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Small Change? Emily Post's *Etiquette* (1922–2011)

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In the contemporary book market, nonfiction genres such as biography and self-help command considerable sales,¹ yet “bestseller” is still a term primarily associated with fiction (the nature of that fiction is explored in this book).² This chapter examines a nonfiction text which has been a bestseller for nine decades, and the pre-eminent example of American advice literature, Emily Post's *Etiquette*. In catering to the social needs and aspirations of its readers, *Etiquette* has *described* as well as *prescribed* US social interaction and is, therefore, a useful tool in calibrating the changing nature of the American dream. Succeeding members of the Post family have renewed the book's content and thereby ensured its continued popularity. By examining these processes of change—of authorship and content—this chapter shows how nonfiction bestsellers maintain and rejuvenate their markets in a manner quite distinct from the majority of bestsellers which are relatively unchanging works of fiction, bound up with their original authors.

***Etiquette*, self-help, and America**

Collectively, the successive editions of *Etiquette*³ form perhaps the best-known American example of the group of etiquette and

manners guides, which can be understood as a small sub-section of a larger cultural category, self-help, which is in turn a highly commercially successful strand of the nonfiction market, along with lifestyle genres including cookbooks, biography and reference titles, and textbooks on a range of subjects. Self-help has a long history in the United States, with roots in the chapbooks exchanged by settlers, which combined fairy tales with sermons with a guiding purpose.⁴ But while etiquette shares with spiritual literature a concern for doing what is right and good, and the processes of compassion and judgment, it is principally a civil practice concerned with impression management in the social world rather than the next world, the here and now rather than the hereafter.

Etiquette has two basic functions, more and less benign: its codes are intended to regulate social interaction to achieve a smooth and considerate result, and to provide a framework within which to judge others. In pursuing the interpersonal aims of courtesy, hospitality, and ease, etiquette writers have much to say about the things with which we surround ourselves, from the clothes we wear, and the way we decorate our homes, to the accoutrements of home entertaining. Etiquette writers, therefore, share many concerns with the authors of the larger swathe of didactic literature which aims to assist Americans in almost every sphere of life, from the decorating and lifestyle books which invite readers to express their identities through a particular assemblage and use of consumer goods (e.g. Elsie de Wolfe's classic *The House in Good Taste*), to the self-help manuals which suggest ways of managing our personal relationships and love lives (such as Alex Comfort's infamous *The Joy of Sex*), to the guides to home entertaining which encourage us to undertake the social and domestic labor of opening our homes and kitchens to friends and family (for instance, Martha Stewart's launch pad *Entertaining*).⁵ All are united in the provision of commodities—books—which can be purchased and read as a way of furthering a sense of self, of who we are and who we *want* to be. Richard Ohmann has made a connection between the discrete areas upon which advice literature has fastened: “Together, manners and material culture partially unveil for our contemplation a style and an ethos well suited to the aspirations of middle class people in growing industrial and commercial cities.” The “work in tandem” of the advertising industry and “magazine entrepreneurs” has accelerated the “tight

linkage of social identity with the purchase and use of commodities, including cultural products.”⁶

As the pre-eminent etiquette guide and one of the most popular advice books in the United States, and indeed global, publishing history, Post's *Etiquette* has played a key role in the development of specifically American manners.⁷ The content and success of *Etiquette* provide evidence of a society that, while theoretically classless—or at least largely homogenized into a self-identified and broadly defined middle class—is practically well-versed in reading subtle delineations of class codes from mien, gesture, expression, and behavior, as well as dress, accessories, and possessions.⁸ Post's *Etiquette* has serviced an aspirational need in US society for guidance on integration and upward-mobility. Clearly, aspiration is not a uniquely American quality, but the popularity of commoditized advice within the United States market is symptomatic of an American dream of self-improvement, and *Etiquette* provides a pre-eminent case study for reading its American form.

Both the self-help genre and its main market, the middle class, have roots in Victorian Britain,⁹ yet the self-help genre merits serious scholarly attention as a route to understanding more about specifically *American* aspirations. Sue Currell has critiqued the role of self-help in educating servants of American capitalism, primarily during the Great Depression, both within and beyond the United States,¹⁰ while for Micki McGee, the “self-fulfillment and self-improvement” promised by self-help authors are perceived as “an antidote to economic uncertainty.”¹¹ Sandra K. Dolby observes that, both domestically and overseas, “people do associate the genre with America. Most of the authors are American, and evidently so are most of the readers.” However, self-help is not taken seriously: “Many people seem embarrassed by the fact that self-help books are so popular in America.”¹²

In recent years, self-help has been the subject of several polemical critiques. Business studies professor Paul Damien has accused self-help authors of misrepresenting research and manipulating buzzwords for profit. For Steve Salerno, the buoyancy of the self-help market exemplifies its inefficacy: if self-help books worked, the afflicted reader would need only one book rather than the succession of titles typically consumed by the self-help addict. Conversely, Dolby argues, readers keep on buying self-help books to “reinforce their optimism,” “they allow these books to mediate between the

values of the culture . . . and their personal values. Through the process of reading self-help books, readers ‘experience’ abstract American culture concretely, personally.”¹³ Both etiquette books and self-help guides, market constantly updated solutions, and also assert their authoritative status and shed light on American ideals. Notwithstanding their shared concerns, recent attempts to better understand the significance of self-help have ignored etiquette.¹⁴ And, while several sociological studies have examined etiquette’s underlying significance, it has been overlooked by literary scholars. This is perhaps a result of its perceived low literary value: even Elias called advice “worthless as literature.”¹⁵ A contribution of this chapter, therefore, is an examination of the pre-eminent American etiquette book within the contexts of self-help and the American bestseller.

From post to posts

Emily Post’s early biography foregrounds the importance of class and gender to the genesis and content of her *Etiquette*. Her conformism to, and deviation from, patterns of upper-class respectability informed the advice she set out in her book. Emily Price was the daughter of architect Bruce Price, who designed the exclusive Tuxedo Park residential area where Post partly grew up.¹⁶ Her early life followed an upper-class pattern, with a private education followed by a season as a debutante and marriage to a banker Edwin Post. However, her divorce from him in 1906 signaled a departure from convention, even as it anticipated the later normality of divorce. In another unusual step for a woman of her social standing, Post made the (questionable) claim that she wrote from financial necessity.¹⁷ Her journalism appeared in national titles such as *McCall’s*, *Harper’s*, and *Vanity Fair*, and she published five novels between 1904 and 1910.¹⁸ In 1915, Post was again in the vanguard when she “drove” from New York to San Francisco for a series of articles for *Collier’s Magazine* (later published as a book, *By Motor to the Golden Gate*) before cars and passable roads had become integral features of American society.¹⁹

Post’s defining book was *Etiquette in Society, in Business, in Politics, and at Home* of 1922. Her account of the book’s genesis, disseminated in her son’s biography *Truly Emily Post*, was that Frank

