

Mapping the Family Road Trip: The Automobile, the Family and Outdoor Recreation in
Postwar British Columbia

by

Samantha Morris
B.A., University of Victoria, 2008

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Supervisory Committee

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Supervisory Committee

Dr. Richard Rajala, (Department of History)
Supervisor

Dr. Eric Sager, (Department of History)
Departmental Member

Abstract

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Supervisor

Dr. Eric Sager, (Department of History)

Departmental Member

This thesis is located at the intersection of several bodies of literature. While material exists on the histories of tourism, the automobile and the family, this combination of literature is previously uncharted territory in the history of British Columbia. By looking at the articles and advertisements published in newspapers and magazines, this work focuses on the dominant discourse surrounding the family and the automobile in postwar British Columbia. Conceptually, it is divided into two sections. The first discusses the role of the automobile in the postwar family, examining ways in which cultural producers framed it as a site of family togetherness and an essential component of modern fatherhood and masculine domesticity. This discourse correlated the automobile's gendered dynamics with roles of modern parenthood and the experience of childhood, effectively blurring the distinction between the domestic and the public. The second section brings the family automobile into the natural environment, exploring ways in which the automobile and other outdoor technologies shaped the family's relationship to nature. Through the gendered consumption of goods associated with the outdoors, cultural producers portrayed facilitation of the family's access to the outdoors as a fundamental component of modern fatherhood.

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Dedication

For my family, in every normative and unconventional sense of the word.

And to M, whose advice and impeccable sense of humour I miss tremendously.

Chapter 1: Introduction

... nostalgia literally means the pain from an old wound; it's a twinge in your heart far more powerful than memory alone. [The Kodak Carousel] isn't a spaceship, it's a time machine: it goes backwards, forwards. It takes us to a place where we ache to go again... it lets us travel the way a child travels: around and around and back home again, to a place where we know we are loved.¹

Taken from what is perhaps the most memorable scene from *Mad Men*² – a period drama and recent popular cultural phenomenon that undoubtedly sparked some of the momentum for this thesis – the epigraph to this chapter reflects the nostalgic emphasis on domestic space that characterized the postwar family, both in Canada and the United States. Similarly, a selection of Kodak advertisements published in *Macleans* further demonstrates this connection between consumer goods, the family, and the push for quality time spent together, implying that the camera not only gave families cause to spend time together but also created lasting memories. An advertisement for Kodacolor film portrayed snapshots of a family picnicking together beside the ocean with a station wagon and a picnic basket in the background, and a caption that reads “as rich and real and full of colour as life itself.”³ Viewed through the lens of a camera, a second of family togetherness could be preserved as an occasion to return to over and over again: these advertisements implied that colour photographs would allow the family to “carry the whole trip home” and live “good times all over again.”⁴

¹ “The Wheel,” *Mad Men*, Matthew Weiner and Robin Veith (Lionsgate Television, October 2007).

² A period drama and television series set in the atmosphere of a Manhattan advertisement agency in the 1960s. The quote is taken from a scene in which the firm’s creative director uses nostalgia to transform Kodak’s ‘Wheel’ into the ‘Carousel.’

³ Kodacolor film advertisement, *Macleans* (1 August 1954), 25.

⁴ Kodak advertisement, *Macleans* (15 August 1954), 25.

Elaine Tyler May described this movement towards domesticity as the family's "first wholehearted effort to create a home that would fulfill virtually all its members' personal needs through an energized and expressive personal life,"⁵ after experiencing the turbulence and uncertainty of two world wars and the Great Depression.⁶ In this idealized image of the postwar family, cultural producers cast the modern father as an essential character, inextricably linking fatherhood with the gendered consumption of goods such as automobiles, boats and camper trailers. Fathers connected to and spent time with their families through the consumption of these products, as their masculine character made it acceptable for fathers to pursue the ideals of domesticity.⁷

By examining the dominant discourse as represented in newspapers and magazines, this thesis will situate the ideal of the modern postwar family in both the domestic space of the automobile and British Columbia's natural environment, encompassing the years between 1945 and 1975. And while my research focuses predominantly on the discourse surrounding the family, it is necessary to first acknowledge the context in which these themes were situated. The relationship between the family, the automobile and outdoor recreation was contextualized by a few defining characteristics of the postwar period: namely, prosperity, population growth, and suburbanization.⁸ Standards of living were higher – notably, fifty-four percent of British

⁵ Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 11.

⁶ Mona Gleason, "Disciplining Children, Disciplining Parents: The Nature and Meaning of Advice to Canadian Parents, 1945-1955" *Social History* 29, 57 (1996), 191.

⁷ Chris Dummitt, "Finding a Place for Father: Selling the Barbecue in Postwar Canada," *Canadian Historical Association Journal* 9 (1998); Robert Rutherford, "Fatherhood, Masculinity and the Good Life During Canada's Baby Boom, 1945-1965," *Journal of Family History* 24, 3 (1999).

⁸ Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford, *Creating Postwar Canada: Community, Diversity, and Dissent, 1945-75* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 3-4.

Columbia's labour force was organized, making it the "most unionized province in Canada"⁹ – which provided families with better wages and more leisure time than experienced in previous decades.

Alongside this image of a prosperous, leisure-orientated postwar family, the province – under the leadership of W.A.C. Bennett – was in the midst of major industrial development. This included a system of modern roads and highways, constructed to support burgeoning resource industries and connect the province's hinterland with metropolitan areas. The government's philosophy of high modernity guided its policies towards extensive resource extraction and industrial development, which it justified by the pursuit of the 'Good Life.' It should be noted, however, that this unprecedented level of resource development met some resistance, and select voices of dissent encouraged strains of modernity that would work more harmoniously with British Columbia's natural environment. These attitudes not only indicated that multiple perceptions of modernity existed, but also that British Columbians were becoming more aware and increasingly vocal regarding the negative effects of unrestrained resource use. While conservationists such as Roderick Haig-Brown drew attention to the provincial government's attitude towards resource extraction, including industrial activity within the boundaries of provincial parks,¹⁰ other residents were also preoccupied with

⁹ Jean Barman, *The West beyond the West: A History of British Columbia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991).

¹⁰ As Ken Youds argued in his thesis, "the value of parks was placed within the general context of resource use and economic benefit." By constructing campground and picnic areas within park boundaries, the provincial government sought to coordinate public use and nature resource development within provincial parks. In this context, Youds quotes a statement that park official Chester Lyons made at the 1949 Natural Resource Conference: "the indiscriminate reservation of large areas for parks... could greatly affect other primary resources." Ken J. Youds, "A Park System as an Evolving Cultural Institution: A Case Study of the B.C. Provincial Park System, 1911-1976" (MA thesis, University of Waterloo, 1978), 77.

environmental concerns. As Arn Keeling has noted, the “unanticipated consequences of urbanization, mass consumption and the alteration of the natural environment” inspired examples of activism throughout the province.¹¹

Consequently, the same roads that gave the provincial government access to natural resources allowed postwar families to engage in outdoor recreation outside city limits, a phenomenon intimately connected to the increasing prevalence of conservationist sentiments. One enthusiast described the new Trans-Canada Highway as a remarkable feat that effectively exposed “craggy mountains, prairies, virgin forest, bustling cities and picturesque sea coast” to those who travelled along it.¹² The automobility¹³ of families was situated in the context of considerable effort to increase revenue from tourist travel, a growing industry the provincial state accorded with similar financial significance to the province’s lucrative natural resource industries.¹⁴ This was not unique to the province, as political and economic leaders across Canada sought to create a modern tourism industry by constructing cultural, natural and national identities

¹¹ Arn Keeling, “Sink or Swim: Water Pollution and Environmental Politics in Vancouver, 1889-1975,” *B.C. Studies* 142/143 (Summer/August 2004), 93. See also: Mia Reimers, “BC at its most sparkling, colourful best’: Post-war province building through centennial celebrations,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Victoria, 2007), 18; Tina Loo, “People in the Way: Modernity, Environment and Society on the Arrow Lakes,” *B.C. Studies* (Summer/Autumn 2004), 161-196; Arn Keeling and Robert McDonald, “The Profligate Province: Roderick Haig-Brown and the Modernizing of British Columbia,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 36, 3 (2001), 7-23; John-Henry Harter, “Environmental Justice for Whom? Class, New Social Movements, and the Environment: A Case Study of Greenpeace Canada, 1971-2000,” *Labour/Le Travail* 54 (Fall 2004), 83-120; Richard Rajala, “‘This Wasteful Use of a River’: Log Driving, Conservation, and British Columbia’s Stellako River Controversy, 1965-72,” *B.C. Studies* 165 (Spring 2010), 31-74.

¹² Donald Bruce, “New road to adventure,” *B.C. Motorist* (September/October 1962), 3.

¹³ As a term, automobility refers to the use of the automobile as the primary method of transportation.

¹⁴ Michael Dawson, *Selling British Columbia: Tourism and Consumer Culture, 1890-1970* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

to attract the patronage of American tourists.¹⁵ Significantly, however, even though only a small percentage of tourism funding went into encouraging domestic travel, less than a quarter of Canadians travelled outside their respective provinces, suggesting that intra-provincial travel was a popular pastime for family vacations.¹⁶

The relationship between the family, leisure and the natural environment is located at the intersection of several bodies of literature that this thesis will build upon. Conceptually, my research – and the relevant literature – is divided into two separate sections. The first discusses the role of the automobile in the postwar family, examining ways in which cultural producers framed it as a site of family togetherness and an essential component of modern fatherhood. This necessitates drawing from recent literature on the postwar family, masculine domesticity, and the automobile. Most notably, this chapter will expand on Susan Sessions Rugh’s research on the American family vacation. Although Rugh explores how postwar affluence affected the family’s patterns of leisure and consumption – and how traditional gender roles informed the processes of packing, planning, and bringing the domestic on the road – my research will enrich her observation by incorporating recent literature on masculinity and the family in

¹⁵ Karen Dubinsky, *The Second Greatest Disappointment: Honeymooning and Tourism at Niagara Falls* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1999); Karen Dubinsky, “Everybody likes Canadians: Americans, Canadians and the Postwar Travel Boom,” in *Being Elsewhere: Tourism, Consumer Culture and Identity on Modern Europe and North America*, edited by Shelley Baranowski and Ellen Furlough (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 332. In the early twentieth century, the promotion of tourism in the United States had a strong national, patriotic content: Political and economic leaders “sought to redefine their ideal of America and the place of the West within it,” and tourist promotion functioned to reconcile the East and West in the context of modern nation-state building. By drawing from ideas of sublime wilderness, political and economic leaders constructed a “natural legacy representative of American exceptionalism.” See Marguerite Shaffer, “‘See America First’: Re-Envisioning Nation and Region through Western Tourism,” *Pacific Historical Review* 65, 4 (November 1996), 560, 565.

¹⁶ Dubinsky, “Everybody likes Canadians,” 332.

postwar Canada.¹⁷ By exploring this recent Canadian literature on modern parenthood and masculine domesticity, the chapter will connect the automobile and motoring vacations to the ‘new’ ideals of the family during the postwar years. In joining these literatures, this section will argue that not only did experts and other cultural producers present the automobile as a site of family togetherness, but this discourse correlated the automobile’s gendered dynamics with roles of modern parenthood and the experience of childhood, effectively blurring the line between the domestic and the public.

The second section brings the family automobile into the natural environment, exploring ways in which automobility and other outdoor technologies (such as camping equipment) shaped the family’s relationship to nature. To accomplish this, the third chapter will combine literature on the automobile, the postwar family and masculine domesticity with literature on the natural environment. As demonstrated by existing research, the dominant discourse gendered particular uses of the natural environment as masculine, experiences also mediated by the automobile and a wide range of outdoor technologies. By discussing these themes – in conjunction with recent work on masculine domesticity, the family, and the gendered consumption of goods – this chapter will contribute to existing literature by suggesting that cultural producers portrayed facilitation of the family’s access to the outdoors as a fundamental component of modern fatherhood. Furthermore, the family’s adventures in the natural environment required entirely different constructions of nature than those sought for ‘traditional’ masculine excursions into nature, such as fishing or hunting. Through examining

¹⁷ Susan Sessions Rugh, *Are We There Yet? : The Golden Age of American Family Vacations* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008).

literature on the role that the automobile and other modern technologies played in granting families access to natural spaces, this chapter will explore an ironic observation: although the family sought to ‘get away from it all,’ the domestic conveniences that articles and advertisements associated with modern family camping necessitated ‘taking it all with them,’ an experience that nonetheless informed growing conservationist sentiments during the postwar years.¹⁸ Not only did cultural producers portray the family automobile as a site of masculine domesticity, the automobile also functioned as a medium through which British Columbian families related to the natural environment.

Both of these chapters focus on the dominant discourse surrounding the family, the automobile and outdoor recreation in postwar British Columbia. Given that each chapter draws from popular sources that were widely circulated throughout Canada, the process of researching necessitated striking a balance between this broader Canadian discourse and explicitly British Columbian content. Because of their popularity and appeal to readers, I selected *Maclean's* and *Chatelaine* to reflect the broader, dominant discourse. *Western Homes and Living*, *B.C. Motorist* and *B.C. Digest* – magazines focusing entirely on the home, driving and automotive safety, and the province’s outdoors, respectively – were each chosen to help situate this discourse in British Columbia. Research on these magazines focused on the years between 1950 and 1970.¹⁹ To get an understanding of each magazine’s style and content, I initiated research by thoroughly examining a full year of each magazine. After doing so, I developed the following

¹⁸ Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*, 130-131; Boag, “Outward Bound.”

¹⁹ *Maclean's* and *Chatelaine* magazine were fully circulated between 1950 and 1970. *Western Homes and Living* was published between 1950 and 1966, when it became *Vancouver Life*. *B.C. Motorist* and *B.C. Digest* were published between 1961-1970 and 1961-1967, respectively. After 1967, *B.C. Digest* became *B.C. Outdoors*. I examined the content of these magazines for the entirety of each available date range, as discussed here.

strategy: I surveyed the table of contents for each issue within the chosen time frame, and devoted particular attention to advertisements and images during the spring and summer months.²⁰ Likewise, I selected newspapers to reflect British Columbia, rather than the broader Canadian context. Given the vast quantity of available newspapers, this thesis focuses on widely circulated urban-based newspapers, such as the *Daily Colonist*, the *Daily Times*, the *Vancouver Province* and the *Vancouver Sun* between 1950 and 1970. Newspaper research drew heavily from the B.C. Legislative Library index, where words or phrases such as ‘camping,’ ‘recreation,’ and ‘nature’ proved quite lucrative. By choosing these particular urban-based newspapers – from Victoria and Vancouver – I sought to situate the larger Canadian discourse presented in popular magazines such as *Chatelaine* or *Maclean’s* within the British Columbian context.

This brief overview provides a rough blueprint – or road map – of the contributions that this thesis will make to the growing body of literature on postwar Canada and British Columbia. Having sketched out the broad contours, the bodies of literature alluded to here will be explored and engaged with to a greater extent at the outset of each chapter. By addressing and connecting these seemingly diverse themes – namely, the family, the automobile, and British Columbia’s natural environment – this thesis will explore dimensions of the postwar family road trip: an image or memory stirring nearly as much nostalgia as the Kodak Carousel.

²⁰ The images referred to throughout the body of this thesis are included in an appendix. After careful consultation, Inba Kehoe, the University of Victoria’s Copyright Officer and Scholarly Communications Librarian, agreed that my use of these images was “fair dealing,” and could be included without obtaining copyright permission. Not only does my critical analysis of these advertisements contribute to a larger body of knowledge, but all images are included as smaller, black and white versions of the originals.

Chapter 2: The Family and the Automobile

It is possible, in 1962, for a drive to be the highlight of a family week.
 King of the road, behind the wheel on four steel-belted tires, the sky's the limit.
 Let's just drive, we'll find out where we're going when we get there.
 How many more miles, Dad?²¹

Published in *Maclean's* during 1954, a full-page advertisement for a new Ford Crestline Sunliner reads: "One drive says more than 1000 words!" The advertisement portrays a happy family cruising through the countryside in a red convertible, with the father assuming a confident position behind the steering wheel, his wife seated next to him, and two well-dressed, cheerful children in the backseat (see Figures 1a and 1b).²² This imagery depicts the drive as the destination, and is strongly associated with family togetherness. As implied by this advertisement and the excerpt from Ann-Marie MacDonald's novel, such a drive had the potential to be the highlight of a family's week.

Production of this advertisement reflects the postwar sentiment that encouraged stable family life, as part of a "powerful reaction on the part of Canadians to prolonged periods of turbulence and uncertainty."²³ As insinuated by postwar cultural producers, time spent together in the family car could enhance domestic life. Similarly, Rugh has argued that the road trip was the most popular form of the postwar family vacation: it typically included members of the nuclear family, conveyed status in a modern consumer society, and reinforced modern citizenship. As Rugh puts it, families brought

²¹ Ann-Marie MacDonald, *The Way the Crow Flies* (Toronto: A.A. Knopf Canada, 2003), 3.

²² Ford advertisement, *Maclean's* (15 June 1954), 31. See also Pontiac advertisement, *Maclean's* (17 August 1957), 29.

²³ Mona Gleason, "Disciplining Children, Disciplining Parents: The Nature and Meaning of Advice to Canadian Parents, 1945-1955" *Social History* 29, 57 (1996), 191.

“domesticity on the road” in their cars to strengthen familial bonds.²⁴ The family road trip was an opportunity to retreat into the safety of domestic space, a phenomenon that this chapter will explore and address in the context of British Columbia. In conjunction with advice articles and interest pieces related to driving, family vacations, and automotive maintenance, other car and petrol advertisements similar to the one mentioned above comprise the main sources for this chapter: collectively, these sources contribute to our understanding of the dominant discourse surrounding the family and the automobile in postwar British Columbia’s popular culture. By exploring how these cultural producers gendered the automobile masculine, and framed the family car as an extension of domesticity and a site of family togetherness reflecting postwar ideas of parenthood and childhood, this chapter will attempt to shed light on this discourse.

Situating the Family and the Automobile in Postwar Canada

Historians have acknowledged that the turmoil of the early twentieth century and the uneasy climate of the Cold War pushed Canadians towards the stability of domestic family life, but it should be emphasized that this movement was not necessarily a retreat into the past.²⁵ As Elaine Tyler May explains:

The legendary family of the 1950s, complete with appliances, station wagons, backyard barbecues, and tricycles scattered on the sidewalks, represented something new. It was not, as common wisdom tells us, the last gasp of “traditional” family life with roots deep in the past. Rather, it was the first wholehearted effort to create a home that would fulfill

²⁴ Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*, 5, 12-13.

²⁵ Doug Owsram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Mary Louise Adams, *The Trouble with Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 20.

virtually all its members' personal needs through an energized and expressive personal life.²⁶

Postwar experts – through the medium of magazine articles and advice literature – connected the concept of the nuclear family to a modernizing society that, as Cynthia Comacchio notes, “necessarily affected ideas about the family... with companionate marriage and the egalitarian family as the new modern models.”²⁷ Not only did experts perceive the family as crucial to the reproduction of normative heterosexuality during the Cold War, but they also celebrated its ability to socialize children and produce modern citizens.²⁸ As a “stabilizing influence,” the family was subject to the advice of postwar experts; they framed the modern family’s functionality as crucial to the creation of a modern nation.²⁹

Although parenting advice was not unique to the postwar years, it assumed a different character. As Gleason has argued, previous expert opinion had focused almost entirely on fundamental elements of childhood, such as maintaining “rigid schedules for sleeping, eating, and playing.” Postwar parenting remained the primary method of transmitting appropriate gender roles, but experts also emphasized the significance of providing children with “above all else, love, security, and understanding” to encourage healthy emotional development.³⁰ This advice focused increasingly on the father’s role in

²⁶ May, *Homevard Bound*, 11.

²⁷ Cynthia Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920 to 1950* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006), 244; Gleason, “Disciplining Children, Disciplining Parents,” 188-209.

²⁸ Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth*, 244.

²⁹ Adams, *The Trouble with Normal*, 38.

³⁰ Gleason, “Disciplining Children, Disciplining Parents,” 195-196.

childrearing.³¹ Experts urged fathers to spend more time with their children, suggesting that “in addition to his role as primary disciplinarian, a good father [should be] an entertaining playmate.”³² Historians have argued that prior to the Second World War, family experts framed fatherhood in terms of breadwinning: fathers were not necessarily expected to take an active role in raising their children, as these associated tasks were thought to be the responsibility of mothers.³³

Postwar family experts encouraged parents to produce well-adjusted children and, to this end, they constructed “appropriate forms of femininity – and masculinity – [as] the means to the nobler goal of childrearing,” connecting the structure of modern family with traditional ideas of what it meant to be man and woman, or mother and father.³⁴ They emphasized the importance of instilling appropriate gender roles in parents, because this was how children learned to be modern men and women. Although family experts encouraged the father to play a larger role in raising his children, and advocated a “new democratic attitude towards marriage and family,” the roles of mother and father did not deviate far from traditional gender roles.³⁵ Take barbecuing as an example: it was acceptable for men to cook for their families if masculine cooking ‘tools’ – such as a grill

³¹ Ibid., 202; Cynthia Comacchio, “A Postscript for Father?: Defining a New Fatherhood in Interwar Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review* 78, 3 (September 1997); Chris Dummitt, “Finding a Place for Father: Selling the Barbecue in Postwar Canada,” *Canadian Historical Association Journal* 9 (1998); Robert Rutherford, “Fatherhood, Masculinity and the Good Life During Canada’s Baby Boom, 1945-1965,” *Journal of Family History* 24, 3 (1999).

³² Gleason, “Disciplining Children, Disciplining Parents,” 202.

³³ Comacchio, “A Postscript for Father.”

³⁴ Adams, *The Trouble with Normal*, 27-28. See also Gleason, “Disciplining Children, Disciplining Parents,” 189.

³⁵ Ibid., 203.

and large pieces of meat – were present.³⁶ Likewise, the automobile was an acceptable site of masculine domesticity because cultural producers gendered it masculine.

The relationship between modern parenthood and the automobile is caught in this intersection between the domestic and the public. By exploring sites of masculine domesticity (such as the barbecue), recent work has readdressed the relationship between the public and private spheres.³⁷ In this sense, we too should reevaluate the separate spheres dichotomy, instead seeing the spheres as relational, with masculinity connected to both the public and the domestic sphere. This does not represent a rejection of the breadwinning narrative but instead marks a departure into a new area. As Christopher Dummitt explains, “by treating the breadwinning role as a meta-narrative of fatherhood, we obscure how the father is both public and private.”³⁸ And although the family car navigated through public spaces, its interior often operated as a domestic space. Furthermore, the dominant discourse connected modern fatherhood – or masculine domesticity – with patterns of postwar consumerism. Advertisements in popular postwar magazines and newspapers tied the material consumption of cars, boats, and televisions to acceptable definitions of fatherhood, encouraging good fathers to “[combine] prudence and foresight with the items used in carving out a stake in the good life.” Consequently, these cultural producers based the “provision and enjoyment” of the coveted “good life” on the consumption and use of goods and services associated with a particular experience, such as the Sunday drive and the family vacation.³⁹

³⁶ Dummitt, “Finding Place for Father.”

