

A Man, a Woman, and a New Magazine: Cyrus Curtis and Louisa Knapp Curtis and the *Ladies' Home Journal*, 1883–1889

In 1883, Cyrus Curtis and Louisa Knapp Curtis decided to turn their newspaper column for women into a separate monthly supplement to their weekly newspaper. After Louisa had prepared the material for the first number of the supplement, Cyrus took it to the office to be set in type. Upon receiving the material, the composing-room manager asked Cyrus what he wanted to call the supplement. Legend has it that Cyrus answered, "Call it anything you like. It's sort of a ladies' journal." The composition manager carried this vague notion to an engraver, who drew a masthead for the supplement, using *The Ladies' Journal* as a title. To embellish the words the engraver added to the title a picture of a home, engraving the word "Home" under it. The first subscription request for the new magazine asked for "The Ladies' Home Journal," as did most subsequent orders, and thus an unknown engraver and its earliest subscribers named the first American mass-circulation magazine.¹

The story of the *Ladies' Home Journal* name highlights the relatively unstructured nature of the 1880s world of magazine publishing, a world that this new magazine itself had a significant part in defining. With their "sort of a ladies' journal," as Cyrus described it, the Curtises established a model for an important genre of magazines in the United States. This genre has remained remarkably stable over the course of a century.

Even more importantly, Cyrus and Louisa helped to mediate the interaction of the growing consumer culture with notions about gender, providing in their magazine a forum for the intersection of these two significant cultural forces. Many elements combined to propel the *Journal* into the mass-circulation magazine ranks: the personal characteristics and relationship of the editor and publisher, the expansion of reading audiences, and commercial developments that included the rise of middle-class consumption and the demand for national advertising. Cyrus Curtis and Louisa Knapp Curtis were commercial pioneers who oversaw the intersection of gendered reading with the demand for a gendered advertising forum to create and develop the highly successful *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Cyrus Curtis was born in 1850 in Portland, Maine. The son of poor but cultured and loving parents, he took on the role of hard-headed businessman and

1.a. The Early *Journal* Masthead.

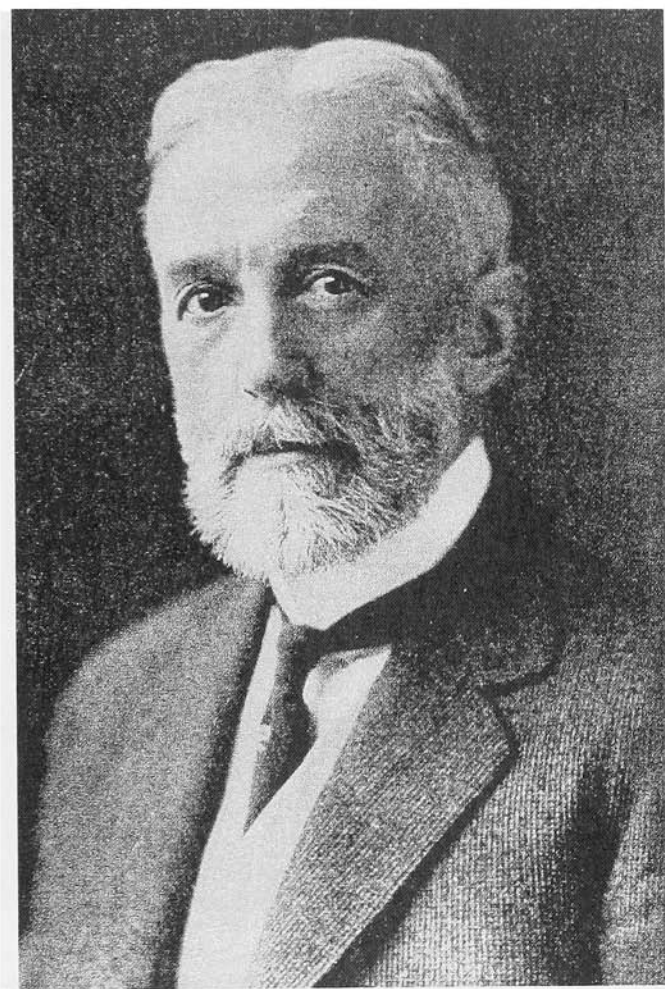
provider early in his life. His instinct for business and hard work as a newspaper boy paid off, and when he was fifteen the first issue of Curtis's first newspaper, *Young America*, appeared on the Portland scene. Curtis was soon selling 400 copies of his paper weekly, earning him the impressive sum of eight dollars per week. The next year, however, Curtis's printing operation was lost in a fire that also destroyed most of his family's belongings. The future publisher gave up hopes of further schooling. After several years of clerking in a general store, he left the town of Portland at nineteen to make his way in Boston.²

