive industry reporters slobbering over him. Everyone wanted to get their picture taken with the man who would transform Israel’s auto industry into the first electric powered industry in the world and transform the start-up nation into the transportation hothouse for the world.

Agassi’s vision was simple and easy to understand.

By 2020, half of Israel’s cars would be battery powered electric cars supplied by his company, Better Place. We would replace our internal combustion engines, powered by oil produced by our worst enemies, with batteries produced by Better Place. Better Place would overcome the technological deficits of batteries that are only capable of powering a car for short distances by building battery changing stations throughout the country. Instead of filling up our tanks with gas, we would replace our battery.

And our enemies would go bankrupt.

The only ones not convinced by Agassi’s plans were people who actually understand the car market generally and the Israeli car market in particular.

Automotive industry reporters warned as early as 2008 that Israeli drivers would need incentives to buy into a new technology. Cars in Israel are prohibitively expensive. The government charges 82 percent customs duties on imported cars. If electric cars could be cheap cars, then they had a chance of succeeding.

To help Better Place succeed, the government gave the company a massive discount on import taxes. Better Place, which signed a deal with Renault to produce a battery-charged model of the Fluence family car, paid only 10% import duties for the car.

Instead of passing the savings off on its customers, Better Place cars cost the same amount as regular gasoline powered cars. And that’s not including the cost of the battery or the monthly

subscription to Better Place battery charging services.

So there was no economic incentive to buy the car.

Many have chalked the failure of Better Place up to its poor management. And no doubt Agassi's management skills didn't hold a candle to his skill as a salesman. The company's business model was an incoherent study in overreach and hubris.

But the fact remains, the car was too expensive.

And that makes some sense. Building a whole national infrastructure for electric cars is expensive.

The only incentives Better Place gave consumers were ideological. And as it worked out, only 900 people were willing to pay full price to own a car whose actual battery life was between 100 and 120 kilometers, just to reduce their carbon footprint or to screw the Arabs.

To summarize, the government gave Better Place a massive tax break. Investors poured \$840 million into the company. The media showered the company in fabulous free PR.

And in four years, it only managed to sell 900 cars.

That tells you something about economics.

The iron rule of supply and demand is foolproof.

If the price is too high, people won't buy your product. And if the ticket price of being the pioneers in a risky market, of having to go out of your way to get to the battery swap stations, and of swapping your battery three to four times more often than you have to fill up your gas tank is the same as the price of a normal car, then no one will want to be a pioneer. And no one did.

Indeed, according to Channel 2, more than a hundred of the 900 owners of Better Place cars worked for the company. And the majority of the other owners purchased the electric car as a second or third car.

People warn that Better Place's failure will harm the reputation of Israel's hi-tech economy.

But these warnings make little sense. Better Place wasn't a hi-tech firm. It was an electric car company. And it wasn't selling new technology.

It simply packaged old failed technology in a new way.

What failed with Better Place wasn't the idea of Israeli hi-tech prowess and ingenuity. What failed – again – was the notion that there is a way to use alternative energy sources – like electricity – to replace the internal combustion engine. And there isn't. There isn't because laws of supply and demand govern the economics of the car industry even when Shai Agassi is the one selling alternative economic laws.

One of the attractive aspects of the alternative fuels market is that it allows people who care

about security to partner with radical environmentalists who oppose the consumption of oil.

No other issue brings far-right security hawks together with far-left environmentalists. And while most environmentalists are unmoved by the presence of conservative hawks in their coalitions, conservatives are overjoyed at the opportunity to rub shoulders with members of Greenpeace and the Sierra Club. Maybe one of the reasons that many security hawks remain enamored of alternative fuels despite their clear inability to replace oil on an open market is because they are unwilling to abandon their one common cause with the Left.

But the time has come to abandon the environmentalists.

Israel has the means to achieve energy independence and pave the way for the free world to neutralize the economic power of the Islamic world.

Unlike the situation with Better Place, economic laws of supply and demand work in favor of Israel's energy solution. The only force standing in the way is a coalition of radical environmentalists who oppose all oil consumption because they believe that the greatest threat to the world is global warming. They don't want cheap oil.

They want oil at \$500/barrel. They don't want clean oil at cheap prices. They want us all to live in crowded cities, become vegetarians and travel around on mass transit or ride bicycles.