³⁷ Ibid.; Rutherford, “Fatherhood, Masculinity and the Good Life.”

³⁸ Dummitt, “Finding Place for Father,” 211.

³⁹ Rutherford, “Fatherhood, Masculinity and the Good Life,” 358.

The automobile played a central role in most families' leisure time and day-to-day domestic routines, but remained fundamentally masculine. When defining good driving as a masculine achievement, cultural producers stressed the type of "diligent awareness and foresight as the epitome of responsible behaviour" that conformed with the postwar discourse of technocratic risk management.⁴⁰ According to Dummitt, the automobile contributed to the discourse of modern masculinity, because "those who gendered the automobile as masculine in the postwar years were also connecting masculinity with the modernist project, creating a cultural bond between technological mastery, progress, and masculinity."⁴¹ The automobile played a similar role in the Cold War American context: as Cotten Seiler notes, social critics and cultural producers framed it both as a remedy for the apparent feminization of American culture and a way to reinstate individuality and independence. These cultural producers perceived automobility as a mechanism to reverse the decline of masculine individuality during a period marked by "anxiety over the feminization of American culture."⁴² This masculine discourse was firmly rooted in spatial movement, technological mastery and independence. In comparison, the same experts and producers of popular culture frequently depicted women as problem drivers during the postwar years, despite a deficit in studies confirming the supposed poor skills of female drivers. In an attempt to remedy the apparent problem of female drivers, the

⁴⁰ Dummitt, *The Manly Modern: Masculinity in Postwar Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 126-127.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 131.

⁴² Cotten Seiler, *Republic of Drivers: A Cultural History of Automobility in American* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 78-79.

producers of articles and advertisements addressing driving skills typically encouraged women to submerge their femininity while driving.⁴³

This suggests that despite the increasing presence of female drivers on the road, the discourse surrounding automotive use – as represented in popular postwar magazines and newspapers – remained gendered masculine.⁴⁴ Experts constructed these acceptable ideals of masculinity and femininity simultaneously: the negative perception of female driving habits influenced the discourse of masculine driving achievements, and vice-versa. Popular depictions of female drivers regularly questioned the competence of women on the road, despite the fact that by the 1950s and 1960s, “the hourly, daily, and weekly journeys of women, as much as anything else, [delineated] western landscapes,” particularly throughout burgeoning suburbs.⁴⁵ And as the automobile became central to family leisure activities in the postwar years, the discourse surrounding what it meant to be a good driver influenced the father’s role in the family. To the extent that driving indicated the embodiment of modern masculinity, this chapter will argue that cultural producers connected good driving to fatherhood: they classified safe and rational driving as attributes of good fathers when the family took to the road.⁴⁶ Although previous work on the family road trip describes the family car as an extension of traditional domestic space – where normative gender roles continue to operate – it does not fully

⁴³ Ibid., 88.

⁴⁴ Ibid.; Virginia Scharff, *Taking the Wheel: Women and the Coming of the Motor Age* (New York: The Free Press, 1991); Virginia Scharff, *Twenty Thousand Roads: Women, Movement and the West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

⁴⁵ Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*, 166; Scharff, *Twenty Thousand Roads*, 6.

⁴⁶ Dummitt, *The Manly Modern*, 126-127.

explore ways in which the family vehicle played a role in this new democratic ideal of gendered parenthood, particularly in terms of fathers. This chapter seeks to fill that gap.

By focusing on the cultural production of ideas in popular postwar media, this chapter approaches the relationship between the automobile and the family from the top down. Like recent work on the barbecue and masculine domesticity acknowledging that “cookbook writers, journalists, retailers and advertisers packaged a particular image of masculine domesticity to sell along with the barbecue,” this chapter will focus on the prescriptive discourse surrounding the family and the automobile.⁴⁷ The nature of this approach does not include ways in which postwar families engaged with or negotiated the dominant discourse and, although this may seem restrictive in scope, this approach holds merit. As Mary Louise Adams explains, before we can understand agency or resistance, we must explore the context – or the dominant cultural discourse – within which agency or resistance occurs.⁴⁸ So although this chapter focuses on identifying dominant ideas without exploring how families engaged with and experienced discourse – and it is important to note that postwar families could be complicated, conflicted, and atypical – this top-down approach will nonetheless add to our understanding of the postwar Canadian society that circulated these ideas. This research will create space for future exploration of negotiation and resistance to the dominant discourse.⁴⁹ As Adams puts it, “we all have to negotiate [dominant cultural discourses], whether we subscribe to them, are marginalized by them, or actively resist them.”⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Dummitt, “Finding a Place for Father,” 212.

⁴⁸ Adams, *The Trouble with Normal*, 19.

⁴⁹ Gleason, “Disciplining Children, Disciplining Parents,” 190.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

The Family Car at Home: A Point of Departure for the Family Road Trip

Although families certainly took domesticity on the road during vacations, increasing automobile ownership quite literally brought the car into the home.⁵¹ Magazines such as *Good Housekeeping* and *Western Homes and Living* published how-to articles to help families incorporate the family car into home architecture. Alongside catchphrases such as “it’s the motor age, and don’t forget it when you lay out your garage and driveway!” these articles featured efficiently organized garages and landscaped driveways. One article highlights these recent changes in the family’s domestic-automotive space:

A few years ago, little thought was given to the garage location. It was habitually placed behind the house at one side, because the stable, which it replaced, had been located there [because] the stable smells had to be kept away from the house... Today, we try to locate the garage to satisfy a score of useful requirements. It can be placed anywhere on the lot, attached to the house, or built within the house to gain the best position.⁵²

Articles encouraged families to situate the garage or parking area with easy access to the home. Garage and driveway layouts should include a “rain-protected” breezeway between the garage and the house in circumstances where the garage could not be placed next to an accessible door, because “if you can get from the house to the car under cover, rain or snow need not bother you.” For aesthetic purposes, the family’s home and garage should blend into one unified design that could be utilized with ease, and drivers “shouldn’t have to turn and twist, or scrape fenders, to get [the] car in and out of

⁵¹ Rudi Volti, *Cars and Culture: The Life Story of a Technology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 111; Owrarn, *Born at the Right Time*, 72.

⁵² Catherine and Harold Sleeper, “The Building Forum: Make your Garage Easy to Use,” *Good Housekeeping* (May 1949), 270.

the garage.” Likewise, the writers of these articles recommended that even the location of the garage should be carefully considered, as an open garage door facing the street could reveal “an unsightly, gaping void.”⁵³

In addition to these aesthetics, both writers and advertisers celebrated the cohesive garage-home unit for its domestic utility. A garage functioned as an extension of the family home: as a hobby room, a storeroom, as extra workspace, or simply as an area to “store outdoor tools, or hide unsightly garbage and waste cans.” Garages and driveways offered prospective play areas for children, and other opportunities for quality family leisure. If the garage was unattached to the house, the connecting breezeway – protected from the weather – functioned as an ideal location for outdoor dining and family or childhood games such as paddle tennis, shuffleboard, deck tennis and badminton. One advertisement features a father leaning proudly against the hood of the family car, watching his children play in and around the garage. The caption reads: “It started out to house just your car. But now, you name it – it’s in your garage... the kids wading pool, your garden hose, plastic-handled tools, new fertilizers, a power mower” (Figure 2).⁵⁴

Articles and advertisements implied that even when parked in the driveway, the automobile provided a way for parents – especially fathers – to bond with children. The idealistic father-son relationship is depicted in a General Motors advertisement featuring a photo of two young boys washing the family car and a caption that read “Won’t Daddy be Surprised!” The caption continues beside the photo:

⁵³ Sleeper, “The Building Forum,” 270.

⁵⁴ Sleeper, “The Building Forum,” 270-271; Shell advertisement, *Maclean’s* (17 August 1957), 8-9.

... he sure will be! But so what if they leave a few streaks and get themselves soaking wet. Their intentions are the very best. They want to show they care about their Daddy. They're not the only ones. General Motors cares, too. That's why we take such care when we build his car; why we insist on quality at every stage of production (Figure 3).⁵⁵

This advertisement exemplifies how material goods associated with fatherhood and the 'good life' were marketed by cultural producers as 'tools' to foster a compassionate familial relationship: even at home, the space in and around the automobile offered opportunities for leisure and positive family relationships. Furthermore, this intersection between domestic and automotive space functioned as a point of departure for family leisure on the road.

Understanding Technical Language and Scheduling Automotive Maintenance: Duties of a Responsible Father

Fathers quite literally "took the driver's seat" for family road trips – reflecting the "manful assertion of material success directed toward domestic consumption and leisure" – but both family and automotive experts extended the responsibilities of 'good' fathers even further.⁵⁶ This included day-to-day and vacation-related maintenance of the family car. Articles urged fathers to prepare the family vehicle before starting summer trips, emphasizing that even though "summer motoring destinations need to be reached quickly to enjoy their facilities," the "wise motorist" would make a thorough pre-vacation check of the brakes, headlights, tires, and steering system.⁵⁷ Responsibilities also included navigation while driving, which required the father to locate and carefully

⁵⁵ General Motors advertisement, *Western Homes and Living* (August 1965), 25.

⁵⁶ Rutherford, "Fatherhood, Masculinity and the Good Life," 364. See also, Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*, 24-26.

⁵⁷ "Prepare your car before starting summer trips," *Island Motorist* (July 1941), 14.

study up-to-date maps prior to departure while paying special attention to the family's anticipated route and any potential detour information.

Articles frequently emphasized that proper maintenance would allow a vehicle to be enjoyed to its full potential, implying that these choices could make or break the family vacation. Fathers accepting this masculine responsibility were advised to have the family's car "preconditioned every spring by a reputable garage" as a "sure way to get the most in carefree driving during the summer motoring season." Likewise, regular attention to maintenance could protect the driver and his family from "unnecessary breakdown or road failure."⁵⁸ Without proper maintenance, the safety, comfort and appearance of the family's car could be compromised at great cost: "no other investment can cost as much money and mental stress as a car which is not well maintained with proper service at regular intervals."⁵⁹ Part of these car care duties included finding a good service mechanic to correct the "minor mechanical imperfections" that could potentially spoil the family's "summer driving pleasure."⁶⁰

Aside from choosing a reliable mechanic and scheduling or performing maintenance, advice articles urged fathers to be accountable for careful cost management. One writer for *Maclean's* equated the family car with having an additional child, humorously suggesting that the "touchy creature out in your garage is the hungriest and most sensitive member of your family." Maintaining his family's car in 'healthy' condition, the father must simultaneously be nurse and psychiatrist, as well as parent. "Now that the good driving weather is here," the author advises in correlating the

⁵⁸ Roly Pepper, "Protection pays dividends," *Maclean's* (1 May 1950), 25.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ "Checklist for Happy Motoring," *Maclean's* (1 April 1954), 61.

father's nurturing role with wise decision-making, "you may save enough to buy shoes for your other children by studying these down-to-earth tips." The underlying humour of this statement pokes fun at the extent to which the car has become part of the family, but puts the responsibility for proper car maintenance, with careful attention to both economy and safety, squarely on father's shoulders.⁶¹

The camper trailer or mobile home became central to many family road trips, and a plethora of advice surrounded their use. Magazine articles and advertisements frequently portrayed "mobile home living" as an advantageous form of vacationing that provided families with "the comforts of civilization" while allowing them to explore the "majesty and beauty and tranquil peace of unspoiled nature."⁶² But the use of such a "vacation headquarters on wheels" mandated caution and careful measures for family safety. Automotive experts cautioned fathers to account for the type of terrain – such as high-speed highways or steep mountainous regions – in conjunction with the space and weight requirements of having a backseat full of passengers or camping equipment. Likewise, the process of towing a trailer demanded additional caution to ensure "pleasant and safe use" while traveling with the family. "Applied common sense and safe driving marks the good car-trailer operator," advised one writer in recommending adequate insurance coverage, frequent safety inspections, and close attention while driving. If properly handled, experts asserted, the camper trailer could create fun for the whole family; if not, the trailer had the potential to become a "death weapon."⁶³

⁶¹ Sidney Margolius, "The Care and Feeding of your Car," *Maclean's* (15 May 1954), 28-30; 32.

⁶² "Tips on buying a mobile home," *B.C. Motorist* (July/August 1962), 11.

⁶³ "Trailer Pointers," *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1964), 16-19.

Similar to the language used to depict automobiles in advertisements and articles, trailer-related terminology was highly technical and frequently emphasized automotive features such as horsepower and engine specifications.⁶⁴ Experts urged drivers – presumably male – to consider “maximum carrying demands,” among other factors such as the “ruggedness, power, braking capacity, and overheating of the proposed towing vehicle.” When buying a trailer, the responsible man should evaluate features such as “heavy-duty shock absorbers, heavier rear springs, large capacity, heavy-duty radiator, five-blade fan, limited slip differentiation in the rear axle and lower ratio axle.”⁶⁵ Knowing and utilizing the meaning of these technical terms was central to a masculine identity premised on technical knowledge, responsibility and accountability. Likewise, neglecting responsibilities could have undesirable consequences:

A motorist who fails to drive with due regard to the new conditions imposed by hauling a trailer will abuse the motive power and control units of his vehicle and invite high maintenance, repair, and replacement expenses... in exchange for comfort and fun.⁶⁶

In the same sense that comprehensive map knowledge and regular car maintenance marked responsible fathers, possession of safety equipment such as red flags, flares and flashlights signified responsible car-trailer operators, whether it involved the family’s camper trailer or boat trailer.

When placed in the context of the family, the technical language used throughout driving and automotive advice can be connected to the recent work on masculine domesticity that utilizes the concept of ‘proliferation of discourse.’ As demonstrated in

⁶⁴ “Tips on buying a mobile home,” 11.

⁶⁵ “Trailer Pointers,” 16-17.

⁶⁶ “Trailer Pointers,” 18.

Dummitt's work on the barbecue, this concept entails "linguistic posturing," linking "outdoor cooking to symbols for virile masculinity and manly leisure."⁶⁷ In the example of the barbecue, this strategy allowed cultural producers to transform cooking utensils into rustic tools situated in an "apparent history of muscular and military manhood."⁶⁸ Such representations portrayed barbecuing as an acceptable masculine activity, using "jargon-filled language" to distinguish masculine barbecuing tools from feminine cooking utensils.⁶⁹ Similarly, the technical language used by experts and other cultural producers gendered the automobile and its associated maintenance as masculine, securing another acceptable avenue for fatherly involvement in the family. When the family took domesticity on the road – and fathers engaged in another form of masculine domesticity – the proliferation of technical jargon helped ensure that the automobile remained fundamentally masculine.

Mothers, Fathers, and the Helping Hand of Modern Amenities

In ensuring automotive safety and preparedness before the family embarked on vacation – and given that he might not necessarily undertake mechanical repairs himself – cultural producers portrayed the father as responsible for selecting the best alternative. Magazine advertisements often depicted gas stations as the "best guarantee of carefree holiday motoring" (Figure 4a).⁷⁰ Alongside images of families playing beach ball under

⁶⁷ Dummitt, "Finding a Place for Father," 212.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 215.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 217.

⁷⁰ Chevron Standard Oil advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (March/April 1963), 17.

the sun, riding horses through a desert and skiing down a mountain, advertisements portrayed service stations as ideal places to relax while “courteous attendants” checked water, batteries and tires to ensure that “all’s OK under the hood!” Spotless restrooms where children could be tidied up before jumping back in the car made the service station a place where families could visit and be taken care of, making for smooth and seamless travel (Figure 4b).⁷¹ In one advertisement, a young boy runs toward his family’s vehicle with a broom and dustpan in hand. The caption reads: “Sorry, son, the jobs taken... by a man who’s proud of his clean station and restrooms!” (Figure 5)⁷² In another advertisement featuring a honeymooning couple, the caption reads: “Best man wherever you go... that’s the man at the sign of the Chevron... he’s always ready to help” (Figure 6).⁷³

These advertisements also depicted service stations as places where female drivers could visit without having to worry about the technical intricacies of the automobile. The sign of the Chevron marked a place where “gals on the go” could be met with quick bumper-to-bumper service, and “scoot on [their] way to a lot smoother driving” (Figure 7).⁷⁴ Companies marketed their service stations’ clean facilities as the perfect place to regroup or reorganize children before returning to the road – “you clean Charlie, we’ll clean the windows” (Figure 8).⁷⁵ One particular advertisement featured a young mother guiding two young girls – both dressed in ballerina outfits – towards the restroom

⁷¹ Texaco advertisement, *Maclean’s* (27 April 1957), 7.

⁷² Chevron Standard Oil advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (July/August 1962), 7.

⁷³ Chevron Standard Oil advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (September/October 1962), 9.

⁷⁴ Chevron Standard Oil advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (July/August 1963), 2.

⁷⁵ Chevron Standard Oil advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1964), 7.

facilities while the attendant cleaned the car's windshield. Another portrayed a mother guiding three messy, ice cream toting children towards the restroom, underneath the matching catchphrase: "You're always welcome, even if it's just to clean up a few little problems... anytime you want to get off the road, and get some of the road off of you" (Figure 9).⁷⁶ The representation of Chevron's service stations repeatedly emphasized family friendliness; one example shows a Chevron service man lifting a young child up to a water fountain. The title – "Best place to fill'er up!" – assured drivers that Chevron gas stations met the needs of both families and cars (Figure 10).⁷⁷ The service station, then, was a friendly refuge from the road for female drivers – most frequently depicted as mothers juggling children and errands – and a reliable place to assure the family's safety on the road, even when the father was present. Likewise, these advertisements depicted the ideal father as a man who knew where to purchase the services associated with safe family driving.

Advertisements portrayed the choice of hotel, motel or vacation destination as equally important and implied that poor planning or selection could potentially ruin a family vacation. In this context, cultural producers correlated the consumption of modern technology – such as the telephone or well-equipped service stations – with family happiness on the road. For example, a BC Tel advertisement depicts a family driving into a motel's parking lot and reading a sign that indicates availability of a heated pool but no vacancies. The accompanying message ("there's a warm welcome awaiting this family") suggested that 'no vacancy' signs should not worry those families wise

⁷⁶ Chevron Standard Oil advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (March/April 1964), 7.

⁷⁷ Chevron Standard Oil advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (September/October 1963), 11.

enough to plan vacations carefully (Figure 11a).⁷⁸ This advertisement worked in conjunction with the British Columbia Automotive Association [BCAA]: because BC Tel phone lines were available at BCAA headquarters and offices throughout the province, “accommodation reservations for BCAA members can be made within minutes... ensuring a happy, comfortable end to your day’s driving.” Not only did these articles and advertisements correlate the consumption of cars, trailers and boats with modern fatherhood,⁷⁹ but they also implied that the father’s choice of modern services – including gas stations and telephone services – played a fundamental role (Figure 11b).⁸⁰ This intersection between fatherhood and consumption reflected middle class values: although he may be able to work on the family car himself, the ideal father had sufficient income to purchase such services for the family’s safety and comfort.

Gendering the Steering Wheel: Disparate Perceptions of Male and Female Drivers

As Scharff has noted in her research, automotive advertisements typically depict women behind the wheel of a vehicle only as a stationary, attractive accessory. For example, one particular advertisement for a 1963 Datsun places a young woman at the steering wheel of a parked car, while a man in a business suit stands beside the car and gazes out at the view. The caption reads: “...for the business man, sportsman, or housewife... the Datsun Sedan 5-passenger car brings a new kind of motoring versatility

⁷⁸ BC Tel advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (July/August 1963), 11.

⁷⁹ Rutherford, “Fatherhood, Masculinity and the Good Life,” 358.

⁸⁰ British American Oil Company advertisement, *Maclean's* (25 May 1957), 65.

in town and country” (Figure 12).⁸¹ During the postwar years, however, as women increasingly used the family vehicle for daily domestic tasks such as running errands or picking up children, articles and advertisements represented their driving patterns differently than those of male drivers.⁸² Some articles recommended a distinction between his and her vehicles, citing the inevitability of “more stress and strain” on ‘her’ vehicle, because it was “primarily engaged in stop and go driving” on domestic errands in the city and suburbs. Although ‘his’ vehicle may have accumulated greater mileage, it apparently did so under “less severe conditions.”⁸³

Advertisements seldom depicted women driving, despite their presence on the road in increasingly large numbers. Additionally, the discourse surrounding what constituted marital harmony informed how women learned to drive, and subtly embodied the notion that good driving was a masculine achievement. Automotive writers frequently advised against husbands trying to teach their wives how to drive. They suggested that not only might the tension created by husband-wife driving lessons adversely affect an otherwise happy marriage, experts were better equipped to handle the bad driving habits and lack of automotive knowledge typically associated with female drivers. One piece of advice suggested that because female drivers were already prone to less than ideal habits, a wife or daughter would surely “inherit Dad’s poor habits” without the help of a licensed instructor. Experts predicted that the ‘inevitable’ comments during husband-wife driving lessons would disrupt marital harmony: “...don’t jam on the brakes so hard! ...you’re too close to the center! ...faster... slower!”

⁸¹ Nissan Datsun advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (September/October 1963), 2.

⁸² Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*; Scharff, *Taking the Wheel*; Scharff, *Twenty Thousand Roads*.

⁸³ “Women on Wheels,” *B.C. Motorist* (March/April 1962), 12.

Consequently, one particular piece of advice could not be reiterated enough: “Family togetherness was never meant to endure the shattered nerves caused by father’s comments.”⁸⁴

The writers of this driving advice encouraged the rational, responsible husband to send his wife to a driving school for proper training by a licensed professional. Similar advice articles typically implied that women were helpless around the mechanical workings of an automobile. Popular B.C. writer Ed Gould described his own personal experience:

The other day I found my wife practicing her driving lessons by methodically pressing up and down on what she thought was the gear shift but what was really the turn indicator level. I decided then and there to relinquish the job of driving instructor to one of the reputable driving schools.⁸⁵

Gould then relates this comparatively ‘modern’ driving experience to a similar situation his father had experienced years earlier. He recalls that “for most of a week my father sat with my mother in the old Ford while he described the functions of the various knobs, levers and wheels,” but when it was eventually time to drive, she immediately confused the clutch with the brake. After eventually leaving the driveway and gathering speed on the open road, his mother skipped across the cattle guard and hit the corner post of a fence, knocking one hundred feet of barbed wire fence to the ground. A driving school was not a viable option for his father and in the end, “Mom never asked for another lesson, Dad never offered one, and the subject never came up again.”⁸⁶ In summation,

⁸⁴ “Give them a Break,” *B.C. Motorist* (Jan/Feb 1962), 3.