The young man held down a job in a dry-goods store, supplementing his income by soliciting newspaper advertisements for an advertising agency on his lunch hour. Though shy by nature, Curtis moved quite comfortably in the world of business. In 1872 he joined forces with a partner who put up the capital for a weekly, which they called *The People's Ledger*. Soon he was doing all the work on the paper, and within a year Cyrus had bought his partner out.³

Curtis's years in Boston saw a development more significant than the acquisition of a periodical, however. In 1874 he met Louisa Knapp, a woman a year younger than he, and the two soon fell in love.⁴ Knapp was at the time serving as private secretary to Samuel Gridley Howe, a prominent Boston doctor and reformer and the husband of activist Julia Ward Howe. Louisa's work experience was unusual at a time when women constituted only about 14 percent of the labor force, and less than 3 percent of the clerical work force.⁵ Given the fact that Knapp was the daughter of an established businessman, her work for pay was even more unusual, and it seems to have led her to a certain flexibility of attitude on the issue of paid work for women.⁶

Knapp's work experience also gave her a first-hand knowledge of the business world. Edward Bok, the second editor of the *Ladies' Home Journal* and son-in-law of the Curtises, wrote years later that "the workings of a man's mind

1.b. Cyrus H.K. Curtis. Courtesy Charles Scribner's Sons.



were not a new revelation to Mrs. Curtis," a fact that served her well in her subsequent partnership with Cyrus.⁷

Cyrus Curtis had a talent for recognizing and encouraging special abilities in others. Early in their relationship he sensed Louisa's business and editorial abilities and encouraged her to apply them. Louisa was a practical, down-to-earth extrovert, thereby complementing Curtis's shy demeanor at the same time that she reinforced his business acumen and drive. Her earlier work experience

l.c. Louisa Knapp Curtis. Courtesy Charles Scribner's Sons.



and her ongoing interest in public activity led her to work with her husband both on and off the company payroll. The strength of their partnership had a great deal to do with the success they were to achieve together.

They were married on March 10, 1875, and their first and only child, Mary Louise, was born in August of 1876, when Cyrus was twenty-six and Louisa twenty-five years old. Cyrus had long been interested in Philadelphia as a publishing city, and upon learning that he could publish the *People's Ledger* more cheaply there than in Boston, the Curtises decided to move to Philadelphia. The

weekly newspaper field was very crowded, however. Curtis struggled with various publications until 1879, when his brother-in-law lent him two thousand dollars in order to establish the *Tribune and the Farmer*, a four-page weekly selling for fifty cents a year.⁸ Cyrus edited the newspaper while Louisa served as business manager. The Curtises, employing an innovative approach, brought in an advertising manager who solicited advertisements for the paper and collected payment for them.

The Curtises' publishing breakthrough did not come, however, until they began running a "Women and Home" column in the *Tribune and the Farmer*. The new column was originally added largely out of expedience. One week in the late summer of 1883 Cyrus found his paper three columns short. Thinking of material that could be gathered quickly and easily from other sources, and that could be built around advertisements that might be of particular interest to women, Curtis proposed a "woman's department" to fill the space.⁹ The column ran regularly thereafter, featuring odds and ends taken from various sources. This material was then surrounded by advertisements geared to women. Curtis clipped the items from what he believed were reliable newspaper columns and advice pamphlets.

