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**AMERICANIZING THE AMERICAN WOMAN: SYMBOLS OF  
NATIONALISM IN THE *LADIES HOME JOURNAL*, 1890-1900**



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SENIOR THESIS IN CULTURAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND  
PELL HONORS PROGRAM  
SALVE REGINA UNIVERSITY  
NEWPORT, RI**

**DECEMBER 2005**

When the *Ladies' Home Journal* began in 1883, its creator, Mr. Cyrus H. K. Curtis, could not have possibly dreamed that the magazine would grow to be the most influential woman's journal of all time. By hiring a male editor, Curtis took a gamble with the fate of the *Journal*, which clearly ended in his favor; Edward Bok proved to be a master in dictating female consumerism. He was able to distinguish the desires of women to learn, decorate and execute certain American ideals; from this he created an all-encompassing publication. A material culture analysis of American nationalistic emblems published in the *Ladies' Home Journal* between 1890 and 1900 will determine how Bok controlled nationalism in the feminine market, displaying the openness of women to nationalism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It will also reveal how Bok created and controlled an educational tool he deemed "Americanization", establishing a technique that magazines would replicate in the future. Edward Bok had an agenda as editor of the *Journal* to Americanize the American women; that is to instruct them on the proper ways to embody, display and participate in patriotism. Through the strategic use of well-known national symbols, the *Ladies' Home Journal* during the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century became the outlet for Edward Bok's Americanization process.

Bok was on a mission to Americanize his audience. He recognized the popularity and widespread acceptance of symbols of nationalism and determined them as important tools for his process. Bok took these beloved images and transformed them into teaching aids in his pursuit to educate American women. Only his position and the revolutionary times he lived in would make this possible.

Major shifts in domestic trends were implemented through advancements in technology, the driving force of the Women's Movement and the formation of a middle class that offered a larger amount of leisure money.<sup>1</sup> This change spawned the creation of an entirely new sales focus on ladies. Women began a new role as the predominant consumers and thus sales and advertising tactics changed rapidly. Companies struggled to find a way to reach these women in a more practical and efficient way, in the home.

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<sup>1</sup> Esta Klein Seaton, "The Changing Image of the American Woman in a Mass-Circulation Periodical: The *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1890-1919", (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1967), 4-10.

Although door-to-door salesmen were still used to promote and sell products, a much more economic solution was the ever growing market of magazines and ladies' journals. New innovations in printing and production allowed for a boost in magazine publications and new laws affecting the postal service allowed for cheaper and faster delivery.<sup>2</sup> Thus, journals and magazines became the ideal way to reach female consumers. Likewise, these journals became the idealistic way for women to shop, offering entertainment through the literature and a commercial outlet through the advertisements. The journals offered an opportunity for American women to participate in commerce and to educate themselves on cultural trends and domestic necessities.

The *Ladies' Home Journal* was the forerunner in this revolution. It led the way in creating guidelines for publications and innovating new ways to impress and engage its audience. In doing so, the *Journal* set the standards for all women's magazines to follow. As the first to intentionally educate through its articles rather than replicate trends, the *Journal* widened the boundaries set for female oriented publications. How the *Journal* was able to reform the marketplace is still a question that must consider the changing times, the attitude of the nation, and more importantly the actions of the *Journal's* editor. Having transformed the *Journal* into the most wide-spread periodical in the country and built a mass-circulated educational tool, did Bok create an entirely new genre of publication that would act as the precursor to the social dictation of popular magazines today?

By his determination to educate and form these women into enlightened American citizens, Bok inadvertently or possibly intentionally redefined the principles behind this type of publication. In order to understand the effectiveness of this metamorphosis, a centralized study of the complex techniques Bok implemented is needed. By analyzing how national symbols aided in the intricate Americanization process, I will show the extent Bok went to in order to fulfill this mission and eventually create a periodical revolution. By looking at these symbols, the importance of the visual support to this ornate method will show the way each step Bok took would ultimately influence the techniques of future magazines.

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<sup>2</sup> Seaton, 4-10.

## Methodology

In order to accurately understand Edward Bok's use of national symbols to aid his Americanization process, I first read and analyzed previous scholarly research on women's journals and their purposes and affect on the female consumer in order to orient myself to the particular styles of approaching the topic. I then researched the history of the *Ladies' Home Journal* in hopes to better understand the role it played in the domestic sphere, its origins, its mission and lastly, its success. This led to an analysis of Edward Bok and his influence and effect on the late 19<sup>th</sup> century American housewife. From there I began a study of the history of symbols specific to America and how they evolved over time. Having established that background, I undertook a page-by-page analysis of the *Ladies' Home Journal* from January of 1890 through December of 1900, recording evidence of Bok's Americanization process through literature. I then returned to research on American symbols, researching scholarly papers and analyses of the purpose and affect of the icons. Lastly, I took the information from the *Journal's* history and the history of American national symbols and analyzed the pictorial symbols found decorating the articles. These steps allowed for a proper analysis of the effect of national symbols on Bok's Americanization process.

## Previous Research

The *Ladies' Home Journal* and American nationalism are easily traceable through literature since the beginning of the *Journal* in 1883 and the founding of the United States in 1776. Since its creation, critics and scholars have been analyzing the *Ladies' Home Journal*, as well as the *Journal's* editor Edward Bok, for what it produced and its effect on consumers. Likewise, American nationalism and its iconography have been evaluated and documented revealing the icons continuity since the American Revolution. Studying this literature creates a premise for understanding and evaluating the two subjects in conjunction and allows for the formulation of the argument that Edward Bok used the *Ladies' Home Journal* to dictate the nationalism of the American woman.

An early analysis of the *Ladies' Home Journal* is seen in Edward Bok's autobiography *The Americanization of Edward Bok*.<sup>3</sup> In his autobiography, Bok paints a glorious picture of his life's work that led to his position as editor of *The Ladies' Home Journal*. He demonstrates his ability to manipulate the feminine marketplace through the production of his magazine. Considering his powerful position in women's literature and consumerism, Bok used the *Journal* as an outlet to instruct women on how to better themselves while claiming to never understand women, nor ever wanting to try. A less personal depiction of the *Journal* is seen in the article "*Ladies' Home Journal* Houses (1895-1919)" praising Bok's ability to promote mail-order house patterns.<sup>4</sup> Gordon Bock argues that Bok's understanding of women as a consumer group led to the success and prestige of the mail-order-house program.

A more in-depth analysis of Bok's achievement is seen in *Reformer in the Marketplace: Edward W. Bok and The Ladies' Home Journal* which argues that the methods used by Bok throughout his time as editor of the *Journal* were revolutionary to women's magazines and ultimately created a standard for women's publications in the future, as well as set the standard for American values in the home.<sup>5</sup> The idea is pursued even further in *Magazines for the Millions: Gender and Commerce in the Ladies' Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post, 1880-1910*, which gives an analysis of Curtis' Publishing Company's success, comparing the *Journal* and the *Post* through technique, style and target audience.<sup>6</sup> Damon-Moore argues that the standards the *Journal* set were recreated through the *Post* without the gender constraints the *Journal* faced, thus Edward Bok's philosophies for the *Journal* transcended to the *Post* as well. *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture*, argues that through Bok's guidance the *Ladies' Home Journal* became the premiere instrument in revolutionizing female consumerism while maintaining the status of an instructive ladies' magazine.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Edward Bok, *The Americanization of Edward Bok: An Autobiography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923).

