

## **8. From ‘marriage bureau’ to ‘points of view’. Changing patterns of advice in teenage magazines: *Mirabelle*, 1956 - 1977**

Melanie Tebbutt

Comics and teenage magazines were an important part of girls’ culture between the 1950s and late-1970s. They ranged from popular pre-teen comics like *Bunty* and *Judy* (first published in 1960). *Tammy* (1971) and *Jinty* (1974) to romance papers like *Mirabelle* (1956), *Romeo* (1957) and *Valentine* (1957). *Jackie* (1964), the most popular teenage magazine of the 1960s and 1970s, has dominated the analytical landscape of such publications in the wake of Angela McRobbie’s pioneering analysis of the late-1970s, which emphasized the magazine’s ‘ideological power’ in reproducing a deeply constricting version of femininity, ‘a cloyingly claustrophobic environment where the dominant emotions are fear, insecurity, competitiveness and even panic’.<sup>1</sup> McRobbie subsequently acknowledged the agency of girls in negotiating and contesting the meanings of what they read, but viewed *Jackie*’s problem pages as spaces where ‘conformity’ to the behaviours expected of women reinforced the ideological thrust of the magazine as a whole.<sup>2</sup> This chapter examines the advice pages of another teenage magazine, *Mirabelle*, popular during the same period, as a contrast which both supports and contests some of what McRobbie identified in *Jackie*. *Mirabelle*’s circulation was not as wide as *Jackie*’s, but the magazine remained one of the most widely read during the sixties until its demise in the mid-seventies. Launched in 1956, the

magazine was rooted in the early history of the genre. These origins are useful, as much research into the role of teenage magazines in girls' culture focuses on the 1970s and 1980s or more recent decades, to the neglect of their earlier evolution.<sup>3</sup> The intention here is to explore how the content and character of *Mirabelle's* advice pages were nuanced between the mid-1950s and 1977, when it ceased publication, setting these changes against a broader context of trends in the personal advice pages of British newspapers and magazines over the same period.

### **Personal advice columns and teenage magazines**

Personal advice columns, known in various forms in Britain since the late 1600s, had become a significant feature of many women's magazines by the early twentieth-century and in the inter-war years, particularly the 1930s, moved into the mainstream press, where their well-established popularity among female readers was exploited to boost sales in a fiercely competitive commercial market among mass-circulation newspapers, such as the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Mail*. Like the 'human interest' stories, which were also a feature of such publishing in the same period, they reflected an informalizing cultural climate in which the public discourse of feelings and emotional life was becoming more relaxed.<sup>4</sup> The heyday of the problem page in the popular press was, however, after the Second World War, when they attracted a broad range of readers, including many more men and teenagers. Mark Abrams observed that *The News of the World*, *The Sunday*

*Pictorial*, *Week-end*, *Tibbits* and *Picturegoer* were very popular among teenage readers, although he does not specify at what age they read them.<sup>5</sup> At least 40 percent of all teenagers, particularly working-class ones', were said to read at least one 'love comic', *Valentine*, *Mirabelle* or *Roxy* a week and two thirds of them at least 'one of the *Reveille* and *Woman's Mirror* type. Girls often gravitated towards women's magazines from their mid-teens and about half of these teenage readers read at least one woman's magazine (*Woman's Own*, *Woman's Realm*) a week.'<sup>6</sup>

Teenage magazines are part of the broader history of women's magazines but were fairly recent arrivals in Britain. They had emerged first in the United States, where teenagers achieved earlier recognition as a distinctive social group, with the growth of consumer-focused high school culture in the 1930s and 1940s. More than 80 per cent of 14- to 17-year olds attended high school in 1940, a 'niche market' of consumers very attractive to advertisers, whose distinctive consumption patterns included magazine purchase.<sup>7</sup> 1944, for example, saw the launch of the pioneering teenage publication, *Seventeen*, targeted at 13 to 18-year old young women,<sup>8</sup> mostly from white middle-and upper-middle-class backgrounds.<sup>9</sup>

The market for distinctive teenage publications in Britain was a post-war phenomenon which developed with rising living standards and the growth of consumption. 'Old type romance periodicals', such as *True Romance*, *Love Stories*, *Red Letter*, *True Stories*, *True Confessions* and *Heartbeat*, remained popular in the early 1950s, but new publications emerged as the

austerity which had marked the immediate post-war years relaxed and economic conditions and distinctive teenage consumer market grew.<sup>10</sup> The newer type of teenage 'romance' magazines launched from the mid-1950s included 'down-market' titles, such as *Marilyn* (1955-65), and *Mirabelle* (1956-1977), both published by C. Arthur Pearson Ltd., *Romeo* (1957-74), published by D.C. Thomson, *Valentine* (1957-74) and *Roxy* (1958-73), both published by Fleetway, and *Boyfriend* (1959-66).<sup>11</sup> Their readership, largely in the early- to mid-teens, was not substantially different from the age groups which had read *Girl* and *Girls' Crystal*, 'but their sense of themselves as young women' was 'much more marked'. 'Romance', markedly absent from earlier comics, was a significant component of these new magazines which presented girls as more dependent on male attention than the 'independent achieving' girls of comics and magazines published in the mid-1950s.<sup>12</sup>

The format of these new magazines varied. Some, such as *Romeo*, looked like cheaply produced comics. Others, like *Mirabelle*, had a more polished appearance, its early colour front covers similar in style to the pre-war ones of *Woman* magazine.<sup>13</sup> Fantasy romance magazines, with 'picture strips' and 'real life' photographs, which combined fantasy with the hint of 'real' experience', were particularly popular in the early 1960s, when they were read by older young women in their twenties, as well as those in their teens. *Marty*, based on the popular British pop star, Marty Wilde, was launched in 1960 as the 'first ever photo romance weekly'.<sup>14</sup>

Several teenage magazines had advice pages, like the women's magazines of which they were a junior branch. A survey of *Trend*, *Valentine* and *Jackie* in the mid-1960s, suggested that 'problem letters' comprised three per cent of content in *Trend*, 'the most sophisticated of the magazines' which catered to 'a slightly older age group', four per cent in *Valentine* and five per cent in *Jackie*. Michael Frayn offered a typically cynical view, however, when he observed how *Marty*'s biggest scoop was 'getting ten letters from readers before there was even a magazine for them to be readers of'. *Mirabelle* published a letter from an unmarried mother 'intended as a warning to other girls, 'but nowhere else do these strange magazines breathe a word about any of the problems their readers must really want help with':

