Steel Magnolias
By Robert Harling

Directed by Laura Kepley

Cleveland Play House

Pre-Production Resource Packet compiled by Maddie Gaw
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### ALL THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE PLAY AND FILM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Play</th>
<th>Film</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All the characters are female; male characters mentioned</td>
<td>The film portrays Drum, Tommy and Jonathan Eatenton, Jackson Latcherie and son Jack Jr., Sammy Desoto, Owen Jenkins, and Truvy’s husband Spud (unnamed in the play) and son Louie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All scenes take place in Truvy’s beauty shop.</td>
<td>Film takes place in a variety of locations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters are seen getting ready for Shelby’s wedding.</td>
<td>We see Shelby’s wedding actually take place, with details like the armadillo cake and Annelle meeting Sammy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelby is back in Chinquapin for the famous Christmas Festival.</td>
<td>We see the characters attend the Chinquapin Christmas Festival.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M’Lynn and Shelby have a private conversation about Shelby’s pregnancy in the beauty shop.</td>
<td>M’Lynn and Shelby have a private conversation about Shelby’s pregnancy in their home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clairee mentions she bought the local radio station and serves as a color announcer for the local football team.</td>
<td>There is a new scene where Clairee and Ouiser are in the men’s locker-room after a football game and Clairee is providing her color commentary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelby announces her pregnancy to the women in the beauty shop.</td>
<td>Shelby announces her pregnancy during the Christmas Festival celebration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The day after Halloween, Shelby has already passed away and M’Lynn stops by the beauty shop.</td>
<td>There is a new scene during Halloween when the women (sans Shelby) throw Annelle a wedding shower. During this time, Shelby loses consciousness in her own house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M’Lynn explains that Shelby’s body rejected the kidney and that she had gone back on dialysis for the months leading up to her death. About a week prior to the scene is when complications started, eventually leading to a coma.</td>
<td>It isn’t until they find Shelby unconscious on Halloween that it is determined Shelby rejected the kidney, and she immediately goes into a coma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M’Lynn says that when they made the decision to take Shelby off of life support, Drum and Jackson left the room before the heartbeat monitor stopped.</td>
<td>We see Shelby in the hospital. Drum, Jackson and M’Lynn are all present when the doctors turn the machine off, and only walk away just before the heartbeat monitor stops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M’Lynn has her emotional outburst in the beauty shop.</td>
<td>M’Lynn has her emotional outburst shortly after Shelby’s funeral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annelle tells M’Lynn that she’s decided to name her child after Shelby</td>
<td>Annelle asks M’Lynn’s permission to name her child after Shelby.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The play ends with M’Lynn leaving Truvy’s beauty shop after having a cathartic experience with the women.</td>
<td>The film continues after M’Lynn’s cathartic experience and shows her helping Jackson raise Jack Jr, and adds an Easter scene where Annelle gives birth to her child.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Steel Magnolias** resource packet

Off-Broadway production info:

http://www.lortel.org/lla_archive/index.cfm?search_by=show&title=Steel%20Magnolias

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening Date:</th>
<th>June 19, 1987</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Closing Date:</td>
<td>February 25, 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Performances:</td>
<td>1,126</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Opening Night Production Credits:**

- **Kyle Renick**, Producer
- **Robert Harling**, Playwright
- **Pamela Berlin**, Director
- **Edward T. Gianfrancesco**, Set Designer
- **Don Newcomb**, Costume Designer
- **Craig Evans**, Lighting Designer
- **Aural Fixation**, Sound Designer
- **Bobby H. Grayson**, Hair Designer
- **Albert Poland**, General Manager
- **Karen Moore**, Production Stage Manager

**Opening Night Cast:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actors</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Betsy Aidem</strong></td>
<td>Shelby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mary Fogarty</strong></td>
<td>Ouiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Margo Martindale</strong></td>
<td>Truvy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rosemary Prinz</strong></td>
<td>M'Lynn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constance Shulman</strong></td>
<td>Annelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kate Wilkinson</strong></td>
<td>Clairee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understudies</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anna Minot</strong></td>
<td>Clairee/ Ouiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ginger Prince</strong></td>
<td>M'Lynn/ Truvy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stacy Ray</strong></td>
<td>Annelle/ Shelby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Replacements</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rita Gardner</strong></td>
<td>M'Lynn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bette Henritze</strong></td>
<td>Ouiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suzy Hunt</strong></td>
<td>Truvy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorrie Joiner</td>
<td>Annelle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Mansur</td>
<td>Truvy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rica Martins</td>
<td>Ouiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maeve McGuire</td>
<td>M'Lynn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Minot</td>
<td>Clairee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betty Moore</td>
<td>Clairee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Pitoniak</td>
<td>Ouiser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacy Ray</td>
<td>Shelby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cynthia Vance</td>
<td>Shelby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Understudies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Julia Kelly</td>
<td>Annelle/ Shelby</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ROBERT HARLING

http://gardenandgun.com/article/interview-robert-harling

Best bits:

How long did the play take you to write?
It was written in about ten days. The events that inspired it were so powerful that, after I found the story arena, it just poured out into my typewriter in a 24/7 tsunami of Southernness. I had no idea what I’d written. I asked the first person I gave it to if it even looked like a play. I wasn’t really sure. All I knew was that I felt it portrayed my sister’s life and spirit accurately, and that was enough for me.

How many countries has the play been performed in, and what are the differences in the productions?
I know of seventeen authorized translations. I’m sure there are more. I’ve seen it in Japanese, Chinese, French, Swedish, Spanish, Italian. But it’s become clear to me: Beauty shops are universal. Demonstrating the need for friendship and support knows no bounds. The main variable is the set. Some of the foreign notions of what a converted Southern carport looks like are mind-blowing. And there was one Italian production where every character was hot. Even the two older characters of Ouiser and Clairee. Smoking hot. The play still worked!

Speaking of cake, had you ever seen an armadillo groom’s cake?
There was indeed an armadillo groom’s cake at my sister’s wedding. The red velvet part was my writerly creation. The original one was very simple—a sheet cake cut in the shape of an armadillo. Not like the high art form it’s become. I’ve seen some amazing edible armadillos. The New York Times credited me with the rediscovery and revival of red velvet cake. I consider this as one of my great life achievements.

Tell us what the title means to you.
When I was a kid, a lady in the neighborhood had a large metal floral paperweight on her kitchen counter that served as a receptacle for change, keys...it weighed down the check for the milkman or the dry cleaner receipt (not that you’d ever need a dry cleaner receipt in my small town—everybody knew who a dress belonged to), whatever. She called that thing on her counter “the steel magnolia.” In her sweet drawl, she’d say, “Take a quarter from the steel magnolia and get us some ice cream.” I found it interesting that the thing was neither steel nor a magnolia, but that’s what she called it. And the imagery stuck. Something beautiful made of very strong stuff.

It is the image of a small, blonde-haired all-American boy beaming in the Easter sunshine that flashes up at the end of Hollywood classic Steel Magnolias – and stays with you long after the credits have rolled.

As writer Robert Harling explains, many new fans will not even know that the movie is rooted in truth and that boy is, in fact, based on his real-life nephew and namesake.

Softly spoken and with a Southern accent that still hints at his Louisiana upbringing, Robert Harling wrote the play Steel Magnolias shortly after the death of his beloved sister Susan Robinson aged just 33 in 1985.

Susan left behind her husband Dr Pat Robinson and their two-year-old son Robert after years of battling diabetes, and amid the waves of his grief, Robert, then an actor, put pen to paper at the urging of close friends and wrote all about the town of Natchitoches, where his mother Margaret ruled the roost and the women ‘spoke in bumper stickers’.

His off-Broadway play became a hit and was then turned into a Hollywood blockbuster in 1989 starring Sally Field, Dolly Parton, Shirley Maclaine, Daryl Hannah, Olympia Dukakis - and a young and unknown Julia Roberts, then just 19, who played Shelby, the character based on Susan.

With its 25th anniversary this year, memories of a teenage Julia eating hamburgers grilled by his dad at the family home, while Dolly Parton sang on his sofa, come flooding back as Robert, 62, speaks.

And it is clear that the bonds that have kept Susan tied closely to Robert all these years are still as tight as ever. Steel Magnolias has been his way, he says, of keeping Susan alive for her son, now 31, about to marry for a second time this summer and living in Texas.

‘There will be people now who watch the film now who don’t know it was based on a true story’, muses Robert: ‘It’s really interesting and emotional and a nice journey to go back and revisit - 25 years is a long time.

‘The story is always with me, but it’s a time just to stop and remember Susan and us as kids, what the town meant to her, to touch base.’
In an exclusive interview with MailOnline, Robert reveals: ‘Susan died in the fall of 1985. Pat, my ex-brother-in-law, he remarried five or six months after her death and the first time I heard my nephew call this other woman ‘mama’ was when I said ‘No – Susan can’t disappear’.

‘I guess I started writing the play about six months later, it came out very, very fast. I wrote the first version in 10 days, I was just trying desperately to get the language, and capture exactly how the women spoke.

‘I wanted to celebrate my sister, it was a time of tumult and the way it took off, who knew. I never, in a million years, thought it would even get produced when I was writing it.’

The play came out at ‘breakneck speed’ and had its first production in February 1987. Robert admits he had no idea there was any comedy in the play until audiences started laughing.