⁸⁵ Ed Gould, “The Driving Lesson,” *B.C. Motorist* (Jan/Feb 1967), 7-8.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

experts and automotive writers portrayed a good husband as rational enough not to attempt giving his wife driving lessons:

This is definitely not a do-it-yourself project, all authorities are agreed. To do so is to risk wrecking both your car and your marriage. Even the astute professional instructors will turn over the job of wife-teaching to another pro... The argument over the comparative abilities of men and women to pilot an automobile in safety has raged ever since the dawn of the motor age, and probably will go on forever... Though this controversy may never be settled, there is one thing on which all safety experts are agreed: Don't teach your wife to drive! Turn her over to a professional driving instructor and hope for the best!⁸⁷

The notion that even well-trained driving instructors would send their wives to a reputable driving school highlights the gendered discourse surrounding the automobile. It was not a matter of husbands being inadequate driving instructors; rather, experts believed that driving instructors were in a better position to teach wives and daughters how to drive. In other words, they implied that a happy and harmonious marriage could be maintained through wise decision-making: it was in a husband's best interest to send his wife to a driving school not because he was ill-equipped to teach her, but because the student-teacher relationship was not conducive to marital harmony. Despite this strong warning against husband-wife lessons, some advice did acknowledge that in certain "dire and immediate circumstances" a husband might have to give his own wife driving lessons. In the event that the driving school was not a viable option, experts offered tips and suggestions to help husbands carefully negotiate through this daunting situation. But for the most part, they argued, he must "resign [himself] to the fact that to the average woman all the inner workings of the car are and forever will remain an area of complete mystification." Explanations, therefore, should be given in "a calm, quiet,

⁸⁷ "Women on Wheels," *B.C. Motorist* (Sept/Oct 1963), 16.

tactful, informative way despite induced concern, apprehension, fright, terror, apoplexy.” Indeed, the husband contemplating such hazards would be best advised to take “an advanced training course” to develop these talking mannerisms effectively.⁸⁸

Experts attributed the primary obstacles that men faced while teaching their wives and daughters how to drive to women’s lack of interest in automotive technology. One *B.C. Motorist* writer stated that the “ignorance of mechanical matters, so nearly universal among the sex [women] is traceable more to the lack of interest than to the lack of ability,” giving rise to “all sorts of dilemmas” and provoking much derogatory storytelling among male drivers. In the same article, a mechanic recalls the story of an elderly woman who would frequently come into his shop to get the air replaced in her car’s tires, each time asking: “I want the old carbon taken out and new carbon put in, please!” A similar anecdote referred to the time a woman phoned BCAA to complain that her car had stopped working. When the attendant asked if her car had run out of gas, she replied: “No, it couldn’t be that. It’s been showing empty all morning and the car ran just fine.” Given this “ignorance,” experts encouraged husbands to explain the car’s essential components to their wives. One article stressed that “because of this disinterest in things mechanical,” husbands should “make a special point of explaining about the gas gauge” and “try to impress upon [their wives] that gasoline is more than a convenience or a luxury; it is an absolute essential if the car is to go.” Similar advice assumed that women were more interested in the car’s aesthetic qualities, for example: “when your

⁸⁸ Ibid.

wife tilts the rear-view mirror to aid in applying lipstick, caution her to put it back in place before starting to drive.”⁸⁹

These stories, despite their underlying sense of humour, nonetheless demonstrate how automotive experts perceived women as hopeless at navigating the complexities of the automobile. Given that this was advice from BCAA’s magazine, husbands and fathers were also being sold a consumer service. Articles and advertisements implied that subscribers to this service – instruction from reputable driving schools – acted rationally in the best interests of their marriage or family life. By encouraging husbands to purchase such services instead of enduring the stress of informal lessons in driveways and parking lots, such advice reaffirmed the notion that driving was a masculine achievement, an idea partially defined against the apparent incompetence of female drivers.

This tone prevailed despite a lack of evidence suggesting that women were indeed worse drivers than men. A study conducted by the United Nations in the early 1960s indicated that despite their reputation on the road, female drivers were not actually more prone to accidents than male drivers. The same study adds that “women have a happy influence on the traffic accident rates,” because “among the male community, married men have the lowest accident rate.” This study managed to defend the reputation of female drivers “without giving them an edge over male drivers,” suggesting that the myth of the bad female driver was quite durable.⁹⁰ In one cartoon illustration, two women are shown chatting with each other while driving in a car with “Careless Driver” written

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ “UN Gives Support to Women Drivers,” *B.C. Motorist* (Sept/Oct 1962), 11.

across the body. The caption reads: “It’s helped me tremendously – everybody stays out of my way!” (Figure 13)⁹¹ If accidents operated as a yardstick to measure good driving, women were certainly not worse drivers than men. Nonetheless, advice articles and advertisements consistently associated good driving with masculinity, and the discourse influencing this cartoon’s humour prevailed.

Feminine Requests and the Family Car: Improving Aesthetics and Functionality

After drawing from a collection of design ideas that women submitted to auto manufacturers, one article draws a distinction between the mechanical concerns that men expressed and the ‘feminine’ feedback that female drivers contributed. The author implies that while men were preoccupied with the mechanical workings under the hood, women were concerned with safety, convenience, and style: “Not many women drivers may know the difference between a carburetor and a crank shaft, but when it comes to the total automobile... they know exactly what they want! And its not lavender sidewalls or chintz sun visors, either. Their ideas are practical!” The same article also stated that “a woman no longer takes a back seat when it comes to autos. She’s up front, steering.”

The author went on to observe that

leaders in the auto industry are very quick to admit that the fair sex has many worthwhile ideas on the construction of cars... not only in the way of conveniences, but also in safety factors. One woman suggested that someone design a car for children to stand in, since most children are determined to stand anyway.⁹²

⁹¹ “Careless driver cartoon,” *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1963), 22.

⁹² “Women on Wheels,” *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1963), 18-19.

Car dealerships and garages noted that most seat belt inquiries came from women, who were more likely to use the devices than men. Ironically, given their reputation on the road, women ranked safety features highest among their concerns in carrying out daily domestic errands. As one instalment in the *B.C. Motorist* “Women on Wheels” series noted, “playing chauffeur all day to a carload of boys and girls isn’t easy, and a woman’s car must be in tip-top condition all the time – particularly brakes and tires.”⁹³

One article states that aside from seat belts, female drivers called for the installation of safety mechanisms to prevent children from opening the doors on a moving car or accidentally releasing the emergency brake while parked. Suggestions were also aesthetic: adding a hook under the dashboard to hang a pocketbook, or creating a door that could be opened without breaking fingernails. Stating that “women excel in the field of conveniences” and that “they first got started with the home, got what they wanted, and then turned their attention to the automobile,” the same article goes on to suggest that automatic shifting and power steering were both designed with the female driver in mind. Each of these features “took the complication out of driving... [and opened] the road to millions of female drivers” by eliminating the “back-breaking job” of steering and changing gears. In addition to crediting women with the development of

⁹³ Ibid. Although seatbelts were available during the early 1950s – Ford, for example, offered them as an optional safety feature starting with its 1956 models – only twenty percent of that year’s Ford models were sold with seatbelts, reflecting the perceived notion that “safety doesn’t sell.” It was not until Ralph Nader’s book, *Unsafe at Any Speed: The Designed-In Dangers of the American Automobile*, was published in 1965 that attitudes towards automotive safety began to shift. Nader’s book argued that automobile manufacturers chose style over practicality and quality and were consequently negligent towards automotive safety. Historians have argued that Nader’s book acted as a catalyst for a public that was “increasingly disenchanted” with the automotive industry. Nader’s initiatives affected the automobile industry positively, although the manufacturers did not necessarily see it that way: in 1966, the American government was required to set and monitor safety standards for vehicles and by 1968, it was mandatory for all vehicles to have seat belts installed. See Rudi Volti, *Cars and Culture: The Life Story of a Technology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 97, 116-119.

certain safety features, the article attributes greater availability in paint and upholstery colour choices to feminine suggestions.⁹⁴

One automotive show room had a suggestion box for women only, and often received very similar inquiries. Selected randomly, three particular suggestions include “a car designed with a special roll-in grocery cart to eliminate lifting heavy bundles in and out of the back seat or trunk; an inexpensive car telephone, perhaps with a direct wire to the woman’s home; [and] a light on the dashboard that glows when the gas tank approaches ‘empty’.”⁹⁵ The feminine attributes that the author associated with these automotive suggestions reveals another aspect of the disparate perception of male and female drivers. Automotive writers granted these features greater practicality than “lavender sidewalls or chintz sun visors,” but continued to correlate them with domestic functionality and aesthetic aspects. Consequently, these experts still considered these features to be less important than the mechanical operation of the family car and the technical automotive language that marked this domain as masculine.

Bringing Domesticity on the Road: Packing and Planning for the Family Road Trip

By noting that his family was one of many embarking on road trips, popular author Joseph Bell hints at the postwar family’s dependence on the automobile, which he correlates with the high number of service stations, repair garages and motels available to

⁹⁴ “Women on Wheels,” *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1963), 18-19. By 1950, the majority of automobiles produced by General Motors in the United States were equipped with automatic transmissions: this included Cadillacs, Oldsmobiles, Buicks, and Pontiacs. Similarly, power steering became an increasingly available option during the 1950s. Rudi Volti, *Cars and Culture: The Life Story of a Technology* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 94.

⁹⁵ “Women on Wheels,” *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1963), 19.

the modern motorist. In a “curious anomaly,” he suggests, the automobile both carried families away from home and promoted family unity and childhood education. For Bell’s family, the car “brought a closer association than seems possible in any other way,” functioning as an extension of domestic family life. Blanche Gunton, a writer for *Chatelaine*, made a similar observation: the confined space of the family automobile allowed her family to “[talk] as we never had time to talk before.” And furthermore, through experiencing the bonds of family togetherness, “[her] boys discovered their father was a different man entirely from the tired preoccupied parent they had known in the evenings at home.”⁹⁶

Although time spent on the road was affiliated with postwar ideals of parenthood and childhood, popular magazine articles anticipated that this quality family time would require careful negotiation and strategic planning. If executed properly,

motoring vacations, more than anything else, give parents and children a chance to play together, share new experiences, and weld themselves into a closer family unit. Ideally, as the car heads out of town towards the mountains or seashore, all worries are left behind and the only thoughts are of fun and relaxation in pleasant surroundings.⁹⁷

Bell cautions, however, that not all family motoring trips lived up to these expectations, as the stress of traveling with children strained the “natural bonds of parental affection.” Implementing an enjoyable family vacation was a matter of “patience, planning and psychology,” demanding that parents figure out “how children think on wheels.” Before embarking on a six-thousand-mile return trip to the Pacific Coast, so that his three

⁹⁶ Joseph Bell, “We travel with our kids and like it,” *Macleans* (3 August 1957), 25. Joseph Bell was an American writer who traveled extensively with his family and wrote about his experiences for popular publications, including *Macleans* and the *Saturday Evening Post*; Blanche Gunton, “We Drove the Kids to Alaska,” *Chatelaine* (January 1952), 50.

⁹⁷ “Travelling with Children: Planning is the Key to Successful Trips,” *B.C. Motorist* (July/August 1962), 20.

children could experience the “broadening influence” of the road, Bell and his wife educated themselves on how to “learn to live with [their] children in a car.” He suggests that by following a few basic guidelines, other motoring parents could ensure a similar experience of “quality, happy family time together.”⁹⁸

Experts and travel writers suggested that, as fundamental components of the family’s road trip, packing and planning needed to be properly executed for the vacation to run smoothly. Only through careful preparation and parental teamwork would families come closer to the ideal family model and avoid the sort of undesirable situation Bell encountered while visiting friends in Texas:

It was probably a hundred degrees in the shade and never had I seen such a completely bedraggled group. The driver was stripped down to his undershirt and was wearing a handkerchief tied about his head to keep the sweat out of his eyes which mirrored an incredible hangdog look. His wife beside him was red-faced and grim and was glaring into the back seat where two children were raucously voicing their displeasure. Noting my Texas plates, the man looked at me plaintively and said in a tone of hopeful, almost abject, humility, “Mister, can you tell me where in the hell is this Alamo?”⁹⁹

By following suggestions from experts or authors experienced at travelling with children, parents could avoid the common pitfalls of poorly planned trips and ruined vacations. Advice articles devoted to successful vacations covered diverse topics, including how to plan family meals, pack properly, and create ideal travel spaces for children. The act of packing and rearranging the backseat was framed as fundamental in setting the stage for

⁹⁸ Bell, “We travel with our kids and like it,” 24-25. See also “Travelling with Children,” 20-22.

⁹⁹ Bell, “We travel with our kids and like it,” 36.

the family road trip, reconfiguring the family car as a domestic space and helping parents orchestrate positive childhood experiences.¹⁰⁰

Because the backseat was typically designated as the children's area, wise parents were advised to pack light and put the family's luggage in the trunk or in a rooftop rack to keep the backseat clear. Writers described station wagons as ideal vehicles for family travel, providing extra space for luggage and a backseat perfect for children to pass time if "kept clear and fitted with a mattress pad." If excess luggage or multiple children limited space, the backseat area could be expanded by "building up the floor space with luggage and covering the entire level area with quilts." Alternatively, these experts wrote, the well-prepared father could either purchase or construct a platform, or put the middle seat down to create additional space. With the exception of a mattress, blankets, pillows and small storage compartments, parents were advised to keep the area clear so as to give children the freedom to move about or, alternatively, have the space to sleep simultaneously (in the "unlikely event that this circumstance should ever arise!").

Chatelaine writer Blanche Gunton gives her husband credit for devising domestic contraptions inside the family car: not only did he construct a rooftop plywood box to store the family's luggage, but he also succeeded in the unlikely feat of "[devising] a way for five full-length people to sleep in – and on – an ordinary two-door sedan."¹⁰¹

In addition to formulating the specs for the modification of the automobile's domestic space – and as Rugh demonstrated in the American context – the father was responsible for keeping the family vehicle in good condition. As travel writer Ann

¹⁰⁰ "Travelling with Children," 20-22.

¹⁰¹ Ian Todd, "Across Canada in Winter," *B.C. Motorist* (January/February 1963), 14; "Travelling with Children," 21; Bell, "We travel with our kids and like it," 25; Gunton, "We Drove the Kids to Alaska," 9.

Rivkin noted, the mother's more domestic role involved being prepared to "hit the road" within a few hours notice. Mothers could aim for efficiency by pre-packing everything from tooth brushes, soap, hair spray, aspirin, band aids, safety pins, needle and thread, flashlight, antihistamines, sunburn lotion and insect repellent to clothing, non-perishable food, plates and cutlery. Rivkin acknowledges that "every family will be different," but packing on the basis of an advance list would save time and "you won't hear wails of 'I forgot my tooth brush' when you reach that mountain cabin, miles away from any store." Similarly, a travel column in *Chatelaine* stressed that proper packing and similar 'prep work' fell to the mother, whose responsibility it was to prevent the "sour disillusioned feeling" of a "poorly executed vacation."¹⁰²

In emphasizing the importance of parental teamwork, experts portrayed the family vacation as a positive influence on family structure. By acting out the associated steps – packing appropriately and preparing the car for the road – parents had the opportunity to embody modern roles of fatherhood and motherhood. Rugh has hinted at this gendered division of labour in the context of the American family road trip, but this chapter expands on her argument by emphasizing the relevance of these tasks to the discourse surrounding new, modern ideals of postwar parenthood. When experts encouraged fathers to drive safely when children were in the backseat, their advice was intimately bound up with ideals of masculine domesticity: the process of caring for and preparing the family car provided fathers with acceptable avenues for family togetherness. By bringing domesticity and traditional gender roles on the road, parents

¹⁰² Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*, 27; Ann Rivkin, "Get Set: Ready to Go," *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1966), 30; Kate Aitken, "Travel's Fun if you Plan First," *Chatelaine* (June 1952), 15. See also "Travelling with Children," 14-15, and Gunton, "We Drove the Kids to Alaska," 50.

could embody the modern ideals of appropriate masculinity and femininity that, as Adams suggests, experts perceived as crucial to successful childrearing. Moreover, experts and other cultural producers implied that through the medium of the automobile, the father in particular could do his part to produce healthy, modern citizens.¹⁰³

Managing Children while Driving: Mealtimes, Safety and Parental Teamwork

The ideal family road trip constructed memorable childhood experiences while simultaneously providing what parents hoped would be a relatively peaceful vacation. Consequently, experts and writers emphasized that the family's 'home on the road' needed to cater to both parents and children, who each had different expectations regarding the ideal vacation. Magazine articles highlighted the correlation between miserable children and miserable parents, especially if the driving schedule did not accommodate appropriate meal times or adequate 'fun time.' To this end, early morning starts were crucial to the family's mood because, as Bell noted, it would take sluggish children "quite a while to realize the incredible misfortune that has befallen them of riding in the car all day long." Parents who executed this strategy properly could enjoy peaceful mornings and the accompanying scenery as a couple. As Bell puts it, there is "tremendous charm in the wonderment of a rising sun that too often dissipates into scragginess and dust at midday." Early morning departures also increased the likelihood

¹⁰³ Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*, 25-29; Adams, *The Trouble with Normal*, 27-28; 38.

of clear highways and an early stop to a long day's driving, but this ideal scenario could only be achieved with careful planning and parental teamwork.¹⁰⁴

Magazine articles on family travel proposed a gendered division of labour in endorsing the benefits of combining preplanned picnics and restaurant strategies. Although women were typically portrayed as responsible for preparing roadside meals, advice articles emphasized the father's ability to provide his family with a restaurant meal. If the family went out for a meal, the father should arrive first, secure seating, and order the family's food while the mother took the children for a walk, lowering the chances of causing a public scene with loud and restless children.

When the family was on the road, food, water, and rest stops often compromised efforts to maximize the distance covered in a day's driving. Experts advised combining essential gas station stops with food or water breaks, in an attempt to combat the "tired travel feeling" without losing ground. To this end, family meal times needed to be both quick and cost efficient, requiring stops at local stores to stock up on essential items such as bread rolls, juice or milk. Bell described the quick roadside breakfast as "one of the highpoints of the day," providing an opportunity for his family to witness a "magnificent sunrise, [work] the sleep out of our eyes and [discover] a gnawing appetite." Bell's family also ate their evening meals outside or, in the event of rain, picnicked in their motel room. Another article emphasized the potential benefits of this strategy, noting that "many drivers prefer a more leisurely pace, stopping every two to three hours to stretch and eat a picnic in some scenic spot."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Bell, "We travel with our kids and like it," 25. See also "Travelling with Children," 20-22, and Aitken, "Travel's Fun if you Plan First," 15.

¹⁰⁵ Bell, "We travel with our kids and like it," 34-35; "Travelling with Children," 20-22.

Safety, of course, ranked highest among parenting responsibilities in the context of the family road trip. Advice articles recommended that parents establish rules regarding “behavior and car safety” before departing. Children should not be allowed to cross the barrier between the driver’s seat and the backseat, and experts advised against allowing children to climb over seats, sit in the driver’s lap, or fiddle with car controls, ignition keys, door handles and locks. Maintaining order in the backseat meant preventing children from standing or jumping on the backseats, putting limbs or toys out the window, playing with large or sharp objects, or engaging in roughhouse play. Similarly, removing door handles and replacing them with knobs created a safer environment for children sitting in the backseat.¹⁰⁶

Cultural producers routinely portrayed the father as being responsible for enforcing this element of safety during the family’s time in the automobile. Consequently, advice articles portrayed the ability to simultaneously master safe driving, maintain order in the backseat and create positive childhood experiences as another aspect of modern fatherhood:

The urge to turn from the wheel to reprimand wrestling, screeching children is sometimes overpowering, but can be disastrous when driving. Instead, pull over and stop. Just doing that often has a sobering effect. Such a situation is often a good sign for a break, anyways.¹⁰⁷

As the above quote suggests, Dummitt’s work on safe driving and modern masculinity could be extended and applied to fatherhood in the context of the family road trip. Yet at the same time, the duty of planning scheduled stops and family meal times – and

¹⁰⁶ “Travelling with Children,” 22.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. See also Gunton, “We Drove the Kids to Alaska,” 8; Authur Baum, “Adventures in the Family Car” *Saturday Evening Post* (31 October 1953), 178.

ensuring safety in the automobile – corresponded with postwar ideals regarding compassionate and democratic marriage, placing the responsibility on both parents for careful planning and teamwork. As Gleason has argued – and as the gendered division of responsibility for packing, planning, safety and meal times suggests – modern attitudes towards democratic marriage and family continued to be mediated by traditional gender roles. Nonetheless, when the family was on the road, experts encouraged parents to incorporate modern, postwar ideals of compassionate marriage into the family vacation, and to work as a team to ensure family and childhood happiness. This suggests that the ideal experience of the postwar family required a great deal of effort and parental teamwork, as it would not necessarily occur naturally. The fact that expert advice focused so heavily on creating and maintaining familial harmony may actually help shed light on elements of lived experiences: perhaps this advice literature was a response to – and an attempt to remedy – actual conflict and disharmony in postwar families.¹⁰⁸

Quiet Games, Simple Devices, and Imaginative Minds: Constructing Childhood in the Family Car

In addition to giving advice on ideal driving itineraries – and tips for ensuring safety and cooperation in the backseat – those who styled themselves as authorities on family travel stressed the importance of including children in the family’s decision-making, which corresponded with the postwar ideal of the democratic family. This strategy, presumably, would make children easier to travel with. For example, by informing children of the family’s vacation route, parents could potentially “head off the

¹⁰⁸ Dummitt, *The Manly Modern*; Gleason, “Disciplining Children, Disciplining Parents,” 203.

question most often asked on the first leg of a thousand-mile vacation trip... Are we almost there, Daddy?" To demonstrate this, a *B.C. Motorist* author cited the time that his six-year-old daughter "poked her head into the front seat and asked plaintively, 'How much further do we have to go?'" less than half an hour into the family's vacation. The same author emphasized how children love contributing to the family's plans, provided they're old enough: "they'll love poring over maps and brochures to see where they're going. At the same time, parents can note the places of educational value, and plan rest stops accordingly." Experts also implied that by involving children in some small details of vacation planning, parents could strengthen familial bonds.¹⁰⁹

Authorities on family travel emphasized that recognizing and catering to the needs and habits of children was crucial to planning successful family vacations. After years of personal experience, Bell urged other parents to accept one basic fact:

Children see motor trips through entirely different eyes than we do. They are generally uninhibited and haven't yet acquired the pleasant adult habit of rationalization. When adults are hot or tired or bored on a trip, they put up with it because they know it's a means to an end and there's no immediate alternative.