Four years ago, Israel discovered that it is sitting on top of a massive amount of oil. South of Jerusalem, in the Shfela Basin beginning around 15 km. from Kiryat Gat, Israel has an estimated 150 billion barrels of oil – or 60% of Saudi Arabia's reserve capacity. The oil is located in shale rock located 300 meters below ground. It is separated from Israel's underground aquifer by 200 meters of impermeable rock on either side.

If tapped into, Israel's domestic oil supply could provide us with energy independence for hundreds of years. At the initial stage, we could produce enough to satisfy entirely the IDF's fuel requirements – 50,000 barrels a day. And we could refine it at Ashdod without even having to expand our refining capacities. In later stages, we could produce enough oil to satisfy the entire country's consumption needs of 80 million barrels a year.

A visit with the senior executives of Israel Energy Initiatives is frustrating journey into Israel's political pathologies. IEI holds the license to develop Israel's shale oil deposit. CEO Relik Shafir, a retired air force brigadier- general, explains that due to a well-funded campaign of radical environmentalists directed by Greenpeace in Turkey, IEI has entered a "Kafkaesque regulatory universe," where a pilot project to demonstrate its technology has been held up for four years.

First through petitions to the Supreme Court spearheaded by the far-left, New Israel Fund-supported Adam Teva V'Din environmentalist movement, IEI's pilot project was delayed for a year. The pilot, which will take three years, involves demonstrating IEI's technology for oil extraction by extracting 500 barrels from a test area south of Beit Shemesh.

The Supreme Court found in favor of IEI, but required the government to rewrite the law governing oil explorations. Radical environmentalists at the Environmental Protection Ministry coupled with incompetent bureaucrats at the Ministries of Justice, Energy and Interior delayed the project for another three years by delaying the drafting process.

Now the law has passed. And all that stands between IEI and the pilot program is the Jerusalem Planning Board. The board will likely begin deliberations on the plans in the fall.

IEI's chief scientist, Dr. Harold Vinegar, worked as chief scientist for Royal Dutch Shell. There Vinegar developed the technology for shale oil extraction. To transform the shale rock into liquid crude oil, shale oil needs to be heated to 300 degrees Celsius. Heated at that temperature, in three years, the rocks melt into liquid fuel that is extracted through production wells.

Vinegar developed the means to heat the rocks inside the earth with heaters dropped 300 meters. Due to the shale rock's isolation from the aquifers, and the fact that 9 meters from the heated area, the rock temperature remains 25 degrees Celsius, IEI's technologies will have no impact on the environment, either below or above the surface.

The basic rationale of the environmentalists' campaign against IEI's pilot is to kill Israel's ability to develop its oil fields before the public realizes what is involved. Once the pilot is approved, assuming it lives up to IEI's projections that it will be able to mass produce oil at \$40/barrel, public support for the initiative will be so great, and the economic logic of moving forward will be so overwhelming, that the project will be unstoppable.

Unlike Better Place, IEI won't need a charismatic salesman from Silicon Valley to sell its product.

Today Israel pays \$100 per barrel for Brent crude, or NIS 2.2 per liter. Consumers pay NIS 8 per liter at the gas pump, which includes refining and transport costs and taxes. If Israel produced its own fuel, although the government would certainly continue to overtax it, and it would still need to be refined and transported, there can be little doubt that the price for consumers would be significantly lower. And most important, the supply would be guaranteed.

One of the IEI's minor investors is Australian news mogul Rupert Murdoch. Murdoch is interested in IEI because there are also massive deposits of oil shale in Australia. If IEI's pilot is successful, Australia will doubtlessly follow Israel's lead in developing its own energy independence through oil shale development.

Unlike the situation with Better Place, there is no hype surrounding IEI – except the negative hype generated by the radical environmentalists.

For an oil company sitting on the license area covering an estimated 40 billion barrels of oil, IEI's appearance is shockingly modest. Whereas Better Place wasted tens of millions on glamorous offices and a huge workforce, IEI office suites are as plain as can be. President Effi Eitam, former minister of national infrastructure, works in a tiny, cluttered office and sits behind a nondescript desk on an inexpensive chair. Employees work in cubicles.

IEI has not waged a campaign to counter the environmentalist propaganda because it believes that the facts will speak for themselves. The minute IEI is able to run its pilot, it is convinced that the public will back it. Whether or not this is the proper strategy will be determined in the coming months by the Jerusalem Planning Committee.

