Mildred briefly celebrates her business success before she is punished for her transgressions.

Feminist Film Theory and Women's History:
Mildred Pierce and the Twentieth Century

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Feminist scholars who study film have been unable to decide what method is best for analyzing movies. Is it historical -- placing the film in historical context and looking for how it portrays women characters? Or is it theoretical -- using semiotics and psychoanalysis to examine the mechanisms by which film gains its power as a patriarchal system? The dichotomy, however, is unnecessary. In this paper, I present a model for integrating film theory and women's history in a way that does justice to both, while leading to rich analyses of women and film. My model implements feminist film theory, while simultaneously using a wide lens for considering the historical placement of the film, something that neither group has yet done.[1] *Mildred Pierce*, because it has been the subject of so much feminist analysis, both theoretical and historical, is an ideal film to use for this purpose.

Mildred Pierce is the story of an overly-devoted mother framed within a murder mystery. In the film's opening sequence, shots ring out and a tuxedoed man falls to the ground muttering Mildred's name. The film becomes the police's -- and the audience's -- search for the motive behind the murder, and for the person who pulled the trigger. Mildred tells her story in flashbacks while being interrogated at the police station, a story of motherhood, family and professional success.

Mildred, played by Joan Crawford, bakes cakes in her family's suburban kitchen to help make money to buy fine things for her spoiled elder daughter Veda. When her unemployed husband Bert leaves her for another woman,

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Mildred finds full-time work as a waitress, and eventually goes into business for herself, opening a chain of successful restaurants. Thus a need to support her family, coupled with her over-indulgence of Veda, leads Mildred to become a successful businesswoman.

There is more to Mildred's story, however, than simply selfless devotion to family. On the contrary, viewers discover that Mildred enjoys feeding her ambition by pursuing financial success. In the process, she kindles an illicit romance with gigolo Monte Beragon, and is in a tight embrace with him while her younger daughter Kate is dying of pneumonia. Eventually she divorces Bert Pierce to marry Beragon, an arrangement she agrees to long after the romance has faded because the status attached to Beragon's name is meaningful to the troublesome Veda. By marrying Beragon, who was the murder victim in the opening sequence, Mildred shows the lengths to which she will go to feed Veda's greedy whims. By the end of the film, we discover that Veda is in love with Beragon, and it is her incestuous liaison with him that leads Veda to kill him. While Mildred has tried to confess to the crime to protect her daughter, the police discover the truth, Veda is taken away, and Mildred is reunited with Bert for a walk into the sunrise.

When the film was released in October 1945, it was met with mixed reviews that reveal the difficulty contemporary critics had classifying it, even agreeing on its story and characterizations. On the subject of motherhood, critics described it as a story of "mother love,"[2] but also as "the enormous and unrewarded sacrifices that a mother makes for her spoiled, greedy daughter,"[3] and "about a middle class housewife who is willing to do anything -- including murder -- to provide things for her selfish little she-wolf of a daughter."[4] Critics grasped for the film's larger significance as well, asserting that it was "a bitter commentary on suburbia and life among the decadent and the rich,"[5] and "about suburban grass-widowhood and the power of the native passion for money and all that money can buy."[6] Mildred herself was described as someone who "drives away her plain and plodding husband,"[7] and alternatively as "an unhappy ambitious woman who is wronged by everyone she loves."[8] About the only thing the critics agreed on was Crawford's fine, Oscar-winning performance.

Contemporary film scholars have found themselves similarly unable to agree

on how best to make sense of *Mildred Pierce*, and their difficulties typify the debates in feminist film criticism. Pam Cook exemplifies feminist film theorists' position, arguing in her 1978 article "Duplicity in *Mildred Pierce*," that the film's structure reveals a patriarchal stance, and that the film's conclusion -- Mildred and Bert walking off together, passing two charwomen cleaning the floor on their hands and knees -- serves to reassert the patriarchal authority that Mildred's filmic behavior had threatened.[9] Cook argues that the film's structure and plot erased Mildred's voice and reasserted patriarchal dominance. She looks for her justification in the theories of Sigmund Freud and J. J. Bachofen, in which maternal authority is undermined and mother-daughter bonds severed in the face of patriarchal authority. Cook points to the structure of the film for evidence.