Crowninshield, editor of *Vanity Fair* magazine and Richard Duffy, an editor at Funk & Wagnalls, persuaded her to write the book and that only the inadequacy of a competing title convinced her to do so.²⁰ By 1922, Post was a 51-year-old “society matron;” historian Arthur Schlesinger suggested that her *Etiquette* was motivated by a desire to preserve the social codes in which she had been schooled.²¹ However, Post had been writing advice for magazines since 1911 at which point she had proposed an advice book to her agent.²² In fact, Post’s fictionalized version of events better resembles the development of 18-year-old New York advertising copywriter Lillian Eichler’s *Book of Etiquette* (1921) which was written at her publisher’s suggestion following customer complaints about the outdated nature of Emily Holt’s *Everyman’s Encyclopedia of Etiquette* of 1901, which Eichler had been marketing.²³

Eichler’s and Post’s books were both bestsellers. Post’s book reached number one in the 1923 nonfiction bestseller list and number four the following year. Because Eichler’s book sold more than a million copies from the first edition of 1921 up to 1945, it was thought to better suit contemporary needs than Post’s *Etiquette*, which sold two-thirds of a million copies during the same period.²⁴ However, in part due to Post’s capitulation on the issue of chaperonage and other symptoms of modernity, discussed below, the longevity of her text distinguishes it from competing titles. Amy Vanderbilt’s *Complete Book of Etiquette* (1952) sold 900,000 copies in its first half year and enjoyed four editions in the first five years,²⁵ but along with Frances Benton’s *Etiquette*, which reached number 4 in 1956, Post’s book was the only etiquette guide in the *Publisher’s Weekly* general nonfiction bestseller lists during the twentieth century. Post’s book is well represented in contemporary bestselling etiquette lists, as the 75th Anniversary edition (1997) was followed by the 17th edition of 2004 and the 18th edition of 2011.²⁶ Today, Eichler is best known for her spiritual titles, whereas Post’s name has become synonymous with etiquette.²⁷ Post’s *Etiquette* featured in the 1998 Celebrate the Century USPS stamps series, along with Margaret Mitchell’s 1936 bestseller *Gone with the Wind*, Dr Seuss’s *The Cat in the Hat* and achievements including the first flight, the polio vaccine, and the moon landings.²⁸ Emily Post’s increasing influence is reflected in the occasional changes to the title of her *Etiquette*. The 1922 and 1927 editions had the full title *Etiquette in Society, in Business, in Politics and at Home*. From 1928, the

title changed to *Etiquette: "the Blue Book of Social Usage,"* with the inverted commas indicating a common moniker for the book; the term "blue book" denoted definitive information, following the output of Automobile Blue Book Company.²⁹ A later title *Emily Post's Etiquette* referred to the original author even while the work of revising and writing was increasingly distributed among family members.

In addition to overseeing ten editions (in 90 printings) of *Etiquette*, Post wrote the comedic *How to Behave though a Debutante: Opinions by Muriel as Overheard by Emily Post* (1928); *Letters We Write* (1935); *Children are People* (1940); *The Emily Post Cook Book*, with her son Edwin (1949) and a pamphlet, *Motor Manners* (1950). Post's fame was extended from 1931 when she broadcast etiquette advice on the radio and wrote a syndicated daily newspaper column. In 1946, 51 years before Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia was launched, Post founded the Emily Post Institute partly to help answer the extensive correspondence she received from readers and also to train assistants to continue her work. Described on the flyleaf of the 18th edition of *Etiquette* as "one of America's most unique family businesses," the Emily Post Institute represents a model of American enterprise, branding the name, signature, and authority of the late Emily Post in books, TV and radio broadcasts, blogs, films, and live events such as seminars.

Following Post's death in 1960, The Emily Post Institute has extended the production of *Etiquette* and its bestseller status, beyond the life of its original author. From 1965 to 1995, granddaughter-in-law Elizabeth L. Post (1920–2010) oversaw five editions of *Etiquette*, revising Emily's text for the 11th and subsequent editions, and writing the 14th edition, *Emily Post's Etiquette*.³⁰ The mantle was passed to great-granddaughter-in-law Peggy Post, wife of Allen Post, who wrote the 16th and 17th editions. The 18th edition of *Emily Post's Etiquette* (2011) subtitled "Manners for a New World," is dedicated to "all of our mothers who have made this book possible." This new book was "led" by Peggy Post, and "welcomes a new generation of Posts—Anna Post, Lizzie Post, and Daniel Post Senning—the great-great-grandchildren of Emily Post." Among this fourth generation, Peter Post's daughter Lizzie Post has written a book *How Do You Work This Life Thing?* (2007) aimed at 18–25-year-olds, and Anna Post has written *Emily Post's*

Wedding Parties (2007), and an erstwhile blog, "What Would Emily Post Do?" recalling in name if not in content, the perennial question "What Would Jesus Do?"³¹ Additional Emily Post Institute products for business users and men have been overseen by Emily's great-grandson Peter Post, and great-granddaughter Cindy Post Senning (Ed.D) has written books for children and teens with Peggy Post, while at least two films have used Post's writing.³² *Etiquette* is not only a bestseller, it is also dynastic if not matriarchal. The production of *Etiquette* replicates the passing down of advice through the generations common to most families, a process integral to the generative structuralism developed by historical sociologist and pre-eminent scholar of manners, Norbert Elias, and later by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, to understand the mechanics of social change.³³

Changes of authorship have enabled a single bestseller to grow into a multimedia brand, with many related authors producing a range of products and services for distinct target markets. The Emily Post Institute perpetuates Post as a Betty Crocker-style figurehead³⁴ for a range of products, both present and not present, authenticating but inauthentic; Betty Crocker products use Crocker's invented "signature" just as the successive editions of *Etiquette* carry Post's signature, a registered trademark of The Emily Post Institute and a personal assurance of quality, integrity, and authority. However, Emily Post's *Etiquette* is now written by a family group of four authors: the 18th edition of 2011 adds to the authority of one woman, earned and reinforced over 90 years, the authority of the committee of collaborating authors each contributing her or his different expertise.

A new *Etiquette* for a new century?

Two of the most influential etiquette books of the American twentieth century, Eichler's and Post's, appeared within a year of one another. In 1946, Historian Arthur M. Schlesinger retrospectively described these titles as "a new etiquette for a new era."³⁵ More recently, sociologist Jorge Ardití has followed Schlesinger in asserting that Post's and Eichler's books not only brought "a breath of fresh air to a rather suffocating situation" but also restored "the connection between manners and the structures of social life at the time."