In the meantime, due to shale oil fracking, the US has moved from net oil importer to net oil exporter in five years. In the same period, Israel has seen IEI's pilot delayed year after year as politicians and reporters have followed alternative fuel pipers into bankruptcy.



## USA Today

### Department of Labor vs. me

*My business is being stifled by outmoded dictates from a world I never lived in.*

by Rhea Lana Riner

As a mother of three who has struggled to stick to a family budget, I know the frustration parents feel as they watch children grow out of brand new clothes seemingly overnight. That's why in 1997, I started a [kids' clothing consignment business](#), a little like the ones that are everywhere now but also a little different.

What started as a small family business operating out of our home has grown to 22 states. Now, though, it might all turn out to be illegal, thanks to the bureaucratic thinking of the Department of Labor.

### **Help a mother out**

The business model that parents thought was an innovation, but that [Labor sees as a menace](#), is simple but effective. You might have heard of it: cooperation.

We rent a large space for a few days, say an unused department store. Parents with clothes and children's items to sell sign up online, enter their items into a computerized tracking system and choose their sale price. Then they bring the clothes and other items to the sale location, label them with preprinted price tags and display the clothes. Parents keep 70%; we keep 30%. It is easier than a garage sale, makes more money for parents, and shoppers efficiently find good deals.

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In January, though, the Department of Labor noticed all this cooperation going on. Months later, investigators concluded that volunteers are "employees" under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

This means paying the [federal minimum wage](#) of \$7.25 per hour, filling out IRS paperwork and complying with who-knows-what other rules. And all for a pop-up business that lasts days.

### **Bear-building tyranny**

Think about that for a second. I've offered regular parents the same opportunities that eBay gives independent resellers. When I do it in the real world to recycle used clothes, the Department of Labor says no way. That's bunk. My volunteers are not employees or independent contractors. They're customers.

By this dreadful logic, Build-a-Bear Workshop employs child labor when it lets its young customers assemble their own teddy bears.

Unfortunately, as my situation shows, too many new ideas are being held back by rules that are stuck in the past. When the Fair Labor Standards Act was [written in 1938](#), nobody was imagining a collaborative, social business like mine. And I'm far from the only entrepreneur stifled by outmoded dictates from a world I never lived in.

In many states, cutting-edge transportation companies like [Uber](#), which uses smartphones to match sedan drivers with riders, [are being threatened by laws](#) written during the era of the rotary phone.

What's clear is that America's entrepreneurs don't need government as a partner. My business didn't become successful because of government assistance; it became successful because my customers like the way I do business.

The economy thrives when entrepreneurs and consumers are allowed to cooperate with one another. If we want the real world economy to thrive as much as the innovative Internet world, entrepreneurs need the same freedom to innovate.

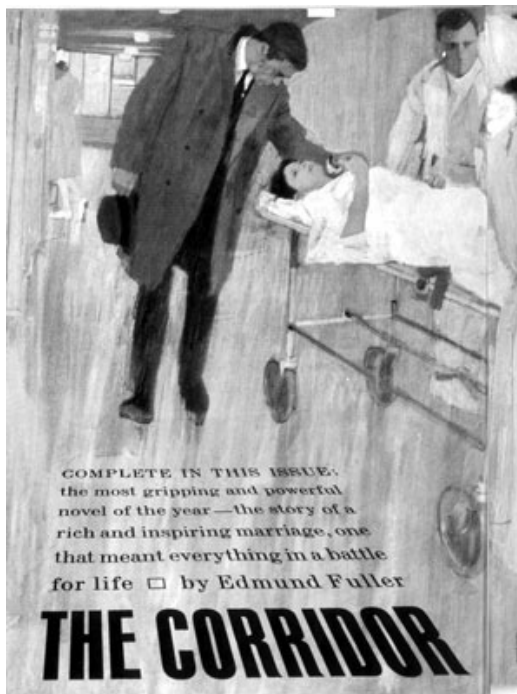
*Rhea Lana Riner is the founder and president of Rhea Lana's, Inc.*

## City Journal

### [Journey Through the Checkout Racks](#)

*Comparing women's magazines, then and now, shows how much America has changed.*

by Laura Vandekam



*In 1963, Good Housekeeping assumed that its readers wanted serious fiction . . .*

Some of the most venerable brands in your grocery store sit not on the shelf but on the checkout line, where magazines like *Good Housekeeping*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, and *Redbook* have been reflecting women's lives for decades. From one month to the next, little seems to vary; the celebrity interviews and fashion spreads blend into one another, creating the impression of a seamless, unchanging world.