One element of creating an ideal environment for family enjoyment hinged on parents using their own rationalization to negotiate with children, bringing distant destinations into the here-and-now. Bell, noting that the "immediate present is very urgent" to children, urged parents to recognize and understand this before they could expect to "get together on an equitable basis" and turn a long car trip into a "pleasurable experience"

¹⁰⁹ "Travelling with Children," 20-21.

for the entire family. Another author suggests that, for parents, keeping children amused and occupied while traveling was one of the foremost challenges of family motoring.¹¹⁰

The “greatest travel asset,” as described by Bell, was the “wonderfully volatile and vivid imagination of children... this can transcend the drabest surroundings or the longest day of traveling.” He suggested that parents encourage their children’s tendency to creatively enhance immediate surroundings. On one road trip, his children pretended that the car traveling behind theirs was “jammed to the gunwales with desperadoes, awaiting an opportunity to run [them] off the road and switch cars to increase speed post-bank job.” His children had their eyes cocked and imaginary guns ready throughout this hypothetical situation. The family vacation also presented entertaining educational opportunities. Simple contests – such as informative quizzes or guessing the gas mileage to the next town – could keep children occupied and knowledgeable. Blanche Gunton insisted that on her family’s motoring vacation, quizzes and games be inspired by the children’s lessons at school. This included information on the “chemistry of the world, the dynamics of electricity, the process of road building, and natural landmarks such as hot springs and volcanic eruptions.” Whether her children expressed the same positive sentiments regarding these activities remains unknown.¹¹¹

Experts on family travel, such as Bell and Gunton, also maintained that including children in the process of vacation planning could create a memorable and wholesome family experience. This could be accomplished by assigning each child certain tasks or responsibilities, such as helping follow the family’s travel route on a map and identifying

¹¹⁰ Bell, “We travel with our kids and like it,” 25; Todd, “Across Canada in Winter,” 16.

¹¹¹ Bell, “We travel with our kids and like it,” 25; Gunton, “We Drove the Kids to Alaska,” 50. See also Todd, “Across Canada in Winter,” 16.

the names and locations of upcoming towns. Children could also be included in ‘grown up’ decision-making related to eating or lodging. For Bell’s family, this process involved tramping into motel rooms, weighing each room against the other rooms and voting on the selection for the night, even though Bell and his wife ultimately “carried the voting balance of power.” Nonetheless, in including each member of the family in the decision-making, the Bells conformed to the ideal of the postwar democratic family.¹¹²

Attention to these strategies – aimed at creating cohesiveness within the family unit – were part of the “psychology to be observed” when dealing with children, helping parents “get along with [their children] much better” when the family was on the road. Inside the family car, this kind of cooperation and cohesiveness could contribute to the “man to man intimacy of car conversation which, unhappily, isn’t often possible in day-to-day living at home.” Implementing this range of advice both prior to and during the family road trip, the experts suggested, would provide for an enjoyable and personally fulfilling experience.¹¹³

The plethora of advice regarding childhood games and other entertainment strategies also reveals postwar attitudes towards childhood. Postwar experts, Gleason observes, advised parents to balance authority with nurturing, reflecting a movement away from a focus on proper eating and sleeping schedules towards advice emphasizing the emotional needs of children. According to Gleason, experts drew a strong correlation between healthy, well-adjusted modern youth – as produced through proper implementation of this authority-nurture balance – and the development of a modern

¹¹² Bell, “We travel with our kids and like it,” 36.

¹¹³ Ibid.

nation.¹¹⁴ When on the road, planning and participation in childhood games similar to the ones previously mentioned served a larger purpose in postwar Canada. Through the dynamics of masculine domesticity as depicted by cultural producers, then, the automobile played a fundamental role in this process.

In Summation

By exploring advice articles and advertisements associated with family motoring, this chapter has shed light on a few aspects of the dominant discourse surrounding the family and automobile in postwar British Columbia. The discussion of central themes – namely, how cultural producers framed the family’s car as simultaneously masculine, an extension of domesticity, and a favourable environment for modern parent-child relationships – contributes to recent work on the family in postwar Canada.

As previously discussed, Susan Session Rugh has explored the family road trip in the American context. Thematically, this chapter bears similarities to Rugh’s argument; however, by situating her work in the context of recent research by Rutherford and Dummitt, we enrich our understanding of the family and the automobile in postwar Canada. To some extent, and in a manner similar to Rugh’s approach, the last few sections of this chapter examine ways in which the process of embarking on a family road trip – including packing, caring for the car and following a set budget – were guided by gender norms.¹¹⁵ While it is important to acknowledge, as Rugh has done, how changes in income, consumption, and automobility affected family leisure, it is also

¹¹⁴ Gleason, “Disciplining Children, Disciplining Parents,” 195-196.

¹¹⁵ Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*, 24-26.

important to recognize how the consumption of this experience was tied to modern changes in the family. In seeking domestic comfort and safety on the road, the postwar family took part in the more general “first wholehearted attempt,” as May has eloquently described, at creating a fulfilling experience for each member.¹¹⁶ Articles and advertisements also depicted the automobile as a masculine space that gave modern fathers the opportunity to engage with the domesticity of family life. The gendered consumption of the automobile – as discussed in Rutherford’s work on fatherhood – played an integral role in the process of creating the modern family, reflecting new ideals of both masculinity and femininity. Postwar cultural producers implied that not only was the automobile a potential site of family togetherness, it also gave parents the opportunity to embody elements of democratic marriage bound up in the discourse surrounding the modern family.

Nonetheless, this research has raised additional questions regarding the family road trip. The relationship between the family and the automobile was contextualized by defining characteristics of the postwar period – prosperity, population growth, and suburbanization – but it is important not to assume uniformity in the postwar family.¹¹⁷ The ideal of the family road trip assumes that there are two parents who have sufficient income and access to leisure time. Although British Columbia’s standard of living improved during the postwar years, further research (beyond the scope of this thesis) should explore the realities of class, ethnicity and non-normative family structure; certainly, families and the relationships between family members were more complicated,

¹¹⁶ May, *The Trouble with Normal*, 11.

¹¹⁷ Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford, *Creating Postwar Canada: Community, Diversity, and Dissent, 1945-75* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 3-4.

inconsistent and multidimensional than representations in popular magazines and newspapers suggest.¹¹⁸ Presumably, these factors influenced the family's access to motoring vacations and affected their experiences. This chapter focused on the proliferation of popular discourse – drawing from both Canadian and British Columbian primary sources – but it is hoped that future research will capture the diversity of lived experiences. Perhaps subsequent research would reveal that the plethora of advice literature surrounding family life actually spoke to real experiences of vacation-inspired tension and misery. For example, the emphasis that experts repeatedly placed on minimizing intra-family conflict indicates the existence of a good deal of disharmony; intra-family conflict may have been a reality that postwar experts sought to remedy or eradicate.

Despite what postwar cultural producers implied through advertisements and articles, not all families were nuclear, not all husbands had middle-class incomes, and not all women stayed at home with the children. For example, women were increasingly present in the labour force both during and after the Second World War.¹¹⁹ Likewise, demographic data suggest that in British Columbia, the movement of women away from the home and into the workforce or higher education was ahead of the rest of Canada during the postwar years. When compared to other Canadian provinces, British Columbia had one of the highest averages of marriage age, a lower fertility rate, and a lower average number of children per household.¹²⁰ This should not suggest that the

¹¹⁸ Barman, *The West Beyond the West*, 304.

¹¹⁹ Joanne Meyerowitz, "Beyond the Feminine Mystique: A Reassessment of Postwar Mass Culture," in *Not June Cleaver: Women and Gender in Postwar America, 1945-1960*, ed. Meyerowitz (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 250.

¹²⁰ Barman, *West beyond the West*, 321.

idealized family road trip was merely an abstraction which few households obtained but, rather, that the reality of different family structures likely affected the form and character of family motoring in diverse ways.

Variation in family demographics and family structure reminds us that masculinity and femininity are not necessarily homogenous entities. This chapter has touched on Dummitt's recent work regarding hegemonic masculinity, but it is important to acknowledge that this discourse competes with other discourses. In other words, we should recognize that definitions of masculinity and femininity are not monolithic, particularly in terms of how they relate to parenthood. This could be conceptualized in two different ways. First, tensions and inconsistencies may exist at the level of dominant discourse. Take the advertisements and advice literature published in *B.C. Motorist* and *Chatelaine*, or *Maclean's* for example. While each source gives us insight into the dominant discourse, there may be minor underlying tensions. In *B.C. Motorist*, for example, masculinity is more closely aligned to technological mastery and progress, as Dummitt has previously discussed in his work.¹²¹ The advice literature and advertisements published in *Chatelaine*, on the other hand, brings masculinity closer to domesticity by focusing on the father's role in the family. And while these sources both inform the dominant discourse surrounding postwar masculinity, the definitions – or prescribed characteristics – of masculinity are slightly different. Additionally, these magazines seem to present a middle-class understanding of masculinity. It is important to remember that perceptions or self-perceptions of masculinity also intersect with other factors, including class, ethnicity, and urban-hinterland differences. In this sense, oral history research

¹²¹ Dummitt, *The Manly Modern*, 131.

could perhaps conceptualize gender roles in terms of multiple femininities and multiple masculinities. That said, however, the sources consulted in this thesis are generally consistent in their presentation of the discourse surrounding masculine domesticity.

But by briefly highlighting other theoretical approaches of recent work on postwar Canada, we can imagine the probable existence of underlying resistance and other competing discourses: acknowledging these additional layers allows us to locate gaps which could be filled by subsequent scholarship, recognizing that lived experience is not synonymous with the dominant discourse. Recent work on postwar Canada's popular culture has demonstrated that historical actors are connected to a dynamic, unequal 'web' of power, where power is always accompanied by resistance and individuals have a degree of agency.¹²² Popular culture is neither "wholly monolithic nor unrelentingly repressive," Joanne Meyerowitz cautions. Historians "no longer assume that any text has a single, fixed meaning for all readers... and [they] sometimes find within the mass media subversive, as well as repressive, potential."¹²³ Power is a contested site: although cultural items – such as the masculinized barbeque – may be part of the dominant discourse there is an element of individual choice. Canadian historians have combined theoretical work by Barthes and Foucault to demonstrate the balance between power and agency in the consumption of popular culture.¹²⁴ Barthes' theoretical work presents a non-deterministic interpretation of popular culture – giving primacy to consumers as active readers capable of unlimited interpretations – instead of

¹²² Valerie Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 19.

¹²³ Meyerowitz, "Beyond the Feminine Mystique," 231.

¹²⁴ Joy Parr, *Domestic Goods: The Material, the Moral and the Economic in the Postwar Years* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*.

interpreting consumption “as a direct corollary to production.”¹²⁵ But by incorporating Foucault’s poststructural concepts of power, resistance and discourse,¹²⁶ historians can reconcile unlimited agency with deterministic and repressive power relationships: they locate power relationships in consumer resistance to the hegemonic discourse guiding gender norms and the normalization of these values.¹²⁷

Despite these suggestions for theoretical approaches and subject areas in the context of future scholarship, this chapter – in an approach similar to recent work by Mona Gleason and Mary Louise Adams – contributes to our understanding of the dominant cultural discourses surrounding the family and the automobile, in an effort to enrich our understanding of postwar British Columbia. As Gleason and Adams have argued, it is necessary to first explore the contours of these discourses before attempting to examine how families negotiated them. And through connecting the prescriptive discourse surrounding the automobile and masculine domesticity to the family camping trip, the following chapter will extend the merits of this approach into the province’s natural environment.

¹²⁵ Parr, *Domestic Goods*, 9.

¹²⁶ Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 18.

¹²⁷ Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 18-19; Magda Fahrni, *Household Politics: Montreal Families and Postwar Reconstruction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005): 27.

Chapter 3: The Family Automobile and the Natural Environment

So far as I remember, the Swiss Family Robinsons were the only historical campers ever to be fully equipped by their biographer.

Halsted, *How to Live in the Woods*, v-vi.

In postwar British Columbia, more than a century after the original story of the Swiss Family Robinsons, the automobile comprised a vital component of the family's camping outfit. A 1961 advertisement published in *BC Digest*, the province's outdoor magazine, portrayed a station wagon as the ideal vehicle for campers, providing both families and sportsmen with substantial storage space, a spacious sleeping area, and the capacity to haul a boat or trailer through challenging terrain. Furthermore, the advertisement emphasized the station wagon's ability to let drivers "leave the roads far behind" so they could explore "unspoiled" areas, all the while remaining a pleasure to drive (Figure 14).¹²⁸

The imagery displayed in this advertisement represents the connection between the family automobile and the province's natural environment. As discussed in the previous chapter, the automobile functioned as an extension of domestic space through which parents – particularly fathers – could embody ideals of modern parenthood. Although the drive was often a destination in itself, the family vehicle also accessed recreational spaces such as picnic areas or campgrounds, making the automobile a necessary component of the typical camping outfit. The automobility of postwar families was multifaceted and more complex than a simple linear movement between urban and nonurban spaces, but this chapter will focus specifically on the role that urban

¹²⁸ Travelall Station Wagon Advertisement, *BC Digest* (June 1961), 63.

to nonurban movement played in the broader discourse of outdoor recreation. Both the automobile – as one component of camping technology – and the dynamics of recreation were fundamental components of the dominant discourse surrounding the postwar family. In fact, cultural producers portrayed the provision of contact with the outdoors through use of the automobile and other camping technologies as one of the key elements of postwar fatherhood. This chapter will also suggest that the modern family camping outfit embodied an element of irony: to escape the ‘ills’ of modern life, the family ultimately brought modernity with them in the form of modern conveniences.

Situating the Family Automobile in British Columbia’s Natural Environment

Magazine articles and advertisements connected the outdoor recreational activities of the postwar family to the gendered patterns of consumption and “manful assertiveness” associated with modern fatherhood.¹²⁹ This emphasis on outdoor recreation simultaneously expanded the role of fatherhood and created the opportunity for fathers to bring their families into the natural environment, where certain activities mandated a ‘working’ understanding of nature as demonstrated through a man’s ability to successfully hunt, fish, build fire and camp. This woodcraft wilderness ethic – an early twentieth-century ideal that persisted until the 1970s – emphasized “an independent masculine ideal rooted in the frontier” that would reinforce masculinity through a temporary return to nature.¹³⁰ Although men took to the outdoors to reaffirm

¹²⁹ Rutherford, “Fatherhood, Masculinity and the Good Life,” 355.

¹³⁰ James Morton Turner, “From Woodcraft to ‘Leave No Trace’” *Environmental History* 7, 3 (July 2002), 464–466; Susan Schrepfer, *Nature’s Altars: Mountains, Gender and American Environmentalism* (Kansas: University

masculinity – with or without their families – the familial movement back to nature was also a further attempt at postwar domesticity: families visited the great out-of-doors to create a wholesome sense of togetherness and cohesiveness threatened by modern life at home.¹³¹ Experts emphasized that in the outdoor setting, as in the home, fathers could take an active role in producing healthy, democratically minded children.

The differences between natural spaces chosen for family recreation and primarily masculine activities – such as mountaineering, hunting or fishing – reveal the extent to which the ‘naturalness’ of nature and the limits of acceptable human activities within different spaces are culturally constructed. Mountaineering, for example, was a predominantly masculine, middle class response to the threats of modernity, where men engaged with nature to preserve or revitalize masculine identities. Women mountaineers certainly existed, but how they were received by their male companions and the surrounding dominant discourse reflects the stereotype dictating this particular use of nature as masculine.¹³² Despite functioning as an escape or retreat from negative aspects of modernity, Chris Dummitt explains, the technocratic risk management of

of Kansas Press, 2005), 202; Tina Loo, “Of Moose and Men: Hunting for Masculinities in British Columbia, 1880-1939,” *Western Historical Quarterly* (Autumn 2001).

¹³¹ Peter Boag, “Outward Bound: Family, Gender, Environmentalism and the Postwar Camping Craze, 1945-1970,” *Idaho Yesterdays* (Spring 2009).
<<http://134.50.3.223/idahoyesterdays/index.php/IY/article/view/9/9>> (Last Accessed: 29 May 2010).

¹³² The participation of women in masculine outdoor activities (such as mountaineering) was certainly not unheard of, as demonstrated by the mountaineering achievements of Phyllis Munday. When on mountaineering expeditions with male climbers, Munday was constantly required to assert her abilities, “[proving] the extent to which the climbers’ game was tied up in notions of masculinity.” See Karen Routledge, “Being a Girl Without Being a Girl: Gender and Mountaineering on Mount Waddington, 1926-36,” *B.C. Studies* 141 (Spring 2004), 57. Likewise, women were also involved in wilderness conservationist initiatives of the Alpine Club of Canada, although not necessarily as mountaineers. See PearlAnn Reichwein, “Guardians of the Rockies,” *The Beaver* 74 (August/September 1994), 4-13. In addition to involvement in conservation, women were also played a role in the American environmental movement. See Glenda Riley, *Women and Nature: Saving the “Wild” West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).

mountaineering embodied the same ideas of rationality and control that characterized modernity, reinforcing the notion that ‘nature’ is influenced by culture.¹³³ Similarly, the cultural values connected to the construction of provincial parks – a common destination for family picnics and camping trips – defined and sanctioned legitimate uses of natural space. Roads, campsites and boat launch sites, for example, proliferated in what cultural producers typically depicted as a “primitive playground... mapped and fenced off for the rejuvenation of a ‘fallen’ humanity lost in the alienation of modern life.”¹³⁴ In a fashion similar to the practice of mountaineering, the maintenance and regulation of the natural environment required the implementation of modern management techniques Joe Hermer characterizes as “artificial, restrictive and alienating,” effectively manufacturing a highly cultural configuration of the outdoors.¹³⁵

The family’s movement into this culturally constructed ‘natural’ environment was informed by material conditions and the discourse surrounding postwar recreation. Higher standards of living – in conjunction with the automobile and the development of modern highway systems – made outdoor recreation increasingly available to families.¹³⁶ Indeed, the concept of recreational democracy assumed that recreation through vacation

¹³³ Chris Dummitt, “Risk on the Rocks: Modernity, Manhood and Mountaineering in Postwar British Columbia,” *BC Studies* 141 (2005), 6-7; Alan MacEachern, *Natural Selections: National Parks in Atlantic Canada, 1935-1970* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001), 4.

¹³⁴ Joe Hermer, *Regulating Eden: The Nature of Order in North American Parks* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 3; See also MacEachern, *Natural Selections*, 229.

¹³⁵ Hermer, *Regulating Eden*, 4-5.

¹³⁶ MacEachern, *Natural Selections*, 161. Notably, between 1955 and 1970, the number of nights spent camping in provincial campgrounds increased tenfold. The number of provincial camping units increased from 711 to 4674, representing a remarkable expansion of camping – an example of outdoor recreation – in postwar British Columbia. See T. O’Riordan, “An Analysis of the Use and Management of Campgrounds in British Columbia Provincial Parks,” *Economic Geography* 49, 4 (October 1973), 299.

time was “a right everyone needed and deserved.”¹³⁷ The idea of recreational democracy was rooted in the early twentieth century, when moral reformers encouraged play both within the city – the ‘urban playground’ – and beyond city limits. Collectively, these leisure activities were not “uniform or discrete, but [included] a number of different activities that participants did not consciously link in a single entity called ‘leisure’.”¹³⁸ At the same time, however, postwar experts and social critics correlated outdoor recreation with democratic citizenship, emphasizing the ability of the natural environment to counter negative aspects of modern society, such as urbanization and mechanization.¹³⁹ But as Jenny Clayton explains in documenting how the province’s rural residents negotiated recreation in their ‘backyards,’ recreational democracy drew inspiration from two sources: although moral reformers and the government encouraged it, people also demanded it. As such, provincial parks served as recreation outlets for both small towns and urban areas, offering employment, the ‘good life,’ and a preventative measure against juvenile delinquency.¹⁴⁰ Against this backdrop of expert advice, families sought experiences in the natural environment as an antidote to modern life.

Although nineteenth-century excursions into Canada’s natural environment were typically masculine, elitist, and facilitated by guides, the postwar counterpart was

¹³⁷ Jenny Clayton, “Making Recreational Space: Citizen Involvement in Outdoor Recreation and Park Establishment in British Columbia, 1900-2000,” Ph.D. diss., University of Victoria, 2009, 243. See also MacEachern, *Natural Selections*, 6, 157.

¹³⁸ Donald Wetherell and Irene Kmet, *Useful Pleasures: The Shaping of Leisure in Alberta, 1896-1945* (Alberta: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1990).

¹³⁹ Boag, “Outward Bound”; Sharon Wall, “Totem Poles, Teepees, and Token Traditions: ‘Playing Indian’ at Ontario Summer Camps, 1920-55,” *Canadian Historical Review* (September 2005); Schrepfer, *Nature’s Altars*; Shirley Tillotson, *The Public at Play: Gender and the Politics of Recreation in Postwar Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

¹⁴⁰ Clayton, “Making Recreational Space,” 242-243.

comparatively democratized and accessible, a shift mediated by the increasing availability of leisure time and changes in mass consumption.¹⁴¹ Accessibility granted by the automobile was fundamental to this process, reconfiguring ways in which the modern individual – and family – engaged with recreation in nonurban environments. As a “symbol and provider of personal mobility and individuality,” Peter Stevens argues, the automobile rendered geography more accessible for mass consumption, effectively shaping the configuration of social and environmental space.¹⁴²

Relationships with nature changed when automobiles became more affordable, effectively granting greater opportunities for leisure time with family and facilitating better access to the outdoors.¹⁴³ As Lawrence Lipin has revealed in the American context, weekend automotive excursions into nature became viable as early as the 1920s, effectively contributing to workers’ demands for extra leisure time and better wages.¹⁴⁴ Automobility was a powerful medium through which people experienced nature: postwar perceptions of nature were guided by the physical contours of the road and subsequently, the view through the windshield. Although both railways and automobiles expanded experiences of nature, “linking the cities with the rural hinterland,” they did so

¹⁴¹ Patricia Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture and Tourism in Ontario, 1790-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Karen Dubinsky, *The Second Greatest Disappointment: Honeymooning and Tourism at Niagara Falls* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1999), 9-15.

¹⁴² Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight Against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005), 51; Peter Stevens, “Cars and Cottages: The Automotive Transformation of Ontario’s Summer Home Tradition,” *Ontario History* (Spring 2008), 27; “Cars and Cottages,” 26-56; See also Steve Penfold, “Selling by the Carload,” in *Creating Postwar Canada: Community, Diversity and Dissent, 1945-75*, edited by Magda Fahrni and Robert Rutherford (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008).

¹⁴³ Lawrence Lipin, *Workers and the Wild: Conservation, Consumerism and Labour in Oregon, 1910-1930* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007).