Arditi makes the qualification that “it was only in comparison to the turn-of-the-century manuals that Post’s and Eichler’s seemed to involve a discontinuous transformation. From a longer historical perspective, they involved a continuation of a process that began much earlier.”³⁶ Etiquette manuals of the 1920s responded to World War I, expanded immigration into the United States and—as we can see retrospectively—the conditions which led to the Great Depression and later World War II. Post’s and Eichler’s books serviced a desire for self-improvement in a shifting social framework and a challenging employment market. They bear comparison, therefore, with Dale Carnegie’s 1936 *How to Win Friends and Influence People* of 1936, a manual of how to get ahead in the depression-era workplace.³⁷ Joan Shelley Rubin has characterized the interwar market as “less deferential and more enamored of business than its nineteenth-century counterpart.”³⁸ For Rubin, “the post-World War I era tended to buttress, rather than to erode, the ideology of culture as it has evolved throughout the nineteenth century,” while between 1920 and 1930, a growing book market was supported by prosperity, increased leisure time, the doubling of both college graduates and high school enrolments, and literary and educational radio broadcasting.³⁹

In fact, a sense of a new era needing a new etiquette has been a constant feature of advice publishing.⁴⁰ The sense of perpetual change expressed in advice literature, on behalf of readers, has sustained a robust publishing industry, in which each new title attempts to respond more effectively to current need. Etiquette discourse in America has shifted in form and content, from the sermons published in seventeenth-century chapbooks to the autodidactic films available on Youtube, and from guidance on how to treat servants to online chat room etiquette. This combination of a constantly changing social and economic context and an oscillation between *describing* and *prescribing* makes advice literature, self-help discourse and, specifically, etiquette books, sensitive tools for the analysis of social ideals and their written expression. Continual reinvention aims to avoid dismissal of etiquette as old-fashioned and irrelevant to contemporary social and business. In his monumental study of magazines, *Selling Culture*, Richard Ohmann acknowledged that: “Granted, etiquette books may be a genre of utopian dreaming more than of ethnography” but their profusion suggests a “preoccupation with gentility among middle class people.”⁴¹ Advice books bear no

more relation to lived experience than do magazine articles, radio broadcasts, and novels, and yet each has much to tell the cultural historian about past ideals and the development of the American dream.⁴²

Ironically, it was Post's willingness to change her advice in response to the conditions of modernity which ensured her bestselling book's definitive status. Historical sociologist Norbert Elias argued that by reading published advice produced over the long term—the *Annales* School's *longue durée*—we perceive broader social changes. We can infer, argued Elias, that points of advice which were once included and are now omitted from etiquette books have been internalized by society and no longer need stating. This runs the risk of oversimplification; some points of advice which we might regard as unwritten rules of commonsense occasionally make their way into published advice. For example, a reviewer of the 18th edition cited the following point of advice as indicative of a tendency to state the obvious: "Use caution going around the corners of buildings to avoid a collision with someone coming round the other way". Roger that." However, numerous changes have been made to the structure and content of *Etiquette* over its 90 years in print, with additions, excisions, and omissions each giving the careful reader pause for thought. Far from being definitive, *Etiquette* is a work under continual revision. Its historical value is best revealed when the various editions of *Etiquette* are read retrospectively and comparatively.⁴³

When compared with the starting point of the 1922 edition, textual changes introduced by 1940 include restaurant etiquette, "Manners for Motorists;" "Modern Exactions of Courtesy" (on smoking, radios, punctuality, telephones, and socializing when ill), which is reduced to "Etiquette for the Smoker" by 1960; "What we contribute to the beauty of living" (on neighborliness, in-laws and sending flowers); "American Neighborhood Customs" and "Saying 'No' to Cocktails." These are carried forward largely unchanged into the 1960 edition, with the further addition of a penultimate chapter "The Flag of the United States." In the 14th edition of 1984, Elizabeth L. Post responds to two trends which have "profoundly affected modern society and our manners": "Your Professional Life" deals with the increasing numbers of women working outside the home and "Your Personal Life" examines, among other issues, the social status of single people.⁴⁴ The 2004 edition adopts a

completely different structure organized around nine parts including, in addition to those already mentioned, “Everyday Etiquette,” “Communication and Protocol,” “Celebrations and Ceremonies,” “Weddings,” “You and Your Job” and “Travel and Leisure.” This leads to a radically different sequence for approximately 50 (sometimes retitled) chapters which appear in earlier editions. For example, part two, “Relationships,” juxtaposes topics which were previously compartmentalized within a sequence of chapters that progressed with increasing intimacy from introductions, and social engagements, to dating, engagements, weddings, christenings, funerals, etiquette for children and travel, akin to a theoretical life course. “Relationships” thereby draws connections, unacknowledged in previous editions, between dating, neighborliness, illnesses, and domestic staff, recognizing that appropriate communication is at the heart of ostensibly discrete areas of our lives, however intimate or functional and emphasizing the interpersonal skills which are the stock-in-trade of self-help books. The 2011 edition clusters eight parts into three clusters concerning “Etiquette Every Day,” “Life in the Workplace,” “Life Stages and Special Times” plus a reference section, “Resources.” Social networking technologies are foregrounded wherever possible: Part III “Communication and Technology” deals with conversation, letters, titles, telephone manners, personal communication devices and computers, while Part IV has a chapter “Social Networking” and Part VIII, “Weddings” considers the benefits and drawbacks of smartphones and emails, social networking sites, and wedding websites.⁴⁵

The most famous change Post made to her *Etiquette* concerns chaperonage. Post’s 1922 chapter “The Chaperon and Other Conventions” was revised in 1936 as “The Vanishing Chaperon and Other Lost Conventions.” The 1922 edition states that while the most effective chaperon is a girl’s own sense of ethics, accompaniment by an actual chaperon is usually necessary for propriety. By 1940, Post accepts “Today’s Reversal of Yesterday’s Precepts;” among “Proprieties That Have Been Repealed,” are girls and young women acting as hostesses without chaperones.⁴⁶ As a successful debutante, Post had herself benefited from chaperonage and her retreat on this issue has been deemed wistful.⁴⁷ One reviewer described the second edition as “‘putting a kick in etiquette to pacify flaming youth.’”⁴⁸ Post admitted that readers’ letters informed the revision and the 1940 edition includes “Answers to Readers’ Questions” in which

she responds directly to changing attitudes and displays her own up-to-date opinions: "I have an enormous sympathy and liking for what I should call the 'typical moderns' of the young generation. I like their honesty of outlook, their complete frankness (if given a chance to be frank)." ⁴⁹ In the tenth edition of 1960, the questions and answers have been cut and the chapter has been renamed again, as "The Chaperon and Her Modern Counterparts." Post maintains that "there are still a few situations in which a genuine chaperon is required" but "parental *training* has largely taken the place of the chaperon's *protection*." ⁵⁰ Girls wishing to decline the advances of men who have accompanied them home after a party are, in 1940, told to say "Sorry! It's against rules. Good night" whereas in 1960, the line is "Sorry, another time . . . good night." ⁵¹ The 1940 chapter, "The Vanishing Chaperon" is preceded by a chapter "Popularity, Fraternity House Party and Commencement" and followed with "Modern Man and Girl;" in 1960, these have been retitled "At College" and "Dating" with a brevity characteristic of the later text, which addresses largely the same structure of chapters within 671 pages rather than the 893 pages of the 1940 edition. By 2004, the chaperone has neither chapter nor an entry in the index, but in a simplified structure which groups 48 chapters into nine parts, one part is devoted to "Children and Teens" with reader questions and answers reinstated. Chaperones are mentioned here in relation to high school proms and graduation parties and "parents, while they're still chauffeuring for teens, should make sure that these courtesies are observed." ⁵² In the 18th edition of 2011, the chaperone is absent from the main text and the index, but she is mentioned in the prefatory "note to readers":

Long gone are the 1st edition chaperone and the 12th edition ashtrays at the dinner table and white gloves; they have been replaced by topics that have relevance to the daily lives of most Americans today, such as managing new communications forums and devices, having confidence at work, and navigating new family structures and dynamics. ⁵³

This sampling above shows a gradual response to a changing social situation, rather than an about-face. Post accommodated social changes attendant upon modernity while also continuing to uphold what she regarded as fundamental etiquette.