His mother is duly immortalised as M’Lynn Eatenton – whose hair is said to closely resemble a teased brown football helmet – while his father’s character is called Drum.

But with a slight grimace, Robert reveals how at first he didn’t even plan to tell his parents that he had written a play about the darkest moment of their lives.

Just like in the movie, Margaret indeed tried valiantly to save her only daughter, donating a kidney to Susan in a desperate attempt to save her life.

‘We were all tested,’ said Robert, ‘but my mother said ‘the buck stops here’, she was going to do it, she had to be there for Susan, that’s the way my mother was.

‘She just made it very clear that she was the one who was supposed to do this and she did.

‘But to do everything my parents did and for it still not work, there were some very dark times,’ he admits. Years later, his father would buy his mother a tear-shaped diamond necklace that she would never take off - and tell her ‘this is the last tear’.

At the urging of friend Kathy Weller, Robert told his mother about his play while she was visiting him in New York, and recalls: ‘She was stunned…She said ‘what’s it about?’ I said ‘You!’
'In true Steel Magnolia fashion she rolled with it, she asked me if she could read it and we went back to the hotel and I would walk past the door and she was just sobbing and sobbing and sobbing. At the end, I was really torn up, I said ‘mom, it’s okay – we don’t have to do this, it doesn’t matter, I can’t put you through this’.

‘But she said ‘no, you must do this, it’s Susan’.

‘My mother and father truly both seized upon it immediately as a way of celebrating my sister and keeping her memory alive…and these two small town people from Louisiana really rose to this wonderful occasion and used it for charity.

‘My mother would speak to the Senate wives about kidney transplants and diabetes research, she embraced it as an opportunity to be about Susan’s life – even though it was short.’

Susan was a force to be reckoned with, Robert says. Desperate to be a mom, she defied doctors’ advice to have her much-wanted baby.

‘She was a real-life force – just like the character of Shelby’, says Robert: ‘She was just all the things that Shelby is – stubborn and wonderful.

‘The one thing she couldn’t ever abide and the only thing that made her cry, she once told me, is when someone couldn’t accept what life had given them, they couldn’t accept death, they couldn’t accept how their life was going.

‘She never discussed her illness, never, not once, there was never a complaint. She was extremely determined and focused - she wanted what she wanted and what she wanted was a kid.

‘My mother was a nurse and Susan wanted to be a paediatric nurse, she wanted to be around babies.’

Susan was diagnosed with diabetes when she 12 and said ‘well, this isn’t going to stop me’, according to Robert. ‘She wanted to be a majorette, so she made mama sew little pockets into her outfits so she could have candy, because her insulin would get all crazy on sweaty hot days.

‘She wanted her life to be as normal as possible.’
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Robert - who also has a younger brother called John - reminisces: ‘I had all these tumultuous times growing up with my dad and one time I remember it was around Christmas - we weren’t getting along at all – and Susan was really worried I was not going to give my father a Christmas present and she went out and got him one from me.’

‘Family was the most important thing to her and taking care of us.’

The family has taken care never to burden Susan’s son Robert with the legacy of Steel Magnolias, mainly on the behest of Margaret, who died aged 90 last summer.

Robert says: ‘My mother said ‘you don’t want to saddle him with anything – it’s out there, he will discover it’, we never made him go and see Steel Magnolias. It’s unfair to make a four-year-old think ‘my mom died because of me’.

However, he recalls calling his nephew one day as a young child, who proudly proclaimed that he was a ‘cool kid’ at school, smiling: ‘Robert’s a very handsome man now, but he was a preemie, and at that age he was skinny – not the definition of cool! But he told me ‘Everyone likes me - I’m the only kid in my class whose mom’s been played by Julia Roberts’.

‘Where most people would smile and laugh at that, I dissolved into tears. Susan wanted to take care of everything, she wanted everything to be fine and everyone protected – Robert was No 1.

‘And I realised, okay, this kid was two when his mom died, he doesn’t remember her, but he does know that it took the biggest star in the world to play her.

‘So Susan’s protecting him, it’s so clear to me. I went ‘okay – job done, mission accomplished’. That’s all I wanted, for him to know who his mother was.’

Susan was ‘crazy, insane in love’ with her young son and ‘worshipped him’, even though they were often forced them apart as she was made to spend long spells in hospital where Robert couldn’t visit her.

It was not even until his 20s that Robert heard his mother’s voice after a family member put together a reel of home movies. ‘He was walking through the room and Susan was on the screen and he stopped. He stood there and listened for a while and said ‘Ah! So THAT’S what her voice sounded like’.
'And I went ‘of course’, he had no idea – how would he know what her voice sounded like’, said Robert.

**Although Robert was brought up by his father Pat, who is now married for a third time, Robert has remained in contact with his nephew and last saw him at his mother’s funeral.**

He says that although Robert looks just like his dad – he has his mother’s eyes, adding: ‘He has a great job as an admissions director, he has his family in Texas. He’s about to marry again – I think Susan is just hoping this one works!’

Stories about Susan come out ‘organically’, Robert says, adding: 'I think Robert talks to my dad about Susan more than me because everybody thinks I'll go write it down!

It was beyond a dream that Steel Magnolias would be turned into a Hollywood movie. Filmed in his hometown, Robert says: ‘I don’t care what people say – I wrote down what I heard. The women in my town talked in bumper stickers, they were funny, funny people. These were lines that I heard said, if you say it doesn’t ring true – you’re wrong.’

However, there are moments that were dramatized for the cameras, he says. In the film, Shelby is found unconscious at home by her husband while her baby son cries in the background.

The reality, Robert says, is more ‘passive’. ‘Susan had gone in to get a shunt to help her dialysis and usually you have a local anesthetic But for some reason she had a general anesthetic and her heart just stopped.’

Robert had a cameo, playing the minister who marries Shelby, and he gives a fascinating insight into how Julia Roberts came to join the stellar cast.

The Oscar winner was the last to be hired and Robert reveals the role was originally offered to Meg Ryan – however, on the day they offered her the part, she won the lead in When Harry Met Sally.

He said: ‘She came to us and said ‘this is a wonderful movie ensemble, but I get to be a leading lady’, and we said ‘absolutely, you must do this, so the role was open again.’

They were looking at both Laura Dern and Winona Ryder when the casting director insisted they saw Julia – who was then filming Mystic Pizza.
Robert said: ‘She walked into the room and that smile lit everything up and I said ‘that’s my sister’, so she joined the party and she was magnificent.’

Director Herbert Ross was notoriously tough on newcomer Julia, who would go on to be nominated for her first Oscar for Steel Magnolias. Sally Field admitted last year: ‘He went after Julia with a vengeance. This was pretty much her first big film.’

Robert recalls: ‘Julia would come over to the house to see my mom and dad all the time, she worked so hard. She would look through their scrapbooks and dad would cook hamburgers.

‘It was an extraordinary time, Dolly would come over with her guitar, she said ‘I’ve written a song for Susan’, which never made it into the movie. But it’s called Eagle When She Flies, which she sings with this gospel choir that just tears your heart out.

‘We had Dolly sitting on the couch where I used to nap and drool, saying ‘you’ll like this song!’ They were crazy days.’

He remains close to Shirley Maclaine, who is trying to get him to write a sequel to the Steel Magnolias.

But Robert, who went on to write movie hit Soapdish, which is currently being turned into a Broadway musical, says he considers himself a ‘playwrote’, not a playwright and insists: ‘All I did was write a story, that’s all, I’m just grateful to the cosmos that Susan gets to live on.’


His original intention was to write a short story, but he realized it was missing the essential personality and vernacular of the south, so he began to add the dialogue — and the rest is history. When the play hit the stage he says everything changed because the play was written as a drama and was rehearsed on stage as such, but as soon as the first audience was brought in the laughter emerged for the very first time and Harling was shocked and terrified at first. “When the first preview audience came in, there was all this laughter, and we had no idea,” Harling said. “We were completely thrown back because we thought we were doing a drama.”

Later when the film became an instant global box office phenomenon, Harling says there was one week when he learned his teenage nephew was having some difficulty with some subjects in school. When he asked his nephew if he was OK, the teenager replied: “Oh no. Don’t worry about me. Everybody likes me. They think I’m really cool.” The reason? Because his real-life mother was brought to life by Julia Roberts on the silver screen. “That hit me like a ton of bricks,” Harling said. “He doesn’t remember his mother, but he does know as a teenager that his mother was so cool, it took the biggest star in the world to play her.”
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--Great video of Robert Harling giving a speech at the dedication of a memorial park to Susan Harling Robinson in Natchitoches. He tells a great story about the London production of *Steel Magnolias* and how Daniel Radcliffe’s mother Marcia, a casting agent who was involved with the production, had him while the production was going on.
ALL FEMALE CASTS (in popular culture)

- *Designing Women*—also set in the South, also set in the 80s, also about female friendship. Big hit sitcom.
  - “Writer/creator Linda Bloodworth-Thomason brought together four very specific actresses for the sole purpose of having them chat with each other -- tailoring storylines to drive home points about women's issues and to present a new image for Southerners on television.”
  - “In contrast to the moving pictures, where you can barely find two important women’s roles in the same movie, television is full of crackerjack female ensembles,”
  - Mentions *Golden Girls*, *Living Single*, *The Facts of Life*
- Tradition in film/theatre: *The Women*, Clare Boothe Luce, *The Group*, *9 to 5*, *A League of Their Own*, *Now and Then*


### Few female ensemble films

**JUNE 16, 2008 | 05:03PM PT**

*There haven't been many pics with lots of dames*

**Jeanine Basinger**
The Women,” Diane English’s remake of the 1939 MGM classic, revives a relatively obscure subgenre of the so-called “woman’s film”: the female ensemble. **Its purpose was to elevate the traditional woman’s film out of the cinematic ghetto through star power.** If you cast Joan Crawford, Norma Shearer, Rosalind Russell, Paulette Goddard, Joan Fontaine, Marjorie Main, Butterfly McQueen, Hedda Hopper and more, maybe you could gain status and ditch the labels of “woman’s film,” “soap opera” or “weepie.” (Today we call films about women “chick flicks.” It’s funnier and hipper, but it’s still dubious.)