Mildred Pierce is told in two different -- and conflicting -- genres. The detective portion of the film, including the scenes in the police station, the search for Monte Beragon's murderer, and the murder itself, are shown in film noir. These episodes are characterized by the darkness and shadows of noir, which suggest a masculine, dangerous underworld. The three flashbacks, on the other hand, in which Mildred tells her own story, are shot in the bright light of melodrama, a form more typical of "women's films" -- films about women and targeted to female audiences. In *Mildred Pierce*, Mildred's story, told in her own voiced-over flashbacks, is repeatedly undermined by the interpretations of the police. Each flashback concludes with the officer of the law discrediting Mildred's account. According to Cook, this combination of genre and plot undermines Mildred's voice and silences her, while reasserting the power of patriarchy. Cook's argument places her squarely with the feminist film theorists who have utilized structuralist and psychoanalytic theories to examine how Hollywood cinema encodes women's subordination in ways that neatly fit the patriarchally-based unconscious.[10] Arguing that it is essential to look at what makes cinematic representations of women so powerful, these scholars have focused on the techniques used in film that keep women, both on screen and in the theaters, in subordinate positions.

In the other corner have been sociologists like Andrea Walsh, who have attempted to place *Mildred Pierce* in its historical context. Walsh argues that Mildred's financial success and emotional independence represent a kind of protofeminism that reflects many women's experiences doing work traditionally deemed men's during World War Two. Because *Mildred Pierce* reached American audiences at the end of

the war, Walsh is quick to point out how the reassertion of patriarchy at the end of *Mildred Pierce* served the needs of patriarchy that had faltered during the war because so many American men were overseas. (Cook is equally quick to point out, however, that *Mildred Pierce* must not be seen simplistically as a reflection of one particular moment, but as an expression of the transhistorical need for male authority to overcome female power.) Walsh, like other historians and sociologists examining *Mildred Pierce*, has been less interested in the structures of films, and more interested in how women characters are portrayed in them. This group has been most interested in looking at how the roles and status of women characters in movies change over time. Commonly known as the "images of women" school, these writers have been most concerned with how women's portrayal in movies reflects, or fails to reflect, cultural realities.[11]

From their respective corners, members of these two groups have hurled insults at each other.[12] The historians and sociologists have accused the theorists of being ahistorical, of glossing over the differences in films made decades apart. To film theorists, they charge, a film made in 1930 is not substantially different from one made in 1990 -- after all, according to these theories, women remain spectacles of a male gaze, and continue to exist outside of the narrative structure of a film. The "images of women" school argues that these criteria overlook significant historically-specific changes that are essential to examine in order to fully understand film in its cultural context.

The theoreticians, on the other hand, have criticized the historians for their naivete about film representations. Historians, they point out, are wrong to look at how women's roles in movies reflect women's "real" experiences. After all, they argue, films don't reflect anything, and they're not meant to. Every image in a film is carefully constructed, painstakingly put together by the team of people who make the film. It is a mistake, the theoreticians argue, to look at films as anything other than constructions. Further, the theorists assert, historians and sociologists are equally naive to say that women viewers need positive role models with whom they can identify. On the contrary, the theoreticians use psychoanalytic theory to problematize the notion of identification itself. How is it, they ask in response to "images" writers, that identification takes place? It is by looking at these complex psychological processes, they argue, that we can begin to fully make sense of the complex relationships between women and film.

In recent years, scholars from both camps have inched toward each other in hopes of finding a synthetic methodology.[13] The best of the attempts at synthesis comes from feminist film theorist Linda Williams in her article "Feminist Film Theory: *Mildred Pierce* and the Second World War."[14] In her essay, Williams argues that it is necessary to deepen a theoretical reading of *Mildred Pierce* with historical context. Thus, while she agrees with Cook's analysis, she also points out that we must consider the historical specificity of this reaffirmation of patriarchy in *Mildred Pierce*. She looks for historical grounding in Walsh's work.[15] But not content with the notion that film simply reflects society, Williams goes farther. She suggests that the conflict between the two schools of thought can be described as the conflict between the desire to see women's experiences, particularly feminism, reflected by films, and the desire to document how women are repressed by filmic structures. She proposes the use of Frederic Jameson's concept of the political unconscious as a way to resolve the dilemma. According to Jameson, we must not simply look at what historical texts reveal about history through their contents, but also at what they reveal about it through their omissions. Thus *Mildred Pierce* must be examined for the contradictions about women that are conveyed through the film and its interaction with the audiences who viewed it in 1945.