Yet if you compare the women's magazines of today with their counterparts of 50 years ago, you'll find it impossible to miss how dramatically different they are—and how daily life has transformed along with them. For example, in 1963, *Good Housekeeping* could report that 40 percent of its readers were in the workforce; by 2010, roughly 75 percent of women aged 25 to 54 were. In 1963, the average age of first marriage for women hovered around 20.5; by 2012, it had risen to 26.6. Clearly, women's lives have changed enormously. But a historical journey through the checkout racks suggests that they haven't always changed in the ways you'd think.

Start with something that *hasn't* changed: American women's obsession with their figures. The January 1963 *Redbook* featured a cover line on a 10-DAY DIET TO HELP YOU RECOVER FROM THE HOLIDAYS; the February 2013 issue cajoles readers to "get to your best weight ever" and promises "the plan and the push you need." The April 1963 *Ladies' Home Journal* pledged ideas on how to "dine well on 300 calories"; the February 2013 issue offers a more cheerful take on weight control: "Yay! Retire your fat pants forever." One shudders to think of the pounds lost and gained over five decades of readership.

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## BRIGHT IDEAS FOR BUSY WIVES

Ways to make the most of your  
time and energy... and have  
some left "all to yourself"!



Busy, says Webster, means constantly active. Heaven knows, wives are that! Thousands of details, big and little, to see to every day . . . a dozen outside activities to sandwich in between. And for a phenomenal 40 percent of you, a demanding outside job besides the care of your home. No wonder you're so enthusiastic about new ways to do things. But they must be ways that *work*—in *your* home, with *your* family, within *your* budget. We've put our collective heads together and come up with 127 ideas that will work just that way. Look them over (they run from here to page 126) and see if you don't agree.

INSTITUTE / FOODS & COOKERY / DOROTHY B. MARSH; DIRECTOR / BEAUTY CLINIC / MAIRE FRIMON; DIRECTOR / APPLIANCES & HOME CARE / JANE KEELY; DIRECTOR

JAMES WILKES

. . . and detailed advice on how to be good housewives.

Given current obesity rates, the readers of women's magazines were probably thinner in 1963. But their magazines weren't. Flip through the weighty 50-year-old issues, and you'll soon feel, literally, a massive cultural shift in what women expect from their periodicals. In 1963, consuming a magazine could take days. Early that year, *Good Housekeeping* serialized Daphne du Maurier's novel of the French Revolution, *The Glass-Blowers*, cramming much of it into a mere three issues. In May, *GH* ran a large portion of Edmund Fuller's novel *The Corridor*, a feat that required stretching the magazine to 274 text-heavy pages. *Redbook's* March 1963 issue featured Hortense Calisher's novel *Textures of Life* and five short stories, a level of fiction ambition that even *The New Yorker* rarely attempts now. There is verse, too. At one point, a dense page of du Maurier's text makes room for Catherine MacChesney's "From the Window,"

letting *Good Housekeeping* readers experience poetry and prose at the same time. Marion Lineaweaver's ode to the coming spring in *LHJ* ("The wind is milk / So perfectly fresh, cool / Smooth on the tongue") was one of six poems in the March 1963 issue alone.

That erudition is all the more surprising when you consider that women's magazines reached a far larger fraction of the population in 1963 than they do now. *Good Housekeeping* hit a circulation of about 5.5 million readers in the mid-1960s, at a time when there were about 50 million women between the ages of 18 and 64 in the country. *Ladies' Home Journal* reached close to 7 million readers. Editors assumed, then, that a hefty proportion of American women wanted to ponder poetic metaphor.

Apparently, those women also wanted to read serious nonfiction. Betty Friedan's manifesto *The Feminine Mystique*, widely credited with launching Second Wave feminism, was helped in its quest for bestseller status when women's magazines like *LHJ* ran prepublication excerpts. In March 1963, *Redbook* covered a doctor's agonizing decision to leave Castro's Cuba after becoming disillusioned with the socialist revolution. *GH*'s May 1963 issue ran "A Negro Father Speaks," in which Luther Jackson, a *Washington Post* reporter, described the racism that his family had experienced and tried to dispel some myths that the magazine's mostly white readers might have believed about their black fellow citizens. Luther recalled being "angry and humiliated" when a little girl, seeing him on the street, shouted, "There's a colored man, there's a colored man!" But he also noted that his own four-year-old had once shouted, "There's a man with no legs!" when encountering an amputee. What is hatred, and what is merely unfamiliarity? Adding their own comment to this nuanced analysis, the magazine's editors attached a sidebar to the piece, noting that Luther "feels, and so do the editors of *Good Housekeeping*, that increased understanding among all people will enable children to live in a world far different from the one known to generations before theirs." Keep in mind that this was in the spring of 1963—before the March on Washington, before the Civil Rights Act, before the "Freedom Summer."