It’s significant that a film starring a female, no matter what other genre it might be (comedy, romance, musical, crime, Western, film noir, melodrama), was always known as “a woman’s film.” There was no equivalent “man’s film” category. Even if a movie cast a group of great male stars, it wasn’t a “male ensemble film.” It was a
Western (“The Magnificent Seven”), a war film (“The Dirty Dozen”) or, perhaps, even a masterpiece (“The Bridge on the River Kwai”). Films with men didn’t need to worry about genre status, but the female ensemble gave the woman’s film a chance to grab some.

Throughout film history, there haven’t been lots of female ensemble movies. One of the earliest was “Thirteen Women,” a 1932 RKO story with Irene Dunne, Myrna Loy and others. (It was a discouraging tale of female revenge in which Loy, a half-Indian mystic, sets out to kill a bunch of sorority girls who snubbed her in college.) The ensemble subgenre has never been defined by a single setting, occupation or age group. It can be about teenagers (“Where the Boys Are”), suburban housewives (“No Down Payment”), actresses trying to break into show business (“Stage Door”) or mothers and daughters coping with wedding plans and cancer (“Steel Magnolias”). The women can be in jail (“Caged”) or mental institutions (“Girl, Interrupted”). They can be standing behind their success-obsessed husbands (“A Woman’s World”), fighting to achieve their own careers (“The Best of Everything”) or just looking to find a decent man to love (“Waiting to Exhale”). Sometimes the ensemble was empowered by legendary stars (“The Women”) and sometimes used to showcase newcomers, as in “The Group.” A story of eight friends who graduated together from a women’s college, “The Group” gave opportunities to Candice Bergen and Jessica Walter, among others.

The female ensemble movie spins off from the woman’s film, which was usually about a single woman, using her as an individual role model. The ensemble makes women important, and “The Women” is a perfect example. In it, men are simply eliminated. The women become the heroes. Audiences can’t ignore them. Their world is defined by the beauty salon, the fashion show, the divorce ranch, the nightclub ladies’ room, the ritzy home with the big closets, and the bridge table. Its women may be archetypes (the doe and her fawn, the prowling she-cat, a lamb and a cow), but they are different from one another. Moreover, the movie suggests there’s more than one way for them to behave.

When “The Women” was first remade, as a musical in 1956 (retitled as “The Opposite Sex”), with June Allyson, Ann Miller and others, men were added to the cast. This diluted the story, revealing it as trivial. The men disrupted the acting ensemble, making the women look weak, and redirecting the audience to include the male point of view. Comparing the original “The Women” and ‘The Opposite Sex’ clearly illustrates the ensemble’s purpose: to elevate women, to provide multiple female characters with differing roles in life, and to delineate the limits of the woman’s world. And, of course, to talk about sex as much as possible, show plenty of furniture and fashion, and to let the women do what men do: make war on one another.

How to obtain sisterhood
Female ensemble movies were not always grounded in competition. The women could obtain “sisterhood,” setting aside petty jealousies to work together toward a higher cause. Significantly, these are movies in which the women have no wardrobes. They wear uniforms, as in World War II movies about nurses (“Cry, Havoc!”), or movies with nuns (“Black Narcissus”). When women put on men’s pants, bulky plaid jackets and hobnailed
boots, as in “Westward the Women,” they can pull together and wagon forward, rolling over rough terrain, hostile Apaches and the occasional rattlesnake. In John Ford’s last feature film, “Seven Women,” a group of soberly dressed missionaries in China make a last stand against cruel mercenaries, never having to worry about changing their outfits.

Technically, a female ensemble film has to have more than three leading ladies to qualify for the type. Threesome female movies (“Valley of the Dolls”) don’t count. They were always a staple of Hollywood storytelling, being used as cautionary tales to warn women how they might end up: married, disappointed or dead — although in good clothes and a glamorous location. (Finally, in 1980, with “Nine to Five,” the women got the upper hand and no one had to die.)

Today female ensemble movies are hard to cast since there’s a shortage of top-ranked box office stars. It’s easier in television, where actresses can be introduced into a series when they are unknowns and made famous as the characters they play. Television’s ability to assemble successful female foursomes is a foundation of the sitcom: “Designing Women,” “The Golden Girls,” “Desperate Housewives” and “Sex and the City” — all of which are female ensembles.

I look forward to a revival of the ensemble subgenre in which women aren’t alike, can feel liberated to behave badly without consequence, can fight it out among themselves (why should the men have all the fun?) and can ultimately become friends and learn to work together. It’s still a groundbreaking concept for any chick flick, so congratulations to Diane English and her ensemble of actresses for reviving “The Women” on modern terms.

Jeanine Basinger is the author of “The Star Machine.”


'Not one strong male figure in the movie': The early reviews of 'Steel Magnolias'

BY ASHLEY FETTERS

Posted November 15 2014 — 9:20 AM EST
On Nov. 15, 1989, the Herbert Ross-directed dramedy *Steel Magnolias* opened in theaters across the U.S. Based on Robert Harling’s successful stage play and starring Sally Field, Olympia Dukakis, Shirley MacLaine, Dolly Parton, Daryl Hannah, and a promising young actress named Julia Roberts, it told the story of six Southern women who bonded over the comedy and tragedy life dealt them while hanging out at the local small-town hair salon.

Today, *Steel Magnolias* is considered a classic of that certain genre of films tailored to and marketed toward female audiences—“chick flicks.” In fact, the Wikipedia entry for “chick flick” lists *Steel Magnolias* as a “prominent example,” and a recent compilation of the “30 Best & Worst Chick Flicks” named it the fourth-best film in the genre and described it as “one of the quintessential chick flicks.” *Steel Magnolias* is now such an overwhelmingly gendered phenomenon that guys who like it and decide to publicize that fact on the Internet sometimes hedge their opinions with disclaimers like this one: “I am secure enough in my manhood to proudly proclaim that I enjoy chick flicks—good ones, at least.”

But there was a time, 25 years ago—before the molasses-sweet *Steel Magnolias* had jelled into its place in the grander canon of beloved girls’-night-in movies—when it was less clear what to really make of it. Early reviews were mixed: Some critics found it weepy but ultimately winning; others thought the film’s brassy sentimentality undermined its real emotional impact. And some took issue with its portrayals of men.

There were a few points, of course, that critics largely agreed upon. For starters, this Julia Roberts gal—then frequently identified as the newcomer sibling of established actor Eric Roberts—was a real winner. Mike Clark of *USA Today* wrote, presciently, that Roberts’ performance offered “further proof that she’s going to be a jumbo star.” In praising Roberts’ performance, *Rolling Stone*’s Peter Travers referred to the actress as “actor Eric [Roberts’] radiant sister,” and David Ansen at *Newsweek* wrote that “Julia Roberts—who sparkled in *Mystic Pizza*—lights up the screen with her liquid fire.” (Reviews were divided on the rest of the cast. It remains unclear whether Shirley MacLaine, in particular, was the worst or best part of the film.)
Many critics also agreed that *Steel Magnolias* was some sort of lesser mutation of 1983’s *Terms of Endearment*. It did, after all, share elements like a mother-daughter bond interrupted by an illness, and Shirley MacLaine. According to the *Globe and Mail*, *Steel Magnolias* was “everything *Terms of Endearment*’s detractors accused *Terms* of being.” *Newsweek* wrote that it “blatantly tries to trigger memories of *Terms of Endearment*.” Other creative comparisons identified *Magnolias* as “a sappy, melodramatic *Terms of Endearment Goes South*” (*People*), “like a road company version of *Terms of Endearment*” (the *New York Times*), and “for all its pretensions, … closer to *Miss Firecracker* than to *Terms of Endearment*” (Roger Ebert).

But, looking back, perhaps the most intriguing criticism of *Steel Magnolias* dealt with whether it did or didn’t have a man problem.

Hal Erickson’s widely syndicated review, for example, expressed some disappointment with the film’s handling of its supporting male characters: “The film stumbles a bit in its depiction of the male characters as fools and deadheads,” he wrote.

Hal Lipper of the *St. Petersburg Times*, meanwhile, asserted that “regrettably, the men are caricatures.” He and *New York Times* reviewer Vincent Canby both lamented the film’s decision to have actors play the leading ladies’ husbands, sons, and boyfriends onscreen at all. (In the stage show, the male characters only existed offstage.) “The male characters are no more substantial now than when they were invisible,” Canby wrote.