But Louisa criticized the column, saying, "I don't want to make fun of you, but if you really knew how funny this material sounds to a woman, you would laugh, too."¹⁰ As Cyrus Curtis's biographer later commented, "Mr. Curtis never dreamed for a moment that in his wife's laugh was hidden his first great success."¹¹ Louisa moved from the business to the editorial department of the *Tribune and the Farmer* on the grounds that she as a woman could produce higher quality reading matter for women. She replaced the old reprinted items with fresh material of her own, and the column soon grew to fill a page. Louisa's department for women began to stimulate a great deal of correspondence and to attract more support from advertisers. Consequently, the Curtises decided to publish a monthly women's supplement to the weekly *Tribune*. The first issue of that supplement, entitled the *Ladies' Journal*, edited by Louisa under her maiden name and published by Cyrus, appeared in December of 1883.¹²

The *Ladies' Home Journal* therefore evolved from a newspaper column to a department to a supplement, which quickly outstripped the original paper in popularity. While the practical details of this evolution are unremarkable, the cultural ramifications of the early *Journal*'s evolution are striking. The creation of the "Women and Home" column and its evolution into the early *Ladies' Home Journal* rested in part on the significant changes in the status of women as readers which were occurring in the mid-nineteenth century.

Reading was common among some groups of women much earlier than the mid-nineteenth century. Late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Puritan women, for example, were responsible for catechizing their children and

hence for reading the Bible in the home.¹³ By the 1780s educational opportunities for women beyond this group had begun to expand significantly. Between 1780 and 1830 women began increasingly to attend district schools and academies, and the justification for expanded literacy had broadened from the needs of Republican motherhood to the notion that reading was for women, as it was for men, "a necessity of life."¹⁴

Reading among elite groups may already have been differentiated by gender to some degree by the mid-eighteenth century. Men were said to read newspapers and history more often, while women were believed to use their inferior intellects more on the less rigorous fare of fiction and devotional literature.¹⁵ But many American women did not read at all in the eighteenth century, and it was not until the first half of the nineteenth century that a large new reading public coalesced. By then, 90 percent of the American people were minimally literate, and technological advances in printing and paper making made literature accessible to more readers than ever before. *Harper's Magazine*, one of the new organs of middle-class culture, proclaimed that "literature has gone in pursuit of the million, penetrated highways and hedges, pressed its way into cottages, factories, omnibuses, and railroad cars, and become the most cosmopolitan thing of the century."¹⁶

Women were an important part of the new reading public. Magazines for women began to appear in the early to mid-nineteenth century, targeting mainly a well-to-do audience but signalling an important segmenting of reading by gender. The mid-nineteenth century also saw a notable increase in book sales among women of some means. It was good business to target women readers for magazine and book publishers alike. Women in the mid-nineteenth century were beginning to be regarded as a special interest group worthy of special attention. It was in these years as well that children's books were targeted by gender, reflecting both the emphasis on childhood as a distinct, discrete phase of life, and the notion that reading was an appropriate vehicle for gender-role socialization.¹⁷

The experience of one woman who would eventually write for the *Ladies' Home Journal* represents these important new trends in the reading of middle-to upper-class educated women in the nineteenth century. Marion Harland was born in 1830 and came of age in mid-century. She was a popular writer of advice books, novels, and magazine short stories and advice columns in the mid-to late nineteenth century. Harland's commentary on her family's reading is revealing:

My sister and I read "The Spectator" aloud to our mother as she sat busy with fine needlework, and learned whole books of Cowper's "Task" and Thomson's "Seasons" . . . rushed through Plutarch's "Lives" with breathless energy no novelist could now provoke . . . and on Sundays pored over "Pilgrim's Progress," Pollock's "Course of Time," and Young's "Night Thoughts." Our

mother took "The New York Mirror" and "Graham," and "Godey," and the "Saturday Evening Courier." On winter nights my father relaxed his objections to light reading so far as to read aloud from these columns.¹⁸

In Harland's home, then, reading was an accepted, even a central activity for women. Though her father seems to have controlled much of the family's reading aloud, it was her mother who subscribed to several of the leading periodicals of the day, including newspapers. This agency on the part of women readers certainly goes well beyond catechizing children, and it is an important development in the evolution of women as readers.