*Redbook*'s January 1963 issue provides further evidence that the editors of women's magazines felt no fear of controversial topics. The previous year, actress Sherri Finkbine had famously traveled to Sweden for an abortion after learning that thalidomide might have injured her unborn child. *Redbook*'s top cover line, HOW THALIDOMIDE TURNED A PREGNANCY INTO A NIGHTMARE: SHERRI FINKBINE'S OWN STORY, pointed the reader to a lengthy article called "The Baby We Didn't Dare to Have." The editors' note in that issue discussed efforts to legalize abortion—following up, the editors noted, on a report in *Redbook*'s August 1959 issue about how many doctors broke abortion laws. The magazine was trying to shape the national conversation. Even its story about counseling parishioners delved into big issues. "Our modern knowledge of psychology and psychiatry," wrote Ardis Whitman, "is no obstacle to religion but has in fact driven the minister to inquire more deeply into the meaning of human personality than ever before." What is sin, the article asked, and what is mental illness? Are ministers trained to treat both?

These are deep questions suggesting a deep interest in the world. So it's jarring—to the 2013 reader, at any rate—to read the how-to articles that the meaty features and novels are sandwiched between. In *GH*'s March 1963 issue, Helen Valentine's monthly column, *The Young Wife's World*, tried to answer a young woman who had written to ask: "Just what is good housekeeping? What needs to be done daily, weekly, monthly?" Though much depended on the woman and her house, family, and temperament, Valentine responded, "I would say that any home needs to be straightened up every day—dusted, ash trays emptied, beds neatly made,

clutter cleared away.” What’s the most surprising part of that sentence to our modern ears—emptying ashtrays? At the time, about 40 percent of adult Americans smoked, far more than today’s 19 percent.

Or are we more surprised by the idea of daily dusting? According to sociologists Suzanne Bianchi, John Robinson, and Melissa Milkie in *Changing Rhythms of American Family Life*, married American mothers spent close to 35 hours per week on housework in 1965. (One of Friedan’s stories for *Ladies’ Home Journal* was “Have American Housewives Traded Brains for Brooms?”) The magazines assumed that their readers were competent at sewing and needlework; the February 1963 *GH* featured instructions for knitting a coat that was a “weightless classic of mohair, matchless for the bright-lights mood of a night on the town, just as stunning by day.”

Indeed, the homemaking standards were sometimes almost comical. In March 1963, *Good Housekeeping* ran 500 words on how to wax a floor. A time-saving tip: “To apply a paste polishing wax, spread a small amount on the waxing brushes with a butter knife.” Perhaps less amusing is another article in that issue called “A Spanking-Clean Nursery” (people still spoke of spanking in polite company). “No one needs to tell a mother that the room where baby sleeps should be immaculate,” the story began. “But many mothers say they would like to know more about how to keep a nursery in this pristine state.” The young mother was instructed to “wet-mop the floor at least once a week. Dry-mop it daily and be vigilant about wiping up spills and splashes after you feed or bathe the baby.” The mother should also keep a large sponge handy to clean the crib, windowsills, and woodwork.

Such a regimen of floor-waxing and dusting could quickly eat up the time that a mother could have used to play with her children. In 1965, married mothers spent just 10.6 hours per week on child care as a primary activity, according to the same trio of sociologists. That included 9.1 hours of “routine activities,” such as bathing and dressing, and a mere 1.5 hours of “interactive activities”—the reading, playing, and chatting that we now think of as quality time.

Then there was cooking. All get-togethers required baked goods, and not of the supermarket-cookie variety. The 1963 housewife apparently lived in terror that neighbors might stop by unexpectedly for coffee and that she wouldn’t have a spread ready. To solve just that problem, the March 1963 issue of *GH* offered recipes for a “quartet of coffeecakes” that could be made ahead of time and frozen. March’s *Good Housekeeping* described a “molded three-fruit salad” made with mayonnaise, cream cheese, heavy cream, canned pineapple, and canned Royal Anne cherries.