<sup>4</sup> Gordon Bock, "*Ladies' Home Journal* Houses (1890-1919)," *Old House Journal* 26, no. 2 (April 1998).

<sup>5</sup> Salme Harju Steinberg, *Reformer in the Marketplace: Edward W. Bok and the Ladies' Home Journal*, (Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979).

<sup>6</sup> Helen Damon-Moore, *Magazines for the Millions: Gender and Commerce in the Ladies' Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post, 1880-1910*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

<sup>7</sup> Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: The Ladies' Home Journal, Gender, and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

The scholarship surrounding the *Ladies' Home Journal* and Edward Bok all agree on the power the *Journal* held over female consumerism, each confirming the argument that Edward Bok was largely responsible for its accomplishment through his ability to comprehend female consumers. Though assessing different aspects of the *Journal's* influence, the revolutionary tactics of the *Ladies' Home Journal* are identified through these works.

Over the years scholars have used women's magazines to evaluate their impact on domestic consumerism. In order to sufficiently understand the *Journal's* role in the female marketplace, specifically concerning nationalism, it is important to consider other research that utilizes similar sources. *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1790-1885*, used early women's catalogues, precursors to the *Ladies' Home Journal* to argue for the existence of a standard for women's domestic responsibilities.<sup>8</sup> "Meanings in Artifacts: Hall Furnishings in Victorian America," also uses journals to record interior decoration trends.<sup>9</sup> Sally McMurry studied the *Ladies' Home Journal's* and other literary magazines' influence over the transformation of the house parlor in "City Parlor, Country Sitting Room: Rural Vernacular Design and the American Parlor, 1840-1900."<sup>10</sup> "From Separation to Togetherness: The Social Construction of Domestic Space in America Suburbs, 1840-1915" analyzes the return to domesticity through the creation of suburbia encouraged and outlined by popular literature of the time.<sup>11</sup> Beverly Gordon wrote two articles citing the *Ladies' Home Journal* and similar magazines, "Spinning Wheels, Samplers, and the Modern Priscilla: The Images and Paradoxes of Colonial Revival Needlework" and "Victorian Fancywork in the American Home: Fantasy and Accommodation."<sup>12</sup> The first article uses the *Journal* to follow the popularity and changes in Colonial Needlework, where as the

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<sup>8</sup> Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1790-1835* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977).

<sup>9</sup> Kenneth Ames, "Meaning in Artifacts: Hall Furnishings in Victorian America," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 9, no. 1 (1978): 19-46.

<sup>10</sup> Sally McMurry, "City Parlor, Country Sitting Room: Rural Vernacular Design and the American Parlor, 1840-1900," *Winterthur Portfolio* 20, no. 4 (1985): 261-280.

<sup>11</sup> Margaret Marsh, "From Separation to Togetherness: The Social Construction of Domestic Space in American Suburbs, 1840-1915," *The Journal of American History* 76, no. 2 (1989): 506-527.

<sup>12</sup> Beverly Gordon, "Spinning Wheels, Samplers, and the Modern Priscilla: The Images and Paradoxes of Colonial Revival Needlework," *Winterthur Portfolio* 33, no. 2/3 (1998): 163-194.

second article argues that although the *Journal* and its peers promote patterned Fancywork, it was actually used as a unique creative outlet for women, rather than the mass-produced pastime.<sup>13</sup> Though the topic varies from study to study, each scholar utilizes the *Journal* in order to gauge the effect of women's magazines on female consumers.

The importance of nationalism to America, nationalistic expressions and the power of a national sentiment has been heavily evaluated by scholars over the past century. *The Bird, the Banner, and Uncle Sam: Images of America in Folk and Popular Art* patterns the appearance and evolution of American symbols from before the creation of the United States until it was published in 1976.<sup>14</sup> A similar presentation of the progression of these symbols is seen in *The Stars and the Stripes The American Flag as Art and as History from the Birth of the Republic to the Present* that actually displays a collection of images of the American flag and references their historic context and importance.<sup>15</sup> These particular studies are more the exhibitions of folk art rather than an analytical study of the symbols' meanings.

A more scholarly analysis is seen through William B. Rhoads' article "The Colonial Revival and American Nationalism."<sup>16</sup> Rhoads argues that the Colonial Revival is the reflection of an American desire to have an American style of architecture based on an increased national pride. A methodological analysis of nationalism is executed in the article "O, Say Can You See?: Nationalistic Emblems in the Landscape" which recorded the frequent appearance of the American flag and other nationalistic icons through the U.S. landscape.<sup>17</sup> Zelinsky studies the flag from its creation through the present, comparing waves of popularity based on national sentiment. Zelinsky is concerned with the American love for the flag versus other countries that do not display their flags as often. The article "In Search of American Iconography: Critical reaction to the Murals at the Library of Congress" discussed like Rhoads did

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<sup>13</sup> Beverly Gordon, "Victorian Fancywork in the American Home: Fantasy and Accommodation," *Making the American Home*, Marilyn Ferris Motz and Pat Browne, ed.: 48-68.

<sup>14</sup> Elinor Horwitz, *The Bird, the Banner and Uncle Sam* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1976).

<sup>15</sup> Boleslaw Mastai, *The Stars and the Stripes: The American Flag as Art and as History From the Birth of the Republic to the Present* (New York: Knopf, 1963).

<sup>16</sup> William B Rhoads, "The Colonial Revival and American Nationalism," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 35, no. 4 (1976): 239-254.

<sup>17</sup> Wilbur Zelinsky, "O Say, Can You See?: Nationalistic Emblems in the Landscape," *Winterthur Portfolio* 19, no. 4 (1984): 277-286.

previously, an expressed American need for some kind of American style or symbol.<sup>18</sup> Moore uses the murals at the Library of Congress to show the controversy over reverting to classical styles rather than creating a new Americanized art form. “The Feminized Civil War: Gender, Northern Popular Literature, and the Memory of the War, 1861-1900” looked at a completely unique possible national symbol.<sup>19</sup> By analyzing published accounts of woman’s experiences concerning the Civil War, Fahs notes that during and directly after the war, magazines used the icon of the grieving woman frequently when referring to the war. Later she argues in subsequent years the image is abandoned for antebellum emblems making the grieving woman icon obsolete. Blending the techniques of the published collections and articles, *What So Proudly We Hail: All About Our American Flag, Monuments and Symbols* argues that symbols have provoked changes in our country through the patriotic feelings they insight.<sup>20</sup> The book evaluated fourteen different symbols discussing the role each plays in sparking national sentiment through the history it recaptures. It is obvious that the study of national symbols varies from the display of collections to actual scholarly analysis. However, scholars seem to be in agreement about the symbols importance in creating and upholding American nationalism. Through the study of known patriotic images as well as analyzing possible less popular icons, the importance of national symbols is depicted through their continuity through history and scholarship and lasting where others were forgotten.

There is a steady progression of literature evaluating the *Ladies’ Home Journal*, Edward Bok, the effect of the *Journal* on domesticity in the Gilded Age, nationalism, and nationalistic emblems based on scholarly articles. Reviewing this literature creates a trail of evidence supporting the effect of the *Ladies’ Home Journal* on 19<sup>th</sup> century nationalism under the direction of Edward Bok. The evaluation of these scholars’ approaches to similar topics and similar research allows for the progression of a scholarly

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<sup>18</sup> Sarah J Moore, “In Search of an American Iconography: Critical Reaction to the Murals at the Library of Congress,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 25, no. 4 (1990): 231-239.