¹⁴⁴ Lipin, *Workers and the Wild*, 94-95.

in quite different ways.¹⁴⁵ William Rollins observes that the railway “cast a loosely woven net over the countryside,” flattening the traveler’s perspective and guiding gazes along set tracks and predetermined stops. The automobile’s “finely grained mosaic of roads,” on the other hand, offered travellers a closer relationship to nature.¹⁴⁶ This technological shift between the railway and the automobile as the normative mode of transportation not only brought the countryside closer to the masses, it affected experiences of space and place.¹⁴⁷

Rollins draws a connection between transportation technology and sentiment towards nature conservation, situating vehicles and the environment in a “curious dialectic of destruction and appreciation.” Additionally, Louter has argued that the automobile contributed to a “legacy of knowing nature through machines,” helping people understand national parks “not as wild places reserved from progress, but known because of it.”¹⁴⁸ Increasing automobile use and the expansion of highway networks in the early and mid-twentieth century influenced the postwar wilderness movement, allowing people to understand nature through leisure, even when the idea of ‘wilderness’ was premised on a conceptual separation of nature and the modern, mechanized

¹⁴⁵ Turner, “From Woodcraft to ‘Leave No Trace,’” 463.

¹⁴⁶ William Rollins, “Reflections on a Spare Tire: SUVs and Postmodern Environmental Consciousness,” *Environmental History* 11, 4 (October 2006), 688.

¹⁴⁷ Ben Bradley, “Roving Eyes: Circulation, Visuality and Hierarchy of Place in East-Central British Columbia, 1910-1975” (MA thesis, University of Victoria, 2003).

¹⁴⁸ Rollins, “Reflections on a Spare Tire,” 686; David Louter, *Windshield Wilderness: Cars, Roads and Nature in Washington’s National Parks* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 4. See also Gabrielle Barnett, “Drive-By Viewing: Visual Consciousness and Forest Preservation in the Automobile Age,” *Technology and Culture* (January 2004), 32.

world.¹⁴⁹ The automobile facilitated a “technological experience” in the natural environment, premised on a physical separation between two distinct areas of work and play.¹⁵⁰

This chapter will explore these themes – the discourses surrounding the family’s participation in outdoor recreation and the relationship between consumer goods and the natural environment – in the context of postwar British Columbia. Recent work has suggested that the family’s leisure time together depended on gendered patterns of consumption and the father’s role in “making that world possible.”¹⁵¹ By correlating the idea of masculine domesticity with the discourse surrounding outdoor family recreation, this chapter will argue that advertisements and advice articles presented the provision of the family’s access to the outdoors as one of the central components of modern fatherhood. But not only did the consumer goods associated with modern fatherhood and masculine domesticity – such as automobiles, boats, trailers, and a range of camping equipment – influence the character of family recreation, these technologies likely influenced how families understood and experienced nature. This chapter will not focus on the lived reality of these experiences, but will instead examine the cultural production of ideas surrounding them. It is important to acknowledge, however, that the proliferation of this discourse might reflect the recreational habits of actual families. According to the surrounding discourse, the modern family’s camping vacation was dependent on domestic conveniences and took place in a manipulated environment

¹⁴⁹ Sutter, *Driven Wild*, 15; Richard White, “Are You an Environmentalist or Do You Work for a Living?: Work and Nature,” in *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, edited by William Cronon (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1995), 185.

¹⁵⁰ Sutter, *Driven Wild*, 51.

¹⁵¹ Rutherford, “Fatherhood, Masculinity and the Good Life,” 355.

decidedly different from that of the typical masculine hunting or fishing excursion. Consequently, this movement towards the outdoors was also ironic: although families sought to ‘get away from it,’ they ultimately ‘brought it all with them’ through their outfit of modern conveniences.¹⁵²

Family Recreation and the Advice of Experts: The Importance of the ‘Out-of-doors’ in Postwar British Columbia

Outdoor recreation, according to Peter Boag, operated as a palliative for “white middle-class families and their individual members” to “[scour] the outdoors for that which escaped them in the routine of their daily lives... family togetherness and cohesion, self-fulfillment and contentment, and even broader societal unity.” As both Boag and Schrepfer have argued in the American context, experts promoted the capacity of the ‘out-of-doors’ to restore a sense of “balance and normalcy” to families, locating national security at the “intersection of wilderness and childhood.”¹⁵³ When connecting recreation initiatives to a broader ideal of reproducing a democratic society, experts implied that strong, cohesive families produced healthy children.¹⁵⁴ Activities such as camping were ideal for fostering important democratic values, allowing children to “escape from the sheltered and mechanized existence imposed upon [them] by modern urban life” in a manner that would encourage wholesome development of character. Some experts claimed that without the benefits of nature, the sedentary and mechanized

¹⁵² Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*, 130-131.

¹⁵³ Boag, “Outward Bound”; Schrepfer, *Nature’s Altars*.

¹⁵⁴ Tillotson, *The Public at Play*; Wall, “Totem Poles, Teepees, and Token Traditions,” 542; Schrepfer, *Nature’s Altars*, 187.

lifestyle of the modern world threatened the character of young Canadian citizens.¹⁵⁵ As historians such as Doug Owram and Cynthia Comacchio have argued, the postwar years were characterized by a wave of expertise in medicine and the social sciences: experts promoted recreation and adequate ‘play’ time as essential to the proper development of children and consequently, the stabilization of both family and nation.¹⁵⁶

Social critics endorsed recreation as necessary for the public’s well being and, in promoting it, emphasized its status as “more and more a basic need.” Since British Columbia’s unionized workers typically worked shorter hours and received higher wages than any other province in Canada, experts – who believed that well-directed recreation was a necessary “duty” to modern society – offered guidance to best maximize this leisure time.¹⁵⁷ In this context, there was considerable concern over whether the mechanization and urbanization of society provided enough space for people to engage in recreational activities.¹⁵⁸ And although experts certainly advocated the importance of family, more structured forms of recreation – such as community programs – were also perceived as important to the healthy development of citizens by teaching cooperation and a sense of social responsibility.¹⁵⁹ These experts – such as Alan Klein, professor at the University of Toronto’s department of social work – argued that recreation was “the

¹⁵⁵ Schrepfer, *Nature’s Altars*, 190-191.

¹⁵⁶ Owram, *Born at the Right Time*, 8; Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth*, 18. Experts on recreation – from diverse areas including psychology, physical education and social work – reflected this wave of expertise.

¹⁵⁷ Alan Klein, “Recreation not frill but need, says Professor,” *Daily Times*, 29 May 1950, 13; “Psychiatrists couch end for millions,” *Daily Colonist*, 2 December 1954, 22; D.L. Macmurchie, “Basic Problems Pertaining to the Utilization of Recreational Resources,” *Proceedings from the Natural Resources Conference* (Victoria: British Columbia Natural Resource Conference, 1949), 227-241.

¹⁵⁸ “The fine art of leisure,” *Vancouver Province*, 10 April 1957, 6.

¹⁵⁹ “Leisure time in BC laid to high standard,” *Daily Colonist*, 23 February 1954, 13; Ken Jordan, “The Use of Recreation Resources by Youth Organizations,” *Proceedings from the Natural Resources Conference* (Victoria: British Columbia Natural Resource Conference, 1949), 245.

only field where young persons could learn the true values of democracy... we can't teach democracy in a book." Klein went on to assert that "the trouble today is [there's] too much talk about democracy and not enough practice of its principles." Proper recreation was also essential for fostering a sense of national pride – in conjunction with democratic principles – among the nation's youth. Regardless of who provided the recreational facilities, experts such as Robert Osborne – head of the physical education department at the University of British Columbia – emphasized the importance of creating healthy, democratic citizens, a role that should be recognized by "all progressive modern nations."¹⁶⁰

While emphasizing the importance of community centers as additional sources of recreation, experts implied that they could not replace the role of the family. Ultimately, it was the parents' responsibility to ensure constructive leisure time, because "[the welfare state] cannot offer assurance that an individual's leisure hours will be happy and constructive."¹⁶¹ As Alfred Kristiansen, superintendent of the Nanaimo Recreation Commission put it, "if parents do their duty as parents and the community does its duty, the situation all around will be more harmonious and more efficient."¹⁶² Fathers, as Robert Rutherford explains, were central to this endeavor as volunteers, participating "actively in their children's socialization" through coaching, scouting and other

¹⁶⁰ "Mental illness problem," *Daily Times*, 25 February 1954, 24.

¹⁶¹ "The fine art of leisure," 6; See also "Community should consider plans for outdoor recreation," *Vancouver Sun*, 9 December 1959, 60; "Play's the thing," *Vancouver Province*, 16 March 1957, 3.

¹⁶² "Recreation centre vital civic need," *Daily Colonist*, 25 February 1956, 13.

recreational groups.¹⁶³ Experts celebrated the benefits of camping – including provincial campgrounds and picnic sites – to the maintenance of mental and physical health.¹⁶⁴

Likewise, the British Columbia Camping Association took some responsibility for family camping, and offered relevant training courses. The topics covered in these talks and discussions included “planning your trip,” “latest equipment and its uses,” “setting up camp,” “safety and first aid,” and “places to go with the family,” as well as information on routes and ideal campgrounds.¹⁶⁵ But regardless of what parents chose as an appropriate recreational activity, experts drew a strong correlation between recreation and the nation’s future. John Tett, director of the Royal Canadian Air Force’s recreation program, stated that without the palliative of outdoor recreation, Canada would “end up a jaded, fed-up society” and would be “in the same historical position of Imperial Rome before it folded up under the debilitating diet of bread and circuses favored by the Caesars as the most effective public pacifiers.”¹⁶⁶

Consequently, cultural producers portrayed the escape from modern life and the process of working and playing together in the natural environment as fundamental elements of the family vacation, whether it involved camping, cottaging, boating, or picnicking. For example, Bruce Hutchison described the summer cottage – “the great

¹⁶³ Rutherford, “Fatherhood, Masculinity and the Good Life,” 360.

¹⁶⁴ “Campers urge study of recreational needs,” *Vancouver Province*, 21 March 1956, 14; “Better recreation facilities urged,” *Vancouver Sun*, 27 February 1957, 25.

¹⁶⁵ Charles E. Roche, “Camping in British Columbia,” *Transactions of the British Columbia Natural Resources Conference* (Victoria, BC: British Columbia Natural Resources Conference, 1956), 350. The British Columbia Camping Association – like the Canadian Camping Association – was designed to enhance the character, wellbeing, and knowledge of both youth and adults through recreational camping. The Association tended to focus on providing citizens with access to structured camping activities, including summer camps.

¹⁶⁶ “The fine art of leisure,” 6.

Canadian antidote to civilization” – as an ideal venue for bringing families closer together while connecting with nature. The rural cottage was a “long-sought and elusive core of the thing vaguely called Canadian Culture” and a “clinic in which all the diseases of [the family’s] economic, political, social and domestic systems are cured.” Hutchison notes that this phenomenon encompassed “the million summer cottages sprawled from the beaches of Nova Scotia to the great woods of British Columbia.” He emphasizes that threats both to the family and the nation could be tamed through labour and hard work in the “original habitat,” allowing Canadians to know and understand their family, take part in a common Canadian culture, and gain a sense of nationhood. Furthermore, he suggests that the challenge of the ‘great out-of-doors’ strengthened character by allowing individuals to embrace and successfully manoeuvre through the challenges of the outdoors. Just by cutting firewood, a husband or father “labours in the company of his ancestors in this land... he is being a Canadian, that insatiable species which, to be happy, must do everything for itself.”¹⁶⁷

Given British Columbia’s natural splendour and increasing automobile ownership, the camping trip became a popular, affordable family activity during the postwar years – one that crossed class lines in a way that cottaging did not. As Schrepfer has argued, “camping reflected the budgetary limitations of young families and the luxury of middle-class leisure,” implying that camping was a common activity for both working- and middle-class families. And although he focuses on the middle-class experience, Boag has also suggested that the relatively inexpensive nature of camping granted the

¹⁶⁷ Bruce Hutchison, “There’s No Cure Like a Summer Cottage,” *Chatelaine* (July 1953), 19, 55.

participation of a wider range of families.¹⁶⁸ One summer during the early 1950s, the park ranger at Little Qualicum Falls joked that “there [were] more Victorians here than there are in Victoria on a fine summer weekend,” simultaneously revealing the park’s popularity and the increasingly common practice of relatively inexpensive, short-distance family travel from urban to nonurban spaces.¹⁶⁹ These ‘tenting travelers’ were for the most part families “taking to the woods.... and going under canvas for their holidays.”¹⁷⁰ Although the movement towards the ‘pitch-your-tent’ and ‘make-your-bed’ aspects of camping began a few decades earlier, both time and financial constraints limited this recreation reality for the family until the postwar years. The relatively low cost of the camping trip can be partially attributed to the automobile as an economical way to travel – as suggested by one advertisement, family vacations “cost less when you drive,” and families should “drive more” because the experience becomes “cheaper by the mile.”¹⁷¹

The *Province’s* outdoors writer Mike Cramond observed that food and transportation expenses aside, the family could literally “sleep under the stars at no cost.” Based on his own experiences, Cramond noted that the average family could spend nine days camping on Vancouver Island and only spend \$84, including the cost of ferry transportation from Vancouver. For this small expenditure the family could enjoy clam

¹⁶⁸ Schrepfer, *Nature’s Altars*, 186; Boag, “Outward Bound.”

¹⁶⁹ Pete Loudon, “Island sites popular: Victorians flock to outdoor camps,” *Daily Times*, 7 May 1956; “Camp life popularity,” *Vancouver Province*, 17 March 1958, 29. Between 1955 and 1970, the number of nights spent camping in provincial campgrounds increased tenfold and the number of provincial camping units increased from 711 to 4674, representing a considerable expansion of camping in postwar British Columbia. See O’Riordan, “An Analysis of the Use and Management of Campgrounds in British Columbia Provincial Parks,” 299.

¹⁷⁰ Ray Baines, “Gypsy in travelers fill forest parks,” *Daily Colonist*, 4 September 1955, 28. See also Stan Meadows, “Camping was easy in the good old days,” *Vancouver Province*, 9 February 1957, 6.

¹⁷¹ Ethyl Corporation of Canada Limited Advertisement, *Maclean’s* (25 May 1957), 69.

digging at Miracle Beach, trout fishing at Campbell River, and “just lazing on warm beaches” in a “camper’s paradise.” These inexpensive camping trips were described as comfortable, easy and wonderfully interesting, where the family could catch “dozens of trout, [see] an amazing array of wild animals and birds and [live] in mountain lake grandeur.”¹⁷²

The favourable combination of pleasant scenery and relatively low expenses undoubtedly influenced the popularity of family camping as a satisfying remedy for modern life. A selection of visitor studies throughout British Columbia’s provincial parks during the 1950s indicates that the majority of visitors brought children and, depending on the park’s location, originated from urban areas. Although provincial park visitors typically engaged with activities such as swimming, resting, fishing, and walking nature trails, ‘an escape from urban life,’ ‘an ideal place to bring children,’ ‘family relations,’ and ‘love of the outdoors’ were the most frequently cited reasons for park visitation.¹⁷³

¹⁷² Mike Cramond, “Easy, interesting and cheap, cheap, cheap,” *Vancouver Province*, 9 July 1960, 13.

¹⁷³ M.C. Murray Matheson, “Stemwinder Park Visitor Survey, 1957,” *Research Section Report* (Victoria: Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1958), 1-35; M.C. Murray Matheson, “Okanagan Lake Park Visitor Survey, 1958,” *Recreational Research Project* (Victoria: Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1958), 1-17; M.C. Murray Matheson, “Okanagan Falls Park and Vaseaux Lake Park Visitor Survey, 1958,” *Research Section Report* (Victoria: Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1958), 1-18; M.C. Murray Matheson, “Bromley Rock Park Visitor Survey, 1957,” *Recreational Research Project* (Victoria: Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1958), 1-18; M.C. Murray Matheson, “Cultus Lake Park Visitor Survey, 1956,” *Recreational Research Project* (Victoria: Department of Recreation and Conservation, 1957), 1-49. This selection of surveys indicates that the majority of park visitors (up to 75%) came from urban areas, particularly ‘metropolitan Vancouver,’ which suggests an urban to non-urban movement. Initially, I looked through these surveys in an attempt to discover more about the socio-economic status of park visitors. Although some of the surveys indicate the ‘general occupation classification’ of visitors, the relationship to class (as a unit of analysis) is not clear. The surveys typically classified visitors into three categories: primary workers, service workers and manufacturing workers. Because these categories have been collapsed, we cannot distinguish between people who worked in managerial positions or as labourers, for example. Nonetheless, each survey suggests that the majority of visitors worked in the service industry (typically around 70%), followed by manufacturing and primary workers (around 20% and 10%, respectively). Only one survey – from Cultus Lake – presents details that could help any sort of class analysis. According to this survey, labourers comprised 27% of visitors, manufacturing and mechanical workers comprised 22.7%, transportation and communication workers made up 13.5%, professionals accounted for 11%, and service workers accounted for 8%. These were the most common

Camping, *Maclean's* writer Fred Bodsworth observed, also brought families together in a way that reinforced ideals of masculine domesticity, because life in the outdoors “puts the male back in his traditional role as provider and protector.” It was also the “most effective way [he knew] to knit a family into a team,” because parents and children undertook most tasks and recreational activities together. Previously, Bodsworth had only embarked on – and much preferred – canoe camping trips, which he described as “strictly for men... in wild country where you can really be alone.” He adds that prior to camping with his own family, he “always looked askance at public campsites crowded with women and children.” His first attempt at family camping, admittedly, started badly; when in the woods, he broke the hatchet and, having forgotten the can opener, several meals of cold wieners and bread followed. Despite this questionable first experience, his entire family enjoyed the experience and formed pleasant memories under a “canopy of pine resin and wood smoke, coffee and frying bacon.” From that point forward, his family always looked forward to camping with a “familiar refreshing tingle of excitement.”¹⁷⁴

Experts framed outdoor recreation in terms of positive character development, and as an activity conducive to producing well-balanced, democratic citizens. Jerry Mathisen, Provincial Supervisor of the Physical Recreation and Education Branch, celebrated family camping as “one of the most effective means of character development,” and a “group experience in which people learn to live, work and play together.” Given

categories of visitors; others included ‘students,’ ‘retired,’ ‘clerical,’ ‘commercial and financial,’ and ‘proprietary and managerial.’ But given that we don’t know how these percentages compare to the population’s occupation distribution – and also that this one survey alone cannot be representative of the larger population – these figures are not enough to make concrete inferences. However, because both professionals and labourers account for a relatively larger percentage than other occupation categories, we can perhaps speculate that camping may actually be an activity that crossed class boundaries, at least at Cultus Lake.

¹⁷⁴ Bodsworth, “The Best Way to Take a Holiday,” 34, 71.

that the natural environment posed “a challenge to campers,” it was necessary for families to share tasks and use “wilderness materials to provide common fun, welfare and comfort.” By learning how to work and play together, families – or individuals – could effectively “learn to understand and to practice democratic living.”¹⁷⁵ The “art of camping,” as one *B.C. Digest* writer submitted, provided a “happy and cohesive answer to the raw jangling tensions of city living,” while offering families the opportunity to ‘take to the woods’ inexpensively, creating a democratic recreational experience that seemed to cross class boundaries. Perhaps this helps explain why camping’s inexpensive nature ranked much lower – if at all – than ‘relaxation’ and ‘an escape from urban life’ in the context of park visitor surveys.¹⁷⁶

The Family’s Modern Camping Outfit: Beyond the Technology of the Swiss Family Robinsons

On the cover of *B.C. Motorist*’s Fall 1964 edition, a photograph displays two vehicles travelling down a highway, with a backdrop of magnificent alpine mountains, while an advertisement in *Maclean’s* for a 1958 Ford guaranteed that families could “settle back and enjoy the scenery” while passing “every imaginable test of riding comfort.”¹⁷⁷ Although the passengers and their destination remain a mystery, these images reveal how the automobile allowed postwar families to venture into the outdoors. Similarly, a photo

¹⁷⁵ Jerry Mathisen, “Problems Relating to Some Specific Uses of Recreational Resources,” *Transactions of the British Columbia Natural Resources Conference* (Victoria, BC: British Columbia Natural Resources Conference, 1950), 247.

¹⁷⁶ “Let’s Go Camping,” *BC Digest* (April/March 1964), 6; Boag, “Outward Bound”; Schepfer, *Nature’s Altars*, 186; Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*, 118-120.

¹⁷⁷ Cover image, *B.C. Motorist* (September/October 1964); Ford Advertisement, *Maclean’s* (21 June 1958).

story in one magazine – portraying a series of automobiles surrounded by curious bears in the middle of a highway – indicates the extent to which modern technology connects people to the natural environment. Without the automobile, the tourists in question would have been unlikely to have the opportunity to engage with wildlife so intimately.¹⁷⁸ There, as Susan Schrepfer observes in the American context, they could encounter the primitive: “a place of rebirth... for men, for the family, for the nation, and for humanity.”¹⁷⁹ Advertisements and articles portrayed a drive through the great outdoors as one mechanism to bring the postwar family ‘back to nature.’ Such activities, one article argued, freed children from the baneful influence of the television set and allowed parents to spend quality leisure time with them through ‘natural’ avenues of amusement.¹⁸⁰

The automobile, however, represents only a fraction of the modern technology that allows people to connect with nature. As cultural producers suggested, other consumer goods, such as the tent and the camp stove, also mediated the family’s relationship with the outdoors and brought its members together in the natural environment. For example, gasoline was advertised as a modern product that allowed the family to get into the car together “on the spur of the moment” with “a boat hitched on behind... or just with your family” in a way that would “add pleasure to all [their] summer weekends.” Gasoline advertisements drew connections between modern consumer products and nature, often in the context of a popular beach or park (Figures

¹⁷⁸ “Photo Story: It’s Tourist Time,” *BC Digest* (September 1961), 32-33.

¹⁷⁹ Schrepfer, *Nature’s Altars*, 206.

¹⁸⁰ Marjorie Wilkins Campbell, “Remember when kids had real fun?” *Maclean’s*, 2 March 1957, 32.

15 and 16).¹⁸¹ Likewise, advertisers depicted Atlas Tires as modern products that would allow both men and families to accomplish the “hazardous journey” that could be expected through the “wilds of Canada... through mud, snow and razor-sharp gravel,” all the while ensuring quality service even in remote areas (Figure 17).¹⁸² The subtext of these advertisements demonstrates how cultural producers connected the experience of nature with the consumption of modern products, bringing families into nature while simultaneously commodifying the ‘natural’ experience. As previously discussed in the context of the automobile, despite bringing people closer to nature, consumption of these modern products locked technology and the environment in a “curious dialectic of destruction and appreciation.”¹⁸³

Although consumption of modern goods connected families to nature and influenced how they experienced it, camping or outdoor products also domesticated nature while creating a space for father to demonstrate his mastery. Popular magazines and newspapers frequently published equipment guides for the novice camper, typically implying that the process of assembling the proper camping supplies was a masculine job. The main photograph of one such article depicts a puzzled-looking husband surrounded by an assortment of camping equipment while he scratches his head. The caption reads: “The novice!” But by listening to some advice, the author suggests that fathers could avoid this dilemma:

¹⁸¹ Ethyl Corporation of Canada Limited Advertisement, *Maclean's* (21 June 1958); Ethyl Corporation of Canada Limited, *Maclean's* (12 May 1956), 43; Ethyl Corporation of Canada Limited, *Maclean's* (22 June 1957), 69; Ethyl Corporation of Canada Limited, *Maclean's* (7 July 1956), 7; Esso “Right with the times” advertisement, *BC Digest* (May/June 1963), 19; Ethyl Corporation of Canada Limited, *Maclean's* (7 July 1956), 7.