They hang suspended in a sexless limbo where "hotly passionate kisses" (I quote) are just rungs on the ladder to marriage and where marriage means simply status and release from loneliness.<sup>15</sup>

*Mirabelle* was originally intended as a 'romance comic' for young women over eighteen and early writers to the advice column were often in their late-teens or twenties.<sup>16</sup> Some were newly married, struggling with the pressures and expectations of being a wife, although the presence of letters from girls aged fourteen and fifteen suggests a younger readership, which grew as the magazine established itself and became particularly popular among younger girls aged between thirteen and sixteen.<sup>17</sup>

Romance magazines were, from the mid-1950s, on the cusp of a changing youth market, as can be followed in the shifting format of *Mirabelle* which despite a declining circulation from the mid-1960s, managed to remain one of the most popular teen magazines. *Mirabelle*'s early problem page took a while to adapt to an emerging audience of young readers and its character during the first few months, under the authorship of 'Vivien Ashley', were strongly shaped by the traditional assumptions of the pre-war era.<sup>18</sup> Ashley specialized in 'love problems' and introduced herself by explaining how her business of 'making wedding bells ring' was run from an office in Manchester, where her Marriage Bureau on Corporation Street had been operating since 1953.<sup>19</sup> The photo of the sensible-looking professional woman which accompanied the column perpetuated a long-established image of the magazine adviser as a wise and experienced mature older woman.<sup>20</sup> Ashley's views on women's role in personal relationships were conservative and writers who sought advice about their boyfriends were usually urged to be more sensitive and nurturing:

My boyfriend and I are both 17. We are always having rows and he says it's my fault. Should I break with him?

*I expect that the trouble is that you are both rather headstrong and want your own way. Growing up means learning to give and take and to be more reasonable about the other person's wishes. Try to be a little more understanding with your boy friend.*<sup>21</sup>

The notion that romance should, ultimately, be transformed into a young woman's expected goal of marriage, was reflected in the advice page's early title of 'Marriage Bureau'. This changed towards the end of 1956, however, into 'Vivien Ashley's Love Problems Page' and moved further from the stuffiness of the earlier title to 'Strictly in Confidence', in Spring 1957, when the column was taken over by 'Anne B', a youth worker who ran a youth club in the Midlands. Anne B, like Ashley, provided an adult voice, yet she was also more visibly in tune with a younger audience, spending 'most evenings with her teenage friends', each week sharing with readers some of the problems they 'posed' her.<sup>22</sup>

Blake held sway over the column for three years, until Spring 1960, when the emerging culture of popular music introduced a celebrity variation on the romantic fantasy with another new letters page entitled, 'Ask Adam'. Intended to provide a novel 'boy's eye-view of a girl's world', this was ostensibly 'written' by the pop star, Adam Faith, whose single, 'What do you want', had risen to the top of the singles' chart in 1959, to be followed by a run of other hits in the early 1960s. Faith's presence as resident heartthrob was complemented by that of another stalwart of British rock 'n' roll, Tommy Steele, who had a column in the magazine and often appeared in features, including when he married Ann Donoghue, in 1960.<sup>23</sup> Both exemplified the 'clean-cut' rock'n'roll image associated with the 'innocent-boy' expectations of British popular musicians of the early-1960s. Faith, hip enough to appeal to the magazine's young readers, was also safe and

reassuring, as exemplified by a picture of him posing in a comfortable jumper.<sup>24</sup>

A strong moral tone still pervaded advice about the boyfriend and love problems discussed in the early 1960s, although the language used had become rather more forceful, echoing the dating conventions of American popular culture rather than the discretion of *Mirabelle's* earlier pages, when writers were typically advised: 'Don't try too hard to find that boyfriend – or he'll fight shy'.<sup>25</sup>

Should a girl kiss a boy on the first date?

*I always think if you feel like kissing somebody – kiss them.*<sup>26</sup>

How can I go about teaching my boy to kiss properly? I'm his first girlfriend and he hasn't a clue.

*Tell him you'll kiss him for a change. Then put your heart into it.*<sup>27</sup>

Two boys we like very much say horrible things to us when they are together. Yet alone they are as nice as can be. What can we do?

*Tell them to drop the Jekyll and Hyde stuff or you'll drop them.*<sup>28</sup>

Can you give me a hint on how to tame a terrible flirt into a reliable fiancé?

*When he's ready to settle, honey, he'll tame himself. Until then, there isn't a thing you can do. Well, maybe one thing. Threaten to*



*leave him if his roving eye doesn't stop roving. You sound ready for a showdown, anyway.*<sup>29</sup>

Sex, albeit veiled in euphemism, was referred to more directly, with references to 'making love' and sleeping together, although advice still highlighted the pitfalls of agreeing to it:

My boyfriend just seems to look at me as a sex machine. You can be shocked if you like, but it's the truth and I'm desperate. I agreed because I was frightened of losing him, but now he expects me to give in all the time. How can I make him realize that's not all a girl is for?<sup>30</sup>

The 'Ask Adam' column lasted until March 1966, by which time Faith was probably already losing his appeal as a heart-throb to a new generation of teenagers whose magazines were becoming even more dominated by pop music; more than fifty per cent of material now was pictures and features about pop stars and correspondents frequently requested information about members of their favourite groups.<sup>31</sup> Tinkler's survey of young women's magazines in the 1960s suggests a 'noticeable shift around 1963 towards a more youthful and dynamic image'.<sup>32</sup> Romance magazines, what Tinkler calls 'love comics' were already past their peak by the mid-1960s. By the end of the 1960s, their 'well-tried' formula was becoming less popular among a new generation of readers, which led to several amalgamations.<sup>33</sup> *Valentine*, for example, combined with *Marilyn*, and *Boyfriend* was