Aside from the much-discussed issue of chaperonage, countless other changes to the successive editions of *Etiquette* have responded to broader social change. Claridge notes the difference one word can make, as the 1922 section “One’s Position in the Community” became, in 1927 “Making One’s Position in the Community.”⁵⁴ Post’s 1922 *Etiquette* infamously assumed a staffed household—even the section “Dinner-Giving with Limited Equipment” presupposed the assistance of cook, waitress, and chambermaid—whereas by 1940, a social shift toward unstaffed households is recognized and by 2004, readers wishing to host a very formal dinner are advised to hire staff.⁵⁵ Both the treatments of chaperonage, and the changing role of the hostess, suggest greater dynamism in the prescribed roles for women than for men, although this impression may be skewed by the extent to which etiquette books, and domestic advice books more generally, dwell on women’s roles to the near exclusion of those for men, because women are associated with the home and its labor, whether emotional or physical, and represent the main market for etiquette and self-help books. Post’s *Etiquette* has remained a perennial bestseller as much by responding to, and describing, current practice as by anticipating, or prescribing, future practice. Post and her successors have told readers what is *done* as well as what *to do*. Historian of American manners, Gerald Carson, neatly summarized the paradox: “Mrs. Post’s text was under constant revision for years, for she was astute enough to follow in order that she might lead.”⁵⁶

Changing form

Over the 90 years of *Etiquette*, the book’s form has changed along with its content. Post’s approach to writing advice drew on her experience as a novelist, as well as her journalism. *Etiquette* is dedicated: “To you my friends whose identity in these pages is veiled in fictional disguise.” Those members of Post’s social circle who opened the pages of *Etiquette*—it was not intended for them, as they had no need for Post’s guidance—would have read the book as much as a *roman à clef* than a manual of manners. Post’s 1922 chapter on “Formal Dinners” describes Mrs. Worldly ordering “her secretary to invite the Oldworlds, the Eminent, the Learned, the Wellborns, the Highbrows, and the Onceweres”:

It will not do to ask the Bobo Gildings, not because of the difference in age but because Lucy Gilding smokes like a furnace and is miserable unless she can play bridge for high stakes, and, just as soon as she can bolt through dinner, sit at a card table; while Mrs. Highbrow and Mrs. Oncewere quite possibly disapprove of women's smoking and are surely horrified at "gambling." . . . So she ends by adding her own friends the Kindharts and the Normans, who "go" with everyone. . . . The endeavor of a hostess, when seating her table, is to put those together who are likely to be interesting to each other. Professor Bugge might bore *you* to tears, but Mrs. Entomoid would probably delight in him; just as Mr. Stocksan Bonds and Mrs. Rich would probably have interests in common.⁵⁷

Biographer Claridge has suggested that "Emily created vivid fictional characters in her own text" in order to "appear at least among the minor league of the day's novelists" with some success: writer Gertrude Atherton judged that *Etiquette* read "like a fine high-society novel."⁵⁸

Jorge Ardití has written persuasively of a transformation in the discourse of etiquette from narrative treatises to reference books, from discussions of ethics to lists of pointers, as associated with a shift from character to "decentred" personality.⁵⁹ In the case of *Emily Post's Etiquette*, we might apply this notion of decentered personality not only to the conduct recommended but also to its authorship, as Emily's original work on the book was subsequently distributed among several of her descendents. But while Ardití recognizes that Post's 1922 *Etiquette* has narrative qualities, the fact that she *continued* to use fictionalized vignettes that were both episodic and intertextual is overlooked. Post's character "Mrs. Three-in-One" was developed for the 1927 edition in response to reader's questions and personal observation and attained a life beyond the pages of *Etiquette*—akin to that of the eponymous Mrs. Grundy—by appearing in an eponymous chapter in later editions, at a dessert bridge party in another chapter and also in *The Personality of the House*. Appropriately, Post herself has enjoyed the same intertextual status as Mrs. Grundy, as exemplified on the pages of other advice books: in 1937, Betty Allen and Mitchell Pirie Briggs cautioned teenagers "Those who gobble and grab are not Emily Posted."⁶⁰ She became known for a Bunyanesque tendency

to enliven her advice by giving her “characters” allegorical names appropriate to their behavior such as “Mrs. Stranger,” “Mrs. Kindhart,” and “Mrs. Oldname,” and the continuance of this strategy was remarked upon even in 1970, ten years after Post’s death.⁶¹ By using character names, Post imbues her advice with an additional layer of significance and we are able to read more into the situations so briefly sketched.

In maintaining a narrative approach to advice-giving during a period associated by Arditì with a wider shift from treatise to reference work, Post distinguished her work from that of other advice writers. Given this distinctive feature, and her unparalleled success, it is tempting to conclude that Post’s narrative approach may have contributed to the bestseller status achieved by her *Etiquette*. In 1950, Funk and Wagnalls made cuts to “a few of the mise-en-scènes” and “Emily’s Gilded Age loquaciousness” in spite of the praise earlier editions had garnered from luminaries such as Edmund Wilson and F. Scott Fitzgerald, with an underwhelming effect on sales.⁶² The tenth edition of 1960 appeared in the year of Post’s death, when her influence over the text was clear and she was still cited as the sole author. In it, we find numerous micro-narratives. For example, the contents page offers a wealth of indicative subtitles for each portion of each chapter, as her for Chapter 3, “How Do You Do?” – Greetings”:

Acknowledging Introductions – The Answer to “How Are You?” – A Gentleman and His Hat in an Elevator – A Gentleman and His Hat out of Doors – A Gentleman Lifts His Hat – A Boy Takes Off His Hat – A Gentleman Removes His Glove – Personality of a Handshake – Greetings from Younger to Older – A Gentleman Rises – The Bow of Ceremony – The Informal Bow – The Bow of a Woman of Charm – Greetings in Public – The Intentional “Cut” – Greetings in Church – Taking Leave.⁶³

The contents alone have narrative allusions, and the bare bones of a short story. In Chapter 43, “Longer Letters,” Post provides an example under the heading “Proper Letters of Love or Affection”:

Instead of “Dear Jim” it perhaps begins “Dearest Jim,” but not “Dearest!” Then follows all the news she can think of that might

possible interest him – about the home team's new players, Betty and Tom's engagement, the political disagreement between two otherwise friendly neighbors, who won the horseshoe-pitching tournament, how many trout Bill Henderson got at Duck Brook . . . Probably she also tells him, "We all missed you at the picnic on Wednesday – Ollie made the flapjacks and they were too awful!" Or . . . *We all hope you'll be home in time for Carol's birthday. She has at last inveigled Mother into letter her have an all-black dress which we suspect was bought with the purpose of impressing you with her advanced age! Mother came in just as I wrote this and says to tell you she has a new recipe for chocolate cake that is even better than her old one. Laura will write you very soon, and we all send love, Affectionately (or Ever devotedly), Ruth.*⁶⁴

When Elizabeth L. Post took up the mantle of revising and eventually rewriting Emily Post's *Etiquette*, she partly retained Emily's narrative approach and even reproduced portions of the 1922 text throughout the book. For example, Post's advice "When a Gentleman Takes off His Hat" is reproduced in facsimile in Elizabeth's 14th edition of 1984 and framed with a decorative border. Elizabeth also retained Post's narrative approach in her sample letters, although she dispensed with characteristic names.⁶⁵ By selectively adapting Emily Post's formal techniques, as well as some of her content, Elizabeth L. Post ensured continuity and maintained her audience. Emily Post's narrative approach enjoyed significant longevity before it was gradually abandoned by Peggy Post in accordance with the trend Arditì identified.