According to Williams, the film offers clues that it takes place during the 1940s. These include the fashions and the cars, which are decidedly vintage 1940s, along with oblique references to the war. For example, Monte, upon seeing Mildred's legs, comments that he is glad stockings are out "for the duration," suggesting the war that was still fresh in the minds of the film's viewers. Similarly, Mildred's friend and business partner Ida wisecracks about the good men being gone, again a seeming, although unspecific, reference to men gone to war.

On the other hand, there are also numerous clues that cloud that interpretation of the film. For example, Bert Pierce's unemployment could be read as related to the Depression, while Mildred's success in the work world outside the home was not applauded as women's war work had been applauded during the early 1940s. Williams argues that it is no coincidence that the historical placement of *Mildred Pierce* is vague. On the contrary, she argues that the presence of the war as a referent within the film allows Mildred's exhilarating story of financial success to be told. On the other hand, the oblique presence of the Depression as a context allows the film to express trepidation about women's economic independence and the need for

male authority. Williams' use of the political unconscious to make sense of these inconsistencies is a tremendous asset in analyzing the film and in improving on the ahistorical theoretical assumptions that limited the work of Pam Cook's previous article.

Yet Williams, like Cook, Walsh, and others,[16] understands the historical context of the film to be its October 1945 theatrical release date, and it is important to fine tune the specifics of her analysis of *Mildred Pierce*. Where my model differs from Williams' is that I consider the historical context of the film to be longer than the year it was released. Like any other historical artifact, films grow out of cultural contexts that develop over many years. Thus, while I agree with Williams' use of the concept of the political unconscious, I offer a different reading of just what historical context is being repressed. A longer historical perspective reveals that *Mildred Pierce* must be seen as one piece of a discourse about women that dates back to the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s, as well as the war years. This longer historical perspective reveals that *Mildred Pierce* addresses, not only women's war experiences, but all the key issues of twentieth-century American women's history -- the relationship between women's sexual and economic independence, and their traditionally-defined roles as full-time mothers.

Looking at the historical perspective with a wider lens means seeing *Mildred Pierce* as a piece that represents the culmination of the decades during which patriarchy was under fire. In the 1910s and 1920s, feminists argued for women's right not only to political participation through voting, but also to economic independence and sexual liberation. They argued that women needed to have the right to work outside the home and to earn their own money; in fact, women's presence in the workforce began increasing in the 1910s, and has not declined since. Financial independence went hand in hand with sexual independence. Feminists argued that women were every bit as sexual as men, and insisted on an end to the double standard that limited women's acceptable sexual activity to marriage, while men maintained the freedom to sexual expression outside matrimonial bonds.

These two arenas, economic and sexual, which were central to feminist platforms of the 1910s and 1920s, were also popular considerations for women less likely to voice them in overtly political terms. Flappers, the sexually liberated young

women of the early twentieth century, embraced sexual freedom. At the same time, working class women found that economic freedom gave them access to the locations where they might seek sexual adventure, and at the same time opened a time in their lives, between living under the family roof and marrying, when they could explore their sexual options. Thus, economic and sexual freedoms had been intertwined since the 1910s.[17]

American women's move toward sexual and economic liberation seemed enormously threatening to patriarchal American culture in the early decades of the twentieth century. For example, women asserting their right to enjoy sexual pleasure inspired best-selling advisers to assess and criticize men's sexual performance in widely-selling "marriage manuals" -- actually sex guide books. In the 1920s and 1930s, these advisers repeatedly asserted that most heterosexual dysfunctions were the result of male ignorance, aggressiveness and selfishness. It was common, for example, to see male sexual performance derided with words like "dense ignorance," "lack of insight and understanding," and "prudish or careless." One particularly harsh adviser went so far as to tell one husband, "what you don't know about making love to your wife would apparently fill a book."