Barbara Sicherman's case study of women's reading in late-Victorian America highlights precisely this sort of agency. She finds that by the late nineteenth century, women as a group were "integral to the culture of reading."¹⁹ They had established reading clubs, literary societies, and libraries in community after community across the country. More importantly, she asserts that many individual women

found in reading a way of apprehending the world that enabled them to overcome some of the confines of gender and class. Reading provided space—physical, temporal, and psychological—that permitted women to exempt themselves from traditional gender expectations, whether imposed by formal society or by family obligations.²⁰

Women read, in other words, not only to escape, but also actively to reshape some of the constraints of their world.

One of the central questions for social historians of reading is whether reading was indeed a liberating or a constraining activity. Making such a judgment rests on situating a group of readers in a particular time period and evaluating their specific circumstances. For example, newly literate female readers in colonial America appear to have experienced a liberating effect from learning to read. Reading became one of the few activities available to such women that were in some measure private and performed for themselves.²¹ For this group, as for Barbara Sicherman's upper-class Victorian women, reading appears to have been relatively liberating.

But the experience of another group of women tells a somewhat different story. Reading for the female readers of the eighteenth-century British magazine, the *Tatler*, was clearly less beneficial. It is the case that the male-edited *Tatler*, to the extent that it targeted women readers specifically, acknowledged women's importance as readers. It courted women and encouraged them to read. But the magazine's direct and indirect messages reinforced female subordination to patriarchal structures. In this instance, therefore, one might say that reading became a liability because the more women read the more exposure they had to the patriarchal status quo.²²

Thus some women at some times seem to have experienced more benefits from reading, while other women at other times appear to have suffered more

from the constraints of reading. On balance, then, reading would appear to be a mixed blessing. Literacy is certainly one of the keys to changing one's status, and in this light it is critical to women's struggle. But print material is on the whole more supportive of conformity than it is of change. Consequently, its effect on readers may be more limiting than it is liberating.²³ A close look at the readership of both the *Journal* and the *Post* in forthcoming chapters will feature careful consideration of this issue.

Some women of Marion Harland's generation became major producers of culture themselves. Harland, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Rose Terry Cooke were among the first American women to become mainstream writers, and they dominated reading lists for much of the nineteenth century.²⁴ Marion Harland and her mother therefore illustrate the evolution from women as readers for the purpose of teaching children, to women as active pursuers of reading matter for themselves, to women as producers of reading matter for others.

Harland and others like her also represent an important broadening of the function of women's reading. Harland's mother, a fairly well-to-do woman with servants, was a member of the primary audience for which *Godey's Lady's Magazine* and similar periodicals were produced.²⁵ With its fashion plates, reprinted sheet music, and sentimental fiction, to say nothing of its two-dollar per year subscription price, *Godey's* was geared to an elite audience. The magazine had attained a circulation of one hundred and fifty thousand by 1860 and was the first major American women's magazine, but by the 1880s many mainstream women writers like Harland would be writing for a different kind of publication: the practical, cheaper, helpful-hints magazine.²⁶ Such magazines would soon eclipse elite magazines like *Godey's* in popularity.

These years also witnessed, therefore, a change in the function of reading for many women. Some women may have experienced an increase in leisure in the days of early industrialization, allowing for more reading for entertainment and general enlightenment. But for most women in the early nineteenth century new domestic chores simply took the place of old ones. As stoves replaced open fireplaces and products like flour were commercially produced, diets became more varied and cooking more complicated; as fabric was produced outside the home and paper patterns were made available for home use, wardrobes became more elaborate.²⁷

These new tasks and others meant that there were larger gaps between the experiences of one generation of women and the next, a problem that was exacerbated in many cases by the physical separation of the generations resulting from migration.²⁸ In a culture where at least some women were undertaking new tasks, and where women were often separated from traditional sources of advice and information, helpful-hints literature was potentially more and more relevant to many women's everyday activities.