Robert Novak of *People* took it a step further when he wrote, “Men in general and Southern men in particular may want to consider drumming this movie’s director, Herbert Ross, and its writer (adapting his own play), Robert Harling, out of the fraternity.”

Novak continued: “So ludicrous are the male figures that the women, their strength and perseverance obviously being manifested in a cartoonish universe, more and more come to seem like caricatures. … There is literally not one strong male figure in the movie,” he concluded. (Shhh, nobody tell this guy what it’s like to be a woman watching an action movie.)
Peter Travers, meanwhile, noted in *Rolling Stone* that the male characters were scarce and underdeveloped—but then again, he pointed out, male characters also weren’t the point. “*Steel Magnolias* belongs to its actresses,” he wrote, “who have tapped into some fundamental truths about the strength women derive from one another.”

Peter Rainer of the *Los Angeles Times* echoed that sentiment. Rainer wrote that the men had been victims of “wimpification,” but that it was at least amusing to observe. “Because few films feature as many women as this one does, their prominence here is a form of pay-back. They’ve seized the screen from the big boys and they won’t let go,” he wrote.

Roger Ebert, for his part, noted that the men “do not amount to much in this movie.” But this, he concluded, was “a woman’s picture.” “The principal pleasure of the movie is in the ensemble work of the actresses … *Steel Magnolias* is willing to sacrifice its over-all impact for individual moments of humor, and while that leaves us without much to take home, you’ve got to hand it to them: The moments work.”

(Click here to watch Ebert discuss *Steel Magnolias* with Gene Siskel. They start discussing the movie right around the 10:50 mark—and Siskel is notably less enthused about *Steel Magnolias*.)

It’s intriguing to note, on a variety of levels, that in 1989, the overwhelming majority of prominent national outlets published *Steel Magnolias* reviews written by men. A notable, glorious exception, of course, is *The New Yorker*, which ran Pauline Kael’s unforgettable one-sentence-long review: “Chalk scraping over a blackboard for two hours.” But when Lifetime aired an all-African American remake of *Steel Magnolias* in 2012, the gender ratio among reviewers was decidedly more balanced.

That’s not to suggest that *Steel Magnolias* is such a gendered phenomenon that it was ever wrong or unacceptable for men to watch or appreciate it. But there’s a certain poignance to the fact that there was a time, before it was permanently shuffled into the chick-flick canon, when men were the ones talking, often favorably, about *Steel Magnolias*. Roger Ebert, it’s worth noting, was a fan of the film—a quiet fan, but a fan nonetheless. “I doubt if any six real women could be funny and sarcastic so consistently
(every line is an epigram)," he wrote in his review, "but I love the way these women talk, especially when Parton observes: 'What separates us from the animals is our ability to accessorize.'"

http://www.samuelfrench.com/breakingcharacter/?p=403

8 Plays to Celebrate International Women’s Day

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/lauren-gunderson/theatres-audiences-are-ma_b_1388150.html

Lauren Gunderson
Dramatist and theater essayist

Theater's Audiences Are Mostly Female: Why Not the Roles?

Posted: 04/05/2012 4:10 pm EDT Updated: 06/05/2012 5:12 am EDT

It appears that in many major theaters across the country, men's roles out number women's by half. One out of every three roles go to women. (An informal survey of 10 theatrical seasons from across the country that I did put women in only 35% of the total roles). This means that men's stories out number women's by the same amount.

Those of us noticing this could be considered big old whiners if it weren't for some solid business-y sounding facts:

- Women buy 70% of theater tickets sold
- Women make up 60%-70% of its audience (see here and here)
- On Broadway, shows written by women (who statistically write more female roles than men) actually pull in more at the box office than plays by men

In any other market the majority of consumers would significantly define the product or experience. Why not theater?
I will disclaim right away that this is not about women playwrights, though plays by women represent less than 20% of the works on and off-Broadway and in regional theaters (and also in the UK, as *The Guardian* illuminates). I consider *August: Osage County* and *In The Red And Brown Water* plays about women though men wrote both. This is about modern theater telling its predominantly female audiences that the human experience deserving of dramatic imagination is still the male one. In TV, this might be a top-down insistence. In politics or business we see it all the time. But in theater?

Sean Daniels, Artist-At-Large/Director of Artistic Engagement at Geva Theater, says:

"In addition to it being inconceivable in 2012 to not program any female playwrights (or really any year past 1913), it’s also just bad business. Just from a business model, look at *Menopause: The Musical*. Though we may take it to task for not hitting all of Aristotle's Six Elements, it’s a show that looked at who the main people buying tickets were, and allowed them to see themselves on stage -- thus making millions and not only preaching and loving the choir, but getting tons of new patrons into the theater."

But what would it be like if this were more common? What if American theater equally reflected and projected its own audience (at least 60% women) and their audience's wallets (which are in their purses) in their season choices?
Theaters might make more money. A friend and artistic leader at a major regional theater remarked on the marked success of Molly Smith Metzler's plays *Elemeno Pea*, a play about sisters. Or what about Tracy Letts runaway hit *August: Osage County* (a play with incredible parts for women including three sisters), or Lynn Nottage's *Ruined*, or Margaret Edson's *Wit*, or John Patrick Shanley's *Doubt* or Steve Yockey's *Bellwether* (with seven parts for women)?

**We wouldn't lose our classics.** Shakespeare’s plays are notoriously under-femmed, but not all of them are. Give me *Much Ado About Nothing* or *Twelfth Night* or *Wacky Midsummer*. Or re-imagine the Bard for us. I saw a truly fresh and powerful production of *Julius Caesar* at Oregon Shakespeare Festival last year in which Caesar was unapologetically played by a woman (it might have been the best show I saw all year, including my own). I didn't think "Oh look at that woman playing a man's part." I thought, "Oh my god she's channeling Benazir Bhutto."

Ibsen also gave us stunning women's stories. So did Shaw, Chekov, Williams, Miller. And don't forget the female playwrights of those same eras. Complex parts for more than one token women are there for the planning.

**We might inspire new classics.** I'm not telling playwrights what to write. Wait. Hell yes I am. And I'm hoping they get commissions to do so. Please write those complex and shocking and profound parts for our great female actors. Lead roles, supporting roles, lots of roles. Imagine writing for Stockard Channing or Viola Davis or Amy Morton or Meryl Streep. How about putting all of them in the same play. Oh my god, I just died a little thinking about it.

However, the now famous study by social scientist Emily Glassberg Sands about gender bias in theater says that though female playwrights write more roles for women, they are aware that plays with female protagonists aren't as likely to be produced as plays with male protagonists. "One way women have compensated for writing female stories is to write fewer [female] roles, which make their plays accessible to more theaters," the study finds. So American theater might need a theatrical version of the *The Bechdel Test* for movies which names the following three criteria: (1) it has to have at least two women in it, who (2) who talk to each other, about (3) something besides a man.

There are bright spots however. Chloe Bronzan and Robert Parsons of *Symmetry Theater* in San Francisco have already put into practice their own version of the Bechdel Test. They built their company around the precepts: "We will never produce a play with more male than female characters," they said, "We will never have more male than female union actors on our stage and we will produce plays that tell stories which include full, fleshed out and complex women that serve as propellants to the human story being told."

**We won't lose our audiences, but we might just gain new ones.** Another Artistic Director colleague noted that if theater companies counted *Menopause: The Musical* as part of their actual season (as opposed to the touring or rental production it usually is) it would be the best-selling show in their histories. Why? Women go to the theater and they bring
their friends if they have shows that reflect their experiences. A dear friend connected with *August: Osage County*’s fierce females so much that she flew from Atlanta to New York three times just to see it as many times on Broadway.

As Hanna Rosen has pointed out in her articles and lectures -- there is a definitive rise in women as breadwinners and moneymakers in this country. I live in the Bay Area and am delightfully surrounded by brilliant women running major intuitions, businesses, and government orgs. Smart institutions will notice this and deliver. Women are already your majority, and women share experiences with other women, so it shouldn't be hard to bring new women into the theater patronizing community.

Sean Daniels again:

"I think there's a hidden thinking in here that men won't watch women centric plays, but women will watch men centric plays -- which really just sells everyone in that equation short. There are men watching *The Hunger Games*, but eventually there won't be ladies watching dude filled plays and seasons."

**We might help the world.** Women are always underrepresented in positions of money, power, and personal safety. This comes, as most inherent biases do, from a lack of understanding and empathy. If we see more stories of women on stages across the country and the world we can change that.

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Maybe what we really dream of is the day when plays by and about women would stop being "women's plays" and start being -- oh, y'know -- really successful, moneymaking, audience-supported, universal, true, bold, smart plays. Everyone wants those plays, no matter what your gender.

Theater audiences want the designers of theatrical seasons to pay attention to the women onstage. Count them (as Valerie Week is doing in The Bay). The women in your audiences will.

Joy Meads of Center Theater Group in LA says:

"It's frustrating that we have to have this conversation in 2012. But I've experienced this in my conversations about plays with colleagues across the country. Colleagues dismissing a play because its female protagonist was 'unlikable.' Producers should recognize that 'we just choose the best plays' is no longer an adequate defense: no one believes that there's a shadowy cabal of avowed misogynists determined to keep women offstage. We need to be brave and rigorous in examining the shadowy, unconscious ways gender bias influences our decision making."