¹⁸² Atlas tire advertisement, *Maclean's* (1 August 1954), 58; Atlas tire Advertisement, *Maclean's* (15 May 1954), 85.

¹⁸³ Rollins, “Reflections on a Spare Tire,” 686, 688.

The traditional camper is an image out of the Thirties slapstick. He bumps into his campsite ten minutes before dark, and hauls the tent off the car onto himself. He struggles up, bangs in the tent pegs, puts the pole in the tent and drags the pegs back out of the ground. If he's learned to avoid that pitfall, he puts the pole in first and staggers around like a canvas dinosaur. If he finally gets the tent up, he finds the air mattress leaking. The sleeping bags are still wet where rain dripped on them through the tent last night. The stove won't start because it's out of gas. Even if it would, no one really wants to eat. It's about that skunk that stumbled over the food supply the night before, down by the stream where it was put to keep cool.¹⁸⁴

To overcome these potential perils, one outdoor writer advised the purchase of light, durable, and family-friendly camping gear. The expenditure of \$125 to \$200, he suggested, would make camping considerably less work while bringing much satisfaction.¹⁸⁵ In short, families were advised to bring 'home' with them in the form of modern domestic conveniences to make the experience more enjoyable. Many articles celebrated new, lighter technologies that made outdoor life easier. And if families took care to "select the best gear for conditions that may be met," weekend or holiday travel could be "fun for the whole family." On the other hand, embarking into nature without being fully equipped entailed "more discomfort than joy."¹⁸⁶

The selection of tents was clouded with relatively technical language, suggesting that a knowledgeable camper should be able to distinguish between the respective merits of lightweight units designed for hikers, larger umbrella tents suspended by external poles, and the "old favourites" with inside poles and pegs. In purchasing the family's

¹⁸⁴ O. Neering, "Equipment Guide for the Novice Camper," *Western Homes and Living* (June 1969), 32-33.

¹⁸⁵ Neering, "Equipment Guide for the Novice Camper," 33.

¹⁸⁶ John Bennett, "Outdoor Canada," *BC Digest* (July/August 1963), 12. High consumer demand fuelled a brisk trade, and suppliers of camping equipment in Victoria reported being sold out several times in 1955. Vancouver stores also recorded "roaring business in the essentials of camp life... tents, sleeping bags, fold-up cots, air mattresses, lamps, and so on." One Victoria man reportedly had to travel to Seattle to outfit his family with appropriate camping gear. See Ray Baines, "Gypsy in travelers fill forest parks," *Daily Colonist*, 4 September 1955, 28.

tent, camping experts stressed the importance of balancing versatility and durability. An advertisement for the pop-up tent – also known as the pneumatic igloo tent – described the model as ideal for family camping. Available in a variety of sizes, they had been known to survive “the most rugged conditions” while offering “as much shelter and comfort as possible in a portable unit.”¹⁸⁷ Likewise, the ‘smart’ camper should be able to select appropriately from a wide range of sleeping bags, mattresses and cooking appliances. These advice articles advised families who “don’t want to rough it at all” or families who were “looking for comfort” or the “crutches of city life” to bring such luxuries as a folding table and chairs, a portable sink, camp cots and air mattresses.¹⁸⁸

This small selection of advice and information from camping and equipment articles is by no means comprehensive: the detailed descriptions of equipment lists, recommended products and recipes, packing techniques and domestic campsite configurations seems endless. While the family’s use of an old-fashioned wire-framed toaster for bread, wieners and sausages is certainly interesting – not to mention techniques for deflecting bugs or finding the best fishing location – the point is not

¹⁸⁷ ‘Pop-Up Tent’ Advertisement, *Western Homes and Living* (June 1969), 51. This advertisement emphasized the effectiveness of the tent’s modern materials in military-like conditions, and the tested endurance of the tent itself during the Second World War. On this note, secondary literature indicates a connection between military training and outdoor activities such as camping, hiking or climbing. In the American context, Susan Schrepfer has noted that the U.S. Army utilized the knowledge, practices and survival techniques of the Sierra Club to prepare soldiers. During the war, the wilderness served as a practice battlefield, and national parks became “defense installations, aircraft warning posts, and grounds for troop manoeuvres.” After the war, Schrepfer notes, the American landscape was cast with a patriotic glow and was conflated with family: the mountain landscape in particular offered Americans stability and “moral guidance” against the uncertainty of the Cold War. Not only was the natural environment a place where boys and men would “learn to defend the public,” but war veterans were sent into the wilderness for “rest and recuperation,” which included both physical and emotional rehabilitation. Outdoor activities such as camping and hiking offered “overburdened” war veterans and their families the opportunity to escape into the stability and primitivism of the outdoors. Schrepfer, *Nature’s Altars*, 149, 181-183.

¹⁸⁸ Neering, “Equipment Guide for the Novice Camper,” 33. See also “Let’s Go Camping,” *BC Digest* (April/March 1964), 7; “Victorians Flock to Outdoor Camps,” *Daily Times*, 7 May 1956, 2.

necessarily to demonstrate every detail of the family's camping trip. Rather, it is more important to suggest that the use of these modern technologies not only allowed families to enjoy and engage with nature in a way consistent with the modern ideal of fatherhood and masculine domesticity, but also contributed to the domestication and commodification of nature. And given the connection that cultural producers made between the importance of outdoor recreation and the family camping trip, articles and advertisements also associated these products with the construction of modern, healthy, democratic citizens.¹⁸⁹

The authors of equipment guides were quick to note that camping was not for everyone. One unattributed *B.C. Digest* article advised that despite the availability of modern and relatively luxurious campgrounds, “a paternal government cannot guarantee you unlimited sunshine, complete freedom from cold, drenching rains, swarms of evil little mosquitoes, and the occasional visit from a black bear.” The family, then, should be prepared for “living outdoors and close to nature” even when armed with a host of recommended modern conveniences. Those psychologically or otherwise unprepared to deal with some discomfort were advised to stay home, or check into a motel.¹⁹⁰ For the “willing” families, on the other hand, the choice or consumption of various camping technologies influenced how they engaged with the environment. From the perspective of popular discourse, then, the family sought an outdoor, domestic experience complete with modern products, even while seeking a tonic for the ills and stresses of modern

¹⁸⁹ Chestnutt, “Camping in the Grand Manner,” *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1966), 26-27; “Station Wagon Camping,” *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1965), 16-18.

¹⁹⁰ “Let’s Go Camping,” *BC Digest* (April/March 1964), 7.

life.¹⁹¹ Furthermore, in addition to the modern camping outfit, the family's relationship with the environment was also mediated by the careful construction and manipulation of the province's provincial parks.

A “Strategic Conservation of Trees”: The Modern Amenities and Design of the Family Campsite

In his work, Hermer describes park space as an ordered, regulated area that despite initial perceptions of being ‘natural,’ did not escape the “control of civilizing technology.” He emphasizes that parks are organized into areas where “specific activities are permitted, restricted or prohibited.” When parks are constructed, he argues, the state designs campgrounds and picnic sites to appear ‘natural’ while catering to the needs of visitors, particularly those of families. This observation seems accurate, as demonstrated by the government's efforts to balance public use with natural resource extraction. In placing campgrounds and picnics areas in strategic locations, and constructing them in certain ways, the provincial government developed a park system consistent with the accessibility of other primary resources.¹⁹²

The portrayal of park space in newspapers and periodicals supports Hermer's argument. In addition to expressing delight at the beauty of the natural environment and potential exposure to a wide variety of wildlife, advice literature on family camping voiced frequent appreciation for modern park amenities. Mike Cramond, for example,

¹⁹¹ Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*, 152; Rutherford, “Fatherhood, Masculinity and the Good Life”; Campbell, “Remember when kids had real fun?” 22, 27-32.

¹⁹² Hermer, *Regulating Eden*, 45-46; 54; Youds, “A Park System as an Evolving Cultural Institution,” 75, 77-78.

remarked on the “graveled curbed parking spots with varnished wooden tables and running water,” as well as level camping areas and designated fireplaces.¹⁹³ Such facilities reflected the provincial government’s efforts to meet the “non-urban recreational needs of the public.”¹⁹⁴ Provincial parks, designed to accommodate “a variety of recreational tastes,” would serve both urban areas and hinterland resource towns.¹⁹⁵ Even the “most primitive” campsites typically had access to well water, picnic tables, stone fireplaces and toilets. In more popular areas, the availability of flushing toilets, electrical outlets, pre-cut firewood, covered shelters for eating and cooking food, stone fireplaces with cooking grills, and frequent garbage collection caused *Vancouver Sun* writer John Barrett to describe provincial parks as “downright luxurious.” But regardless of variation in modern amenities, the “famous rustic table-and-bench combination” – typically recognizable from the road – was the hallmark of provincial campgrounds.¹⁹⁶

While on a camping vacation with his own family, Barrett noticed that the “strategic conservation of trees,” including “towering firs, cedars and naked-limbed arbutus” created an element of seclusion within each campsite. The stone camping fireplace was situated in ideal proximity to the picnic table and tent platform, a level area to pitch tents. Consequently, his family’s modern experience of “roughing it” was more comfortable and enjoyable than his “travel-and-camp outdoor trips” a few decades

¹⁹³ Mike Cramond, “Easy, interesting and cheap, cheap, cheap,” *Vancouver Province*, 9 July 1960, 13.

¹⁹⁴ S.E. Park, “The Provincial Parks and Campsites,” *Transactions of the British Columbia Natural Resources Conference* (Victoria, BC: British Columbia Natural Resources Conference, 1956), 306.

¹⁹⁵ In her recent work, Clayton has noted that not all parks were created to “draw tourists from more distant points,” as some were designed to provide “temporary escape on new highways from nearby hinterland and factory towns.” Furthermore, these parks were meant as sources of employment for local residents and areas of leisure for working families. See Clayton, “Making Recreational Space,” 240.

¹⁹⁶ John Barrett, “Happy nomads of the summer roads,” *Vancouver Sun*, 1 May 1954, 22.

earlier. Such modern amenities – including the boat launch site and the nature house – contributed to the experience of quality family time in the great out-of-doors. Indeed, Hermer has also noted the extent to which the modern campground “ironically mimics” the design of suburbs: individual campsites are designed similar to the family home and collectively, the layout of the campground mimics the design of property lots, driveways and water or sewage access areas found in the suburbs, effectively bringing the domestic into nature.¹⁹⁷

The strategic (and modern) construction of provincial parks extended beyond the layout of campsite and picnic areas to affect the buildings and facilities available for the enjoyment of campers and visitors. For example, the provincial government’s addition of ‘nature houses’ at Miracle Beach and Manning Park – described as a “surprising success” with visitors – illustrates how modern amenities and technology mediated the family’s relationship with nature.¹⁹⁸ Relating his own family’s experiences in provincial parks, one author praised the Miracle Beach nature house as “one of the finest features we have seen,” providing “live and graphic” information sessions on birds, animals and insects, and a natural history aquarium and museum that was “of extreme interest to children” who wanted to view wildlife in a ‘natural’ setting. Miracle Beach staff also offered summertime nature walks, where families could locate and learn about “myriads of sea animals and other life on long stretches of excellent tidal beaches.”¹⁹⁹

According to one writer, the nature houses were “proof that people are never in too much of a hurry to enjoy a glimpse of what goes on with Nature... [whetting] the

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.; Hermer, *Regulating Eden*, 77-78.

¹⁹⁸ “Nature Houses prove a surprising success,” *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1965), 18

¹⁹⁹ Mike Cramond, “Vancouver Island camper’s paradise,” *Vancouver Province*, 6 August 1960, 13.

appetite for more knowledge concerning the outdoors.” In addition to offering a brief respite from the pressures of modern living,” the facility at Miracle Beach also promoted ecological understanding:

man is conscious of his shrinking importance as he views the complexities of life that have continued to cycle, century after century, up to the present... at the same time, chances are the experiment will open a new door of wisdom that leads to the appreciation of ecological association between man, land, water and air.²⁰⁰

Detailed accounts of campground layouts, nature houses and nature trails collectively demonstrate the extent to which these areas of nature were carefully constructed – and very modern – family spaces. Furthermore – as discussed further in the following section – these sources indicate the marked difference between the environments desired for family recreation and those sought for traditional masculine activities such as hunting or fishing.

Men in the Mountains: Masculine Activities in the Great Out-of-Doors

As Dummitt argues in his article on mountaineering, masculine wilderness trips offered middle-class men an escape from modern life. Mountaineering, a *B.C. Motorist* writer declared, allowed urban men to “seek the serenity and satisfaction of a close-to-nature existence,” where “all of the pretty problems of the office and the bigger troubles

²⁰⁰ “Nature Houses prove a surprising success,” *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1965), 18; see also British Columbia Archives, B.C. Parks Records, GR-1991, Mflm B-01776, File No. 2-6-3-16, “During Park Visit, Nature House a Must,” *Campbell River Courier*, 20 August 1969. The educational facilities available at Miracle Beach appear to be part of a broader postwar trend directed towards promoting an ecological understanding among children. See also *This Land of Ours*, Mike Poole, dir., CBC Vancouver Film Production, 1967.

of the world begin to fade.” This article portrayed nature as a destination where men could bring life into “sharper focus” and understand the “enduring values of man and nature.”²⁰¹

After acknowledging that the outdoorsman has “his own individual way of setting up a campfire,” B.C. Parks official C.P. Lyons celebrates the merits of the ‘Swedish Campfire’ as a source of non-cooking heat when camping outdoors. Lyons goes through each step of how to set up this campfire in the woods, and in stressing the degree to which survival entailed a degree of skill and knowledge, he reflects the ‘woodcraft’ wilderness ethic associated with strengthening or reaffirming masculinity through a temporary return to nature. This woodcraft ethic took place in a ‘wild frontier’ setting that allowed men to demonstrate they could successfully hunt, fish, build fire and camp in nature. Although the woodcraft wilderness ethic originated in the early twentieth century, it endured in the years following the Second World War, informing a collection of guidebooks instructing men on how to ‘survive in the woods.’²⁰²

As one example, in his 1948 book, titled *How to Live in the Woods*, American writer and outdoors enthusiast Homer Halsted outlines the most essential things to learn, plan and acquire before embarking on a trip into the woods. In this process, the author also differentiates this type of excursion from more domesticated trips into the outdoors, such as motor camping and the family vacation. He describes the process of motor

²⁰¹ Dummitt, “Risk on the Rocks”; “Three Miles from the Rat Race,” *BC Motorist* (September/October 1965), 16-17.

²⁰² University of Victoria Special Collections, Chester P. Lyons Fonds, box 11, “Swedish Campfire has Advantages as a Source of Non-Cooking Heat,” *Forest and Mill* newspaper clipping, n.d.; Turner, “From Woodcraft to ‘Leave No Trace,’” 464-466; Schrepfer, *Nature’s Altars*, 202; See also Tina Loo, “Of Moose and Men: Hunting for Masculinities in British Columbia, 1880-1939,” *Western Historical Quarterly* (Autumn 2001).

camping – limited to campsites readily accessible from the road – as ideal for “prosperous folk who want outdoor life without too much of the primitive” and restricting campers to a “fairly tame country” where comforts were readily available.²⁰³ The process of hiking into natural spaces, he adds, offered a more challenging adventure that privileged skills over the convenience of modern equipment, requiring men to engage with the natural environment in order to survive.

Halsted described self-sufficiency, thorough practice and comprehensive skills as – “more than any other one thing” – esteemed attributes of the ideal camper. By learning how to clean a gun, unravel a fishing line, sharpen a knife or an ax, and sufficiently dry out a pair of boots, the hunter or fisher could “add immeasurably to [their] fun and the respect of [their] companions.” This advice encouraged men to practice the “business of camp-making” in a nearby forest before setting out to “conquer the wilderness.” The woodcraft ethic emphasized the importance of packing, planning and acquiring necessary skills for these outdoor expeditions, as the process of ‘conquering the wild’ involved much foresight. Tasks ranged from engineering toilet facilities, digging trenches, storing the canoes, creating food caches and tending to fire embers, all entailing physical work and knowledge of the outdoors. The process of camp-making was not necessarily an experience in itself, and outdoor experts such as Halsted recommended that fellow outdoorsmen complete tasks quickly and efficiently as a small obstacle to fishing and hunting: for example, Halsted advised that the “business

²⁰³ Homer Halsted, *How to Live in the Woods: Here is Advice on Planning, Outfitting and Managing the Camping Expedition* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1948), 72.

of setting up housekeeping” be a “well coordinated team play all the way through with no time out for fishing, bathing or wild life study until the necessary work is done.”²⁰⁴

Although Halsted’s advice specifically refers to the American context, his book reflects the broader North American discourse of the ‘woodcraft wilderness ethic’ that Turner discusses in his work. Halsted’s advice was selected to demonstrate the distinction between the consumer goods and the relative skill sets required for family camping and masculine ‘wilderness’ adventures, respectively. While the family camping trip typically engaged enthusiastically with modern domestic conveniences, the wilderness ethic of masculine hunting and fishing trips shunned such modern conveniences.²⁰⁵

The woodcraft ethic included utilizing the natural environment to cook successful meals, as demonstrated by a regular feature in *B.C. Digest* titled ‘Campfire and Cookstove.’ Although the editor was initially sceptical about publishing recipes – as he associated these with women’s magazines – the magazine introduced the column to help its readers utilize the abundance and diversity of food when out in the great out-of-doors. Published advice, some from women who either accompanied their husbands or helped prepare them for outings, provides readers with a variety of recipes and techniques, including how to cure or pickle freshly caught fish at the campsite, how to build a simple smoke house, and how to construct “the perfect cooking situation” using only wood, fire and aluminum foil. The content of this and other similar advice

²⁰⁴ Halsted, *How to Live in the Woods*, 4, 160-161, 164.

²⁰⁵ Turner, “From Woodcraft to ‘Leave No Trace’”.

addresses the challenges of “making do” in the wild, taking advantage of the available natural resources with little reliance upon ‘extra’ products, such as aluminum foil.²⁰⁶

Taken together, this collection of recipes, instructions, and advice for surviving the natural environment indicates a noticeable difference between the experiences of the family camping trip and the masculine wilderness adventure. Perhaps most evident is the distinction between the acceptable consumer products for each type of trip: while the masculine excursion seems to emphasize simplicity and tools ‘from the wild,’ the family’s camping trip features technology representative of the auto camper who was so clearly denounced in Halsted’s guide to outdoor adventures. And finally, the masculine excursion appears to take place in a more remote setting, whereas the family camping trip is guided by the contours of campsites and picnic sites readily accessible from the road. Popular discourse surrounding activities such as hunting, hiking or fishing gendered the wild – as distinguished from the domesticated landscape of the family campground – as a masculine space.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁶ Keith Faviell, “Campfire and Cookstove,” *BC Digest* (April 1963), 57; Keith Faviell, “Campfire and Cookstove,” *BC Digest* (February 1961), 16, 46; ‘The Deacon,’ “Campfire and Cookstove,” *BC Digest* (September 1961), 29; Keith Faviell, “Campfire and Cookstove,” *BC Digest* (May/June 1963), 16, 46; ‘The Deacon,’ “Campfire and Cookstove,” *BC Digest* (June 1961), 27; Keith Faviell, “Campfire and Cookstove,” *BC Digest* (July-August 1963), 18, 41.

²⁰⁷ It is worth noting, however, that “Campfire and Cookstove” seems to reflect some tension between the wilderness ethic and the modern conveniences sought for family camping: although the articles typically align with the former, consumer goods such as the portable cookstove were also included. Perhaps through the elements of masculine domesticity, the ‘woodcraft wilderness ethic’ associated with masculine excursions into the outdoors had to meet the challenges of family recreation: unlike the woodcraft ethic, which hinged on ‘making do’ with natural tools, the family camping trip depended on modern domestic conveniences.

Women in the Woods: Participants in Masculine Activities

In a *B.C. Digest* cartoon depicting a wife and husband watching television together – where the husband is clearly interested in the programming – the unimpressed wife states: “Well, I don’t enjoy these outdoor programs featuring hunting and fishing.”²⁰⁸ A similar cartoon draws a husband and wife fishing in small boat: he is holding a fishing line while she asks, “Are you sure this is the hot spot? We’ve been here 10 minutes and nothing’s happened.”²⁰⁹ Another, featuring a couple fishing in a small motorboat, has the impatient wife declaring, “Well, hurry up and reach your limit because I’ve reached mine!”²¹⁰ These cartoons published in the province’s outdoor magazine hint at the gendered dynamics of the natural environment, where cultural producers depict certain activities as masculine. In a similar fashion, an advertisement for Vernon’s Adventure Bay Resort is titled “How to convince your wife *she* needs a hunting, fishing, skiing vacation this fall.” Tongue-in-cheek, the advertisement encourage husbands to “be a little sneaky” when proposing this vacation style. The imagery juxtaposes a tidy, modern hotel room with a man fully outfitted in hunting gear, pointing his gun towards the sky; it implies that women would be primarily interested in its lakeside location, its beautifully furnished Hawaiian Lanai-style rooms, the option to sightsee on the resort’s cabin cruiser, its fine selection of horses and the availability of a personal kitchen, sundeck and barbecue. This advertisement repeatedly emphasized the resort’s “luxurious” amenities

²⁰⁸ ‘Outdoor Program’ Cartoon, *BC Digest* (April 1963), 28.

²⁰⁹ ‘I’ve got a bite!’ Carton, *BC Digest* (May/June 1963), 45.