absorbed into a new title *Trend and Boyfriend* (in much smaller lettering).<sup>34</sup> This decline exemplified a characteristic of publications aimed at teenagers, their vulnerability to ephemeral popular trends, which led to frequent closures and amalgamations over following decades.<sup>35</sup> A new market of ‘interim’ ‘teen-magazines’ for girls emerged, targeted at those had left childhood comics behind them, but who were not ready for adult women’s magazines. They tended to take up such magazines from the age of 11 and reached *Woman* and *Woman’s Own* towards their mid-to late-teens, often reading their mothers’ magazines, a reminder of how girls more generally did not necessarily confine themselves to just one magazine.<sup>36</sup> This new type of teenage publication had a more general format than the narrow romance emphases of the earlier generation of teen magazines.<sup>37</sup> Some ‘teen-magazines’ launched in the sixties were geared towards older readers aged between their mid-teens and mid-twenties, although they were also read by ones. *Honey*’s readership included students in further and higher education, and young workers with O-levels or A-levels. Its sister magazine, *Petticoat*, was aimed at a slightly different market of 15-19 year-olds, most of whom had left school and were in work.<sup>38</sup> *Jackie*, the best-known magazine for teenagers, was also a creation of these trends and quickly became one of the most popular. Launched in 1964, with a largely working-class readership aged 10 to 14, it dominated the market for almost twenty years, ceasing publication in 1993. By 1968, sales had risen to 451,000 and it retained many characteristics of the highpoint of teenage culture in the sixties well into the following decade.<sup>39</sup>

*Mirabelle* was also hit by a declining readership, its early weekly sales of 540,000 falling by the mid-1960s and dropping to 175,000 by 1968.<sup>40</sup> Like other teen titles struggling to survive in a competitive market, it started to develop a different tone, exemplified by the problem page which replaced 'Ask Adam's', called 'Letters to Lesley'. 'Lesley', 'the girl with the personal touch', conveyed a much greater sense of generational intimacy with her readers, who were urged, if they were 'worried about anything', to write in 'and talk things over' with her. The column referred to the 'many hundreds of letters' that *Mirabelle* received each year, with those that were published described as 'the typical problems of young people'.<sup>41</sup>

The problem pages in magazines aimed at teenagers were no different from those sent to other popular newspapers and magazines in that published letters were the tip of a much larger volume of correspondence.<sup>42</sup> Advisers were also similar to those on adult publications in that they had no specific training for the job.<sup>43</sup> Unlike the 'authority and professionalism' which advisers on women's magazines maintained through the use of full names (Marje Proops, Evelyn Home or Anna Raeburn), 'Lesley', like 'Cathy and Claire' on *Jackie*, who became the best known advisers on teenage magazines, were more like 'sympathetic elder sisters' than 'professional counsellors', 'young and trendy enough to understand the girls' problems but also experienced and wise enough to know how to deal with them'.<sup>44</sup> The reality behind these names was somewhat different. They 'may have sounded like understanding sisters', but as the journalist and broadcaster, Bel Mooney, observed of *Jackie*, their replies were 'concocted by a

changing posse of staff writers', some of whom were married and 'quite sensible Scottish ladies'. 'There were maybe six or seven Cathies or Claires' who replied to readers who supplied the requisite stamped addressed envelope.<sup>45</sup>

Mooney's comments underline the importance of distinguishing between the approach and content of different magazines.<sup>46</sup> Connie Alderson, in 1967, described letters published in *Trend*, as 'more serious' than those in *Jackie*, providing 'a glimpse of real problems'. These letters were answered by 'Secretary Sally' and an advisory panel made up of a psychologist, the 'beauty editress' and a pop star, suggestive of the balance of entertainment and information which marked advice in teenage magazines.<sup>47</sup> The tone of replies on teenage advice pages was often light-hearted, although some magazines actively solicited amusing letters from readers, as in *Jackie*, where the best 'humorous' ones received a cash prize. This was perhaps a way of dealing with the hoax letters, which were a thorn in the side of advice columnists, although they were usually 'quite easy to spot'. 'You'll get a bunch of schoolkids or students getting together and sending in a joint effort, or sometimes people send a letter in under someone else's name'.<sup>48</sup>

### **The changing cultural climate**

The explicitness of the subject matter discussed in advice columns across magazines and newspapers started to change from the late 1960s, when

legislative revisions in relation to abortion and homosexuality allowed advisers to respond more openly to problems which once could never have been published. Discussion of hitherto sensitive issues was in many respects pioneered on the problem pages of women's magazines and popular national newspapers, where columnists started to write more directly about personal matters, such as contraception, abortion and sexually transmitted diseases. Some acquired more specialist expertise than in the past, with training in counselling, psychiatry or medicine.<sup>49</sup> A new generation of advisers emerged in the 1970s, more overtly influenced by the professional counselling movement.<sup>50</sup> The British Association for Counsellors was, for example, established in 1976, and by 1977 had 1,000 individual members.<sup>51</sup>

Magazines aimed at teenagers tended to be slower to adapt to this changing social and cultural climate than publications aimed at older audiences, although commentators tended not to distinguish between the styles and approaches of different magazines. The features and letters pages of *Honey* and *Petticoat*, for example, often discussed sexual matters in the sixties, although girls were commonly advised to avoid pre-marital sex.<sup>52</sup> More generally, story-lines adjusted to accommodate 'the odd case of drug-taking or skinhead violence', but 'underlying attitudes showed 'little sign of change'. Girls were depicted as 'obsessed' with finding a boyfriend, 'the happy endings are as unreal as ever' and they had 'no ambitions beyond finding a mate'.

While the adult women's magazines have been making a determined effort to grapple with the harsher realities of life, these teenage versions display a remarkable case of arrested development in their attitude to their readers.<sup>53</sup>

This was very clear in *Jackie*, whose problem pages in the 1960s and 1970s were not spaces for the discussion of 'taboo' topics. *Jackie* was published by D.C. Thomson, a Scottish publishing company based in Dundee, which was known for conservatism and the strong moral tone of its publications. Romance dominated and references to sexuality and sexual behaviour were unusual, more likely to appear 'under the "Dear Doctor" column', where they were 'treated in purely clinical terms'. Girls were 'reassured about irregular periods, pubic hair, weight and so on' but there was 'no mention of masturbation, contraception or abortion'.<sup>54</sup> Advisers on *Mirabelle* were, by contrast, discussing contraception and sexually transmitted diseases by the mid-1970s, a reminder of how the approach and content of columns in teenage magazines could vary.