<sup>19</sup> Alice Fahs, “The Feminized Civil War: Gender, Northern Popular Literature, and the Memory of the War, 1861-1900,” *Journal of American History* 85, no. 4 (1999): 1461-1494.

<sup>20</sup> Maymie R Krythe, *What So Proudly We Hail: All About Our American Flag, Monuments and Symbols*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

analysis of Bok's role as a leading power in consumerism and how it relates to the nationalistic symbols typical of his era.

### **Opening the *Ladies' Home Journal***

The *Ladies' Home Journal* was started in 1883 by husband and wife, publisher and editor team Cyrus Curtis and Louisa Knapp. The couple's shared knowledge of and interest in business allowed for a prosperous relationship where both were responsible for the triumph of their initial project, the *People's Ledger*. After beginning their family, the Curtises moved to Philadelphia in hopes of greater success and cheaper production costs.<sup>21</sup> The *Ledger* was not as well received in Philadelphia as the Curtises had hoped since there was already a plethora of weekly publications available to consumers. The competition forced Curtis to waver through several other newspapers and magazines until in 1879 he began the *Tribune and the Farmer*, which is where the *Ladies' Home Journal* had its beginnings.

The *Journal* began as a space-filler in the *Tribune*, which Curtis devised to allow for the opportunity to solicit more female advertisements. He began a column entitled "Woman and Home" which he threw together from multiple sources. It was Louisa who first criticized the column, telling her husband that the information sounded ridiculous to women. This conversation was the inspiration for Louisa's editorship, as she was instantly offered the position of editing the new woman's section of the *Tribune*.<sup>22</sup>

The new column, written and edited by Louisa Knapp was warmly received by readers and quickly grew from a small column to an entire page of the *Tribune*. Its popularity motivated Curtis to change Knapp's contribution from a column to an eight-page monthly supplement to that was entitled the *Ladies' Journal and Practical Housekeeper* beginning in 1883.<sup>23</sup> This supplement was a hit and Curtis

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<sup>21</sup> Helen Damon-Moore, *Magazines for the Millions: Gender and Commerce in the Ladies' Home Journal and the Saturday Evening Post, 1880-1910*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994) 15-18.

<sup>22</sup> Damon-Moore, 19.

<sup>23</sup> Damon-Moore, 19.

quickly turned his focus to that publication creating from it the *Ladies' Home Journal* in December of 1883.<sup>24</sup>

The *Journal's* early purpose was to entice female consumers through multiple advertisements within the magazine. The couple “saw that a magazine designed expressly for women that featured a practical emphasis could be an important forum for advertising.”<sup>25</sup> Curtis used women’s growing interest in literature as a device to reach the female marketplace and expand the support he received from advertisers. Knapp’s writings spoke to women on a personal level, offering advice on running a perfect home. Next to these columns were advertisements for products that would make these tasks possible.

When the *Ladies' Home Journal* began a yearly subscription cost fifty cents. The *Journal* sold remarkably well and reached 440,000 subscriptions by 1889 enticing Curtis to raise the annual cost to one dollar.<sup>26</sup> The growing demand for the *Journal* caused the opening of offices in Chicago and New York City, as the Philadelphia publishing plant was insufficient for meeting subscription requests. In 1889, the *Journal* was deemed a “mass magazine,” due to its widespread appeal.<sup>27</sup>

The *Journal* experienced a large change between 1889 and 1900. Knapp, who had excelled at her editorship, was considering leaving her position. She felt her presence was required with her family; she took her own advice returning home, leaving the editor position wide open. However, Knapp did not abandon the *Journal*, it was she who conducted searches and convinced her husband to seek out and offer the position to the advertising director for Charles Scribner publishing company, Edward Bok.<sup>28</sup>

Edward Bok is well known for his contributions to the *Journal* as well as a pioneer in the world of women’s magazines. Born in the Netherlands and immigrating with his parents to New York at the age of 6, Bok was bred for hard work.<sup>29</sup> In his autobiography, Bok refers to his Dutch work ethic, which consisted of constant hard work and perseverance that dictated his efforts through his life. He began his

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<sup>24</sup> Steinberg, 2.

<sup>25</sup> Damon-Moore, 24.

<sup>26</sup> Steinberg, 2.

<sup>27</sup> Steinberg, 2.

<sup>28</sup> Damon-Moore, 56-58.

<sup>29</sup> Bok, 1.

life in poverty, dropping out of school to take up a full time job.<sup>30</sup> Determined to live the American dream, he decided to self-educate himself, reading the biographies of important Americans. This task led to the beginning of Edward Bok's esteemed autograph collection. As a young man, Bok would write questions to the American elite, including generals, presidents and writers. The majority of these men and women replied to Bok's letters and he would keep their responses catalogued. This hobby led to many invitations to personal meetings with the noteworthy people and from here Bok began an intricate system of networking that would aid his editorship, allowing him to secure literary pieces, speeches and advice from the most prominent Americans of the day.<sup>31</sup>

Bok spent most of his youth working a second job producing a paper with the help of his brother and a friend. He also coordinated a number of syndicates for multiple newspapers around the country. As his self-proclaimed Dutch work ethic would dictate, he also wrote many literary reviews. It was his literary reviews that led the Curtises to him. Bok's *Literary Leaves* impressed Louisa Knapp and sent her husband looking for William Bok, Edward was publishing the letter under his brother's name. Curtis found Bok working for Scribner, one of his advertising connections and upon meeting Bok he offered him the position. Bok was initially unsure, but a few months later he agreed and "on October 20, 1889, Edward Bok became the editor of the *Ladies' Home Journal*."<sup>32</sup>

Bok began his job as editor by introducing himself to his audience. This proved very effective. Bok was worried that having had a female editor since its creation, the *Journal's* subscribers would be hesitant to accept a male editor to a ladies' journal. He devised a column to reach the women and prove that he would uphold the familial principles that Louisa Knapp had instilled. He called this column "At Home With The Editor" and announced to the women that he would be writing to them from "his own fireside" and "in his favorite chair" where he can "feel closer in sympathy with your [the women's] interests and thoughts."<sup>33</sup> Bok felt that through his column he reached his intended audience and

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<sup>30</sup> Bok, 15.

<sup>31</sup> Bok, 20-60.

<sup>32</sup> Bok, 159.

<sup>33</sup> Damon-Moore, 67.

established a personal connection while they grew to know and trust him. Interestingly though, Bok admits that the key to his success lies in his understanding that he could not understand women. Bok explains himself in this passage from his autobiography, “of women, therefore, he knew little; of their needs less. Nor had he the slightest desire, even as an editor, to know them better, or to seek to understand them.”<sup>34</sup>

What Bok did understand however was quality and service which is what he brought to the *Ladies’ Home Journal*. He promised to strive for only the best for these women and in exchange they gave him loyalty. Over the years of his editorship, he strove to bring them the newest, rarest and greatest material that contemporary literature could offer. He signed contracts with exclusive writers who normally avoided magazine entries. Bok kept his audience entertained and growing through his constant efforts to serve and impress the American woman.

The Curtis and Bok, publisher and editor team was a partnership that equaled success. “For Cyrus Curtis the main goal was profit; for Edward Bok the primary job was effective service to readers.”<sup>35</sup> Through this joined ideal, the two worked together to attract a specific market through quality and advertising. Curtis wanted the magazine to represent high class, knowing that there lies the profit. He secured advertisements that would appeal to the wealthier class, coaxing them into purchasing the magazine. Bok continued to write for the mass market, understanding that the middle class was just as important to their success. Bok realized that these upper-class advertisement created desire among the middle class women and emulated the status they wished to hold. The stronghold Curtis and Bok created through the *Journal* became the window of opportunity Bok needed to execute his Americanization tactics.