Theater should be in the complex and necessary business of illuminating the human condition, of inspiring empathy and community, of provoking understanding, of
Steel Magnolias resource packet

entertaining and surprising and exposing and making beautiful the complete world of our time.

You know what helps that?

Telling everyone's stories.
**Steel Magnolias**

Written by Robert Harling of Natchitoches, “Steel Magnolias” carries on the successful tradition of the hit off-broadway play by the same title. The moving, bittersweet story line centers around six women in a small southern town who comes to terms with life, death and marriage. “Steel Magnolias” offers a most unique blend of comedy and tragedy as stars Sally Field, Dolly Parton, Shirley MacLaine, Daryl Hannah, Olympia Dukakis, and Julia Roberts weave the variety of southern life on film.

The film’s producer, Ray Stark, realized the potential of Harling’s work, and insisted on the best for its development. He proved this by securing an outstanding cast of stars, and by obtaining Herbert Ross as the film’s director. Additionally, he sought a location community that would reflect the endearing qualities of the story’s setting. Without question, the search ended where the story began: Natchitoches, Louisiana, the actual setting of the true life drama depicted in the movie.

The charming qualities of our 275 year old community and its friendly, caring people were a perfect blend for the filming. Throughout Natchitoches, the support that six characters extended to each other through the events in their lives is obvious. Weddings and receptions at elegant homes, fun and frolic at the “Festival of Lights,” and daily exchanges at the beauty shop are just a part of many scenes in this historic community.

Many well-known area locations, including Northwestern State University campus, the riverfront area on Front Street in the National Landmark Historic District, Trinity Episcopal Church, and the Henry Cook Taylor home were chosen for important scenes in the film. In fact, in the summer of 1988, this quiet smooth-running city became a flurry of activity.
and excitement as production for "Steel Magnolias" took place. Much of the city, and people from all over the region became involved by either acting or watching. Hundreds of local citizens were among those cast to fill the 2,500 parts.

The Henry Cook Taylor home is currently operating as a Bed & Breakfast.

Filming locations for "Steel Magnolias" offer an enjoyable walking/driving tour of Natchitoches.

http://www.natchitoches.net/history-culture/meaning-of-natchitoches/

Meaning Of Natchitoches

Legend and local "historians" have for many years erroneously interpreted the word "natchitoches" as "chinqapin" or "chinqapin eaters". The most accurate translation however, is believed to be as recorded by John R. Swanton in his early book "The Indian Tribes of North America".

"The word "Natchitoches" is generally supposed to be derived from "nashitosh", the native word for pawpaw, but an early Spanish writer, Jose Antonio Pichardo, was told that it was from a native word "nacicit"signifying "a place where the soil is the color of red ochre," and that it was applied originally to a small creek in their neighborhood running through red soil."

The Indian Tribes of North America by John R. Swanton

*NOTE: Chinquapin is the stand-in for Natchitoches in the play, and most likely refers to the Allegheny chinquapin chestnut species*

http://www.natchitocheschristmasfestival.com/christmas-past/

Lights, Fireworks, Parades And Meatpies

Contributed by Terry Isbell
from Old Natchitoches Parish Magazine

Part I

The Christmas Festival we know and love today had very humble beginnings. In 1920, Max Burgdof came to Natchitoches to install the Fairbanks-Morse electricity generators purchased by the Power & Light Department. He did such a good job that Mayor T.E. Poleman persuaded him to stay on as chief electrician. In 1926, Max, who'd found a home in Natchitoches, thought that stringing Christmas lights along Front Street would be a nice Christmas present from the Power & Light Department to the citizens of his adopted town. He and Councilman Alf Ortmeyer approached local businessmen with the idea and Foster & Glassell, Avoyelles Wholesale, and W.F. Taylor each put up $25.00, while other businesses put up lesser amounts. A small 10 watt light bulb had just become available and Mr. Burgdof used the money to acquire a small supply of them.

Interestingly enough, just like now, the town was of two minds about the lights. While most residents supported the idea, some thought using Power & Light employees to string the lights was a waste of public money. Those in favor of the lights won out, however, and over the next decade the lights were extended down Front Street, over to Church Street and across part of Second. Despite better financial support for the Christmas lights, Natchitoches seemed to prefer the inexpensive small bulbs so the Power & Light Department continued to use them. There was a down-side though. Since the colors faded, every bulb had to be hand dipped into a vat of dye before they could be restrung. Luckily, bulbs with interior frosting became available and made this job obsolete.
Part II

To complement the lights, Burgdof built the first set piece, an 8 foot tall Christmas Star, which as since been remodeled into a piece 21 feet across. After launching the lights, Max Burgdof would go on to become a local ice-manufacturing baron and Charles Solomon, his successor as chief electrician, picked up the “torch” of the Christmas lights. Today, he is probably the individual most identified with the lights. Mr. Solomon, with the help of his friend and co-worker Charles Maggio, built over 40 set pieces from either their own or submitted designs.

The Festival actually began when people in Natchitoches and the surrounding communities began to gather downtown on the first night the lights were turned on. This turning on of the lights became a community event but an informal one. Eventually, a committee of local businessmen under the direction of the Chamber of Commerce, began to plan and organize it (see page XX for a list of Festival Chairmen). The event quickly evolved into a festival, the Festival of Lights, which was a big hit. People from all over the region started coming to Natchitoches on the first Saturday in December.

Part III

It was in the late 1930’s that the Festival first featured fireworks. Two separate stories are told about how this came about. One story has it that in 1936, a couple of local businessmen, Allen T. Cox and Sam E. West, were discussing over coffee one morning, how the Festival could be jazzed up. They hit on the idea of fireworks. The two men enlisted the help of master Festival fundraiser Alf Ortmeyer, who raised $300.00 from local businessmen. Two of those businessmen, John Hamilton Cunningham and A.C. Massingill, took the money down to New Orleans both buy the rockets and learn how to shoot them off. While this is the most widely known story of how the Festival got its fireworks, there is another version.

This other version says that John Cunningham, Chairman of the Festival that year, and his friend, A.C. Massingill, were trying to decide how to make the 1939 Festival special, as it coincided with the 225th anniversary of the founding of Natchitoches. The Lighting Committee found it had a 400 dollars surplus in the budget due to the barge parade coming in under budget and was casting about for the best way to spend it. Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Massingill hit upon the idea of buying fireworks, and the rest his history. No matter how they got started, the fireworks were an immediate hit. Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Massingill would continue to shoot off the fireworks until John Cunningham was killed in World War II.

Every year, more money was raised for the fireworks (until a couple of years ago, the money was raised using roadblocks for voluntary donations or charging a voluntary admission fee to downtown), and the fireworks have continued to evolve into the incredible double display we see today.

Part IV

Along with the lights and the fireworks, one of the biggest crowd pleasers of the modern Festival are the parades. The “adult” parade, held in the early afternoon, came about as a way to attract people to town earlier in the day so that the merchants could benefit from their patronage. Prior to the introduction of the parade, the ‘Festival’ consisted of some church sponsored activities, perhaps a short patriotic program, then fireworks followed by the turning on of the lights. Northwestern State often had a football game in the early afternoon, which gave people something to do until dark, but took them away from the downtown merchants. For several years, Festival-goers would have to choose between the game and the parade. Gradually, the parade won. Actually, the afternoon parade became so popular, that the Festival quickly added a lighted-barge parade on the Cane.

The children’s parade made its debut in 1971. It was started in response to criticisms that there wasn’t much for children to do at the Festival. Traditionally held earlier in the day, it has a shorter route so as not to tire the children too much. This short route is deeply lined with proud grandparents armed with cameras and camcorder so as to record their grandchild for posterity.
Part V

The parades accomplished their purpose and people began to gather for the Festival early in the day. There has always been a desire not to “commercialize” the Festival, but the crowds got to the point that the existing merchants couldn’t feed them. The Festival committee decided to allow food booths and local churches and charities began to set them up. Most of these booths, then and now, featured the highly popular Natchitoches Meat Pie. Other types of food also became available, or as one Festival-goer put it, “if it swims, flies, hops, or crawls, you can find it there, deep-fried and on a stick”.

Part VI

The Festival went on break in 1941, when Natchitoches turned its attention to more serious matters. After the war, though, the town clamored for its return. In an effort to cut costs for the first revived Festival, the Committee had to drop the barge parade. In protest, several residents floated decorated war-surplus rubber rafts down the Cane.

In the late 1940’s and early 1950’s, the Festival really began to grow. Along with the growth, though, came increased expenses. Just like now, various ways of coping with the expense have been proposed, ranging from admissions fees to door to door solicitations. One of the long term fund raisers that developed in the late 40’s was the sale of programs. The Festival Programs listed the day’s events, information about Natchitoches and the Festival and most importantly paid advertising. Advertisers included: Live Oak Grocery on Second Street – “Right on The Corner and Right on the Price!”; Levy Rexall Drug Store on Front Street – “prescriptions filled by registered college graduates only”, and Standard Bakery on St. Denis – “Home of Freshy Bread”. These “Compliments of” ads both supported the Festival and brought Festival-goers into these businesses, but the Program’s popularity waxed and waned. Some years they sold well and other years they stacked up in the Chamber’s office. Finally, they were discontinued and the Natchitoches’ Time’s Tourism Tabloid took over the job of listing the Festival activities.