The content of 'Lesley's' published postbag remained largely preoccupied with boyfriends and love, although the page's format had become more serious by the early 1970s; 'interesting' problems were still featured in a picture strip, but published letters and replies were longer. They were also accompanied by publicity photos of Lesley which bore an uncanny resemblance to those publicising Marje Proops in her advice column during the same period; Lesley was often depicted wearing thick-rimmed glasses,

thoughtfully clenching her pen and wearing a similar hair style.<sup>55</sup> The homage may not have been lost, even on younger readers. Proops, who had become agony aunt on the *Daily Mirror* in 1954, was an influential pundit in the 1960s, ‘doyenne’ of post-war advisers, who pioneered the more open discussion of personal and sexual issues, one of several columnists from a range of newspapers and magazines who argued strongly in favour of abortion reform.<sup>56</sup>

The tone of advice in ‘Letters to Lesley’ continued to valorize the male role in relationships and urge oblique strategies on girls who wanted to get their own way, but by the late-1960s and early 1970s, the assertiveness urged in the early sixties had become more marked. Readers were more frequently encouraged not to accept unfair treatment by their boyfriends and to look after their own interests.

My boyfriend says he loves me, but I sometimes find this hard to believe. We only ever do the kind of things that *he* enjoys, go to the places *he* likes, or the parties *his* friends give. If I complain he says that if I don’t like going out with him then we’d better break up. I couldn’t bear this, as I think the world of him, and in every other way he’s a wonderful boyfriend. He just seems to think that *my* wishes don’t count for anything.

The reply elicited was direct and challenging:

*It's not surprising that he's a wonderful boyfriend if he's always allowed to have his own way... Call his bluff, and if he loves you as he says he does, he'll quickly back down. At the moment he's getting away with too much.*<sup>57</sup>

A different, less conciliatory focus emerged, one less concerned with trying to discuss the problem, or leaving if unhappy about an aspect of a relationship, and more to do with how to make a boy jealous or retaliate:

I can't stop my boyfriend making rotten remarks about my figure in front of other people. I'm very flat-chested and I'm very conscious of it, but he still keeps joking and commenting although he knows it upsets me... I've told my boyfriend how terrible it makes me feel, but he seems to enjoy getting a cheap laugh at my expense. J.G.  
(Coventry)

*I wonder how he'd feel if you turned the tables and picked on some weaknesses of his, which he feels insecure about, and made it into a public joke. Maybe you should try. This boy is either too thick to understand that his remarks just aren't funny, or too unkind to care, and either way it doesn't say much for him. I suggest you stop asking him to show more consideration and tell him that he'd better pack it up at once or you'll find yourself a boyfriend who's a good deal more sensitive.*<sup>58</sup>



For older young women, a new style of magazine shaped by feminist emphases on female independence and autonomy and women's right to sexual pleasure emerged in the 1970s.<sup>59</sup> Magazines like *Nova* and *Cosmopolitan* (launched in the UK in 1972) were known for their 'frank' discussion of sexual matters.<sup>60</sup> Secularising social movements like feminism and egalitarianism were accompanied by higher levels of divorce and cohabitation, greater openness about sexual diversity and less social deference,<sup>61</sup> and changes in the style and content of personal advice columns across a range of popular newspapers and magazines came to exemplify these trends,<sup>62</sup> as the 'private world of sex' started to enter the popular public domain' in 'quite unprecedented' ways.<sup>63</sup> *Cosmopolitan* most obviously pushed the boundaries of heterosexual discussion, but 'the mood of even the most traditional women's magazines' started to change in the 1970s. *Woman* and *Woman's Own* (both owned by IPC) became more 'forthright' about 'women's rights and expectations, morally, legally and sexually.'<sup>64</sup>

Overt and under-stated feminism, or sympathy with feminist ideas, played an important part in raising public awareness of sexual behaviour and social issues through problem page writers in the popular press and on women's magazines in the 1970s and 1980s, where some columnists had been actively involved with the women's movement or acknowledged its influence, as in the case of Anna Raeburn, Virginia Ironside and Irma Kurtz. Others, like Marje Proops and Angela Willans, were influenced by feminism in a broader sense, as 'the themes of feminist politics' encouraged franker

and more campaigning approaches to a range of issues, including domestic violence and homosexual equality.<sup>65</sup> By the mid 1970s, many topics which even a decade previously would have received little public airing in advice columns were being discussed in the mainstream press and women's magazines.<sup>66</sup> The period also saw the emergence of 'teenage confession' magazines, such as *Love Affair*, *Loving*, *New Love* and *Hers*, which were associated with 'explicit sexual content'. 'Purported to be aimed at seventeen year olds', they were 'read by girls as young as eleven' and stimulated considerable criticism and concern among right-wing commentators.<sup>67</sup> The 'agony' columnist, Claire Rayner, who started on *The Sun* in the early 1970s, also advised in teen magazines, such as *Petticoat*, where she attracted the ire of Valerie Riches, honorary secretary of the 'Responsible Society', founded in 1971. Riches, who campaigned against teaching about contraception, sex education and the Family Planning Association, described advice columns such as those Rayner wrote for *Petticoat* magazine as <sup>68</sup>

Superficial and damaging. In fact, I'd like to see them suppressed altogether. They tend to be anti-parent. A child will write in a moment of pique, and when her problem is aired it becomes the problem of a whole generation. <sup>69</sup>

Riches attributed the contemporary 'breakdown' of the family to a 'network' of largely interlinked organisations who exploited the 'natural anxieties' of young people by encouraging the use of contraceptives and

discussing topics such as masturbation, a topic about which Rayner said she received hundreds of letters.<sup>70</sup>

The social and cultural expectations of teenagers were changing. The voting age was lowered to 18 in 1969. Young people could marry without parental consent from 1970, and the pill became available on the National Health Service in 1974.<sup>71</sup> The moral tone about pre-marital sexual relationships which had characterised *Mirabelle* in the late-1950s and early-1960s started to dissipate in the 1970s, replaced by health concerns and the more open discussion of sexual matters, albeit sometimes re-cycling the same phraseology:

I started sleeping with my boyfriend Pete a couple of weeks ago – and quite frankly, I don't find it anything more than quite pleasant. Where are all the stars and stripes and passionate feelings you're meant to get. I'm a bit worried that I may be frigid or something – or that I'm going to miss out on all this wild excitement that magazines are always on about.