### **Uncovering the Americanization Process in the *Ladies’ Home Journal***

The *Ladies’ Home Journal* between 1890 and 1900 acted as an instructional guide for the modern housewife. The *Journal* offered gardening tips, parenting advice, table settings, and the latest fashion to

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<sup>34</sup> Bok, 168.

<sup>35</sup> Steinberg, xix.

all its readers. It also offered the newest literature, publishing recently completed works from popular writers, such as Rudyard Kipling and William Dean Howells. Edward Bok and his team at the *Journal* intended to not only entertain the American women, but educate them as well through these instructional articles and a plethora of literature. Series of articles would take the readers around the globe, into the life of a girl at college and even in the living room of notable Americans. Bok used the *Journal* as an outlet for expanding the minds of these women and molding them into model American citizens.

In order to see Bok's motives behind educating the female American population, one must understand his stance on female voting. Bok was decidedly against letting women vote, "he felt that American women were not ready to exercise the privilege," but declared his position was based on his belief that American women were ill-educated on the U.S. government, how it functioned, how it began and why it was so important.<sup>36</sup> Bok believed that an American woman should have a strong knowledge of United States history in order to display the customary amount of American pride and instill in her children, mainly her sons the same sentiment<sup>37</sup>. Surprisingly it is a Dutch immigrant determining the importance of American patriotism, but it seems that Bok was using the process of "Americanization" (as he refers to it in his autobiography) that he underwent to Americanize these women.

Bok's process of Americanization for himself included the creation of his autograph collection. Bok as a young man realized the importance of knowing about beloved American figures, military, political and literary. He went about collecting autographs from and meeting with as many national celebrities as possible, paying particular attention to presidents and generals. He eventually met with and bridged friendships with several former presidents and well-known military heroes.<sup>38</sup>

Bok was careful with the introduction of this Americanization process to his readers. He took the first few years of his editorship to establish a relationship between himself and the American women. He eased his changes in slowly announcing them all to the women through his column "At Home with the

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<sup>36</sup> Bok, 191.

<sup>37</sup> Seaton, 4.

<sup>38</sup> Bok, 29-53.

Editor”<sup>39</sup> and allowed them to make comments and ask questions through a question and answer section of the magazine. Once he felt the public had warmed to a male editor he slowly began to add articles he felt would spark a national sentiment or at least educate the women about the glories of being an American.

In the early issues of the *Journal* in 1890, there is evidence of Bok’s first attempts to bring his ideas of patriotism to the people. He began by publishing articles that allowed women to see life as it is in the White House through the eyes of the first lady named “Mrs. Harrison in the White House”<sup>40</sup> and portraying the “President at Play”<sup>41</sup> with his grandchildren. Next, Bok brought the Americanization process to a personal level, publishing a list of presidential photographs he had personally taken, including Arthur, Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, and Harrison.<sup>42</sup> He then returned to the domestic side of the White House by the December 1890 article describing the children of the White House.<sup>43</sup> At this point in the Americanization process the only specific symbols Bok used are the White House and the President. Even still, these are not visible symbols rather representatives of America that are well known enough not to need pictorial depiction. Bok was able to use literature alone to set his nationalism tutorial in motion without the aid of nationally accepted patriotic symbols.

With a continual increase in sales and no known criticism on these articles, Bok continued with three series that depicted the lives of women who were close to some great American men. In “Clever Daughters of Clever Parents”<sup>44</sup> Bok introduced his audience to the daughters of American notables and the extraordinary things they accomplish. A similar article entitled “Wives of Well Known Men,”<sup>45</sup> let Bok exhibit the wives of esteemed American men allowing them to act as an example of the ideal

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<sup>39</sup> Edward Bok, “At Home with the Editor,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, 1888-1923. A monthly column written by Bok over the course of his editorship of the *Journal* where he delivered his readers a personal side of himself and allowed them a glance into his home life and everyday thoughts.

<sup>40</sup> A.J. Halford, “Mrs. Harrison in the White House,” *Ladies Home Journal*, March 1890, 1.

<sup>41</sup> “The President at Play,” *Ladies Home Journal*, February 1890, 8.

<sup>42</sup> A. Bogardus, “Presidents I Have Photographed,” *Ladies Home Journal*, October 1890, 3.

<sup>43</sup> “The White House Children,” *Ladies Home Journal*, December 1890, 15.

<sup>44</sup> Emma Trapper, “Clever Daughters of Clever Parents,” *Ladies Home Journal*. This series appeared sporadically over a few years including February 1894.

<sup>45</sup> “Wives of Well Known Men,” *Ladies Home Journal*, January 1891, 3.

housewives which his readers could aspire to emulate. “Faces We Seldom See”<sup>46</sup> was a series based after the previous article that enabled children and grandchildren of these prominent figures to be featured as well.

Around the same time, Bok converted his “At Home with the Editor” question and answer segment of the *Journal* to what was called “The Open Congress.”<sup>47</sup> By renaming and reworking this section, Bok changed the focus of the questions and added to the nationalistic message of his *Journal* by using the obvious reference to the U.S. Congress. In this portion of the *Journal*, readers could still ask any questions they wish to have answered, but the name tended to inspire more questions based on the country. The first “Open Congress” answered three questions based on American history and the American government. This not only acted as another outlet for Bok to educate about the history of the U.S., but also proved that the American women were interested in learning more about their country through the questions they submitted and confirmed that they were in fact warming to this Americanization process.

In the summer of 1894 it seems as though Bok felt confident in the loyalty of his readers and launched his Americanization tactics in full force. Bok himself starts this surge of Americanism with an article of his critiques of the country. “The Blot on our American Life”<sup>48</sup> is where he actually listed off his greatest disappointments with Americans such as children’s lack of respect for their elders, materialism and constant criticism of others and included personal instructions on how to remedy them. Joining this article, in true patriotic spirit, a favored series of articles featuring ideal travel locations visited the Goddess of Liberty, describing Liberty Island to the readers. Also, in July of 1894 the sheet music segment of the *Journal* featured “The American Girl Waltz” with the title highly decorated with national emblems including the flag motif and the eagle, (Figure 1.)<sup>49</sup> “Where American Life Really

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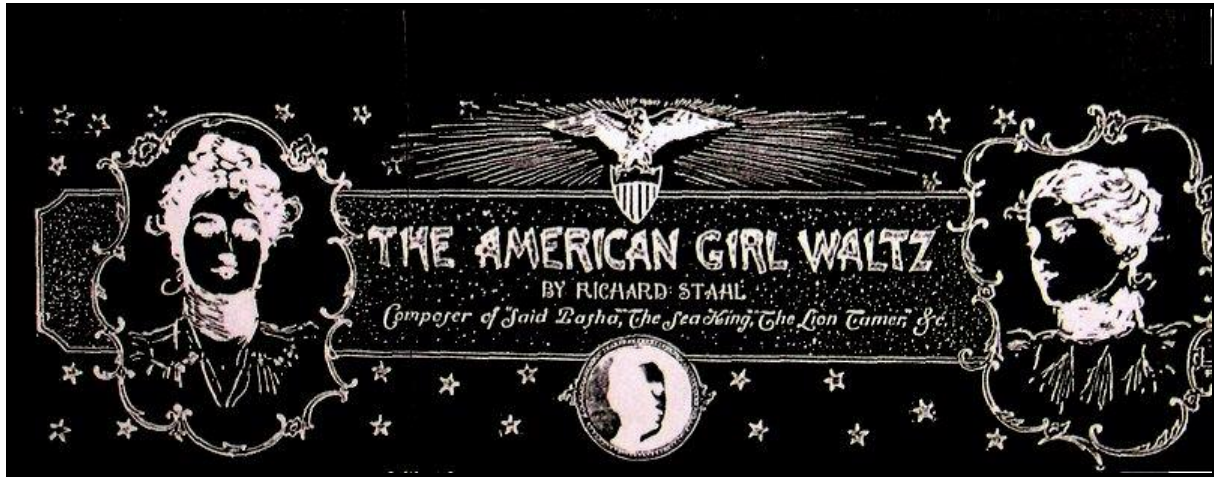
<sup>46</sup> M.V. Moore, “Faces We Seldom See,” *Ladies Home Journal*. This series appeared sporadically from September 1893- March 1894.