²¹⁰ ‘Reached My Limit’ Cartoon, *BC Digest* (November/December 1963), 60. See also: ‘Outdoor’ Cartoon, *BC Digest* (November/December 1967), 34.

and the availability of planes for flying into secluded areas, allowing hunters and fishers to “always be back in time for cocktails.”²¹¹

Women were certainly not absent from the outdoors, but this brief description of advertisements and cartoons suggests that particular uses of nature were portrayed by some cultural producers as masculine. A 1951 *Chatelaine* article by Jack Hambleton used personal experience to describe the dangers inherent in bringing women on masculine ‘wilderness’ vacations. He recalls the difficulties created after a friend brought his wife along on their camping and hunting excursion. Hambleton asserts that the outdoors was a place where a man could “be a man,” after acting as “the most gentlemanly and refined of men” for the other fifty weeks of the year. Predictably, then, the presence of a woman greatly restricted the experience of the trip. “All men believe that when it comes to hunting or fishing trips a woman’s place is back home with the kids,” Hambleton declared, arguing that

The brutal fact is that despite all the years that women have been trying to civilize him, beneath his double-breasted exterior the average male is about as housebroken as Neanderthal man. At least once a year his soul becomes troubled by something he can’t describe and he craves a large dose of male companionship. He wants to escape back to the cave where he can scratch, belch, swear and tell vulgar stories without the dearest voice in the world interrupting with a shocked “George!”²¹²

Consequently, Hambleton suggests that this sort of retreat into nature was necessary for a man’s “proper balance.” He cites additional ‘secondary’ reasons for not bringing women along on fishing and hunting trips, suggesting that although a few (“and far between!”) women could cope, most were simply uncomfortable when it comes to guns,

²¹¹ Adventure Bay Resort Advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (July/August 1962), 4.

²¹² Jack Hambleton, “Baby, Won’t You Please Stay Home?” *Chatelaine* (August 1951), 4.

hooks, and animals. Not only did he portray women as dampening the experience of masculine companionship in the wild, he also implied that they posed potential hazards to sporting success. Once, while hunting, his wife exclaimed “but, John, that bird’s too pretty to kill!” after hurling her shoe to encourage flight before her husband took aim, shot, and killed it.²¹³

Not only was the masculine vacation a retreat into the woods to escape from the ills of modernity, but it was also a welcome – and necessary – opportunity to take a break from masculine domesticity at home. Men (and boys) ‘returned’ to the woods as a place where male companionship prevailed and the constraints of modernity could be broken: these were places where men could “let [their] whiskers grow” and go about their day without washing. As Hambleton notes, the desire to temporarily escape into the wild was a reaction to the increasing prevalence of “effeminate occupations” requiring little physical labour. Masculine adventures embodied a “throwback” to the “prehistoric days when men did the hunting and fishing, not for sport, but as a means of survival.” For women who did “follow [their] man to the wilderness,” Hambleton states, expectations of a typical husband-wife vacation should be forgotten. In the event that her husband abandons her on a trout-stream miles away from home, he advised the wife to remember that “he still loves you... [but] the trout has still to be caught!” Likewise, he advised women to look like they enjoyed the trip (even if they wanted to express the opposite sentiment quite strongly), and encouraged them to take an “intelligent interest” in the matter of fishing and game hunting.²¹⁴

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 5, 39.

As suggested by literature on outdoorswomen – and Hambleton’s article in *Chatelaine* – women did engage with the natural environment, despite masculine stereotypes.²¹⁵ Nonetheless, the example of Vancouver wife and mother Joan Greenwood, who routinely took the “perfect holiday from our suburban living,” leaving her husband and children at home to embark on multi-day excursions into the natural environment, only reinforces the extent to which urban-based experts, advertisers and writers perceived particular activities in nature as masculine.²¹⁶ Despite the fact that her husband – himself an avid camper – provided initial inspiration for her trips by introducing her to the outdoors, she took full responsibility for the packing and planning required for her extended trips. Even though Greenwood’s motivations for exploring the outdoors reflected a gendered desire for freedom from modernity – as an antidote to “house slippers,” “plastic aprons,” and the frustrations of modern domestic life²¹⁷ – her solo excursions typically elicited surprise from other male travelers. Men in particular were always shocked to come across her in the wild – as demonstrated by her anecdotes of run-ins with workers, ranchers and hunters. The *Chatelaine* article on Greenwood presented these extended solo trips into nature as unusual for a ‘housewife’ not necessarily because she ventured outdoors, but because she left her husband and children to do so.

Because she challenged the acceptable stereotypes of femininity and masculinity by embarking on adventures with only her dog as company, Greenwood’s status as a solo

²¹⁵ Routledge, “Being a Girl Without Being a Girl,” 31-58; Reichwein, “Guardians of the Wild,” 4-13; Riley, *Women and Nature*.

²¹⁶ Joan Greenwood, “Don’t Shoot... It’s the Hiking Housewife,” *Chatelaine* (June 1954), 24.

²¹⁷ This similarity probably starts and ends with an escape from the ‘frustrations of modern living.’ For obvious reasons, men probably didn’t require an escape from house slippers or plastic aprons; even the popular practice of barbecuing didn’t require such a colourful uniform.

housewife in the great out-of-doors was neither normal nor expected. As Riley argues in her research on women and the outdoors in the American context, this cultural constraint was longstanding, persistent and difficult to overcome despite the fact that outdoor women were growing both “in number and range of interests” during the postwar years. Riley has noted that despite the large number of active female climbers, athletes and conservationists during the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, women continued to fight the prejudice that they “naturally fear – and thus avoid – the outdoors.” In the American context, Riley asserts, women “embraced nature and the outdoors” as part of the “proper sphere.”²¹⁸ Notably, women have been present in the outdoors, and the notion that nature itself was a masculine space is almost certainly a cultural production (and prejudice) put forth by male-written, urban-based advice literature. Given these constructions, nature is neither a fundamentally masculine nor feminine space. In crossing the boundary between managed recreational landscapes and the ‘wilderness,’ women such as Joan Greenwood and Phyllis Munday transcended normative gender and spatial boundaries.

In Summation

Popular discourse in newspapers and magazines – such as the cartoons and advertisements previously discussed – situated men “back in [their] traditional role as provider and protector,” particularly when in nature with the family or women. As

²¹⁸ Riley, *Women and Nature*, 184, 190; See also Routledge, “Being a Girl Without Being a Girl,” 57.

acknowledged in Fred Bodsworth's 1955 article in *Maclean's*, the natural environment was a place for men to reassert masculine abilities and embody the role of 'provider':²¹⁹

Setting up a camp looks tough to a woman – to her it belongs with carving-a-home-out-of-the-wilderness – but it really isn't tough at all... it's a lot easier than mending a leaky faucet. Those primitive skills like fire lighting will impress a woman much more than coming home from the office with news that your Whatzit sales are thirty-eight percent higher than the same month last year. For it is one of life's great injustices that, while Man has become thoroughly civilized, Woman still admires him most in a thoroughly uncivilized back-to-nature role.²²⁰

Rutherfordale has suggested – in the context of this very quote – that the gendered consumption of goods associated with the outdoors allowed fathers to strengthen relationships with family: the purchase of consumer goods or 'props' associated with masculinity normalized the postwar father's prolonged engagement with the domestic space. The dominant discourse represented ideal fathers as "expedition leaders" who were "well equipped for masculine adventure in the new era of automobile travel and outdoor recreation."²²¹ Similarly, an article in *BC Digest* noted that the "family camper" had replaced the "brawny hairy-chested male type who backpacked into the wilderness" as the "average camper." The author notes that although this masculine figure "still survives," he has to travel "farther afield" in order to access the "fringes of the wilderness."²²²

These sources suggest, once again, the existence of a marked difference between the natural spaces utilized for masculine excursions and the spaces accessed on family

²¹⁹ Boag, "Outward Bound"; Schrepfer, *Nature's Altars*.

²²⁰ Bodsworth, "The Best Way to Take a Holiday," 34.

²²¹ Rutherfordale, "Fatherhood, Masculinity and the Good Life," 360, 365.

²²² "Let's Go Camping," 6.

camping vacations. Furthermore, by bringing the urban family into nature for camping or fishing excursions – arguably masculine activities connected to ideals of a woodcraft wilderness ethic – the father facilitated an entirely new relationship between his family and nature. The tools and dynamics of masculine domesticity played a fundamental role in connecting British Columbia’s postwar citizens to the natural environment, an argument that expands on the Rutherford’s earlier work on masculine domesticity. Modern consumer goods, in combination with the discourse surrounding the importance of outdoor recreation to development of democracy and healthy citizens, allowed fathers to involve the family in otherwise masculine activities. But as acknowledged by recent work on the relationship between nature and culture, this knowledge of nature was entirely mediated by modern technology, such as the automobile.

Consequently, this relationship between masculine domesticity and postwar discourse surrounding recreation likely played a role in modern environmental movements: by understanding and knowing nature through the family camping trip – and the ecological knowledge put forth by educational facilities such as the nature house at Miracle Beach – postwar children developed a lasting appreciation of nature. Considering the widespread popularity of camping – as an economical way to travel that fit the “budgetary limitations of young families” while reflecting the “luxury of middle-class leisure”²²³ – this effect was potentially far-reaching.

Likewise, historians have argued that national and provincial parks held the “greatest impact in the popular understanding of wildlife conservation,” because as these parks became more crowded, the human threat to nature became more visible to park

²²³ Schrepfer, *Nature’s Altars*, 186.

visitors.²²⁴ The increasing number of families heading out into nature had a noticeable effect: “Ironically,” Rugh has noted, “the popularity of trailers and RVs made it even more difficult to ‘get away from it all’ because popular campgrounds are jammed on weekends, and people trying to get away from it all are taking it all with them.”²²⁵ As Turner has noted, the postwar rise in traffic into the outdoors concerned environmentalists, providing the impetus for a policy that would minimize environmental impact, thus influencing the transition between the woodcraft ethic and the concept of ‘leave no trace.’²²⁶ Despite the fact that it seems contradictory, the postwar family’s tendency to ‘bring it all with them’ when embarking on excursions into the outdoors allowed them to ‘know’ nature through technology at a time of unprecedented natural resource extraction. Although this facilitated a separation of work and leisure – as Richard White has argued – it also provided the impetus for environmentalist impulses.²²⁷

But despite my occasional references to the ‘family’s experience,’ this chapter – much like the chapter on the family and the automobile – offers only limited insight into the reality of lived experiences. Rather, the arguments made and the sources used emphasize the ideals and imagery circulated in popular culture and consequently, the chapter focuses on the dominant discourse surrounding the family and outdoor recreation during the postwar years. As discussed in the chapter on the family automobile, this emphasis on dominant discourse is not necessarily a shortcoming:

²²⁴ MacEachern, *Natural Selections*, 161; See also, Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*, 153.

²²⁵ Rugh, *Are We There Yet?*, 129.

²²⁶ Turner, “From Woodcraft to ‘Leave No Trace,’” 468.

²²⁷ White, “‘Are You an Environmentalist or Do You Work for a Living?’”

rather, it contextualizes and provides us with an understanding of the broader, hegemonic discourse, creating the opportunity for subsequent research on how families engaged with and negotiated the imagery and ideals depicted in popular magazines and newspapers.

Given that we cannot assume a uniform stereotype of the postwar family, we can anticipate a variety of lived experiences; after all, the processes that characterized the postwar period – such as suburbanization and an increase in prosperity – affected British Columbian residents differently. Not every citizen or family experienced an increase in income or available leisure time: it is likely that variation in family demographics and family structure was greater than we initially assume, despite the prevailing image of the prosperous nuclear family. Not only did these factors affect the ability of some families to access outdoor recreation areas, they also changed the shape of lived experience.

Perhaps the greatest question that this chapter raises – with exciting potential for subsequent research – relates directly to class. As noted in the introduction to this thesis, 55 percent of the provincial labour force was unionized by 1960, making it the most unionized province in the country. Increasing unionization – with better wages and a shorter workweek – gave postwar families greater access to leisure time. Although Doug Owram situates the automobile in the common middle-class experience, the automobile became increasingly available to working-class British Columbians during the postwar years.²²⁸ Between 1951 and 1971, for example, the number of cars in British Columbia

²²⁸ Owram, *Born at the Right Time*, 69-72.

more than tripled: in 1951, there was one car for every seven people and by 1971, one in every four people owned an automobile.²²⁹

As indicated by the sources utilized in this chapter, the popularity of the family camping trip was frequently attributed to its inexpensive nature: fathers could take their families on enjoyable vacations at a relatively low cost. Likewise, the plethora of Esso and Ethyl Corporation of Canada advertisements suggests that family camping trips were popular not only because the family could camp in provincial parks for free, but because the automobile was a comparatively inexpensive way to travel. It appears that the family road trip became increasingly accessible to both middle-class and working-class families after the Second World War. However, it should be emphasized that – as indicated by selected park visitor surveys – families frequently cited ‘an escape from modern life’ above economy as their motivation for visiting provincial parks. This suggests that although the automobile – in conjunction with provincial parks – allowed families without much in the way of expendable income to take vacations together, it offered an accessible tonic for modern life for both middle- and working-class families. Given its status as a popular pastime for many postwar British Columbians, this form of family recreation had the potential to cross class boundaries: if sources could permit the opportunity to tap into lived experiences, this observation offers exciting potential for future research.²³⁰

²²⁹ Bradley, “Roving Eyes,” 156.

²³⁰ In the process of exploring the observation that camping crossed class boundaries, I looked through copies of the *B.C. Lumberworker* (during the 1950s and 1960s) as a potential source of additional class analysis. Unfortunately, I did not discover anything useful for the content of this chapter. Nonetheless, perhaps further research on other union journals or newspapers would prove more successful.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

At its conception, this thesis sought to explore the discourse surrounding the family road trip: an aspect of postwar culture that stirs as much nostalgia as the old advertisements described in the introduction. Through this process, I attempted to expand on existing scholarship on the postwar family by drawing from, and integrating, several bodies of literature. The first section – the family and the automobile – explored how cultural producers gendered the automobile masculine, depicted it as an extension of domesticity and a site of family togetherness, and correlated its use with postwar ideas of parenthood and childhood. This thesis expanded on a similar project in the American context by reconciling some of its themes with Canadian literature. In her research on the American family road trip, Rugh situates the automobile in changing patterns of leisure and consumption without really emphasizing the extent to which cultural producers connected the family car to the modern ideals of masculinity and femininity that informed postwar parenthood. This thesis attempts to fill this gap by reconciling Rugh's work with recent scholarship on masculine domesticity and fatherhood, effectively situating the automobile in these themes.

The automobile, a consumer good used to navigate around the public sphere, helped bring the father closer to the family's domestic life, a trend Rutherford considers in the context of gendered patterns of consumption. This thesis expands on both his work and Rugh's work by pulling the themes of their research together and sharpening our understanding of the family and the automobile in postwar British Columbia. I addressed Rutherford's work more comprehensively in the second section of this thesis: by relating the gendered consumption of goods associated with fatherhood to the natural

environment, I have expanded Rutherford's theme by suggesting that the father's ability to provide his family with access to the outdoors was also a fundamental part of postwar parenthood. In the process of extending the father and the family into British Columbia's natural environment, this thesis also touched on several other important themes. Not only was the family's relationship to nature mediated by modern technologies such as the automobile and camping gear, but the spaces they visited and consumed were culturally constructed to fit the provincial state's postwar agenda.

Moreover, the process of exploring this theme uncovered an anticipated conclusion: although modern conveniences influenced the family's camping experience (as an activity that took place in a culturally constructed space), the father's provision of these 'modern' goods allowed families to 'know' nature at a time when the provincial government was implementing strategies of rapid resource development. Consequently, the family camping trip helped inspire conservationist sentiments in both parents and children. While this is a theme not fully unpacked in this thesis, it certainly offers inspiration for future scholarship. Although historians such as Rugh and Sutter have documented this relationship in the American context, it remains to be fully explored in the context of W.A.C. Bennett's 'Beautiful British Columbia' and the accompanying resource exploitation, as exemplified by the controversy over the Stellako River log drive of the mid-1960s. For example, in a 1967 CBC documentary on this conflict between the forest industry, the fishing industry, tourism and conservation in the context of the Stellako, the film's commentator discusses natural resource use with a group of grade nine schoolchildren in Vancouver's aquarium. After one young student states that "I don't think it's necessary that these things [the natural environment] have to be ruined,"

another responds to ideas regarding conservation by adding “I don’t think it’s only a question of the beauty of the country or the resources – I think it’s also a question of our own health.” This film clip demonstrates the extent to which British Columbians questioned the government’s exploitation of natural resources. Presumably, these children and many others would have developed some of their appreciation of nature from camping trips with their families, fuelling subsequent popular environmentalist impulses.²³¹

Assuming again that popular culture is neither “wholly monolithic nor unrelentingly repressive,” we can assume a diversity of lived experiences that reach beyond the scope of this thesis; perhaps a project exploring oral histories of family recreation in the postwar era would be an enlightening subject of a future dissertation and an excellent way to explore these voices.²³² That being said, it is important to remember the strengths of an approach that focuses on the dominant cultural discourse. As mentioned towards the beginning of this thesis – in reference to recent work by Mona Gleason and Mary Louise Adams – the process of examining this hegemonic discourse gives us the necessary background for exploring competing dialogues and sites of negotiation.²³³

In summation, while keeping the contours of this dominant discourse in mind, perhaps it would be helpful to reinstate the possibilities that each chapter presented for future research, for example: in the chapter on the family and the automobile, the

²³¹ Rugh, *Are We There Yet*, 130-132; Sutter, *Driven Wild*, 256-267; MacEachern, *Natural Selections*, 162-163; *This Land of Ours*, Mike Poole, dir., CBC Vancouver Film Production, 1967.

²³² Meyerowitz, “Beyond the Feminine Mystique,” 231.

²³³ Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs*, 18-19; Fahrni, *Household Politics*, 27.

connection between masculinities, femininities and modern parenthood raises some interesting questions. The dominant discourse surrounding the family and the automobile – as presented in magazines such as *Maclean's*, *Chatelaine*, *B.C. Digest* and *B.C. Motorist* – is typically prescriptive, and presumably one of many competing discourses. Given this, future research could follow the recent trend in postwar scholarship by exploring and questioning the popular assumption of the nuclear family, complete with a breadwinning father, a stay-at-home mother, a suburban home, and two healthy children. Likewise – and as discussed earlier in this thesis – future scholarship could explore the notion that competing discourses inform masculinities and femininities: after all, neither masculinity nor femininity is a monolithic identity, as the case of Joan Greenwood makes so clear.

As discussed in the second section of this thesis, the research on the family and outdoor recreation raises important questions regarding class: to this end, subsequent scholarship would be well-advised to explore the idea that the family camping trip – and to some extent, the family road trip in general – was an experience that crossed class boundaries. As the previous chapter indicates, the anticipated benefits of the family camping trip held an attraction that was as strong, if not stronger, than its potential as an inexpensive form of family leisure. Given Jenny Clayton's recent research on how rural British Columbians engaged with outdoor recreation, geographical location may be a category of analysis that is intimately connected to class: perhaps rural working-class British Columbian families related to camping in different ways than their urban, middle-class counterparts. This intersection presents opportunities for further research.²³⁴

²³⁴ Clayton, "Making Recreational Space," 2, 7.

Regardless of what subject matter is chosen for subsequent scholarship, this thesis has offered a stronger understanding of the dominant discourse surrounding the automobile and family recreation in postwar British Columbia, hopefully contributing to a burgeoning body of literature on this era. As families ventured into provincial parks and developed a growing appreciation of nature during the postwar years, they illustrated another dimension of the 'Good Life' in a province experiencing unprecedented levels of natural resource extraction. While this frantic pace of resource exploitation reflected one dimension of modernity, another illustrates the extent to which fatherhood and postwar family life rested upon recreational access to the outdoors, a space profoundly influenced by evolving cultural perceptions of nature.

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Appendix A:
Images cited in text

FORD CRESTLINE
Sunliner

One drive
says more
than
1000 words!

FORD V-8
WORTH STILL MORE IN '54

Only a V-8 is up to date... try Ford V-8 before you buy

Only convertible that outsells
FORD
PROVE FORD ON THE ROAD

YOUR FORD DEALER INVITES YOU TO **PROVE FORD ON THE ROAD**

MACLEAN'S MAGAZINE, JUNE 15, 1954

Figure 1a. Ford Advertisement, *Maclean's* (15 June 1954), 31.

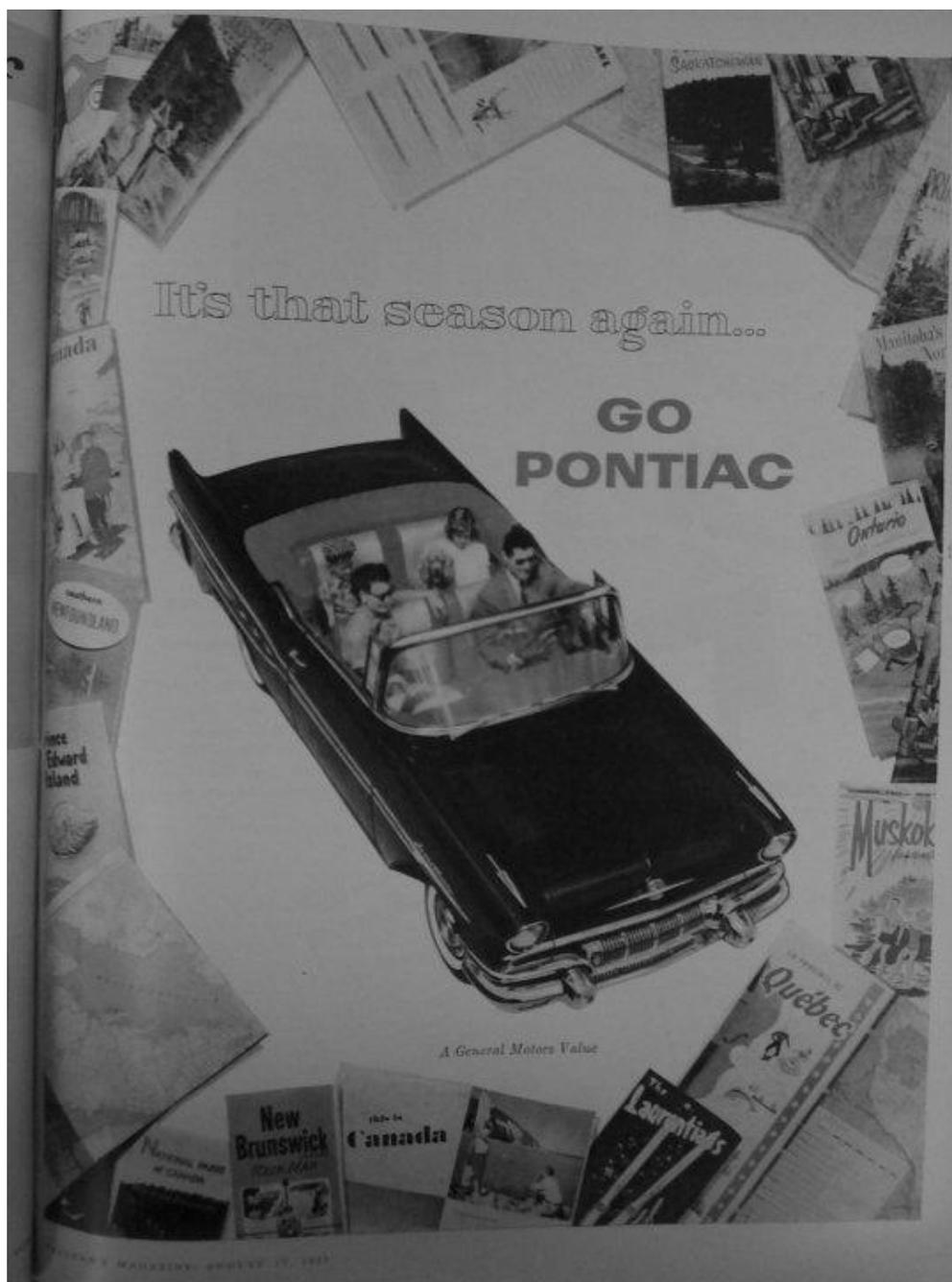


Figure 1b. Pontiac Advertisement, *Maclean's* (17 August 1957), 29.