*Of course you're not frigid, Louise, so you stop worrying about that! It's just that a satisfactory relationship takes a little while to achieve. As long as you're always honest with your boyfriend, and never fake orgasm, I'm certain you'll see those stars and stripes before long.*<sup>72</sup>

*When girls first start having sex, more often than not they do find it a bit of a disappointment – but without meaning to sound crude, practice makes perfect! It takes time to get to know each other sexually. Also, you'd get a fulfilling relationship together much more quickly if you're honest with your boyfriend, and never fake orgasm, I'm certain you'll see those stars and stripes before long.<sup>73</sup>*

*Mirabelle's* advice pages were less explicit than many teenage publications became in the 1980s and 1990s, but letters did cover many sexual issues which once would have been unmentionable.<sup>74</sup> Sex in heterosexual relationships was discussed not only in relation to those going 'steady' but also encompassed more casual liaisons. A range of personal issues which would never have appeared in earlier magazines became more common, from domestic violence and underage sex, to inter-racial sex, rape, sexual abuse, incest and menstruation, a boyfriend's inability to get an erection, and health advice about sexually transmitted diseases, cystitis and contraception.<sup>75</sup> Work and careers, less visible on the advice page the 1950s and 1960s, appeared more frequently and were not necessarily subordinated to expectations of marriage.<sup>76</sup>

In part, these changes reflected the reciprocal aspect of advice columns as the greater frankness with which personal and sexual matters could be discussed also helped elicit more explicit correspondence from readers. Sexual and social matters were discussed in language which reflected broader changes in the character of gender relationships.<sup>77</sup>

*Wow, it's enough to make your blood boil, isn't it! It's about time you gave this chauvinist a taste of his own medicine... start taking a firm hand now.*<sup>78</sup>

Letters published in *Mirabelle* throughout the 1970s hint at how changing social mores were beginning to unsettle girls' own views of what was appropriate feminine behaviour:

We were discussing 'Women's Lib at school, and somebody said it was unfair that girls had to change their names when they got married and take the same surname as their husband.'<sup>79</sup>

They also intimate how traditional attitudes still lingered among writers, possibly more so among those who did not live in large metropolitan areas. Jennifer (Suffolk) who had been going out with her boyfriend for six months did not want to finish with him, but felt she was 'missing a lot of chances by being tied to him. What do other girls think of this? I do wish we could go out with anyone we like and not have to be faithful to one boy'. The reply warned that while it was fine to 'have several boys in your life' if they weren't particularly important, there were likely to be 'problems' where 'deeper feelings were involved'.

*You're perfectly free to choose, but it's difficult to change over when you've been going steady for as long as six months and then you*

*decide you'd like other dates as well. Robert might agree, or he might want to finish altogether. This is something you'll have to discuss together.*<sup>80</sup>

One of the most 'significant' trends in teenage magazines, from the 1970s onwards 'was the move from 'romance' to 'real life', as romantic 'photo-love stories' acted out by 'real people' were superseded by readers' 'true-life' experiences.<sup>81</sup> This change, part of a broader social move away from seeing girls as dependent children towards accepting them as autonomous individuals, became apparent in *Mirabelle*, in the mid-1970s, when 'Lesley' was replaced by advisers whose much younger appearance was closer to the age of the magazine's readership. The first of these was a new column called 'Evie's Place', illustrated by a photo of a young woman who looked in her teens. The casual title was suggestive of readers being able to just drop by to see 'Evie', who was described as 'a friend to talk things over with', although it was also made clear that she was part of a 'regular team', who would call on expert help if unable to answer the reader's questions.<sup>82</sup>

'Evie' was soon joined by two other advisers, a young woman called 'Jan' and a young man called 'Mark', not a celebrity like 'Ask Adam' but an 'ordinary' young man whose tone was much less flippant. *Mirabelle* now featured letters under the heading a 'Boys Eye View', which included correspondence such as that from 17-year-old 'Michael from Romford', who was anxious about his lack of success with girls, who towered over him with their 'six-inch heels' and went for much taller boys.<sup>83</sup> Mark's presence

on the advice pages poses questions about how the readership of *Mirabelle* was changing in this period. Challenges to traditional masculinity in the popular culture of the early 1970s were epitomised by glam rock musicians such as Slade and David Bowie, who ‘reached across genders and were featured regularly in *Jackie* and *Mirabelle* and similar publications aimed at teenage girls’.<sup>84</sup> There are no figures to confirm how many boys read such magazines, but it is possible that more were doing so than in the past. Philip Cato, who grew up in Rugeley in the West Midlands, for example, bought girls’ magazines like *Jackie* because of the ‘the quality of the posters of his favourite stars’.<sup>85</sup>

Mark and Jan’s column, ‘Between Friends’, lasted until May 1977, when they were replaced by another young duo ‘Kenny’ and ‘Caroline’, in a column called ‘Points of View’, which presented a novel juxtaposition of adult and more youthful opinions.<sup>86</sup> Kenny and Caroline, described as ‘resident experts’, picked a weekly ‘selection of interesting letters’ to answer in print, while Sue Butler, ‘a young mother with two teenaged daughters’, was invited to comment on them. Butler, who tended to provide sensible referral details of professional agencies after Kenny and Caroline had supplied their brotherly and sisterly comments, re-introduced a visible adult influence which had been lost in recent years.<sup>87</sup> A belief still prevailed on teenage magazines that girls in their early teens should be protected, which continued to set boundaries around how issues should be discussed.<sup>88</sup> The adult presence and emphasis on professionalism may have been, however, a response to contemporary concerns about how such pages

undermined parental influence, which underlay criticism from groups of the ‘moral Right in the 1970s, such as the ‘Responsible Society’.<sup>89</sup> Columnists across the period, probably aware of the fact that many readers were in their early teens and below the age of sexual consent did, in fact, frequently referred to the importance of respecting parental views about their behaviour, although they also encouraged girls to make their own decisions. Readers were urged to show respect for parents, to see their point of view and to try to accommodate to their wishes, although tensions over negotiating older expectations and newer desires for cultural freedoms were often clear in published queries, even in the case of small issues such as wearing make-up, which elicited a mix of practical and subversive advice:

*Oh, dear, I'm torn between the devil and the deep blue sea here!  
Personally, I think you should be allowed to wear make-up if you  
want to – but if your mum objects, there's very little I can say. You  
could, of course, get some make-up together and leave it at a  
friends's house – and then make sure that you always remove every  
scrap from your face before going home again. But I don't want to  
encourage you to be deceitful. Whatever you decide, just keep trying  
to win your mum round!*<sup>90</sup>

The interpretation of feminism on these pages may have been ambiguous, but the strongest feminist message on teenage magazines like *Mirabelle* was often in advice columns.<sup>91</sup> Sex in heterosexual relationships was discussed more openly, not only among those going ‘steady’, but also in relation to



more casual liaisons. Emphases on female appearance and women's sexual desirability remained, but greater willingness to discuss sexual matters was accompanied by significant changes in how the dynamics of social and sexual relationships with boys were perceived, with girls more likely to be encouraged to take the initiative, as in influential women's magazines like *Cosmopolitan*.