<sup>47</sup> “Open Congress,” *Ladies Home Journal*. A monthly segment of the *Journal* from August 1893-June 1894 when it began to appear once every other month until May 1897.

<sup>48</sup> Edward Bok, “The Blot on American Life,” *Ladies Home Journal*, July 1895, 14.

<sup>49</sup> Richard Stahl, “The American Girl Waltz,” *Ladies Home Journal*, July 1895, 11.

Exists”<sup>50</sup> was a second article written by the editor that year, in which Bok discussed how America is portrayed to other nations. Bok was using his own influence over his readers to reinforce his national theme through his literature and keep the women engaged in the process of becoming Bok’s idea of a respectable American woman.



**Figure 1. Banner for “The American Girl Waltz.”**

Bok’s most avid attempt to Americanize women was launched in December of 1895. Bok teamed with former President Harrison to create the series entitled “This Country of Ours.”<sup>51</sup> The series was a collection papers written by the former president, in which he planned to educate the American women on the government. His introductory paper began “If any mistake has been made in the assumption that American women need and will welcome a series of articles on ‘This Country of Ours’... I disclaim all responsibility.” Here Harrison revealed to his audience that the series was commissioned by Bok, proving his intent on educating his readers and expecting their willingness to learn.

The first article provided elementary background information which would be important in the understanding of his proceeding papers, as well as some of his personal thoughts on the great nation. The following articles focused on topics such as the constitution, the presidential office and his duties and continued monthly for a year and a half. By its conclusion, the former president had described in depth

<sup>50</sup> Edward Bok, “Where American Life Really Exists,” *Ladies Home Journal*, October 1895, 14.

<sup>51</sup> Benjamin Harrison, “This Country of Ours,” *Ladies Home Journal*, December 1895, 4. This series continued monthly until March 1897.

each branch of the government and the duties of the presidential cabinet members. In his autobiography, Bok expressed his approval of the series and the partnership he formed with the former president.<sup>52</sup>

Bok continued this contract with Harrison for over a year in each monthly issue of the *Journal*. It is evident through increased sales and the continuance of Harrison's articles that the educational papers were a success and contrary to the former president's fears the American women did welcome the lessons on government. This approval from the public allowed Harrison to continue writing for the *Journal*. In the new articles Harrison focused more on the presidency rather than the entire government itself. He took his experience as president and made it available to the *Journal* readers with articles entitled "A Day with the President at His Desk," "The Domestic Side of the White House," and finally "The Social Life of the President."<sup>53</sup>

These series were followed by a group of articles that painted a picture of historical American figures. There were multiple articles about George Washington, as a general and as president. They discussed his life at the White House and illustrious battles he fought, as well as insight into why he made certain choices. In 1896, two articles entitled "A Personal Side of Washington" allowed readers to enjoy a glimpse into Washington's life that they would not have had access to before.<sup>54</sup> Washington's private life became reoccurring subject in the *Journal*, articles such as "Washington's Minuet" and "The Home Life of Washington" offered a link that connected the American women to the first president. A similar set of histories was published about Abraham Lincoln, ranging from his Gettysburg Address to why he waited so long to get married.<sup>55</sup> It seems that by describing these historical figures lives, Bok first discussed how the men achieved greatness and then used the men's personal lives as examples for creating standards in American home life.

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<sup>52</sup> Bok, 192-198.

<sup>53</sup> Benjamin Harrison, "A Day with the President at His Desk," *Ladies' Home Journal*, March 1897, 1. "The Domestic Side of the White House," *Ladies' Home Journal*, May 1897, 7-8. "The Social Life of the President," *Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1897, 3-4.

<sup>54</sup> A.W. Greely, "The Personal Side of Washington," *Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1896, 7-8.

<sup>55</sup> John Gilmer Speed, "Lincoln's Hesitancy to Marry," *Ladies' Home Journal*, October 1895, 1.

In 1897 the Americanization process was at its height. Arguably, the Spanish American War sparked feelings of patriotism throughout the nation, though it was not mentioned in the *Journal* and the elections of 1896 was a more interesting subject. The introduction of a new president to the nation offered a new way for Bok to introduce different tactics for Bok to play out Americanization. Bok published articles on “The Inauguration” and “The New Tenants of the White House.”<sup>56</sup> After familiarizing his audience with the newly elected president, Bok used the already present nationalistic fervor to continue his process through a more scientific approach. The article “The Greatest Nation on Earth” evaluated the natural resources the U.S. possessed that set it apart from the rest of the world.<sup>57</sup> The article boasts that “The sun never sets on Uncle Sam” arguing that American influence on the globe was as prominent if not greater than that of England.<sup>58</sup> Accompanying this article in July of 1897 was an article entitled “The Women’s Patriotic Societies,” which depicted ten ladies’ social groups focuses on patriotism.<sup>59</sup> Their mission was laid out clearly when the author, Marion van Riper Palmer wrote “The patriotic societies of the United States aim to foster a spirit of regard for the heroic acts of ancestors, to quicken a love of history and to stimulate a broader and stronger patriotism,”(Figure 2.)<sup>60</sup> Not only did this describe the societies, but it surmised Bok’s Americanization process as well, spelling out word for word what Bok intended for his audience through the mass appeal of women’s groups. This surge of patriotism allowed for the beginning of other patriotic series to be added to the *Journal* over the next two years, since the “This Country of Ours” series was ending creating a gap in educational text; the first of which was the “When” series. These articles all focused on one important event in American history that also glorified an American. The series gave a detailed account of many events that are still memorable historical scenes today; the first of which was entitled “When Lincoln Was First Inaugurated.”<sup>61</sup> By using the revered president, Bok established this series as an integral part of the process, allowing for less

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<sup>56</sup> Francis Johnston, “The New Tenants of the White House,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, October 1897, 3.

<sup>57</sup> William Jordon, “The Greatest Nation on Earth,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, July 1897, 7-8.

<sup>58</sup> Jordon, 7.

<sup>59</sup> Marion van Riper Palmer, “The Women’s Patriotic Societies,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, July 1897, 10.

<sup>60</sup> Palmer, 10.

<sup>61</sup> Stephen Fiske, “When Lincoln Was First Inaugurated,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, March 1897, 7-8.