While domestic advice writers exercise authority over readers, by virtue of their expertise and pedagogic role, the bestseller status of Post's "Blue Book" means that readers' choices must be considered as significant. Sales figures alone demonstrate that Post's *Etiquette* received the popular vote if not the critical acclaim of readers; it met a need, provided readers with pleasure, or seemed like a good gift to buy for others. By continuing to buy Post's *Etiquette*, and by writing in turn to Emily, Elizabeth and Peggy Post, readers have enabled and contributed to the continual updating of its contents, which has in turn secured a continued market for the book.⁶⁶

The nonfiction bestseller

In addition to USPS's *Celebrate the Century* stamp series, Post's *Etiquette* was included in another centennial celebration, the New York Public Library's 1995 exhibition *Books of the Century* along with other examples of bestselling nonfiction.⁶⁷ Like Post's *Etiquette*, Irma S. Rombauer's *The Joy of Cooking* (1931), Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (1936), and Dr Benjamin Spock's *Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* (1946) are definitive works in their respective fields, influencing both readers and subsequent titles. Each has been a perpetual bestseller: Post's *Etiquette* is 90 and Rombauer's book is 80 years old, and both have enjoyed 75th anniversary editions and facsimile editions; Carnegie's is in its seventh decade and Spock's is in its sixth decade. Each text has been modified to suit changing social needs over several editions and multiple reprinting and Starker has identified paperback editions as contributing to the bestselling success of Carnegie's and Spock's books.⁶⁸ In all cases, the original author has been accompanied or superseded by members of her or his own family and several spin-off titles have been developed from each.⁶⁹ Rombauer's daughter Marion illustrated the first edition of *The Joy of Cooking*, and worked with her mother as joint author, taking over the authorship completely from 1955 to 1975 and handing the baton to her son, Ethan Becker, from 1976, while Ethan's son John is now involved in the *Joy* enterprise.⁷⁰ *The Joy of Cooking's* by-line is "Best Loved and Brand New," an oxymoron denoting a balance between tradition and novelty, description and prescription, maintained by bestselling advice literature. Dale Carnegie, who had been teaching adult communication course since 1912, and had published on public speaking, developed *How to Win Friends and Influence People* for publication in 1936. By 2008, it had sold 15 million copies.⁷¹ Carnegie's second wife, Dorothy Carnegie, edited a volume of advice containing his writings in 1959 and his daughter, Donna Dale Carnegie, wrote *How to Win Friends and Influence People for Teen Girls*, published in 2005.⁷² Authored with his wife Jane, Spock's *Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* was published in 1946 and the eighth edition appeared in 2004, by which point it had sold more than 50 million copies.⁷³ He later collaborated with his second wife, Mary Morgan.

Aside from the common characteristics of changing authorship through collaboration with family members and changing content produced in various new editions, the bestsellers by Rombauer, Carnegie, and Spock also share a publisher: Carnegie has been published by Simon and Schuster and Rombauer and Spock by Simon and Schuster imprints Scribner and Pocket Books, respectively. In addition, each has prompted rejoinders, *The Joy of Not Cooking*, *How to Lose Friends and Alienate People* and *What Dr. Spock Didn't Tell Us or A Survival Kit for Parents*, respectively.⁷⁴ Distinctively, Post produced *How to Behave Though a Debutante*, which was thought by contemporary critics to be a satire on her *Etiquette*.⁷⁵

Like Post's *Etiquette*, these other titles of similar status in related fields—cooking, interpersonal skills, and child care—display the characteristics which distinguish nonfiction bestsellers from their fictional counterparts: distributed authorship and changing content over re-editions. Whereas these nonfiction bestsellers are characterized by changing authorship, fiction bestsellers are usually thought of as the creative output of one author, displaying recurrent thematic preoccupations and/or signature style, woven into her or his *oeuvre* and biography. And while the nonfiction bestsellers discussed here maintained their currency through successive revised editions, for the fiction bestseller, a standard text and veracity to an original manuscript are important. The long-term success of nonfiction bestsellers is not the result of individual genius, or even textual quality, but rather responsiveness, the freedom to change authorship and content as the need arises.

Conclusion

Etiquette books, like self-help books more broadly, and bestsellers in general, loom so large in the popular cultural landscape that they have escaped academic attention. In contributing an original analysis of etiquette, self-help, and bestsellers, this chapter goes some way to addressing their neglect. It adds to the analysis of fiction bestsellers, a nonfiction case study, and helps to overcome a tendency to dismiss bestsellers as merely populist, and unworthy of serious attention, by analyzing one of the bestselling American books of the twentieth century, and the pre-eminent conduct book, Post's *Etiquette* of 1922 and thereafter. A close reading of 85 years of *Emily Post's Etiquette*

as an exemplar of the self-help genre, as family saga and brand, as a barometer of social ideals, reveals how it has successfully negotiated several paradoxes. Etiquette and self-help discourses assist readers in pursuing American values and the American Dream through the commoditization of social interaction and aspiration, albeit subject to continual change as its successive authors have attempted to both reflect and prescribe contemporary manners. *Emily Post's Etiquette* has done this successfully for 90 years by renewing its authorship and its content; perpetual renewal is the promise of the self-help genre, always ready with a new cure. *Etiquette* is, at once, one book and several books, by several authors, a single volume bestseller and a multimedia brand. The constancy of its bestseller status relies on its constantly changing content. During its 85-year history, *Etiquette* has *described* social change—the rejection of chaperonage, the increasing acceptability of divorce—just as it has purported to *prescribe* acceptable manners. It is follower *and* leader. *Etiquette* is *both* an index of class consciousness, as it promulgates an upper middle class norm *and* an egalitarian tool of upward mobility and auto-didacticism in a self-declaredly classless society. When read retrospectively, and comparatively, and subjected to contextualized case study analysis, etiquette literature has much to tell about the mechanics of giving advice and authority, the ingredients for a successful bestseller, and about what a bestseller such as *Etiquette* can tell us of the ideals and aspirations of American society across nearly a century of the nation's history. In introducing the first edition of *Etiquette*, Richard Duffy declared “as a social document, it is without precedent in American literature.”⁷⁶ Despite this hyperbole, under analysis, Post's *Etiquette* can reveal as much about American society and the enduring American obsession—How to Behave?—as could any classic novel.