As women's sexual pleasure became a topic of popular concern, marital advisers, aligning themselves with women, made new demands on men. Their new expectations of men raised the specter of women's sexual self-determination and power.[18] Similarly, while paid employment signified equality to women, like sexual freedom it raised uneasiness about women's power increasing while men's diminished. The most widespread fear that accompanied women's growing presence in the workforce was the fear of women infringing on the male preserve of wage work, and the attendant fears of man's displacement as breadwinner, and therefore as social and sexual initiator. If women worked for wages and were economically independent, many feared that they might no longer find men interesting or worthy of attention.[19]

While cultural commentators expressed fears of women's expanding economic and sexual spheres during these decades, their fears only escalated in the 1930s and early 1940s. During the Depression, many more men were thrown out of work than women, as men's work in heavy industry was more seriously affected by the economic decline than women's work in the already-segregated pink collar sector.[20] Cultural commentators feared that women were gaining too much power, and that

men's power was diminishing. For example, sociologists of the 1930s, doing research on the impact of the Depression on family life, found that men's unemployment seriously undermined their authority in the home. The fear they expressed was that the economic depression would lead to the disintegration of patriarchal dominance in the family.[21]

World War II was merely the final chapter in this decades-long fear of women's domination. As the much-recounted story of Rosie the Riveter explains, women took over men's jobs in war industries when the men went off to fight. Whether, like the majority, they were working class women who had held pink collar jobs prior to the war, or middle class women, who were entering the workforce for the first time, these women demonstrated their ability and desire to do men's jobs.[22] Women's participation in war work was the final blow in the struggle to maintain patriarchy. It seemed, after the Depression and the war, that men would disappear entirely, that women would not even miss them, and that American society could function perfectly well without them.

Thus, as Williams notes, the discursive struggle in *Mildred Pierce* between the woman's film and film noir represents the need to reassert patriarchy at the close of the war. But the longer historical view suggests that patriarchy had been threatened for decades, virtually since the late nineteenth century when women began their large-scale entry into the public arenas of work and sexual expression. *Mildred Pierce*, then, becomes part of a long-term historical struggle for gender authority. In this view, the reason for the confusion in temporal setting in the film -- did it take place during the 1930s or 1940s? -- becomes more clear. In a sense, the film was expressing fears that had gone on for at least that long. Thus, the reason why the film does not applaud Mildred's career success is because *Mildred Pierce* addresses women's career activities of the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s more than women's war work. The lack of clarity about the time in the film allows it to address this longer-term concern. In that regard, the slippage is most revealing. It allows *Mildred Pierce* to be both timely to post-war audiences while simultaneously addressing an enduring issue about women's independence.[23]

Mildred Pierce experienced both sexual and economic freedom, and was punished for both; and while film theory argues that narrative structures revolve around punishing women who transgress their "proper" place as spectacles, *Mildred Pierce* was punished in specific ways that refer to the debates of the 1910s to 1940s. Dur-

ing the first flashback, after her husband has left her, Mildred goes with future-hus-band Monte Beragon to his beach house for a day of swimming that ends with a night of passion. In the last scene of this segment, we see the mirrored reflection of Mildred and Monte kissing. In the next scene, Mildred's darling child Kate dies of pneumo-nia at the home of Bert Pierce's lover, Mrs. Biederhof. In the editing of these two sequences, Mildred is clearly punished for her extra-marital sexual foray. Thus the film's narrative reproves Mildred's transgression in a particular way: her deviation from patriarchal constraints on female sexuality was punished through the death of her daughter. At the same time, her behavior cast aspersions upon her abilities in her "true" feminine role, that of mother.

Mildred also gains economic freedom. With only minor help from Beragon and a family "friend," Mildred opens a chain of successful restaurants and attains not only financial independence, but prosperity. Yet she is punished for these gains as well. Mildred's economic freedom drives Bert into the arms of another woman, and makes it difficult for him to return to her later. It also allows her to spoil her older daughter Veda, who goes on to become Monte's lover (violating incest taboos) and then kills him. Mildred's economic freedom is directly tied to her failures as wife and mother.