All that was missing was any sense of how long these recipes would take. “The assumption was that you had that kind of time,” says historian Stephanie Coontz, director of research at the Council on Contemporary Families. “Once the kids got off to school, you could spend the rest of the day cooking if you wanted.” Some women with too *much* time on their hands—those with older or grown children, for example—might have welcomed the devotion that cooking demanded. The promise of women’s magazines was that “we can keep you busy 20 hours a day—if you chop the celery very fine for that lime Jell-O salad,” says Coontz.

Perhaps that explains why the magazines advertised so many convenience foods, from Campbell’s soups to Hunt’s tomato sauce to Duncan Hines brownies, and nevertheless printed recipes that incorporated those easy elements into complicated dishes. One *LHJ* story from April 1963, “The Magic of Mixes,” noted that “every mix is a bagful of tricks. Each ‘instant,’

canned and frozen food too.” All these foods were “excellent as is,” the article conceded, “but look what happens when they become an ingredient. Our Beef Cottage Pie, for example, begins in a box—or rather boxes, plural—then materializes as hearty, fork-tender chunks of beef in a magic gravy (dry soups are the secret).”

Over the past 50 years, as women have poured into the workforce, the amount of housework that they do has cratered. By 2000, say Bianchi and her colleagues, married mothers were devoting 19.4 hours per week to it. But the amount of time that they were spending with their children rose to 12.9 hours a week, including 3.3 hours spent on “interactive activities.” Many mothers consequently feel pulled in many directions at once. Not long ago, a WorkingMother.com poll asked readers when they’d last had “me time.” About 50 percent of respondents claimed that they couldn’t remember (though you have to wonder when, exactly, these busy women find the time to answer online polls).

Maybe that’s one reason that today’s women’s magazines are so short. The February 2013 *Ladies’ Home Journal* runs just 104 pages. The longest features top out at six pages, and they’re graphics-heavy. No longer do editors view their product as something that you’ll curl up with for hours over the course of a month. Instead, a magazine is something that a woman-on-the-go can grab to fill those scarce snatches of “me time”: 15 minutes of waiting for the kids at soccer practice, or 20 minutes on the bus to work.

The articles in today’s women’s magazines seem to be written explicitly for this “me time”—that is, centered on the reader herself and not on the larger world. After reading through the 1963 magazines, one can’t help finding the modern ones a bit shallow. It’s hard to imagine a social revolution being launched from their pages, as Friedan’s partly was. Only a few features deal with something beyond the reader’s own life—a tale in *LHJ*, for instance, of how the mother of a soldier killed in action met the nurse who treated him. Gone (mostly) are the short stories and the novels. In the 1963 *Redbook*, the anthropologist Margaret Mead answered outward-facing questions from readers (“Do very primitive societies have humor?” “Do you believe that our laws on drug addiction should be revised?”). In the 2013 *Redbook*, a similar role is filled by Soleil Moon Frye, the actress best known for playing Punky Brewster, who answers readers’ personal questions—one about a husband’s body odor, another about a fiancé’s pre-wedding jitters. Remember the January 1963 *Redbook* that told the anguished tale of Sherri Finkbine’s thalidomide exposure? The February 2013 issue looks at sexual health from a different perspective. One of its longest stories, hawked on the cover as BIRTH CONTROL THAT BOOSTS METABOLISM? SIGN US UP!, features women discussing why they switched contraceptive methods, with such headlines as SHE LOST THE EXTRA WEIGHT and HER LIBIDO IS BACK IN BUSINESS! *Redbook* writer Erin Zammett Ruddy reports that “as with so many things (sex life, hair, marriage), you don’t have to settle for so-so birth control.”

Even the staid *Good Housekeeping* has gone you-you-you. It has recently published a book called *7 Years Younger*, turning the resources of its product-testing Good Housekeeping Research Institute to the pressing question of the most effective moisturizers. The longest piece in the magazine’s February 2013 issue may sound less fluffy: its news hook is some thought-provoking research from the Templeton Foundation about gratitude. But the piece emphasizes what being grateful can do for *you*: “New research shows why gratitude is a crucial tool for health and happiness,” the headline promises. A mother of twins explains that she uses her commute to reflect on her blessings because “thinking about what’s made me grateful lets me come into the house with less stress and more positive energy.” A May 1963 *Good Housekeeping* feature on “what it takes to be a wife, mother and heart surgeon” profiled Dr.