*It's up to you to make the move. I should take up your friend's suggestion. Of course girls can ask boys out these days.*<sup>92</sup>

Replies were also coloured by the objectification of boys which would become much more blatant in later generations of teenage magazines in the 1990s.

*From this moment on, you must train yourself to see all members of the male sex as potential bits on the side.*

*Put his hand on your thigh – take your clothes off and hope he takes the hint.*

*Sniff out all the most likely places to find the male of the species.*

*Men as we all know, are rather stupid creatures.*<sup>93</sup>

‘Evie’, who left *Mirabelle* in April 1976, reflected on the changes that had taken place even during the short time she had been answering the ‘thousands of letters’ that the magazine received. Perhaps the most significant change was ‘one of attitude’.

When I first started answering problem letters most of them were about traditional problems (personal problems like spots or emotional problems like a treacherous best friend). But of late my postbag has contained many more letters from girls facing new kinds of problems – the problems spring from a general desire to live life to the full and a refusal to accept traditional attitudes.<sup>94</sup>

McRobbie’s feminist critique of the problem page on *Jackie* condemned the way in which it ‘privatized’ the ‘personal experiences which feminism sought to publicize and politicize’: ‘the logic which informs the very existence of the problem page depends on problems being individual, not social and their solution likewise revolves around the individual alone, not on girls organizing together’.<sup>95</sup> How problem pages were received, however, was more complex than this. They were very popular among school-aged girls, as was highlighted by Alderson’s survey of comic and magazine reading among school pupils in the mid-1960s. Some laughed at them, but most seem to have taken them seriously and regarded the advice offered as more accessible than having to approach their parents. They ‘recognized the problems as familiar; they took the difficulties seriously: “Sometimes when I read a letter from a girl I think I could have written that myself.”’<sup>96</sup>

Informal sources of sexual information had always been more important in young people's lives than sex education in schools, which in the 1950s and 1960s tended to be confined to discussions of the human reproductive system in biology lessons. Sex education changed in the 1970s to cover information about contraception and dispel embarrassment, guilt and ignorance but its quality and scope remained very narrow and the media, especially advice pages in magazines, was an important source of sexual information which would become even more important in subsequent decades.<sup>97</sup>

Ethnographic work with the readers of teenage magazines in the 1980s and 1990s and interviews with older women who recalled reading them when they were teenagers have suggested the complex ways in which they related to their context and text.<sup>98</sup> Sampling the content of advice pages in *Mirabelle* across the magazine's history reveals a similarly nuanced picture. Advice was not as uniform as McRobbie originally argued and change is clearly discernible over time, from the traditional emphases on romance and marriage of Vivien Ashley in the 1950s to encouragement of greater assertiveness which became much clearer from the early 1970s, as discussions of sexual behaviour became detached from marriage. Emphases remained upon heterosexuality and protective boundaries around girls in their early teens were maintained, particularly in terms of smoothing relationships with parents, but the moral underpinning of Ashley's era weakened, albeit unevenly and inconsistently.<sup>99</sup> By the time *Mirabelle* ceased as an independent publication in 1977, a more professional approach

to advice-giving had developed in terms of recommendation to professional agencies, while more open discussion of sexual matters supports McRobbie's argument that teenage magazines published more sexual content from the 1970s.<sup>100</sup> Nevertheless, although teenage magazines shared many common features, their format, style and content differed between publications, as Tinkler has also observed. This small study suggests there is considerable scope for not only comparing the content of such pages across similar publications but also for learning more about the writers behind such pages who, like much of their readership, remain shadowy and little known.

---

I owe a considerable debt to my graduate student, Rob Deeble, whose sampling of *Mirabelle* forms the basis of the content analysis on which this chapter is based. My thanks also go to the British Academy, for providing a small grant which has supported this research and to my colleague, Pat Ayres, for helpful comments on an earlier draft.

## References

1. Angela McRobbie, *Jackie: An Ideology of Adolescent Femininity* (Birmingham: The University of Birmingham Stencilled Occasional Paper, 1978). The research took place when McRobbie was a researcher in the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the University of Birmingham; Angela McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture. From Jackie to Just Seventeen* (London: Macmillan, 1991, p. 84; Angela McRobbie, 'Working

class girls and the culture of femininity’, in Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *Women Take Issue: Aspects of Women’s Subordination*, (London: Hutchinson, 1978); Angela McRobbie, ‘Just like a *Jackie* story’, in A. McRobbie and T. McCabe (eds), *Feminism for Girls: An Adventure Story* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981); Angela McRobbie, ‘*Jackie* magazine: romantic individualism and the teenage girl’, in *Feminism and Youth Culture: From ‘Jackie’ to ‘Just Seventeen’*, (London: Macmillan, 1991).

2 McRobbie, *Jackie*, p. 28.

3 For early analyses, see Angela McRobbie, *Jackie: An Ideology of Adolescent Femininity* (Birmingham: The University of Birmingham Stencilled Occasional Paper, 1978). A. McRobbie, ‘More! New sexualities in girls’ and women’s magazines’, in A. McRobbie (ed.), *Back to Reality? Social Experience and Cultural Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 195. For a more recent examination, see Penny Tinkler, “‘Are you really living?’ If not, “get with it!’” The teenage self and lifestyle in young women’s magazines, Britain, 1957-70, *Cultural and Social History* (2014), 11:4, 597-619.

4 For an overview of the evolution of problem pages in British popular newspapers in the twentieth century, see Adrian Bingham, ‘Problem pages and British sexual culture, c. 1930s-1970s’, *Media History* 18:1 (2012), 51-63.