G is for Garage

It started out to house just the car. But now, you name it—it's in your garage. The kids' wading pool, your garden hose, plastic handled tools, new fertilizers, power mower, swift-killing insecticides—your garage is full of good things made possible by oil.

Figure 2. Shell Advertisement, *Maclean's* (17 August 1957), 8-9.



**Won't Daddy
be surprised!**

He sure will be! But so what if they leave a few streaks and get themselves soaking wet. Their intentions are the very best. They want to show they care about their Daddy.

They're not the only ones. General Motors cares, too. That's why we take such care when we build his car; why we insist on quality at every stage of production. It's the same with everything we make - cars, trucks, buses or home appliances. Every GM product reflects the best thinking of top designers and engineers, the finest materials and first class workmanship.

You can take General Motors quality for granted because we don't.

GM IN CANADA

General Motors of Canada, Limited,
Oshawa, Windsor and St. Thomas West:
cars and trucks

General Motors Diesel Limited,
London:
locomotives, buses, Euclid and Diesel engines

Frigidaire Products of Canada Limited,
Scarborough:
all major home appliances

McKinnon Industries Limited,
St. Catharines and Windsor:
automotive parts and accessories

Figure 3. General Motors Advertisement, *Western Homes & Living* (August 1965), 25.

W NORTH...
SOUTH...
EAST...
WEST

HOLIDAY MOTORING AT ITS BEST!

From Yukon to California, from Vancouver Island to Arizona, you're never far from a Standard Station or Chevron Dealer - your best guarantee of carefree holiday motoring.

Fill up there with unsurpassed Chevron Supreme Gasoline containing Methyl* (the most revolutionary anti-knock additive since Ethyl) . . . protect your engine with detergent-action RPM Supreme Motor Oil . . . relax while the courteous attendants check your water, battery and tires almost faster than you can read this ad . . . visit their spotless rest-rooms.

Minutes later, with a cheery wave from your friendly Standard or Chevron service man, you're on the way again behind a sparkling clean windshield - secure in the knowledge that "all's O.K. under the hood!" That's the Standard recipe for holiday motoring at its best!

*TRADEMARK FOR ANTI-KNOCK COMPOUND

STANDARD OIL COMPANY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA LIMITED

REG. T.M.

AT THE SIGN OF THE CHEVRON
STANDARD STATIONS • CHEVRON DEALERS
"Where We Take Better Care Of Your Car"

Figure 4a. Chevron Standard Oil Advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (March/April 1963), 17.

... AFTER A TEXACO SPRING CHECK-UP!

Your Texaco Dealer is an expert on car care. He will give yours a real Spring lift; carefully check the many seemingly small trouble spots — such as lights, tires, radiator and battery. Every working part that should be lubricated will get the proper grade and quality of Texaco lubricant.

TO PROTECT YOUR ENGINE: The crankcase will be drained and refilled with Advanced Custom Made Having motor oil. It protects your engine for the life of your car. You enjoy quicker starts, more power, better gasoline mileage.

TO CUSHION YOUR DRIVING: The chassis will be lubricated according to a special lubrication chart covering your make and model car — with superior Texaco MARPAK. It assures you quieter driving, easier handling, and that cozy feeling for 1000 miles or more.

TO SAFEGUARD YOUR TRANSMISSION: Your Texaco dealer is specially trained and skilled in caring for your automatic transmission. He will bring the fluid to the proper level, or replace old fluid with Texaco TEXAMATIC in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

One stop and you're on your way, all set for safer, more, more enjoyable driving. So now's the time to see your Texaco Dealer, he really knows how to put SPRING in your car! Drive in... float out!

SEE YOUR NEAREST
TEXACO DEALER
 A DEALER OF McCOLL-FRONTENAC OIL COMPANY LIMITED
 Manufacturers and Distributors, in Canada, of Texaco Petroleum Products

MACLEAN'S MAGAZINE, APRIL 27, 1957

Figure 4b. Texaco Advertisement, *Maclean's* (27 April 1957), 7.



Sorry,
son,
the
job's
taken

Taken by a man who's proud of his clean station and restrooms. And just as proud of the products he sells: Like our Chevron gasolines . . . both better than ever with the new gasoline discovery—Methyl*, first new antiknock compound since Ethyl. Methyl steps up performance, gives more knock-free miles than any other antiknock compound. This better performance doesn't cost a penny extra . . . at the sign of the Chevron where *we take better care of your car.*

Methyl
*Methyl—trademark for antiknock compound

STANDARD OIL COMPANY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA LIMITED
JULY-AUGUST, 1962



CHEVRON DEALERS
STANDARD STATIONS

Figure 5. Chevron Standard Oil Advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (July/August 1962), 7.



Best man wherever you go —that's the man at the sign of the Chevron. He's always ready to help, whether it's making a rear window see-worthy or filling the tank with Methyl*, first new antiknock compound since Ethyl. This research breakthrough makes possible a new kind of gasoline. It combines Methyl with all the other qualities required for the highest performance your car can deliver. And it doesn't cost one penny more for Methyl power — in both Chevron gasolines.

*Methyl—trademark for antiknock compound

We take better care of your car

**Chevron Dealers
Standard Stations**




STANDARD OIL COMPANY
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA LIMITED

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1962

9

Figure 6. Chevron Standard Oil Advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (September/October 1962), 9.



Gals on the go know that the fastest way to get bumper-to-bumper car service, plus the warmest of welcomes, is to stop at the sign of the Chevron. And you'll scoot on your way to a lot smoother driving... thanks to Methyl power. Methyl* is the first research breakthrough in anti-

knock compounds since Ethyl. It teams up with all the other qualities required for the highest performance your car can deliver, older model or brand new '63. No increase in price, just in driving pleasure... with Methyl power — in both grades of Chevron gasoline.

*Methyl is a trademark for anti-knock compound

We take better care of your car • Chevron Dealers • Standard Stations

COLLECT A BIG BONUS every time you take on seven gallons or more by buying Golden Rhapsody fine china dinnerware for only 99c per four-piece table setting. Inspect this lovely fine chinaware for yourself at any Standard Station or Chevron Dealer — and charge it on your credit card, if you wish.

STANDARD OIL COMPANY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA LIMITED

Figure 7. Chevron Standard Oil Advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (July/August 1963), 2.



*Methyl...trademark for antiknock compound

You clean Charlie, we'll clean the windows.

Chocolate, strawberry or vanilla windows come clean at the sign of the Chevron. It's all part of our bumper-to-bumper service, along with a choice of two great Chevron gasolines.

Both Chevron and Chevron Supreme gasolines have Methyl* power—a research breakthrough in antiknock compounds that stands up under the extreme temperatures of high-compression engines. Unlike other antiknock

compounds, Methyl* spreads evenly to all cylinders, giving uniform antiknock performance and best all-round driving results.

For high compression cars fill up with **Supreme**. For cars that run on regular, choose **Chevron**. You'll get on-the-road proof that we take better care of your car at the sign of the Chevron.

STANDARD STATIONS - CHEVRON DEALERS

STANDARD OIL COMPANY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA LIMITED



REGD. TM

Figure 8. Chevron Standard Oil Advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1964), 7.



*Methyl—trademark for antiknock compound

**You're always welcome ...
even if it's just to clean up a few little problems.**

Anytime you want to get off of the road—and get some of the road off of you, stop at the sign of the Chevron. We check our rest-rooms as often as possible to keep them neat and properly equipped.

Both Chevron and Chevron Supreme gasolines have Methyl* power—a research breakthrough in antiknock compounds that stands up under the extreme temperatures of high-

compression engines. Unlike other antiknock compounds, Methyl* spreads evenly to all cylinders, giving uniform antiknock performance and best all-round driving results.

For high-compression cars fill up with **Supreme**. For cars that run on regular, choose **Chevron**. You'll get on-the-road proof that we take better care of your car at the sign of the Chevron.

STANDARD STATIONS • CHEVRON DEALERS



STANDARD OIL COMPANY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA LIMITED

4195-901

Figure 9. Chevron Standard Oil Advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (March/April 1964), 7.



Best place to fill 'er up . . .

. . . and your car, too . . . is at the sign of the Chevron.

Both Chevron and Chevron Supreme gasolines have Methyl power—a research breakthrough in antiknock compounds that stands up under the extreme temperatures of high compression engines. Unlike other antiknock compounds, Methyl spreads evenly to all cylinders, giving uniform antiknock performance, and best all-around driving results.

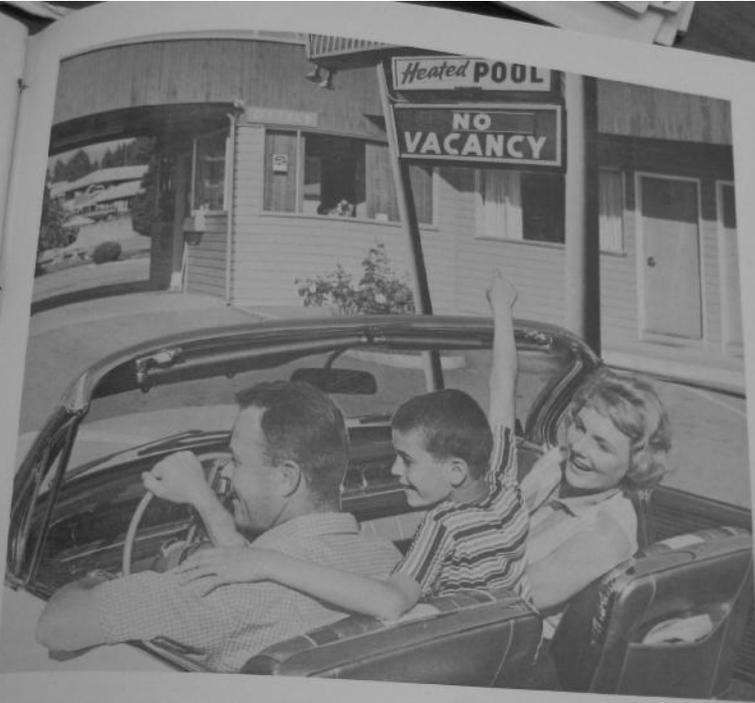
For high-compression cars, fill up with **Supreme**. For cars designed to run on regular, choose **Chevron**. You'll get on-the-road proof we take better care of your car.

 **Standard Stations - Chevron Dealers**
STANDARD OIL COMPANY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA LIMITED

COLLECT A BIG BONUS every time you take on seven gallons or more by buying Golden Rhapsody fine china dinnerware for only 99c per four-piece table setting. Inspect this lovely fine china ware for yourself at Standard Station or Chevron Dealer — and charge it on your credit card, if you wish.

Figure 10. Chevron Standard Oil Advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (September/October 1963), 11.

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... but there's
a warm welcome awaiting
this family!

(Thanks to TWX) "No vacancy" notices never worry families wise enough to plan their vacations with the help of the British Columbia Automobile Association. B.C.A.A. has now installed Teletypewriter Exchange Service (TWX), supplied by B.C. TEL, at its Vancouver headquarters, and at the Victoria, Penticton and Kamloops branches. Now, accommodation reservations for B.C.A.A. members can be made within

minutes - assuring a happy, comfortable end to your day's driving. The technical facilities provided by B.C. TEL help bring you a warm welcome at hotels and motels along your holiday route. And that's not all. This new B.C.A.A. Service also handles accident claims, credit information and other business between B.C.A.A. offices faster and more economically - with savings to all Association Members.

Get full details today about TWX in modern business from our Marketing and Sales Department. In Vancouver dial 683-5511. Elsewhere in B.C. ask your operator for Zenith 7000 (no charge).

B.C. TEL 
BRITISH COLUMBIA TELEPHONE COMPANY

Figure 11a. BC Tel Advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (July/August 1963), 11.

For modern-day drivers...



Canada's **MOST MODERN** gasolines

For modern-day driving you need a modern-day gasoline... a gasoline that can deliver all the power... all the efficiency your car has to offer... That's why more and more of today's drivers are switching to B-A 88 and 98 Gasolines—Canada's Most Modern Gasolines.

So look for the sign of the big B-A. It is your invitation to go modern with B-A 88 and 98 Gasolines.





Meet Mr. B-A
he's always glad
to serve you



THE BRITISH AMERICAN OIL COMPANY LIMITED

MACLEAN'S MAGAZINE, MAY 25, 1957

Figure 11b. British American Oil Company Advertisement, *Maclean's* (25 May 1957), 65.

A Natural . . .

young lady
young man
lovely view
new DATSUN

For the businessman, sportsman or housewife . . . the Datsun Sedan 5-passenger car brings a new kind of motoring versatility in town and country. A sturdy 60-HP O.H.V. engine with synchromesh transmission gives you the maximum in fuel and maintenance economy. Small wonder it's the fastest selling car in Japan and favorite in over 60 countries of the world. Datsun 5-Seater - only \$1850.00 with heater.

DISTRIBUTORS:

ROTARY MOTORS LTD.
60 West Broadway, Vancouver, B.C. — TR 2-7151

DOUG'S MOTORS AUTOMOTIVE LTD.
527 - 12th Street, New Westminster, B.C. — LA 1-4420

JUNCTION SERVICE LTD.
Highway 97 & Rutland Road, Kelowna, B.C. — PO 5-5041

NISSAN MOTOR CO., LTD. TOKYO, JAPAN.
Japan's Largest Exporter of Automobiles

DATSUN

DATSUN

Figure 12. Nissan Datsun Advertisement, *B.C. Motorist* (September/October 1963), 2.

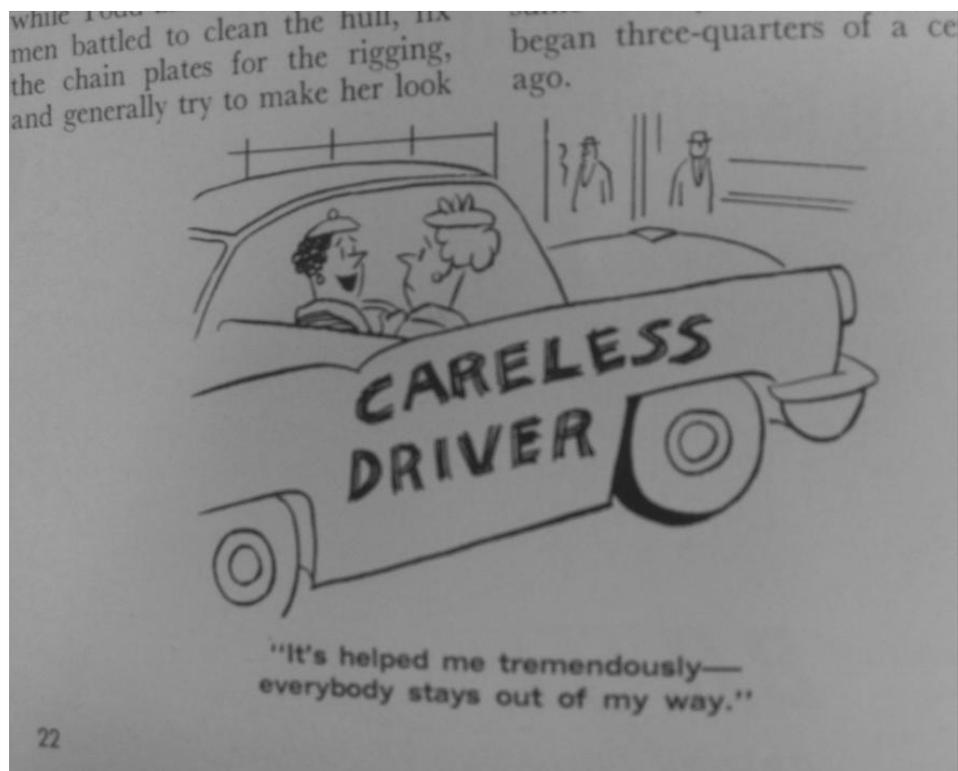


Figure 13. "Careless Driver Carton," *B.C. Motorist* (May/June 1963), 22.



BUILT-IN BED
Seats fold down to form full-size bed—just one of the many features of the new Travelall that makes it ideal for campers and sportsmen.

See the **BIG** wagon ...
the *only* station wagon for today's campers and sportsmen!

NEW INTERNATIONAL
Travelall
STATION WAGON

Carry more people and bigger loads where other station wagons can't go!

<p>More room for camping and hunting gear is one big reason you'll want the Travelall! With two rear seats removed, load space is more than 8 feet long, over 4 feet wide and almost 4 feet high. With three full width seats in place, you have room for nine persons.</p>		<p>More endurance is built into the Travelall frames and axles to stand up to rough conditions that could cripple ordinary station wagons. Whether you choose V-8 or six, you'll have responsive power to flatten the hills and pull trailers or boats with ease.</p>	
<p>More clearance to let you travel with confidence over rutted roads where you wouldn't dare drive ordinary station wagons or cars. With 4-wheel drive you can leave roads far behind—strike out for those unspoiled areas and unfish lakes!</p>		<p>Style and comfort make the Travelall a pleasure to see and drive. Low profile, clean lines and twin headlights add up to beauty. Steering is responsive and fingertip easy. Available with either standard spring or independent front suspension.</p>	

For the complete Travelall story see your nearest International dealer—or write to
INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER COMPANY OF CANADA, LIMITED, HAMILTON, ONTARIO
Sold and serviced by more than 800 dealers coast-to-coast.



Figure 14. Travelall Station Wagon Advertisement, *B.C. Digest* (June 1961), 63.

**Drive More in Canada's
out-of-doors ...
it gets cheaper by the mile!**

Here's one of the happiest discoveries you'll ever make!
By driving more — seeing more of Canada's fascinating
out-of-doors — you can cut your cost per mile by an
eye-opening amount!

In fact, your cost *per mile* for 15,000 miles annually is only
about half what it is if you drive only 5,000 miles!

You see, whether you leave your car standing idle or stretch
out its pleasure-giving mileage, the depreciation, insurance
and license fees remain the same. Actually, the only other
important cost for extra mileage is gasoline and oil,
which are being made by Canadian refineries to give far greater
value than ever before.

So it makes sense to make more use of your car. You
and your family can have so much extra enjoyment for
so little, because when you *drive more* . . .
it gets cheaper by the mile!

HE MAKES TRAVEL EASIER. Wherever you drive, Canada's oil companies and
the business men who sell their products help you and guide you on your way.

ETHYL CORPORATION OF CANADA LIMITED

**DRIVE
MORE
... It Gets Cheaper
By The Mile!**

Canada has hundreds of colourful historic spots such as Fort Henry
at Kingston, Ontario. It costs little to visit them by car.

Figure 15. Ethyl Corporation of Canada Limited Advertisement, *Maclean's* (21 June 1958).

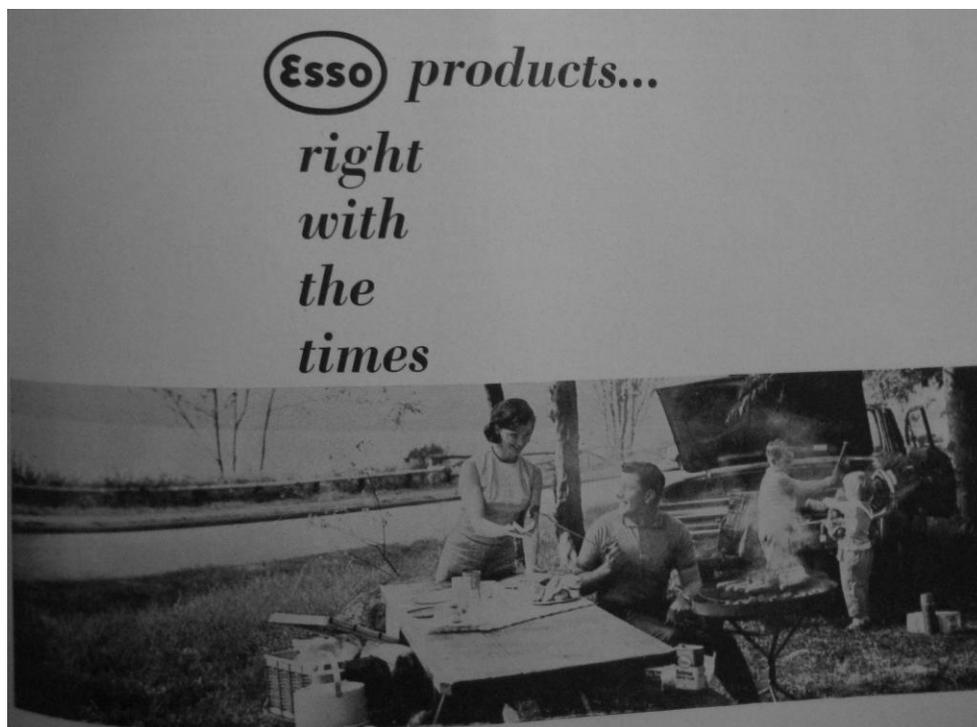


Figure 16. Esso Advertisement, *B.C. Digest* (May/June 1963), 19.

"I'd drive anywhere to fish" says Richard L. Carlton
of Oakland, California



"Way back in the mountains I found a fisherman's paradise. The trail was full of rocks that scraped the oil pan of the car. But my Atlas tires came through without even a scratch. They must be made of elephant hide!"



"Following trout streams may lead you out anywhere. But that broad, flat Atlas tread always gives sure footing."



"On one dangerous road - covered with big boulders - it took an hour to go five miles. Some pounding - but Atlas stood up!"




"Another time in a big blizzard everybody else was stuck off the road. But Atlas pulled me through without trouble!"



"If it's safe mileage you want, I don't see how you can beat Atlas, with all these great features."

For long, hard use, get tires and tubes specially built for extra strength. Every Atlas Tire is fully guaranteed in writing by Imperial Oil Limited.
*IMPERIAL OIL, ATLAS SUPPLY COMPANY OF CANADA, LIMITED

EVERYWHERE IN CANADA  ALWAYS AT YOUR SERVICE

Figure 17. Atlas Tire Advertisement, *Maclean's* (1 August 1954), 58.