Part VII

In the 1950’s, two important additions to the Festival came about. Prior to 1957, the event had always centered around the theme of “Christmas in Song and Story”. In 1957, a contest was held to determine a new theme and the winner was “Joy to the World”. The contest has existed in various forms ever since (see page XX for a list of contest winners and themes). The other tradition with its roots in the 1950’s was the selection of Miss Merry Christmas and the Christmas Belles. Every parade needs beauty queens, and the 1956 Festival Committee (under Chairman W.R. Noah), decided the Festival needed its own beauty contest. The winner of that first contest was Miss Judy Hubley (see XX for list of Miss Merry Christmas). All the Miss Merry Christmases and the Christmas Belles have added immeasurably to the Festival, making numerous public appearances and caroling the tourists on Front Street. Despite Bobby Harling’s little joke in Steel Magnolias, none were ever caught with a Natchitoches mayor in a local motel room. They’ve all been young ladies of upstanding character as well as beauty.

An additional tradition that developed in the early 1950’s was the booking of Ms. Betty Brown as part of the entertainment. Ms. Brown was a State Champion Baton Twirler and throughout the 50’s and early 60’s, Ms. Brown and her student twirlers would be a fixture at every Christmas Festival.
WHAT'S YOUR SEASON? Having you colors “done”


Have you ever wondered which makeup colours would complement your own skin, hair, and eye colours? Back in the '80s, a huge movement existed that used seasons to determine just that. Were you a Winter or a Summer? And what colour palettes would go with said season? On and on the process went — there were even swatch books with fabric samples carefully customised by a colour expert so that the guesswork was taken out of each and every shopping trip. They were definitely on to something, though.


Also Carole Jackson, *Color Me Beautiful*

Bernice Kentner, *Color Me a Season*
EIGHTIES MUSIC/FASHION/HAIR

Big pop musicians: Michael Jackson, Madonna, Tina Turner, Cyndi Lauper, Cher, Hall and Oates

Big hard rock/heavy (glam) metal musicians: Def Leppard, Motley Crue, Bon Jovi, Whitesnake, Guns and Roses, Quiet Riot, Twisted Sister, Van Halen, Poison, Aerosmith, AC/DC

Other rock: U2


Soft/Classic Rock: Bruce Springsteen, Tom Petty, Stevie Nicks, Suzanne Vega, Beach Boys (Kokomo), Steve Miller Band (Abracadabra), Don Henley, Bryan Adams


R&B: Prince, Rick James, Lionel Richie, DeBarge, Whitney Houston, Janet Jackson

Country Pop: Kenny Rogers, Dolly Parton, Lynn Anderson, Ronnie Milsap, Barbara Mandrell, Crystal Gale

Traditional Country revival: Randy Travis, Dwight Yoakam, George Strait, Reba McEntire, The Judds (mother daughter connection), Patty Loveless, Travis Tritt, Alan Jackson

Other Country: Willie Nelson, Juice Newton


By the mid-eighties tills rang not with cash, but the increasing use of credit cards. It was all such a relief to the consumer to be able to spend and actively be encouraged to consume after years of recession. Clothing purchases soared. Interiors were decorated. Showing wealth was superficially powerful.

Advertisers gave a whole range of acronyms to groups of consumers in the 1980s. Looking at these acronyms does help to understand how advertisers identified recognisable groups in society in the consumer driven world of marketing 1980s fashion.

A typical acronym was DINKY which described an increasing section of society, the couples not necessarily married, but who were 'Double Income No Kids Yet.' The Dinky was the type of consumer that might be targeted for spending on fashion and status symbols like perfume, label goods and stylish kitchen items that might never be used.
Yuppie was a 1980s acronym for 'Young Upwardly Mobile Professional Person'. The word was coined by the advertising industry to capture the essence of a particular type of work hard, play hard, ambitious minded city career person of either sex.

http://www.fashion-era.com/power_dressing.htm

Fashion history reveals that the 80s fashion look was a tailored look. It was hard to go anywhere without at least a jacket, but preferably a complete suit. This was influenced by several movements including media influence on 1980s fashion through the popularity of TV dramas like 'Dynasty' and 'Dallas'. Costume dramas brought fashion into real everyday eighties life.

'Dynasty' the 1980s television fantasy soap series promoted fashions which enlarged the shoulder. One of the main characters was played by the naturally broad shouldered film star Linda Evans.

Nolan Miller, the Dynasty film set costume designer decided to go with her big shoulders and give slight emphasis to them. Every other actor had to be shoulder padded, but with more depth to match her shoulders.

In the 1980s 'Dynasty' was watched by a global audience of over 250 million viewers. Many who watched did so for a look at the 80's fashions which were always over the top and frankly camp. Throughout the 80s styles did filter to the mass market in watered down versions.

Costume jewelry saw a great revival and huge gold earrings, or pearl and gilt earrings that got bigger as the 80s decade progressed were the final finishing touch...Gilt buttons the size of earrings were also used on suits and charm bracelets with chunky gold charms were revived from the sixties.

By the 1980s, low pumps were made popular by Diana Princess Of Wales. The high heel did not totally disappear, but was kept for evening as more casual footwear such as trainers became important fashion statements for those who liked them. Their popularity was sealed when New York power dressed women walked to work in them during a transport strike.


Another source for the Linda Evans’ broad shoulder/Dynasty shoulder pad connection


Nolan Miller’s obit also confirms this detail
“[The 1980s] saw a rise in the number of female barbers. By the mid-1980s, about half of all barber students were women...” (pg. 54)

“Since the 1980s, the beauty industry has been paying more attention to women over forty, fifty, and beyond. Companies recognized that an increasing number of ‘baby boomers’—people born between 1945 and 1961—were over forty, and these consumers have tremendous buying power.” (pg. 26)

Possibly useful books:
https://cpl.bibliocommons.com/item/show/6833608048_hairstyles
https://cpl.bibliocommons.com/item/show/5213391048encyclopedia_of_hair
BEAUTY SHOP CULTURE

Facing the Mirror: Older Women and Beauty Shop Culture
By Frida Furman (http://www.amazon.com/Facing-Mirror-Older-Beauty-Culture/dp/0415915244)

“What is so safe there? Is it something about the shop culture that reminds me of my childhood in its more positive moments—time with grandmothers, aunts? What is so comforting and satisfying about talking about coat sales? Or exchanging, in a somewhat competitive mood, our latest physical maladies? There is something very affirming there. It is as if one feels nurtured without having to do anything in exchange, save nurture others, which comes naturally and is self-confirming, too.” (Intro, pg. 1)

“In the absence of factual knowledge about, and direct exposure to, older women, both mythic and prosaic stereotypes have come along to fill the vacuum: The Wicked Old Witch, the Old Bad Mother, the Little Old Lady ‘cloud the individuality of every woman past sixty.”—pg 2

“At Julie’s International Salon, the customers’ shared gender and age—among other factors—give rise to a lively community where women unabashedly discuss their aches and pains, their facial lines and double chins. The prohibitions of the public sphere against speaking about these matters are suspended. The beauty salon emerges as a site of support, friendship, and yes, moral action.”— pg. 6
Rubrecht's itinerary included visits to Lake Providence, Ruston, Natchitoches, Grayson, Jonesville, Donaldsonville, Hammond, Grand Isle and New Orleans.

In each he was supposed to concentrate on having a single respondent fill out the questionnaire -- which would take a week -- but in New Orleans he had three, an Uptown white person, an African-American, and what DARE would define as a "yat" -- "one who speaks a distinctive working-class white vernacular of New Orleans," taken "from the characteristic greeting, 'Where y'at?'"

DARE's editors also mapped the word-finds, and the volume includes 682 little maps with dots placed geographically to indicate where that word was encountered in the field worker's questionnaire.

There are food items from "tombouille," a thickened stew, to "wop salad," an Italian salad that Rubrecht encountered on a menu in Natchitoches, and one of the ethnic slurs that finds its way into regional slang and its dictionary.

--A recording of Natchitoches natives pronouncing phrases from the play

-- Youtube video featuring a moderate Louisiana twang
DIABETES
Liberty Twp. freshman to educate lawmakers on Type 1 Diabetes

Provided
Cameron Hall, of Liberty Twp., has been selected to go to Capitol Hill in July as part of JDRF’s Children’s Congress.

By Eric Schwartzberg
Staff Writer

LIBERTY TWP. —
Most teens’ summer plans include a job, camp or family vacation.

Cameron Hall, of Liberty Twp., is going to talk to the U.S. Congress.

The 15-year-old Lakota East student was selected by the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) among 1,500 applicants to represent southwest Ohio in Washington, D.C., July 13-15 as part of JDRF’s Children’s Congress.

Cameron will join 160 other children from around the country and six from overseas to visit Capitol Hill. There they’ll remind lawmakers that Type 1 Diabetes is a global problem that requires a global effort.

Delegates to JDRF’s Children’s Congress consists of children ages 4-17 representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia, plus six international delegates traveling from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Israel, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

Being chosen to represent the region is “just an incredible feeling,” Cameron said.