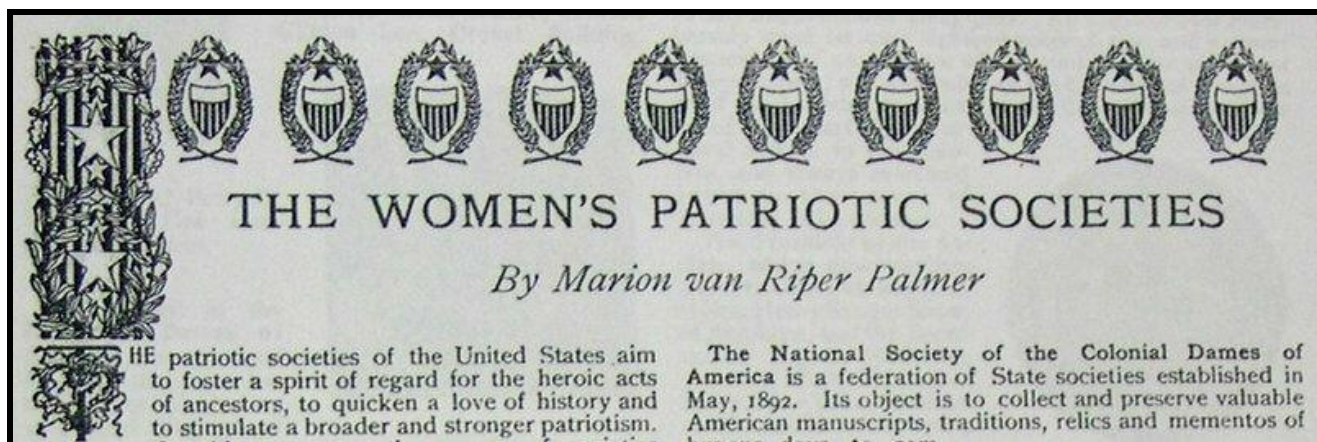


Figure 2. Banner for “The Women's Patriotic Societies.”

obvious, but still important historical events to follow such as “When Dolly Madison Saved the Declaration of Independence” and “When General Grant Went Round the World.”<sup>62</sup> The series was written by several different authors, some of which were prominent military figures, and continued every other month for a year.

The second patriotic series found in the *Journal* beginning in 1897 was “The Inner Experiences of a Cabinet Member’s Wife.” Each article gave insight into the world of the wife of an unnamed politician through letters to her sister. The articles spoke of her responsibilities and anxieties as well as her acclimation to the lifestyle she was to lead in Washington. Here Bok brings a rather personal experience to the housewives of America, creating a familiar image that they could connect with, commiserate with and eventual strive to imitate.<sup>63</sup>

The final series Bok introduced to his readers in 1898 was “The Anecdotal Side.” Here Bok extended a personal view of many prestigious Americans. “The Anecdotal Side” articles allowed the readers to personally relate themselves to these famous people and where a connection lacked they could use these individuals as role models. Bok strategically picked citizens that engender the traits of a fully Americanized person, as well as having lives that aid the Americanization process. Through this series

<sup>62</sup> “When” Series. John Young, “When General Grant Went Round the World,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, May 1897, 3-4,30. Clifford Howard, “When Dolly Madison Saved the Declaration of Independence,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, July 1897, 3-4.

<sup>63</sup> “The Inner Experience of a Cabinet Member’s Wife,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, December 1897-June 1898.

the *Journal* readers were introduced to the “anecdotal side” of Edison and the current president, among others, all through the words of their most intimate friends.<sup>64</sup>

The last year of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first year of the 20<sup>th</sup>, Bok continued avidly with Americanization. He strayed from using series and now focused on specific American symbols, mainly the presidents and the White House. Through articles entitled “The Last Years of Washington” and “One Hundred Years in the White House” Bok used historical references that allotted for nostalgia and inspired a national sentiment.<sup>65</sup> These turn of the century articles proved the intensity of the Americanization process and emulated the affect of these prominent symbols. As the process progressed each issue became more decorative, as seen in Figure 3, and the articles from 1900 produced historical American subject matter that became intensified by addition of American symbols.



Figure 3. *Ladies Home Journal* cover, July 1899.

### The Role of Symbols in Americanization

American national symbols began developing as soon as America became a nation. These symbols span from images to songs and from people to places. Determining national symbols was an illusive task since many have evolved over the years and many symbols come to mean different things to different generations. For instance, Uncle Sam was an early 1800s reference to a hard-working

<sup>64</sup> “The Anecdotal Side of Edison,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, May 1898, 7. “The Anecdotal Side of the President,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, July 1898, 1-2.

<sup>65</sup> William Perrine, “The Last Years of Washington’s Life,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, October 1899, 13-14. Rene Bache, “One Hundred Years in the White House,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, September 1900, 1-2.

American, whereas now Uncle Sam is a symbol of the American government, quite a difference from his origin.<sup>66</sup> Americans across the nation could determine a multitude of different symbols that represent their diverse country, but there are a few specific ones that each and every citizen would agree are universal American symbols. There are six symbols that have for over 200 years acted as common emblems associated with the US: the American flag, the bald eagle, the white house, the president, the goddess of liberty and Uncle Sam.

Bok used these well-known symbols to supplement the literature intended to Americanize the audience. The American flag and the American bald eagle are the most frequently used pictorial symbols in the *Ladies Home Journal*. These two highly recognizable images constantly decorated the pages of the *Journal* after 1895. The flag and eagle were often used in a banner style surrounding the article's title or as images featured with the article. "The American Flag... is one of the oldest national ensigns in the world. It was adopted June 14, 1777."<sup>67</sup> Bok knew that, "a flag is more than just a brightly colored piece of cloth. It is a symbol or sign that stands for an idea, a cause, or a purpose."<sup>68</sup> In 1896, when the flag received a new star for the admittance of Utah into the nation, Bok published an article about the new state as well as new star.<sup>69</sup> This article also featured a history of the American flag, including the regulations for creating a truly American flag; specifying the correct placement of the stars, as well as the alternating 13 red and white stripes.

"The bald eagle is the official emblem of the U.S."<sup>70</sup> It tops hundreds of public buildings and is emblazoned on our national seal. The choice of the eagle was not random; it was already a well established icon. "The eagle is a time-honored symbol of independence, freedom and strength"<sup>71</sup> and had been used by many victorious peoples over the span of history. The *Journal* featured the eagle as a decorative addition to many article headings. Seeing a dominating eagle adorn articles about the U.S.

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<sup>66</sup> Horwitz, 95-98.

<sup>67</sup> Krythe, 1.

<sup>68</sup> Krythe, 1.

<sup>69</sup> Frances E. Lanigan, "The New Star for Our Flag," *Ladies' Home Journal*, July 1896, 16.

<sup>70</sup> Krythe, 40

<sup>71</sup> Horwitz, 39

added a feeling of Americanism and a sense of importance to the article. The eagle was seen less often than the flag, but in many cases the eagle tops the flag. The previously discussed series “This Country of Ours” acted as Bok’s testing ground for the introduction of patriotic symbols to the *Journal*. National emblems were scarcely used in decorating *Journal* literature before 1896, but with the start of Harrison’s papers, well known American icons were seen decorating the boarder of this series’ title. Once this outlet was established it seems as if the *Journal*’s illustrators toyed with different nationalistic motifs alternating between the use of the flag, the eagle, both and variations of both. Though the decoration seemed constantly varied, a banner of eagles, five small and two large, sitting above and at either end of the title, appear on four of the articles, (Figure 4.)<sup>72</sup> Beginning with Harrison’s series and continuing through the decade, the American bald eagle was constantly present at the top of each article Bok published to aid in his Americanization process.