Nina Braunwald with an almost anthropological fascination: “She belongs to no organizations, goes to no meetings, spends no time in idle chat.” The February 2013 *Good Housekeeping* also profiles a doctor, but the reason is that she successfully lost 40 pounds—and that you can, too.

In all this self-obsession, something has surely been lost. Still, what the modern woman finds in today’s *Redbook* isn’t entirely superficial. Consider the “time budget” that the February issue of the magazine proposes for her day. Her morning should feature an intense work project; she should blog after work because “if you don’t block out time for personal projects and dreams, they’ll never happen”; her evening can be devoted to “family game night!” The point, *Redbook* notes, is to “prioritize time for activities you love”—which no longer seems to include spending all day reading a magazine.

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## MS Magazine

### [My Month With a Gun: Week One](#)

by Heidi Yewman



My hands are shaking; my adrenaline is surging.

No, it’s not from the latte I just inhaled or because this is the first time in two years I’ve been in a Starbucks since declaring a boycott on its [open-carry gun policy](#).

What’s got me jittery this morning is the 9mm Glock that’s holstered on my hip. Me, lead gun policy protester at the 2010 Starbucks [shareholder meeting](#). Me, a board member of the [Brady Campaign](#). Me, the author of a book about the impact of gun violence, [Beyond the Bullet](#).



Yes, I bought a handgun and will carry it everywhere I go over the next 30 days. I have four rules: Carry it with me at all times, follow the laws of my state, only do what is minimally required for permits, licensing, purchasing and carrying, and finally be prepared to use it for protecting myself at home or in public.

Why? Following the [Newtown massacre](#) in December, the NRA's Wayne LaPierre, [told](#) the country, "The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun." I wondered what would it be like to be that good guy with a gun? What would it be like to get that gun, live with that gun, be out and about with that gun. Finally, what happens when you don't want that gun any more?

I decided to find out.

Getting the permit to carry a concealed weapon was simple. I filled out a form, had my fingerprints taken for a background check and paid \$56.50. No training required. It took far longer to get my dog a license.

I started my 30-day gun trial with a little window-shopping. I visited a gun show and two gun dealers. I ended up buying a [Glock 9mm](#) handgun from Tony, a gun dealer four miles from my house. I settled on this model because it was a smallish gun and because Tony recommended it for my stated purposes of protecting myself and my home.

It was obvious from the way I handled the gun that I knew nothing about firearms. Tony sold it to me anyway. The whole thing took 7 minutes. As a gratified consumer, I thought, "Well, that was easy." Then the terrifying reality hit me, "Holy hell, that was EASY." Too easy. I still knew nothing about firearms.

Tony told me a Glock doesn't have an external safety feature, so when I got home and opened the box and saw the magazine in the gun I freaked. I was too scared to try and eject it as thoughts flooded my mind of me accidentally shooting the gun and a bullet hitting my son in the house or rupturing the gas tank of my car, followed by an earth-shaking explosion. This was the first time my hands shook from the adrenaline surge and the first time I questioned the wisdom of this 30-day experiment.

I needed help. I drove to where a police officer had pulled over another driver. Now, writing this, I realize that rolling up on an on-duty cop with a handgun in tow might not have been fully thought through.

I told him I just bought a gun, had no clue how to use it. I asked him to make sure there were no bullets in the magazine or chamber. He took the magazine out and cleared the chamber. He assured me it was empty and showed me how to look. Then he told me how great the gun was and how he had one just like it.

The cop thought I was an idiot and suggested I take a class. But up to that point I'd done nothing wrong, nothing illegal.

So here I sit at Starbucks, and the irony couldn't be thicker. On March 12, 2010, I was surrounded by big hairy men with guns on their hips, yelling at me as I led a protest against Starbucks's gun policy. Today, I'm surrounded by five-year-old boys sitting with their moms at the

next table. Now I'm the one with a gun on her hip. The gun makes me more fearful than I could have imagined.

In some way, I feel a certain vindication. I was right to protest Starbucks policy. Today, they have a woman with absolutely no firearms training and a Glock on her hip sitting within arm's reach of small children, her hands shaking and adrenaline surging.