“There were so many people (who applied) that I really didn’t think I’d be picked,” he said. “It’s a big honor.”
Cameron became a youth ambassador with JDRF in 2010 after being diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes, an autoimmune disease where the body’s immune system attacks and destroys certain cells in the pancreas.

"A lot of people don’t really understand what children with diabetes have go through every day," Cameron said. “It affects my entire daily routine, but not only mine, but my entire family’s. It’s really a group effort. I have to check my blood sugar repeatedly every day. I have to watch it all day. I have to drink juices or eat snacks whenever it goes too low.”

JDRF’s Children’s Congress, which is held every other summer, includes congressional visits by the delegates and a congressional committee hearing, during which selected delegates and Type 1 Diabetes celebrity advocates will testify on the need for continued funding for Type 1 Diabetes research.

“More than 30,000 people right here in Southwest Ohio alone live with this disease and JDRF is steadfast in its mission to cure Type 1 Diabetes,” said Melissa Newman, JDRF Executive Director. “Children’s Congress gives Cam and the other delegates who all live with Type 1 Diabetes one unified voice to urge Congress to support diabetes research.”

In addition to advocating for JDRF, Cam and his family have supported the organization in many other ways.

Last year, Cameron served as a chapter youth ambassador and helped build awareness of JDRF and T1D in the greater Cincinnati community. His parents, Chelcy and Kendra, are also involved, having volunteered at many local events and supporting the JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes, Newman said.


American Diabetes Association Applauds the Passage of Ohio House Bill 264
Alexandria, VA, Virginia
June 12, 2014

Bill Will Ensure Children With Diabetes Are Safe at School

The American Diabetes Association (Association) is pleased to announce the passage of Ohio House Bill 264, a key piece of legislation in the fight to keep children with diabetes medically safe at school. This bill, which was signed into law today by Governor John Kasich, allows school staff to volunteer to be trained to assist children with diabetes with insulin administration and, in an emergency situation, to administer glucagon. In addition, the bill allows children, if they are capable to do so, to self-manage their diabetes while at school.

The bill was sponsored by Ohio State Representatives Lynn Wachtmann (R-District 81) and John Barnes (D-District 12). Both sponsors are members of the Health and Aging Committee and together, championed this legislation to keep children with diabetes safe at school in Ohio. In addition to support from within the state house, for two years, volunteer diabetes advocates from the American Diabetes Association have helped to raise awareness and build critical support to ensure the successful passage of the bill.

"The American Diabetes Association appreciates the support of House Bill 264’s sponsors, Representative Lynn Wachtmann and Representative John Barnes," said Gina Gavlak, RN, BSN, Chair, National Advocacy Committee, American Diabetes Association. "With Governor John Kasich's signature, this vital legislation provides students living with diabetes across Ohio access to the support and care they need to manage their diabetes and stay medically safe at school."

An estimated 208,000 children are living with diabetes in the United States. These children have a disease that must be managed 24/7, including the many hours spent at school. Every day, children with diabetes are put at serious risk if no one, including a school nurse, is present at school to help with daily and emergency diabetes care. House Bill 264 will remove that risk by allowing school staff to volunteer to be trained in school throughout Ohio to provide the diabetes care these children need and deserve to learn and be healthy.
To address barriers to diabetes care at school, the Association created its Safe at School campaign. Through this campaign, the Association is dedicated to making sure that all children with diabetes are medically safe at school and have the same educational opportunity as their peers.

The American Diabetes Association is leading the fight to Stop Diabetes and its deadly consequences and fighting for those affected by diabetes. The Association funds research to prevent, cure and manage diabetes; delivers services to hundreds of communities; provides objective and credible information; and gives voice to those denied their rights because of diabetes. For the past 75 years, our mission has been to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

For more information please call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-DIABETES (800-342-2383) or visit www.diabetes.org. Information from both these sources is available in English and Spanish.
GOOD FOR BUSINESS: CPH/PSQ Alliance and the Move Downtown

http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748703712504576236683591903882

After New York's Lincoln Center, PlayhouseSquare is the second-largest performing arts center in the country by audience capacity. Home to 10 performance spaces with a total of more than 9,000 seats, it attracts more than a million visitors to its approximately 1,000 performing-arts events annually.

Its budget of more than $60 million puts it ahead of the better-endowed Cleveland Orchestra and Cleveland Museum of Art. Two-thirds of PlayhouseSquare's annual budget supports the performing arts. One-third is reinvested in its real-estate ventures.

"The real-estate business is a working endowment for the theaters," said Gina Vernaci, vice president of theatricals for PlayhouseSquare. "The stages feed the neighborhood's excitement and vice-versa," she added. "People who work down here now think about PlayhouseSquare as a campus."

"It's no longer enough for performing arts centers to focus on what's on stage," said Lawrence P. Goldman, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center's founder, president and CEO. "This model is not only right but smart because it secures the urban environment around the arts center, which is good for the city and generates revenue..."

Ironically, the area's oldest and most highly regarded theater company, the Cleveland Play House, is moving its operations to PlayhouseSquare because real estate was a drain on its artistic resources. Until now, the 95-year-old theater was housed in a cultural no-man's land adjacent to the expanding Cleveland Clinic hospital complex in facilities constructed in the 1920s and added to in 1983 with a design by architect Philip Johnson. But as the Play House's current artistic director, Michael Bloom, said, "the move will allow us to focus on our mission, which is top-tier theater and education, and let PlayhouseSquare handle the real estate." Until now, some of his staff spent more time overseeing rental of their spaces than focusing on their theater projects.

"The hallmark of PlayhouseSquare is that they realized a successful theater district could only work if there was a successful neighborhood," Joe Roman, the president & CEO of the Greater Cleveland Partnership, said in a recent interview. "The business community expected a business rigor to what they were doing, and they got it. It's market-based and market-oriented. The theaters are the core, but now there's so much more. The project exceeded everyone's expectations."

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/02/realestate/commercial/clevelands-thriving-theater-district-makes-downtown-living-alluring.html?_r=0

But in Cleveland there's a more marquee reason people are moving downtown: the theater. PlayhouseSquare, a nonprofit that operates nine performance spaces in Cleveland's theater district, has run its own real estate services division since 1999. With last fall's opening of
Residences at Hanna, Playhouse Square took its first step into the world of residential real estate, an unusual project for an arts organization that is usually more concerned with renewing subscriptions than leases.

PlayhouseSquare is also in the middle of a $16 million transformation of the surrounding streetscape, with new signs, gateway arches and the renovation of a small commons featuring a food kiosk called Dynomite. On May 2, the organization will hold a lighting ceremony for its new, retro-looking electronic signage and a gigantic LED crystal chandelier that will hang over an intersection near the theaters.

In addition, two new restaurants will be opening in the next several months.

“It’s not just about what’s on stage,” said Art Falco, the president and chief executive of PlayhouseSquare. “It comes down to creating a vibrant area, too.”

Mr. Marinucci said that until occupancy reaches over 20,000, downtown is “still short” on the number of people needed for a truly round-the-clock neighborhood with significant pedestrian traffic. Amenities like drugstores and supermarkets are still lacking downtown, although Heinen’s, a local grocery chain, plans to open a 33,000-square-foot supermarket this fall some five blocks away from the Hanna as part of the renovation of a former bank building.

“The basic rule in real estate for 5,000 years is value is tied to location,” said Robert L. Lynch, the chief executive of Americans for the Arts, a nonprofit arts advocacy organization in Washington. “Whenever you can do something that enhances a location, you enhance the value. Art and theater are value enhancements.”

https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/cleveland-downtown-playhouse-square-arts-culture

PlayhouseSquare is now a power player both in the arts and in commercial and residential real estate, managing more than 2.3 million square feet. The revenues advance its arts mission and have been slowly changing the face of the city, Falco explains. “We are a long-term player — and we’re going to be here for many, many years — so we can take a long-term view and the types of retail tenants and restaurants that we would like to see in the neighborhood. We are not looking to turn a quick profit.”

“Our basic principle is to use the performing arts as the vehicle to create a critical mass,” says Falco. “But we also realize that to further develop
the neighborhood, we have to take a leadership position. We have been very aggressive in the acquisition of some of these properties. We have been leading the development of some buildings and vacant spaces that have been vacant for upwards of 20 years in order to create more vitality.”
GLOSSARY

Southern Hair (pg. 3)—Not a real magazine, but probably not dissimilar to real magazines Southern Beauty, Southern Living, etc.

McCall’s—a popular magazine aimed at women that started around 1890 and continued in various forms until 2002. It was known for publishing fiction by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Willa Cather, Ray Bradbury and others. It focused on children, home organizing and family issues, and featured the “Betsy McCall” paper doll.

Family Circle—popular magazine aimed at women, started in the 1930s and distributed at grocery stores like Piggly Wiggly and Safeway. Again focused on recipes and other articles aimed at a housewife.

Glamour—magazine founded in 1939 as “Glamour of Hollywood”, it originally focused on beauty and fashion of the stars before focusing on the beauty and fashion of the everyday woman, as well as health, career, relationships and other important women’s issues.

Mademoiselle—a fashion magazine that was aimed at college-aged women, often publishing short stories by noted female authors like Sylvia Plath and Joyce Carol Oates.