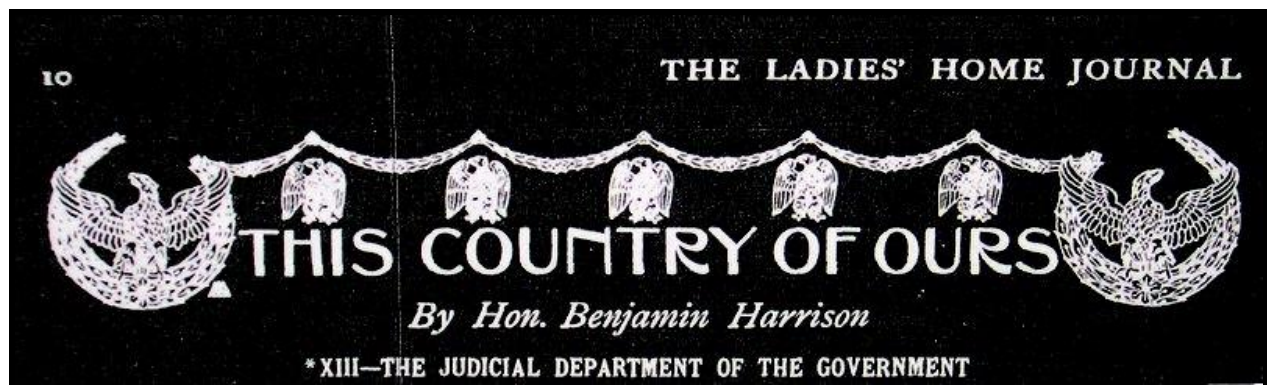


Figure 4. A title banner for the series “This Country of Ours.”

However, the use of the White House and the president as national symbols was Bok’s most useful tactic in the Americanization process. Bok wished for the American women to be able to raise a family and run a house as idealistic as the first family, as well as understand enough about the president and the government to be able to mold their children into educated Americans. “The White House, official residence of our president at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, is the oldest public building in Washington, D.C.”<sup>73</sup> The *Journal* referred to the president’s house frequently, in regard to decoration and

<sup>72</sup> Harrison, “This Country of Ours,” August 1896, September 1896, December 1896, January 1897.

<sup>73</sup> Krythe, 96

the family that was living there. It is regarded, “as a symbol of our country’s history and unity,”<sup>74</sup> and Bok used that notion in the many articles he published on the progression of the White House and all of the changes it under went. Since the White House “is a symbol –the democratic image- of executive authority in a land that believes in neither crowns nor kings,”<sup>75</sup> it was easily an emblem that is identifiable as American and extremely useful in the Americanization process.

Inseparable from the executive mansion is the man holding the executive seat, the president. The president of the United States is a personified symbol of the country. For four years one man’s image and name is synonymous with America. Bok was in tune with the people’s reverence and respect for the president. He used the image and in many cases the man to educate American women, through historical accounts of past presidents, advice from former presidents and acquainted them with the current president. The White House and the president, symbols commonly found in the *Journal*, were noticeable from the beginning of Bok’s editorship and became particularly prevalent in the latter part of the 1890s. Throughout the end of the decade the *Journal* featured articles entitled “The New Tenants of the White House,” “The Domestic Side of the White House,” and “The White House over 100 Years.”<sup>76</sup>

A goddess figure was often used to decorate the covers of the *Journal* between 1890 and 1900. Only the July 1890 cover referred specifically to the goddess of Liberty, but other images utilized the Greek style that represented democracy.<sup>77</sup> Since the goddess of Liberty rarely appeared as a symbol through the *Journal* for this study, we will assume that she did not act as one of Bok’s Americanization techniques, although she is truly an American symbol. Even though she is a well known symbol across America her overall meaning is negotiable. Liberty can trace her ties back to Greece with her billowing toga and sandals, reminiscent of ancient Greek clothing that the general public could connect. That image has come to represent the earliest forms of democracy, with which Americans would undoubtedly be able to associate their newly formed democracy with. However, distinguishing her use as an American

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<sup>74</sup> Krythe, 96

<sup>75</sup> Krythe, 96

<sup>76</sup> Johnston, 3. Harrison, “The Domestic Side of the White House,” 7-8. Bache, 1-2.

<sup>77</sup> *Ladies’ Home Journal*, July 1890, cover.

national symbol or as a global symbol is difficult. She undeniably represents America since her establishment as the Statue of Liberty off the shores of New York and New Jersey in 1886, but when used as a pictorial image the goddess of Liberty may be representative of universal democracy and not specific to America.<sup>78</sup> The goddess of Liberty that can be directly connected to America must be clad with her torch and book and normally, tinted green. Yet, the goddess of Liberty was seen without these distinguishing characteristics multiple times throughout the *Journal*.

Uncle Sam, another prominent American symbol, was quite scarce in the *Journal* between 1890 and 1900. On many occasions, Uncle Sam was referred to through literature, but there was no pictorial connection. When used in literature, Uncle Sam depicted a personification of the American government. One article, entitled “Positions Under Uncle Sam” explained the two hundred jobs the government offered.<sup>79</sup> The lack of pictorial evidence could have to do with the icons controversial background. Uncle Sam’s roots as an early satirical comic could have dissuaded Bok from endorsing the symbol when implementing a pro-American process.<sup>80</sup>

Though Bok might have endorsed national symbols through his Americanization process, it seems he and his staff were opposed to the symbols used in home decorating. The symbols were specifically used in articles about the nation, but using these symbols in home decoration was not supported by the *Journal*. Nowhere in the *Ladies’ Home Journal* between 1890 and 1900 was there an article about the flag in your home or the use of any patriotic ornament. Likewise, there were no advertisements for household objects that featured patriotic symbols. In the 1897 series “Inside of a Hundred Homes” only one segment pictured one living room that displayed an American flag.<sup>81</sup> Out of the one hundred featured homes only one had any patriotic décor, negating Bok’s possible support of expressing nationalism through home decoration. Bok’s refusal to endorse patriotic decoration was not the norm; this is evident through scholarly research recording the popularity of such household goods that

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<sup>78</sup> Krythe, 176.

<sup>79</sup> Barton Cheyney, “Positions Under Uncle Sam,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, October 1899, 26.

<sup>80</sup> Horwitz, 95.

<sup>81</sup> Edward Brown, “Inside of a Hundred Homes,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, October 1897, 6.

display national emblems. One account says that it was popular to “paint flags on chests and clocks and to carve and inlay eagles on chairs and mirror frames.”<sup>82</sup> The *Ladies’ Home Journal* makes no reference to this kind of technique nor does it suggest that its readers should follow in this trend.