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Notes

- 1 "Self-help book sales rose by 96 per cent in the five years between 1991 and 1996. By 1998 [they reached] some \$581million." The self-improvement industry has been valued at \$248 billion per annum and "one-third to one-half of Americans have purchased a self-help book in their lifetimes." Micki McGee, *Self-Help, Inc: Makeover Culture in American Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 11; also "Bestselling Self-Help Books by Years on Bestseller Lists," in

- Wendy Simonds, *Women and Self-Help Culture: Reading between the Lines* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 234–7.
- 2 On fiction and advice literature, see Hildegarde Hoeller, “Branded from the Start: the Paradox of (the) American (Novel of) Manners,” in *Etiquette: Reflections on Contemporary Comportment*, ed. Ron Scapp and Brian Seitz (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2007) and Caroline J. Smith, “Living the Life of a Domestic Goddess: Chick Lit’s Response to Domestic-Advice Manuals,” *Women’s Studies* 34 (2005).
 - 3 The first edition was titled *Etiquette in society, in business, in politics and at home, by Emily Post (Mrs. Price Post) . . . illustrated with private photographs and facsimiles of social forms* (New York, London: Funk & Wagnalls Company, July 1922). Following 17 reprintings, a second edition appeared in 1927 with a revised title, *Etiquette, “The blue book of social usage”* which name was retained until the 14th edn, Elizabeth L. Post, *Emily Post’s Etiquette* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984).
 - 4 Michael Warner, ed., *American Sermons: The Pilgrims to Martin Luther King Jr.* (New York: Library of America, 1999); Victor Neuberg, “Chapbooks in America: Reconstructing the Popular Reading of Early America,” in *Reading in America: Literature and Social History*, ed. Cathy N. Davidson (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press 1989).
 - 5 Elsie de Wolfe, *The House in Good Taste* (New York: Century Co., 1913); Alex Comfort, ed., *The Joy of Sex: a Cordon Bleu Guide to Lovemaking*, illus. Charles Raymond and Christopher Foss (New York: Crown, 1972). In her first book, *Entertaining* (New York: Clarkson Potter, 1982), 12, Martha Stewart placed herself in a tradition of entertaining advice: “When the Emily Post etiquette book was rewritten in 1965, it asserted that a strict code of social behavior was as obsolete as the old social pyramid. I still shudder with a sympathetic case of nerves when I read the pompous little book of entertainment advice written in 1888 by Ward McAllister, Mrs. Aster’s famous advisor, or see in Edith Wharton’s fiction the severe and detailed instructions for the handling of social habits and rituals . . . But there is no such cause for anxiety today.”
 - 6 Richard Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets and Class at the Turn of the Century* (London: Verso, 1996), 153, 362.
 - 7 On American manners, see, for example, C. Dallett Hemphill, *Bowing to Necessities: A History of Manners in America, 1620–1860* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999); Cas Wouters,

- Informalization: Manners and Emotions since 1890* (London: Sage, 2007).
- 8 Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (London: Penguin, 1990 (1959)); Dennis L. Gilbert, *The American Class Structure in an Age of Growing Inequality*, 8th edn. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2010).
 - 9 For example, Samuel Smiles, *Self-Help: with illustrations of character and conduct* (London: John Murray, 1859); Mrs Isabella Beeton, *Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management*, 24 parts (London: S. O. Beeton, 1859–61). British publishing on “How-To and Know-How started in real earnest in the 1890s,” Frank Seymour Smith, *Know-How Books: An Annotated Bibliography of Do It Yourself Books for the Handyman and of introductions to Science, Art, History and Literature for the Beginner and Home Student* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1956), v.
 - 10 Sue Currell, “Depression and Recovery: Self-Help and America in the 1930s,” in *Historicizing Lifestyle: Mediating Taste, Consumption and Identity from the 1900s to 1970s*, ed. Joanne Hollows and David Bell (London: Ashgate, 2006), notes the popularity of American self-help books in developing economies such as India; Steven Starker, *Oracle at the Supermarket: the American Pre-Occupation with Self-Help Books* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2002 (1989)).
 - 11 McGee, *Self-Help, Inc.*, 191.
 - 12 Sandra K. Dolby, *Self-Help Books: Why Americans Keep Reading Them* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 56.
 - 13 Paul Damien, *Help! Debunking the Outrageous Claims of Self-Help Gurus* (Austin, TX: Synergy Books, 2008); Steve Salerno, *Sham: How the Self-Help Movement Made America Helpless* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2005); Dolby, *Self-Help Books*, 158–9.
 - 14 For example, David Bell and Joanne Hollows, eds, *Ordinary Lifestyles: Popular Media, Consumption and Taste* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2005); Tania Lewis, *Smart Living: Lifestyle Media and Popular Expertise* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2008).
 - 15 Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, vol. I *The History of Manners* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994 (1939)), 67; Jorge Ardit, *A Genealogy of Manners: Transformations of Social Relations in France and England from the Fourteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1998); Wouters, *Informalization*.
 - 16 Interior designer Dorothy Draper also lived in Tuxedo Park. She wrote an advice column for *Good Housekeeping* and books such as *Entertaining is Fun!* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1941).

- 17 Post's first novel was published in 1904 and her divorce decree was issued in 1906. In 1909, Post received a considerable inheritance from her mother. Laura Claridge, *Emily Post: Daughter of the Gilded Age, Mistress of American Manners* (New York: Random House, 2008), 153–4, 178, 196, 202.
- 18 Post also wrote for *Scribner's*, *Collier's Magazine* and *The Century* and the novels *Flight of the Moth* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1904), *Purple and Fine Linen* (New York, D. Appleton and company, 1905), *Woven in the Tapestry* (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1908), *The Title Market* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1909), *The Feather* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1910) and *Parade: a Novel of New York Society* (New York, London: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1925).
- 19 However, "Emily Post's book was part of a dying breed," and while other women had previously completed long road trips, Post traveled with her cousin and son and a chauffeur. Emily Post, *By Motor to the Golden Gate*, ed. Jane Lancaster (Jefferson NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2004 (1916)), 12, 4. In 2007, the *Illinois Lincoln Highway Coalition* unveiled a plaque commemorating Post's trip in Rochelle, Illinois, where the rain had stranded her.
- 20 Edwin Post, *Truly Emily Post: a Biography* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1961), 202–5. This biography was ghost-written by Dorothy Giles, Claridge, *Emily Post*, 443.
- 21 Enid Nemy, "In an Age of Finger Food, A New Emily Post," *New York Times*, April 20, 1997; Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Learning How to Behave: a Historical Study of American Etiquette Books* (New York: MacMillan, 1946). Claridge, *Emily Post*, 249: "First she reviewed Mrs. John (Mary) Sherwood's etiquette book, which [her mother] had reared her on." This refers to M. E. W. Sherwood, *Manners and Social Usages* (New York: Harper & Co., 1994). Post reflected on different modes of learning etiquette in "Etiquette an Essentially Elemental Subject," *The National Elementary Principal*, XXIV, 2 (December 1944).
- 22 Claridge, *Emily Post*, 208–9, 246.
- 23 Lillian Eichler, *The Book of Etiquette* (Garden City, NY: Nelson Doubleday, 1921) and various editions; Emily Holt, *Everyman's Encyclopaedia of Etiquette* (New York: McGlure, Phillips & Co., 1901).
- 24 Alice P. Hackett, *Fifty Years of Bestsellers, 1895–1945* (New York: R. R. Bowker, 1945), 98, 106. However, sales figures for both Post's and Eichler's books were unreliable, Claridge, *Emily Post*, 343.