Ladies’ Home Journal—famous women’s magazine, featuring articles on domestic life and fine arts

Elizabeth Taylor (pg. 4)—legendary Hollywood actress, well-known for films like Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Suddenly Last Summer and Butterfield 8. She was equally well-known for her eight marriages, seven of which ended in divorce and one which ended with the tragic death of husband Mike Todd. She also suffered from alcoholism and drug addiction.

Chinquapin (Natchitoches) (pg. 5)—City and the parish seat of Natchitoches Parish. Pronounced “Chin-kah-pin” and “Nack-a-tish” respectively.

Zwolle, LA (pg. 5)—town in Sabine Parish, founded in 1898. Has the Zwolle Tamale Fiesta. Pronounced “Zuh-wall-ee”.

“I’ll swanee” (pg. 5)—A Southern woman’s expression, a euphemism for “I’ll swear”. http://www.bubblews.com/news/976439-quotwell-i039ll-swanneequot-origin-and-meaning

http://wadesdixieco.com/dont-cuss-say-i-swaneef/

LSU (pg. 7)—Louisiana State University, located in Baton Rouge, LA.

Baltimore, as “hairdo capital of the world” (pg. 7)—A moniker that has been mostly attributed to cult Baltimore filmmaker John Waters, whose film Hairspray was released just a year after Steel Magnolias. Baltimore is associated with the 1960s beehive hairdo.

Tickfaw, LA (pg. 8)—a village in Tangipahoa Parish.
Princess Di (pg. 9)—Diana, Princess of Wales, was married to Charles, Prince of Wales and Queen Elizabeth II’s eldest son, from 1981 to 1996. A much beloved public figure and icon who was known for her philanthropic work as well as for her other romances before her 1997 death.

Princess Grace (pg. 11)—Moniker for actress Grace Kelly after she married Prince Rainier III of Monaco. Princess Grace died in 1982 a day after she suffered a stroke and crashed her car.

Baby’s breath (pg. 12)—the colloquial nickname of the flower gypsophila. Often used in bouquets and weddings, the flower is associated with innocence and purity.

Jaclyn Smith (pg. 16)—Actress best known for playing Kelly Garrett on Charlie’s Angels. She also began her own fashion and clothing line in the 1980s.

Petroleum Club, Shreveport (pg. 17)—As quoted from the website, “The Petroleum Club of Shreveport traces its origins to a 1948 meeting of oil industry employees. The group, mostly draftsmen, geologists and engineers, believed working people in the oil industry needed a place downtown where they could enjoy lunch together.” (http://www.petroleumclub.com/)

Monroe/West Monroe (pg. 18)—two cities in Ouachita Parish, Louisiana.

Emily Post (pg. 19)—A woman born into a wealthy family who found mid-life success as the author of Etiquette—The Blue Book of Social Usage, first published in 1922. Her names lives on in the Emily Post Institute, an organization that continues to provide etiquette advice to newspapers and other places.

Magnolias (pg. 22)—Magnolia grandiflora, also known as the southern magnolia, is the official state flower of Louisiana.

“Dago” pie (pg. 23)—Dago has been considered an ethnic slur against people of Italian, Spanish or Portuguese origin. While the script doesn’t specify what a dago pie entails, hot dago sandwiches are popular, Italian-style meals.

“doesn’t know us from Adam’s house cat” (pg. 32)—“Don’t know him from Adam” is an idiom meaning that someone is totally unknown to the speaker. In this case, M’Lynn is saying that the usual group is unknown to Annelle. The oldest recorded use of the phrase is in a British court case in 1784. The “Adam’s house cat” appears to be a uniquely Southern one.

Christmas Festival (pg. 48)—Real celebration in Natchitoches. http://www.christmasfestival.com/

Wayne Newton (pg. 51)—an American pop and jazz singer who has been a top Las Vegas entertainment act for more than fifty years. While there is no evidence that he ever was the grand marshal for Natchitoches’ Christmas Festival, he was the grand marshal of Newark, Ohio’s bicentennial parade in 2002.

Born Again Christian (pg. 53)—Referring to a specific movement popular in Evangelical Christianity, particularly in the United States. Being “born again” refers specifically to someone making a conscious commitment to accept Jesus Christ as lord and savior—as opposed to simply being raised in a specific religious tradition.
Pecan Tassies (pg. 54)—A recipe like a miniature Pecan Pie

Dry Prong, LA (pg. 55)—a village in Grant Parish, Louisiana.

Hawaii Five-O (pg. 57)—American police procedural that aired for 12 seasons, from 1968-1980. The theme song, performed by Rock and Roll Hall of Fame members The Ventures, reached no. 4 on the Billboard Hot 100 pop chart.

Mr. Coffee (pg. 65)—Coffee machine brand

Cosmo girls (pg. 66)—Most likely referring to Cosmopolitan magazine, which focuses on relationships and sex from a woman’s perspective, as well as on careers, self-improvement and beauty.

Dark Victory (pg. 67)—1939 drama starring Bette Davis as a woman with a malignant brain tumor.

Elizabeth Arden, red front door (pg. 67)—Florence Nightengale Graham was a cosmetics pioneer who founded Elizabeth Arden Inc. The trademark red door comes from the first salon location Arden opened in 1910, on Fifth Avenue in New York City.

Track lighting (pg. 71)—A system of lighting that was often used in store window displays and became particularly popular in home decorating in the 1970s and 1980s.

Pate (pg. 72)—pronounced “pah-tay”, it is a mixture of seasoned ground meat or vegetables that can be made into a spreadable paste.

The Little Theatre (pg. 74)—not necessarily based on a real place in Louisiana. If Clairee is driving up to Monroe, she could be going to the Strauss Little Theatre of Monroe—who incidentally was the first community theatre to receive the rights to produce Steel Magnolias. (http://www.strausstheatrecenter.com/about-us.html)

Bloomingdale’s, NY (pg. 74)—one of New York City’s most famous department stores, which opened in 1927 on the Upper East Side in Manhattan.

Woman’s Day (pg. 74)—a women’s magazine that specializes in food, nutrition and fashion and lifestyle advice.

Camp Crossroads (pg. 79)—No official Christian summer camp found in the Ozarks with this name, but there are plenty of organizations just like it, with programs for adults as well as children—like Shepherd of the Ozarks and Woodland Acres Bible Camp, both found in Northern Arkansas.

30th wedding anniversary (pg. 82)—There is a traditional list of gifts associated with certain wedding anniversaries in the United States. The origins of this tradition are unclear, but there are theories that the tradition originated in the U.K. during the Victorian era. The gifts increase in value the longer a couple is married; the 1st anniversary is paper, and the 30th anniversary is pearl.

Piggly Wiggly (page. 83)—a supermarket chain that operates in the Midwestern and Southern United States.
Dixie Plaza Shopping Center (pg. 83)—real shopping center in Natchitoches.

Dialysis (pg. 84)—A treatment for kidney failure that imitates the functions of a healthy kidney by cleaning the patient’s blood. Shelby is likely receiving hemodialysis, the most common form of treatment, where a machine is hooked up to your bloodstream and serves as an artificial kidney.

Circus of the Stars (pg. 89)—Was an annual variety television special that was broadcast on CBS from 1977 to 1994. Celebrities would perform circus-like acts, such as tumbling and aerial dance. Magic tricks like sawing someone in half do not appear to be an actual part of the show.

Cher, ribs taken out (pg. 89)—A notorious rumor/urban legend that has dogged the actress and singer Cher since at least 1988, when it was reported in the magazine Paris Match that she had two ribs removed to maintain a “boyish” figure. While Cher successfully sued the publication eventually, it didn’t stop other outlets from picking up the false story.

Reader’s Digest (pg. 94)—A general interest family magazine which was the best-selling consumer magazine for many years until 2009.

Baton Rouge, LA (pg. 94)—The Louisiana state capital and a popular tourist spot.

Anne Boleyin, six fingers (pg. 95)—The second wife of King Henry VIII and the mother of Queen Elizabeth I. A Catholic propagandist named Nicholas Sanders was the first to describe Anne as having six fingers, among other defects, to discredit her and her daughter, long after Anne’s death. She was reported to have a vestigial second nail on one figure, which may be the source of Sanders’ myth.

Soul food (pg. 97)—A term with a specifically African-American connotation that refers to Southern cooking, which can trace its origins to The Autobiography of Malcolm X.

Deputy Dawg (pg. 98)—A television series created by the Terrytoons animation studio that originally aired from 1962–63. It revolved around the central character, who was a deputy sheriff in the Southern United States. The series relied on its fair share of Southern stereotypes.

“Doing our Jane Fonda” (pg. 101)—In the 1980s Hollywood actress Jane Fonda began a second career as a home-fitness instructor, releasing Jane Fonda’s Workout on VHS in 1982. She continued releasing videos throughout the decade.

“give their eyeteeth” (pg. 103)—Eyeteeth refer to a person’s canines in the upper arch of their jaw, so-called because the teeth lie directly below the eye-socket. The related idiom, “cut one’s eyeteeth”, signifies growing older and gaining wisdom, because the canines are generally the last adult teeth to grow in. Therefore eyeteeth are considered valuable symbols of knowledge and experience, and sacrificing them would be a big deal. (http://www.worldwidewords.org/qa/qa-giv3.htm)