5 Mark Abrams, *The Teenage Consumer* (London: London Press Exchange, 1959), p. 15. For the market in magazines aimed at teenage girls, see Penny Tinkler, *Constructing Girlhood: Popular Magazines for Girls Growing Up*

in *England, 1920-1950* (London: Taylor and Francis, 1995); Angela McRobbie, *Jackie: An Ideology of Adolescent Femininity* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 1978); Angela McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture: From Jackie to Just Seventeen* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1991); Dawn H. Currie, *Girl Talk: Adolescent Magazines and Their Readers* (Toronto and London: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

For women's magazines, see Marjorie Ferguson, *Forever Feminine: Women's Magazines and the Cult of Femininity* (London: Heinemann, 1983).

6 *The Guardian*, 26 January 1961, citing the results Mark Abrams's survey of teenage consumer spending, published in 1959.

7 Kelly Schrum, "'Teena means business': teenage girls' culture and Seventeen magazine, 1944-1950", in Sherrie A. Inness (ed.) *Delinquents and Debutantes: Twentieth-century American Girls' Cultures* (London and New York: New York University Press, 1998), p. 136.

8 Claudia A. Mitchell and Jacqueline Reid-Walsh, *Girl Culture* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2008), p. 527.

9 Schrum, "'Teena means business'", p. 139.

10 Connie Alderson, *Magazines Teenagers Read* (London: Pergamon Press, 1968), pp. 84-5.

11 Brian Braithwaite and Joan Barrell, *The Business of Women's Magazines* (London: Kogan Page, 1979), p. 26; Michael Frayn, 'Romances for Sale', *The Guardian*, 20 January 1960.

12 Deborah Philips, 'Good citizenship and girls in British postwar popular culture' in Dudley Jones and Tony Watkins, *A Necessary Fantasy?: The*

*Heroic Figure in Children's Popular Literature* (Garland Publishing: New York, 2000), p. 82.

13 James Chapman, *British Comics: A Cultural History*, (London: Reaktion Books, 2011), Kindle edition.

14 *The Guardian*, 20 January 1960.

15 Michael Frayn, 'Romances for Sale', *The Guardian*, 20 January 1960.

16 *Mirabelle*, 21 January, 1957, p. 19; *Mirabelle*, 8 October, 1960, p. 23.

17 White, *Women's Magazines*, p. 174.

18 *The Guardian*, 1 July 1971, p. 4.

19 *Mirabelle*, 10 September 1956, p. 25.

20 *Woman's Own*, 6 October 1934; M. Beetham, *A Magazine of Her Own? Domesticity and Desire in the Woman's Magazine, 1800-1914* (London, New York: Routledge), pp. 166, 170. *Woman at Home* was published between 1893 and 1920; Robin Kent, *Aunt Agony Advises: Problem Pages Through the Ages* (London: W.H. Allen, 1979), pp. 1-6.

21 *Mirabelle*, 19 November 1956, p. 21.

22 *Mirabelle*, 4 March 1957, p. 9.

23 *Mirabelle*, 30 July 1960, pp. 10-11.

24 Gillian A.M. Mitchell, 'A very "British" introduction to rock 'n' roll: Tommy Steele and advent of rock 'n' roll music in Britain, 1956-1960', *Contemporary British History* (2011) 25:2, 17.

25 *Mirabelle*, 10 September 1956, p. 21;

26 *Mirabelle*, 9 December 1961, p. 19.

27 *Mirabelle*, 24 February 1962, p. 19.

28 *Mirabelle*, 25 November 1961, p. 19.

- 29 *Mirabelle*, 27 January 1962, p. 26.
- 30 *Mirabelle*, 23rd December 1961, p. 23.
- 31 Alderson, *Magazines*, pp. 50.
- 32 Tinkler, “Are you really living?”, p. 600.
- 33 Chapman, *British Comics*, Kindle edition.
- 34 Alderson, *Magazines*, pp. 5-6.
- 35 Peter Childs, Michael Storry (eds), *Encyclopedia of Contemporary British Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 520.
- 36 Alderson, *Magazines*, pp. 84, 97.
- 37 Chapman, *British Comics*, Kindle edition.
- 38 Tinkler, “Are you really living?”, p. 600. *Honey*, 1960-1986, had a strong emphasis on fashion. Its links to women’s magazines were clear in its takeover of *Woman and Beauty* in 1964. In 1986, it was absorbed by *19*, established in 1968, targeted at those aged 16-19. *19* closed in 2004. *Petticoat*, published between 1966 and 1975, also appealed to the fashion-conscious.
- 39 McRobbie, *Jackie*, pp. 1, 8.
- 40 L. White, *Women’s Magazines, 1693-1968* (London: Michael Joseph, 1970), p. 324.
- 41 *Mirabelle*, 26 March 1966, pp. 30-31.
- 42 Virginia Ironside, *Problems! Problems! Confessions of an Agony Aunt* (London: Robson Books, 1991), 85; Willans, “Problem page ethics”, 41.
- 43 Angela Phillips, “Advice Columnists,” 98; P. Makins, *The Evelyn Home Story* (London: Fontana, 1976), pp. 13, 54.



44 McRobbie, *Jackie*, p. 27; Angela McRobbie, Trisha McCabe (eds), *Feminism for Girls: An Adventure Story*, (London: Routledge, 2013 edition), pp. 120-1.

45 Bel Mooney, 'Job satisfaction? Take my advice', *British Journalism Review* 21:25 (2010), 25; <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2007/mar/07/art.gender>, accessed February 2014.

46 Richard Smith, "Part time agony aunt in trousers", *British Medical Journal*, 287, (8 October 1983), 1029.

47 Alderson, *Magazines*, pp. 56-7.

48 S. Perera, 'Agony and empathy', *Guardian*, 29 June 1987, p. 32.

49 Liz Bondi, (2005) 'Is counselling a feminist practice?', online papers archived by the Institute of Geography, School of Geosciences, University of Edinburgh, pp. 3-4.

50 Willans, "Problem page ethics", p. 43.

51 By 2003, membership was over 20,000. Bondi, 'Counselling', p.1.

52 Tinkler, "'Are you really living?'"', p. 611.

53 Maureen O'Connor, 'Romantic fantasies', *Guardian*, 11 September 1970, p. 7.

54 McRobbie, *Jackie*, p. 29; *Mirabelle*, 9 October 1976, p. 32; *ibid.*, 16 October 1977, p. 32; *ibid.* 20 November 1976, p. 32; *ibid.*, 22 January 1977, p. 32.

55 Angela Phillips, 'Advice columnists', p. 104.

56 White, *Women's Magazines*, p. 43.

57 *Mirabelle*, 1 January 1972, p. 29.