The *Ladies’ Home Journal* was notorious for offering advice on creating fancywork, such as needlepoint and crocheting. Over the 10 year span of 1890-1900, the *Journal* displayed many fancywork suggestions for housewives and children to create in their home. None of these suggestions included anything patriotic in nature, despite a larger trend in nationalistic patriotic fancywork. Horwitz says that through the 19<sup>th</sup> century, “proud housewives hooked rugs, sewed quilts, made needlepoint pictures, and wooden coverlets, incorporating eagles and flags and perhaps even a word or motto.”<sup>83</sup> These trends were not evident in the *Ladies’ Home Journal* and seem not to have been endorsed by Bok and his staff. However, there was one example of colonial embroidery in the *Journal*. The November 1895 issue featured “Colonial Embroidery Design” which displayed what was supposedly the fashion in colonial America, though none of these designs included any patriotic motifs.<sup>84</sup>

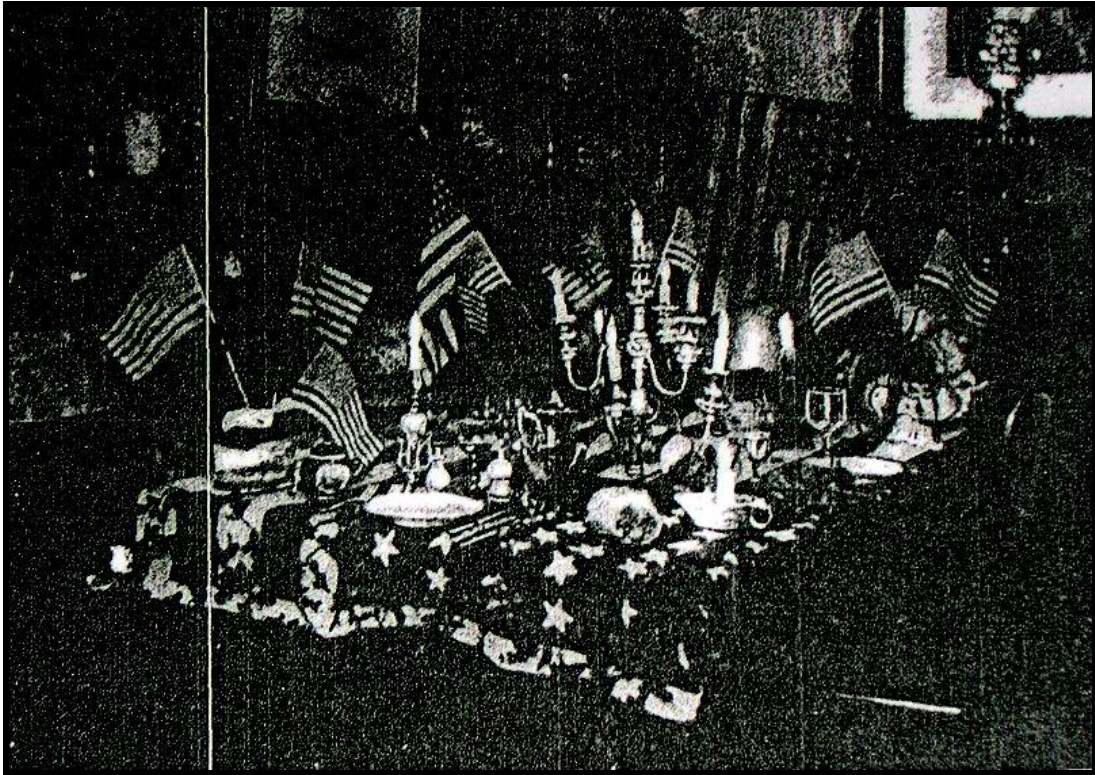
The scarcity of patriotic fancywork and décor leads to the conclusion that the *Journal’s* use of patriotic symbols was more of an educational and instructional tool rather than a decorative motif. The *Journal*, as a woman’s magazine, had to keep up with fashion trends to maintain its place as the most popular ladies’ publication. Featuring American styles and fancywork may have hindered that. In the Gilded Age, fashion was synonymous with Europe, as seen through the multitude of European fashion advertisements and clothing patterns. As far as clothing and furnishing trends were concerned Bok was undoubtedly required to promote the latest styles from Paris rather than use these outlets for Americanization. The message Bok sent was to be an American, but embrace the fashion trends of Europe.

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<sup>82</sup> Horwitz, 12

<sup>83</sup> Horwitz, 12

<sup>84</sup> Helen Mar Adams, “Colonial Embroidery Designs,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, Nov 1895, 11.



**Figure 5. A table setting as seen in “Tables Set for Special Occasion.”**

There were a few exceptions to the denial of patriotic decoration. On two occasions the *Journal* endorsed the display of patriotic emblems in the home. The first was seen through an advertisement for the Washington Jug. The jug was actually designed to look like the esteemed president and was found in a rather large advertisement.<sup>85</sup> The second strayed even further from the norm and offered place setting and table decoration ideas for celebrating Washington’s Birthday. There was an example of a highly ornate table ornamented with many flags and other national motifs, as seen in Figure 5.<sup>86</sup> Despite these two exceptions, it is apparent that the *Journal* did not support popular patriotic decoration trends, preferring to use symbol solely as aid in Americanization literature. Beyond the need to support European fashion, Bok’s motives are unknown. However, Bok may have decided to use these symbols only as decoration to Americanization articles and not anywhere else to keep his educational articles easily identifiable.

<sup>85</sup> “The Washington Jug,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, September 1896, 18.

<sup>86</sup> “Tables Set for Special Occasion,” *Ladies’ Home Journal*, October 1899, 9.

The six American national symbols were integral in the execution of Bok's Americanization process. Without these decorations the articles would have been less obvious to the reader. The slow integration of these symbols showed the process Bok followed when introducing Americanization, scattered articles with no decoration in the beginning and highly ornate continual series at the turn of the century. The symbols marked the full force of the Americanization process and would continue through the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Implications**

As the editor of the fastest growing ladies' magazine in a booming market, Edward Bok was given the opportunity to introduce his own principles to his audience. The Americanization process flourished through the changing conditions of domestic American and through the finely tuned efforts of Bok to educated women about American history and government. The process was initiated and continued with vigor and was eventually polished by the addition of beloved American national symbols. These symbols acted as a tool in identification and association without which the process would not have been as successful. The Americanization of American housewives was just the first step. More extensive research has been done on another point in Bok's career when he used the Americanization process. In the 1910s and 1920s, Bok used his now perfected process to Americanize immigrants, more specifically domestic servants.<sup>87</sup> Once Bok had molded model American citizens out of his target audience he instructed them to pass on this knowledge to their household staffs. The reoccurrence of this process is evident of the *Journal's* strong influence over the public.

This research could be continued by further investigation of the role of women's magazines in directing and constructing domestic life at the turn of the century. A comparison could be made by using similar methods of analysis to a wider range of ladies' magazines and determine different techniques of cultural construction. A comparison between magazines such as *Godey's Lady's Book* and the *Ladies' Home Journal* might show a different editor's approach to educating an audience or rather the beginnings of methods used in women's magazines today, referring not to education, but rather to fashion and

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<sup>87</sup> Steinberg, 137-139.

commerce. Lastly, the research would benefit from a study of the effect of domesticity through the different social classes to examine whether the influence reached both the lower and upper classes of American society. It would be interesting to see to what extent Bok's Americanization process effected groups such as immigrants not working as domestic servants and African Americans, as well. Determining Americanization's sphere of influence during its conception might lead to a direct connection to the surges of patriotism seen today.

### **Pell Component**

The *Ladies' Home Journal* was established as a magazine that would offer a service to women, helping to broaden their education through varied literary works and informational pieces. This goal allowed the Journal to become the most widely read women's magazine. Sadly, the present world of women's magazines differs greatly from the mission of the original *Ladies' Home Journal* and is not actively seeking to educate American women. The goals and achievements of Edward Bok and the *Ladies' Home Journal*, made available through this research project, will reveal the way in which the Journal succeeded in delivering educational and cultural information, creating guidelines of how today's women's magazines could follow the same initiatives to provide a similar service to the community rather than the negative image they currently produce.

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