The nineteenth century thus saw an important broadening of the reading public to include more and more women, the increasing gender segregation of reading materials, and a broadening of the function of reading for women. These trends relied in part on the development of a cohesive middle class, or a "self-conscious socio-cultural group."²⁹ This group consisted mostly of native-born, Protestant, white collar, salaried business and professional men and their families. Their group identity was informed by a shared set of morals, values, and attitudes, and by a certain cluster of cultural features: the home and what went into it, residential location, child-rearing strategies, leisure activities, and levels and patterns of consumption.³⁰

Men's class definition, since it rested in large part on occupation, was somewhat more direct than women's in the mid- to late nineteenth century. Most women's financial dependence on men tied their status to men's occupations. Yet women were responsible for many of the trappings of the middle-class: home, child-rearing strategies, leisure activities, and—to an increasing degree over the course of the nineteenth century—levels and patterns of consumption. Consequently, the Consumer Revolution that paralleled the Industrial Revolution seems to have been informed by gender concerns and assumptions from its earliest days.

The beginnings of the Consumer Revolution appear to be situated in the decades after 1830. These years saw the expansion of the production of goods intended for middle-class consumption, including furniture, carpeting, china, glassware, and elaborate fashions.³¹ The consumer culture as we know it today took shape more firmly in the 1880s, when business expanded rapidly, transportation networks improved, and national markets grew.³² Producers sought national markets when continuous-process machinery put out many more goods per unit than had been possible in the past. The decade of the 1880s saw the almost simultaneous invention of such machinery for making flour, breakfast cereals, soup and other canned products, matches, photographic film, and cigarettes.³³ American producers at this point chose to control neither output nor prices but sales, a development that made ever larger national markets crucial.³⁴ With the dramatic improvement of the nation's transportation and communications infrastructure, the stage was set for the rise of mass markets.

One of the businesses ancillary to the new large corporations' drive to create national markets was the advertising agency. Given their much higher output, companies like Campbell, Heinz, and Borden had to embark on massive advertising campaigns conducted with the help of these agencies.³⁵ In turn, advertising agents, along with publishers like Cyrus Curtis, had to convince manufacturers of the importance of advertising. Many business people were reluctant to advertise because advertising had been dominated for years by patent-medicine manufacturers, long viewed as charlatans in the business

world. The new agents showed business people that respectable claims would do the sale of their products more good than harm. They also helped manufacturers to create advertisements that spoke directly to consumers, in an attempt to convince merchants to stock the product if they did not already do so.³⁶ And women were increasingly the targets of these advertisements.

Women had traditionally been responsible for making and/or using several of the products increasingly turned out by continuous-process machinery, a crucial fact in the history of consumption and advertising, and in the history of gender construction as well. Since a number of the earliest mass-produced items were assumed to be of interest to women, and since producers needed to move them and used advertising to do it, a significant proportion of early advertising was targeted specifically to women. By the late 1800s women were perceived to be at least potential consumers of a variety of products like clothing and entertainment items, and they were already viewed as the major consumers of household goods. One analyst calls this development the "feminization of American purchasing."³⁷ By 1895 a brochure for the advertising agency Lord and Thomas was asserting that

She who "rocks the cradle" and "rules the world" is directly and indirectly head of the buying department of every home. The advertiser who makes a favorable impression with her may be sure of the patronage of the family.³⁸

Gender provided an avenue through which advertisers could "personalize" their increasingly impersonal contacts with potential buyers. As markets became national, neither local nor regional product identifications were meaningful. Gender-related assumptions provided a discourse through which advertisers could reach a targeted yet national audience. We see very early in the history of advertising that advertisers sacrificed a possibly broader audience—that is, both women and men—for the narrower gender-targeted audience that was perceived to be reachable through a particular gender discourse. But this discourse would need a suitable conduit, a medium through which advertisers could reach out to middle-class women who had some money to spend.