Mildred's failures as a mother represent the other significant theme in Ameri-can women's history that must be addressed as a context for *Mildred Pierce*. In the early 1940s, in response to women's seemingly escalating power in American soci-ety, Mom-bashing became an American obsession. Historians have noted the im-mense popularity of Philip Wylie's attack on American motherhood in his 1942 best-seller *Generation of Vipers*. Journalist, science-fiction writer, and self-appointed expert on the state of American mothers, Wylie fervently believed that American society was "veering toward matriarchy."[24] He blasted American women for sup-posedly destroying their husbands, forcing them to work beyond their endurance to support bottomless feminine consumer desires, and destroying their sons by smoth-ering them with overwhelming "devotion."

Professional psychiatrists followed in Wylie's footsteps. At times, they blamed women for smothering their children because as full-time homemakers they had noth-ing else to do. At other times, they blamed them for abandoning the children to work outside the home. Women were damned either way.[25] In this context, *Mildred Pierce* must be seen as one of a series of cultural artifacts that indicts mothers for

their failures.[26] Like the women about whom psychiatrists began writing in the 1940s, Mildred was a misguided mother who destroyed her daughters -- she destroyed Kate by her neglect, and Veda by her overprotection and overindulgence. In both instances, according to writers of the 1940s (some of whom preceded the film, some who followed), *Mildred Pierce* was not appropriately feminine, had not embraced her designated role as mother, and had therefore failed her children miserably. Mildred's failures render her a grotesque caricature of delinquent motherhood. In this way as well, *Mildred Pierce* is a film which reasserts the deteriorating patriarchy of the early 1940s.

My model for analyzing film offers a true synthesis of history and theory that avoids the dichotomy of being just one or the other. Linda Williams lays out the importance of historical context, and revises theoretical perspectives which look at patriarchy as a static and unchanging entity. Yet she, like the others scholars from both camps who have studied *Mildred Pierce*, looks at the historical moment when the film was released -- at the end of World War Two -- as the extent of the film's context. But there is a longer historical context to *Mildred Pierce*, and examining it reveals that the film addresses all the central issues of twentieth century American women's history. Such an analysis, coupled with more theoretical perspectives, gives appropriate depth to the study of film. As feminist critics, we must begin to use both methods together to gain a full understanding of women and film.

NOTES

[1] I became acquainted with this debate while a graduate student at Brown University, where the women's historians worked out of the American Civilization and History departments, while feminist film theorists were housed in English (now Media and Modern Culture). The departmental separation was more than bureaucratic; it represented a deep schism in the approaches to feminist studies. This paper grows out of a course I team-taught at Hampshire College about American feminism. Thanks to Mari Jo Buhle, Mary Ann Doane, Susan Douglas and Joan Braderman.

[2] *New Yorker* 21 (October 6, 1945), p. 95.

[3] *New Republic* 113 (October 22, 1945), p. 528.

[4] *Time* 46 (October 22, 1945), p. 100.

'*Newsweek* 26 (October 15, 1945), p. 102.

"*The Nation* 161 (October 13, 1945), p. 385.

'*Newsweek* 26 (October 15, 1945), p. 102.

'*Time* 46 (October 22, 1945), p. 100.

"Pam Cook, "Duplicity in *Mildred Pierce*," *Women in Film Noir*, E. Ann Kaplan, ed. (London: BFI, 1978): 68-82.

"See, for example, Teresa De Laurentis, *Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984); E. Ann Kaplan, *Psychoanalysis and Cinema* (New York: Routledge, 1989); Annette Kuhn, *Women's Pictures: Feminism and Cinema* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982); Judith Mayne, *The Woman at the Keyhole: Feminism and Women's Cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990); and Laura Mulvey, *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).

"See, for example, Molly Haskell, *From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in Movies*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).

"On the debate, see Bill Nichols, ed., *Movies and Methods*, Vol. 2, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). The debate is laid out in two articles in a recent collection. See Linda Artel and Susan Wengraf, "Screening Women's Films," and Diane Waldman, "There's More To a Positive Image Than Meets The Eye," in Patricia Erens, ed., *Issues in Feminist Film Criticism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990).