- 25 Claridge, Emily Post, 435, 443.
- 26 Publisher's Weekly Bestselling Hardback Books, aggregated by year. Accessed October 25, 2008. <http://www.caderbooks.com/bestintro.html>. *Etiquette* (17th edn) was in sixth place in Barnes and Noble's etiquette list on November 29, 2007 and the new 18th edn was second on October 27, 2011. <http://www.barnesandnoble.com/bestsellers/top10everything.asp>.
- 27 For example, Lillian Eichler Watson, ed., *Light from Many Lamps* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1951); Mark Caldwell, *A Short History of Rudeness: Manners, Morals and Misbehavior in Modern America* (New York: Picador USA, 2000), 65. In writing a "science of human rule systems," Robert Hogan and Nancy Henley have noted that rule systems normally function as codes, prepared by codifiers "(God, Emily Post, Congress)"; these codes also have custodians and exemplars: "Emily Post was once codifier, custodian, and exemplar." Robert Hogan and Nancy Henley, "Nomotics: The Science of Human Rule Systems," *Law & Society Review* 5, 1 (August 1970): 138–9.
- 28 See the stamps at <http://arago.si.edu/flash/?s1=5lsq=%22Emily%20Post%22lsf=0>. Accessed October 4, 2011.
- 29 Published from 1901, and under the auspices of the AAA from 1906. See James R. Akerman, "Twentieth-Century American Road Maps and the Making of a National Motorized Space," in *Cartographies of Travel and Navigation*, ed. James R. Akerman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 169–70, 173. Post mentions the *Automobile Blue Books* in *By Motor to the Golden Gate*, 15. In 1930, Post's *The Personality of a House: the Blue Book of Home Design and Decoration* appeared (New York, Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1930)—the 1948 edition was subtitled *The Blue Book of Home Charm*—and in 1933, Ely Culbertson's *The Contract Bridge Blue Book* (New York: The Bridge World, 1930) reached number eight in the bestseller lists.
- 30 Elizabeth L. Post, *Emily Post's Etiquette*, 14th edn.
- 31 Lizzie Post, video, *How Do You Work this Life Thing?* Accessed October 14, 2011. <http://www.emilypost.com/home-and-family-life/133-college-and-beyond/432-lizzie-post-discussing-how-do-you-work-this-life-thing-video>; Anna Post, "What Would Emily Post Do?" Blog, June 11, 2007 to July 28, 2010. Accessed October 14, 2011. <http://annapost.typepad.com/>; Cindy Post Senning, "The Gift of Good Manners: Advice and Tips for Parents from The Emily Post Institute." Blog, Accessed October 14, 2011. <http://www.thegiftofgoodmanners.com/>; Also, Emily Post Productions, Youtube channel. Accessed October 14, 2011. <http://www.youtube.com/user/EmilyPostProductions>.

- 32 Emily Post is cited as a writer for *Behave Yourself*, dir. Michael Winner, 1962 and a film with the working title *Etiquette*, based on Post's writing, is in production for 2012.
- 33 See the discussions of 'sociogenesis' in Elias, *Civilizing Process*, and Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: a Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (London: Routledge, 1986 (1979)), 66.
- 34 Post appeared on the radio show *Betty Crocker Talk* in 1947. Claridge, *Emily Post*, 418.
- 35 Schlesinger, *Learning How to Behave*, 53.
- 36 Jorge Arditi echoes Schlesinger in "Etiquette Books, Discourse and the Deployment of an Order of Things," *Theory, Culture & Society* 16, 4 (1999): 32, 33.
- 37 Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1936); Currell, "Depression and Recovery."
- 38 Joan Shelley Rubin, "Information Please! Culture and Expertise in the Interwar Period," *American Quarterly* 35, 5 (Winter 1983): 501.
- 39 Joan Shelley Rubin, *The Making of Middlebrow Culture* (Chapel Hill, NC and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 31.
- 40 Grace Lees-Maffei, "From Service to Self-Service: Etiquette Writing as Design Discourse 1920–70," *Journal of Design History* 14, 3 (2001), 191.
- 41 Ohmann, *Selling Culture*, 152–3.
- 42 Cas Wouters, "Etiquette Books and Emotion Management in the 20th Century, Part One: the Integration of the Social Classes," *Journal of Social History* 29, 1, (1995): 107–24.
- 43 This chapter is based on five editions of *Etiquette* sampled from approximately 20-year intervals (1922, 1940, 1960, 1984, and 2004) plus the 2011 edition.
- 44 Deborah Robertson Hodges mentions some textual changes to Post's *Etiquette* in *Etiquette: An Annotated Bibliography of Literature Published in English in the United States, 1900 through 1987* (Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland, 1989), 118–21.
- 45 This emphasis on "manners and technology" is criticized by Dwight Garner, "Classic Advice: Please, Leave Well Enough Alone," review of Dale Carnegie and Associates, with Brent Cole, *How To Win Friends And Influence People In The Digital Age* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011) and Peggy Post, Anna Post, Lizzie Post and Daniel Post Senning, *Emily Post's Etiquette*, 18th edn (New York: William Morrow, 2011) *New York Times*, October 5, 2011.
- 46 Emily Post, *Etiquette 'The Blue Book of Social Usage'*, 6th edn. (New York and London: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1940), 354.

- 47 Nemy, "Age of Finger Food."
- 48 Anon., "Putting a Kick in Etiquette to Pacify Flaming Youth," *Literary Digest*, XCVI (February 4, 1928) 56–9, cited in Schlesinger, *Learning*, 52.
- 49 Post, *Etiquette* (1940), 36.
- 50 Emily Post, *Etiquette 'The Blue Book of Social Usage'*, 10th edn. (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, Inc., 1960), 168.
- 51 Post, *Etiquette* (1940), 356 and (1960), 171.
- 52 Peggy Post, *Emily Post's Etiquette*, 17th edn. (New York: HarperCollins, 2004), 217, 219, 212.
- 53 Peggy Post, Anna Post, Lizzie Post and Daniel Post Senning, *Emily Post's Etiquette: Manners for a New World*, illus. Janice Richter (New York: William Morrow, 2011), x.
- 54 Claridge, *Emily Post*, 294.
- 55 Grace Lees-Maffei, "Accommodating 'Mrs Three in One': Homemaking, Home Entertaining and Domestic Advice Literature in Post-War Britain," *Women's History Review* 16, 5 (2007); Lees-Maffei, 2001.
- 56 Gerald Carson, *The Polite Americans: 300 Years of More or Less Good Behaviour* (London, Melbourne: Macmillan, 1967), 239.
- 57 Post, *Etiquette* (1922), Chapter 14, Formal Dinners.
- 58 Claridge, *Emily Post*, 250, 262.
- 59 Arditi, "Etiquette Books," 25–48. Carnegie's *How to Win* is seen to appeal to personality rather than character; see David Riesman, Nathan Glazer and Reuel Denney, *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969 (1950)), 149–50, 73–4. Richard Sennett countered Riesman's ideas, arguing instead that "Western societies are moving from something like an other-directed condition to an inner-directed condition," *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1992 (1974)), 5. See also, Warren Susman, "Personality and the Making of Twentieth Century Culture," in *New Directions in American Intellectual History*, ed. John Higham and Paul K. Conklin (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 220–1; Andrew R. Heinze, "Schizophrenia Americana: Aliens, Alienists and the 'Personality Shift' of Twentieth-Century Culture," *American Quarterly* 55, 2 (June 2003).
- 60 Betty Allen and Mitchell Pirie Briggs, *Behave Yourself!* (Philadelphia, Chicago: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1937), 7.