Cyrus Curtis and Louisa Knapp Curtis were ready to capitalize. They saw that a magazine designed expressly for women that featured a practical emphasis could be an important forum for advertising. Edward Bok later noted the significance of the "Women and Home" column's commercial function: "It was a productive field, since, as woman was the purchasing power, it would benefit the newspaper enormously in its advertising if it could offer a feminine clientele."³⁹ Other women's magazines founded in this period also had explicit ties to commercialism. While each of these publications eventually became the broader product now known as a women's magazine, *McCall's* came from a flyer featuring dress patterns, and the *Woman's Home Companion* and *Good*

Housekeeping originated as mail-order journals.⁴⁰ The recognition of women's power to consume by the late 1800s thus led to the establishment of magazines for women that were highly identified with consumption.

These magazines were also established because of the sense that women's interests were easily addressed in one contained "package." Although mid- to late nineteenth-century women came from all walks of life, producers of books, newspapers, and magazines confidently offered reading material that could speak to many of women's interests in a relatively small space. Women with some expendable income were assumed to share a set of domestic and familial interests. And, if they were addressed at all in newspapers, women were addressed in a single column, page, or supplement. Similarly, producers believed that all of women's interests and all women of some means could be addressed in one magazine.

This trend toward packaging women's interests in a single publication parallels and is to some extent a product of the metaphor of separate spheres, which informed at least some thinking in the nineteenth century. Women, insofar as they were confined to the private sphere in such thinking, were allocated a separate, discrete space that was, metaphorically speaking, smaller and more limiting than men's space in the public sphere. Men's larger, more flexible sphere did not actually resemble a circumscribed sphere at all. The metaphor was therefore fundamentally flawed, since there was no men's sphere to correspond neatly to women's sphere. Applying the metaphor to the lives of both men and women also implied an equal division of labor that did not exist. Finally, it implied an equal division of income and economic power that did not exist. As we shall see, use of this flawed spheres metaphor had a critical impact on the development of both gender relationships and commerce at the turn of the century.

The currency of the spheres metaphor suggests the artificiality of the private/public dichotomy that also informed the development of commercial magazines in the late nineteenth century. For example, the *Ladies' Home Journal*, as published by Cyrus and edited by Louisa, was a public product, since it was created and printed in the business world, sent through the public mails, and financed by advertisers. But the magazine was read in people's homes, and it spoke to private issues such as establishing and maintaining a household, parenting, and marital relations. Similarly, advertising in the 1880s began to commodify needs and activities previously recognized as private, including cooking, eating, cleaning, dressing, bathing, and nursing.

As we shall see, the *Journal's* producers were informed by and employed different variations on the private/public theme. At this point in the early stages of the *Journal's* development, the distinction between private and public was quite purposely blurry, reflecting the editor's views on gender construction and her stance on women's issues. Future editors would employ the dichotomy more rigorously.

Women's magazines were not, of course, the only magazines on the market. The Curtises began publishing their *Journal* 142 years after the first American magazine was founded in 1741. But historically, magazines in the U.S. had not been a dominant medium. A major impetus to magazine founding on the national scale was the Postal Mailing Act of March 3, 1879, which established favorable mailing rates for periodicals. The Postal Mailing Act was enacted in an attempt to create a national press that might be the "mucilage" to hold the Northern and Southern states together.⁴¹ Between 1865 and 1885 the number of periodicals increased more than fourfold, from 700 to 3,300.

The average citizen in these later years was still not a magazine reader, however. The magazine market was polarized, with quality monthlies like *Harper's* and *Scribner's* at one end of the spectrum, and cheap weeklies and story papers at the other end. In the mid-1880s things began to change; the next fifteen years would be a golden age of mass-circulation magazine founding. Many factors were influential, including technological advances in the printing trades, faster delivery possibilities by means of railroads and rural free delivery postal routes, businesses hungry to create national markets, and the shift from bulk to packaged merchandise. No one profited more from these developments than did Cyrus and Louisa Knapp Curtis.