"See for example Mary Ann Doane, *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987); Maria LaPlace, "Producing and Consuming the Woman's Film: Discursive Struggle in Now, Voyager," in Christine Gledhill, ed., *Home is Where the Heart Is: Studies in Melodrama and the Woman's Film* (London: BFI, 1987); B. Ruby Rich, "From Repressive Tolerance to Erotic Liberation: Maedchen in Uniform" in Doane et al, eds., *Re-Vision. Essays in Feminist Film Criticism* (Los Angeles: AFI, 1983).

"Linda Williams, "Feminist Film Theory: *Mildred Pierce* and the Second World War," in Deirdre Pribram, ed., *Female Spectators: Looking at Film and Television* (London: Verso, 1990): 12-30. As Williams writes, "there is ...a great need for feminists working in both traditions to discuss their very different aims and methods with one another," because each group has something to learn from the other. (p. 13).

"Andrea Walsh, *Women's Film and Female Experience*, 1940-1950 (New York: Praeger, 1984).

"See June Sochen, "*Mildred Pierce* and Women in Film," *American Quarterly* 30 (Spring 1978), p. 3-20.

[17]Nancy Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements: Women and Leisure in Turn-of-the-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); James McGovern, "The American Woman's Pre-World War I Freedom in Manners and Morals," in *Our American Sisters: Women in American Life and Thought*, Third Edition, Jean E. Friedman and William G.Shade, eds. (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath and Co., 1982).

[18]M. J. Exner, M.D., *The Sexual Side of Marriage* (1932; reprint, New York: Pocket Books, 1947): p. 60; William J. Fielding, *Sex and the Love Life* (New York: Permabooks, 1927): p. 104; Marie Stopes, *Married Love* (New York: Eugenics Publishing Co., 1931): p. 30; Judge Ben B. Lindsey and Wainwright Evans, *The Companionate Marriage* (1927; reprint, New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1972): p. 109-110. For a different interpretation of the books, see Christina Simmons, "'Marriage in the Modern Manner': Sexual Radicalism and Reform in America, 1914-1941," Ph.D. dissertation, Brown University, 1982.

[19]Lois Scharf and Joan Jensen, eds., *Decades of Discontent: The Women's Movement, 1920-1940* (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood Press, 1983).

[20]Ruth Milkman, "Women's Work and the Economic Crisis: Some Lessons From the Great Depression," in Nancy Cott and Elizabeth Pleck, eds., *A Heritage of Her Own: Toward A New Social History of American Women* (New York: Touchstone Books, 1979), p. 507-541.

[21]See, for example, Robert Cooley Angel, *The Family Meets the Depression* (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1936); Ruth S. Cavan and Katherine H. Ranck, *The Family and the Depression: A Study of 100 Chicago Families* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938); Eli Ginzberg, *The Unemployed* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1943); Mirra Komarovsky, *The Unemployed Man and His Family: The Effect of Unemployment upon the Status of the Men in Fifty-nine Families* (New York: Octagon Books, 1972, rpt. 1940); Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown in Transition: A Study in Cultural Conflicts* (1937; rpt, New York: Harvest Books, 1965): p. 160; Samuel Stouffer and Paul Lazarsfeld, *Research Memorandum on the Family and the Depression* (1937; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1972): p. 54.

[22]See, for example, Susan Hartmann, *The Homefront and Beyond: American Women in the 1940s* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982), Ch. 2, 4, 5; Leila J. Rupp, *Mobilizing Women For War: German and American Propaganda, 1939-1945* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978); Karen Anderson, *Wartime Women: Sex Roles, Family Relations and the Status of Women During World War II* (Westport, Ct.:Greenwood Press, 1981).

[23]In this light, *Lady in the Dark*, another film frequently discussed by historians and theorists also

addresses women's moves into careers more than war work, despite its 1944 release date.

²⁴Philip Wylie, *Generation of Vipers* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1942).

²⁵The most famous of these books were Edward Strecker, *Their Mothers' Sons: The Psychiatrist Examines an American Problem* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1946, 1951); and Ferdinand Lundberg and Marynia Farnham, *Modern Woman: The Lost Sex* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947). For a survey of advice to mothers, see Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, *For Her Own Good: 150 Years of the Experts' Advice to Women* (New York: Anchor Books, 1978).

²⁶See for example *Now, Voyager* (1942) and *Imitation of Life* (1959). See also Doane, *The Desire to Desire*, Ch. 3.