58 *Mirabelle*, 18 december 1971p. 29.

59 Janice Winship, *Inside Women's Magazines* (London: Pandora, 1987), p. 101.

60 *Guardian*, 8 March 1975; cited in Selina Todd, 'Models and menstruation: *Spare Rib* magazine, feminism, femininity and pleasure', *Studies in Social and Political Thought* (Brighton: University of Sussex), 1 (2009), p. 67.

61 Charles L. Ponce de Leon, *Self-Exposure: Human Interest Journalism and the Emergence of Celebrity in America, 1890-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of Carolina Press, 2002).

62 Cas Wouters, *Informalization: Manners And Emotions since 1890* (London: Sage Publications, 2007), 3.

63 Gauntlett, *Media, Gender and Identity: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 84.

64 *Guardian*, 8 March 1975.

65 Bondi, 'Counselling', pp. 5, 10.

66 Katherine Whitehorn, "Now it's orgasms on the front cover," *British Journalism Review* 9:32 (1998): 34, p. 39; *Independent*, 14 April 2000.

67 S. Feldman, 'Why I'm Glad My Daughter Had Underage Sex', *The Humanist*, 64: 6 (2004), p. 7.

68 Phillips, "Advice columnists," 102; *Guardian*, 11 November 1996; Adrian Bingham, *Family Newspapers?: Sex, Private Life, and the British Popular Press, 1918-1978* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 53.

69 M. De-la-Noy, 'The irresponsible society?', *Guardian*, 19 September 1974, p. 13.

70 Susan Faludi, *Backlash: The Undeclared War Against Women* (London: Vintage, 1993), p. 457; Andrew Adonis, Tim Hames, *A Conservative Revolution?: The Thatcher-Reagan Decade in Perspective* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), p. 88

71 Tinkler, “Are you really living?”, pp. 613, 619.

72 *Mirabelle*, 9 October 1976, p. 32.

73 *Mirabelle*, 29 January 1977, p. 32.

74 *Guardian*, 26 March 1993.

75 *Mirabelle*, 6 November 1976, p. 32; *ibid.*, 26 February 1977, p. 29; *ibid.*, 9 April 1977, p. 30; *ibid.*, 23 October 1976, p. 32; *ibid.*, 20 November 1976, p. 32; *ibid.*, 14 May 1977, p. 30; *ibid.*, 18 December 1976, p. 32; *ibid.*, 13 November 1976, p. 32; *ibid.*, 12 February 1977, p. 30; *ibid.*, 1 January, 1977, p. 32; *ibid.*, 17 September 1977.

76 *Mirabelle*, 23 October 1976, p. 32; *ibid.*, 5 March 1977, p. 6; *ibid.*, 7 May 1977; 21 May 1977.; 5 March 1977, p. 26.

77 *Mirabelle*, 9 October 1976, p. 32; *ibid.*, 16 October 1976, p. 32; *ibid.*, 8 January 1977, p. 32; *ibid.*, 29 January 1977, p. 32; *ibid.*, 12 March 1977, p. 7; *ibid.*, 9 April 1977, p. 30; *ibid.*, 26 March, 1977, p. 28.

78 *Mirabelle*, 26 March 1977, p. 28.

79 *Mirabelle*, 1 June 1974, p. 31.

80 *Mirabelle*, 30 October 1971, p. 29.

81 Peter Childs and Mike Storry (eds), *Encyclopedia of Contemporary British Culture* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 520-1.

82 *Mirabelle*, 14 February 1976.

83 *Mirabelle*, 21 January 1976.

84 Thompson, cited in Keith Gildart, *Images of England through Popular Music: Class, Youth and Rock 'n' Roll 1955-1976* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 158.

85 Philip Cato, *Crash Course for the Ravers: A Glam Odyssey* (Lockerbie: S.T. Publishing, 1997) p. 85, cited in Gildart, *Images of England*, p. 169.

86 *Mirabelle*, 19 February 1977, p. 26. Such boy and girl duos were not unique. The problem page editors of *Boyfriend* in the late-1950s were the Talbot Twins, Jeannie and Johnny. Tinkler, "'Are you really living?'" p. 606.

87 *Ibid.*

88 Fred Inglis, *A Short History of Celebrity* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2010), 14; A. Bingham, *Family Newspapers? Sex, Private Life, and the British Popular Press 1918-1978* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 53.

89 The Responsible Society subsequently became Family and Youth Concern. *Guardian*, 23 July 1985, p. 22

90 *Mirabelle*, 23 April 1977, p. 30.

91 A. McRobbie, *In the Culture Society: Art, Fashion and Popular Music* (London: Routledge, 1999), p. 55.

92 *Mirabelle*, 20 November 1976, p. 32.

93 *Mirabelle*, 26 February 1977, p. 29.

94 *Mirabelle*, 24 April 1976.

95 McRobbie, *Jackie*, p. 28.

96 Alderson, *Magazines*, p. 102.

97 Mary Jane Kehily, 'More sugar? Teenage magazines, gender displays and sexual learning', *European Journal of Cultural Studies* (1999) 2:1, pp. 65-89. In 2003, 'a poll of readers of the teenage magazine *CosmoGIRL!* suggested that if they had a sex related question 79% would first consult a magazine agony column. Only 3% would speak to a doctor or a Brook adviser, and only slightly more (18%) would ask their parents.' P. B. Boynton, 'The value of agony aunts. (Personal View). *British Medical Journal*, 28 June, 2003.

98 Mel Gibson, University of Sunderland, 'Remembering reading: memory, comics and post-war constructions of British girlhood. Some initial thoughts', [https://mediamatrix.wikispaces.com/file/view/mel\\_gibson.pdf](https://mediamatrix.wikispaces.com/file/view/mel_gibson.pdf), accessed June 2014, p. 4.

99 For American teenage magazines, see Jennifer A. Schlenker, Sandra L. Caron and William A. Halteman, 'A feminist analysis of *Seventeen* magazine: content analysis from 1945 to 1995', *Sex Roles* (1998) 38:1-2, pp. 135-149; Schrum, "'Teena means business', pp. 34-163.

100 Petra Boynton, 'Whatever happened to Cathy and Claire: sex advice and the role of the agony aunt', in Feona Attwood (ed.), *Mainstreaming Sex: The Sexualization of Western Culture* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, 2009), p. 115.