The goal of publishers like Curtis was to sell as much advertising and as many magazines as possible. The business story of the early *Ladies' Home Journal* illustrates how a successful publisher went about doing so. The first issue of the supplement appeared in December of 1883, with Louisa Knapp as editor and Cyrus Curtis as publisher. Curtis from the start relied on advertising in order to supplement the six cents an issue he charged, but he used other devices to build the *Journal's* circulation as well. While the magazine's subscription price was fifty cents for a year, from the beginning club or group memberships at four for a dollar were offered. The *Journal* also offered premiums for new subscriptions. For one new subscriber a woman could "earn" a lace doily, for five a beaded purse, for fifty a desk, for seventy-five a piano. Curtis was consciously seeking a wide lower-middle-class to middle-class audience for the magazine, one to whom his advertisers could sell their new products.

The *Ladies' Home Journal* was a major prototype for all mass-circulation magazines. It sold cheaply to thousands of readers and relied heavily on advertising for making profits. In tandem with Louisa's editorial efforts, Cyrus's strategy worked amazingly well. The *Journal's* circulation was 25,000 at the end of its first year, double that in six more months, and by 1886 it had reached the impressive figure of 400,000. The Curtises were not content with this phe-

nomenal growth, however, and in 1888 they engaged the N. W. Ayer Company to advertise their magazine in three other periodicals—at a total cost of four hundred dollars.

In fact, Cyrus Curtis's relationship during these years with the advertising agency N. W. Ayer illustrates the pivotal role Curtis played in the advertising world of the late nineteenth century. He first used the Ayer agency to place advertisements for the *Journal* in other magazines. Ayer then began to buy advertising space in the *Journal* for some of its clients. Curtis designed most of the advertisements himself, pioneering in the use of white space to make the advertisements more noticeable and appealing. In turn, in the late 1880s the Ayer Agency lent Curtis much of the \$310,000 he spent in a massive advertising campaign that gave the *Journal* the unheard-of circulation figure of 452,000. His pioneering role in creating and employing effective advertisements is signaled by the fact that Cyrus Curtis, magazine publisher, was also known in his time as the "Father of Modern Advertising."⁴² His greatest contribution in the long run was his advancement of the concept of selling directly to women.

By 1889 Curtis had decided to consolidate his gains. He increased his advertising rates and abolished cut-rate subscriptions to the magazine. This resulted in a short-term drop in circulation, but the *Journal* soon gained other subscriptions. Curtis had essentially raised the quality of both his advertisers and his audience to a truly middle-class level.

The *Ladies' Home Journal* had offices in New York and Chicago as well as in Philadelphia by this time, and in 1889 the magazine employed seven to ten people a day simply to open letters. After seeking as wide an audience as possible, and then firming up his subscription list by withdrawing cut-rate offers, Curtis in 1889 claimed to reach the best classes of American families.⁴³ He and Louisa decided that the July 1889 issue would double in size, becoming a thirty-two page magazine with a cover. In a few short years the magazine had evolved from a collection of helpful hints in a newspaper to a phenomenon in the publishing industry.

Hence Cyrus Curtis and Louisa Knapp Curtis presided over the union of reading, consuming, and advertising with gendered assumptions about middle-class women in their new magazine. One of the unintended results of their publishing venture was the print media's further institutionalization of gender difference in American popular culture. The *Ladies' Home Journal* was an influential contributor to the trend toward heightened gender differences in print matter that was gathering force in the late nineteenth century.

The Curtises were pioneers in the field of magazine publishing. They saw a need for a certain kind of publication and they worked to fill that need. The Curtises were certainly interested in realizing profits from their magazine. But

Louisa in particular desired as well to be of service to her late-nineteenth century peers. Editing the *Ladies' Home Journal* was also challenging and fulfilling work. We turn now to the messages conveyed in Louisa's *Journal*, messages that helped so much to define gendered commercialism and commercialized gender at the turn of the last century.