- 61 Dwight E. Robinson and Dennis F. Strong, Review of *Etiquette in Society, in Business, in Politics and at Home*, by Emily Post (Mrs. Price Post) (New York: Funk and Wagnells, 1922) Replica Edition, with "A New Preface to an Old Edition," 1969 and Elizabeth L. Post, *Emily Post's Etiquette*, Twelfth Revised Edition (New York: Funk & Wagnells, 1969) in *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (July 1970), 173–4. Reference is made to John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, ed. W. R. Owens (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001 (1678)).
- 62 Claridge, *Emily Post*, 428: "According to Wilson, after finishing [*Etiquette*] Fitzgerald 'became inspired with the idea of a play in which all the motivations should consist of trying to do the right thing.'" Edmund Wilson, "Books," *New Yorker*, July 19, 1947 and reprinted in Edmund Wilson, *A Literary Chronicle, 1920–50* (New York: Anchor, 1952), 380–9.
- 63 Post, *Emily Post's Etiquette*, 10th edn. (1960), v.
- 64 *Ibid.*, 534.
- 65 Elizabeth L. Post, *Emily Post's Etiquette*, 14th edn., 82–3.
- 66 On readers' contributions to a leading US women's magazine, see Jennifer Scanlon, *Inarticulate Longings: the Ladies' Home Journal, Gender and the Promises of Consumer Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).
- 67 Elizabeth Diefendorf, ed., *The New York Public Library's Books of the Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, 2000) records *Books of the Century*, a centenary exhibition of influential texts at The New York Public Library's Center for the Humanities, May 20, 1995–July 13, 1996.
- 68 Starker, *Oracle*, 59–74; Pocket Books arranged for Spock's book to appear in hardback as *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* with Duell, Sloan and Pearce (New York, 1946) before publication the same year as *The Pocket Book of Baby and Child Care* (New York: Pocket Books, 1946, 1949). Diefendorf, *Books of the Century*, 95.
- 69 In an early familial collaboration on a bestselling advice book, Catharine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe (author of the influential antislavery novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) adapted *A Treatise on Domestic Economy, for the Use of Young Ladies at Home, and at School* (Boston: Marsh, Capen, Lyon, and Webb, 1841) as *The American Woman's Home: or, Principles of Domestic Science; Being a Guide to the Formation and Maintenance of Economical, Healthful, Beautiful, and Christian Homes* (New York, J. B. Ford; Boston: H. A. Brown, 1869).

- 70 Irma S. Rombauer, *The Joy of Cooking*, illus. Marion Rombauer (St. Louis, MO: A. C. Clayton, 1931) published in facsimile as *The Joy of Cooking: 75th Anniversary Edition* (New York: Scribner, 2006). Joy has sold 18 million copies. Kim Severson, "Does the World Need Another 'Joy'? Do You?," *New York Times*, November 1, 2006.
- 71 Carnegie's *How to Win* has never been out of print; by 1954, it had sold 1,300,000 copies and in 1980, it was edited for political correctness. Ray Walters, "Paperback Talk," *New York Times*, September 5, 1982. The cover of the 1998 Pocket Books edition boasted of 15 million copies sold, while the current figure is 30 million and a 2011 edition addresses "the digital age," Garner, "Classic Advice." Carnegie also wrote *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1948).
- 72 Dale Carnegie's *Scrapbook: a Treasury of the Wisdom of the Ages. Edited, with a selection of Dale Carnegie's own writings, by Dorothy Carnegie* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959); Donna Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People for Teen Girls* (New York: Fireside, 2005).
- 73 Spock, *Common Sense Book*; Spock, *Pocket Book*; Dr. Benjamin Spock, *Dr. Spock's Baby and Child Care*, 8th edn. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2004).
- 74 Imar Hutchins, ed., *The Joy of Not Cooking: Delights of the Garden's Guide to Vegetarian Cuisine* (Washington, DC: Delights of the Garden Press, 1994) reissued as *Delights of the Garden: Vegetarian Cuisine Prepared Without Heat from Delights of the Garden Restaurants* (New York: Main Street Books, 1996); Irving D. Tressler's *How to Lose Friends and Alienate People* (New York: Stackpole Sons, 1937) is a faithful parody, unlike Toby Young's memoir of the same name (London: Little, Brown, 2001) and the associated film (dir. Robert B. Weide, 2008); Butler M. Atkinson, *What Dr. Spock Didn't Tell Us or A Survival Kit for Parents* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959, 1979).
- 75 Initially published serially in *Vanity Fair*, Emily Post, *How to Behave Though a Débutante: opinions by Muriel as overheard by Emily Post*, illus. by John Held, Jr. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1928).
- 76 Richard Duffy, "Manners and Morals," introduction to Post, *Etiquette* (1922), n. p.

Link. Emily Post's Etiquette. 108 views. Share. 3. THE AUTHORITATIVE SOURCE ON ETIQUETTE SINCE 1922 If Emily Post was born in 1872. With her publication of "Etiquette: In Society, In Business, In Politics and At Home" in 1922, she gained a reputation as the top authority on social conduct (<http://emilypost.com/>). If Emily Post's family has continued to publish subsequent editions of her text as traditions of etiquette have changed over the past century. If The 18th and most recent print edition. was published in 2011 and is authored by Emily Post's great-great grandchildren: Peggy Post, Anna Post, Lizzie Post, and Daniel Post Senning. <http://e...> Emily Post, Etiquette in Society, in Business, in Politics and at Home, by Emily Post (Mrs. Price Post) Illustrated with Private Photographs and Facsimiles of Social Forms (New York and London, Funk & Wagnalls, 1922). As Richard Duffy explains in his introduction, Many who scoff at a book of etiquette would be shocked to hear the least expression of levity touching the Ten Commandments. But the Commandments do not always prevent such virtuous scoffers from dealings with their neighbor of which no gentleman could be capable and retain his claim to the title. There is no intention in Questions best posed to Emily Post, who first published her famous book on etiquette in 1922. Today that legacy endures as her family is devoted to spreading the rules of good manners worldwide. "We are a much more informal society than we use to be," says Anna Post, who along with her sister Lizzie and their cousin Dan Post Senning are the fifth generation to work at the Emily Post Institute in Burlington, Vermont. Coming soon: Etiquette bites, small chunks of advice available on your mobile device. Yet despite our changing world and reliance on technology, the Posts believe good manners go back to basics. "Etiquette clearly evolves there's no doubt about that. What doesn't change is what we call principles," says Peter.