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"Travel Inter-City like the men do": Marketing British Rail's Inter-City in Britain 1964–1979

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The change in brand from British Railways to British Rail (BR) marked an important moment in the history of Britain's railway. Running alongside BR's modernization was a wider process of "professionalization" within the field of marketing. This paper explores how the wider professionalization of marketing impacted BR's own marketing practices, showing that after 1965 BR opened its doors to new methods, means, and perhaps most importantly, specialists from outside the railway industry. Such marketing efforts helped to frame the railway in terms of individual travelers' specific economic needs: by 1968 it had effectively segmented its passengers into demographic audiences, and by 1975, BR had a much better understanding of its markets. These individual economies were often highly gendered and saw only mixed success, but ultimately demonstrated an application of research, advertising, and promotion.

Keywords: marketing; public policy; transport; gender

Introduction

In 1974 Britain's nationalized railway operator, British Rail (BR), aired a television commercial that extolled the virtues of traveling on board its new sub-brand, Inter-City, "like the men do." Designed as a catchy tongue-in-cheek musical number, the advertisement pictured a group of middle-aged, middle-class women singing about the advantages of traveling by train, proclaiming "up with women's rights," offering a chance to "get away from the boring kitchen

sink he needs you at" and be "nice and bright and ready for the men."[1] While these messages were no doubt windows into the gender dynamics in the 1970s, giving housewives the option to travel "like the men do" represented a period of profound change within the marketing capabilities of the railway: BR had built an advertisment based on consumer research and embraced new media. Moreover, BR had repositioned the message of long-distance travel as one based on the economies of individuals and individual families, rather than on cultural messages or destinations.

This marketing shift saw itself alongside the wider corporate rebrand from "British Railways" to BR in 1965 which originated, albeit indirectly, from the previous Conservative Government's efforts to make nationalized industries pay their way. As part of the railway's response to these pressures, BR hired outside experts known for their marketing work from outside the sector. Such individuals joined the railway with a view to rejuvenating the image of railway travel in the minds of the traveling public and, more importantly, to broaden its traveler base. Many of these new marketing managers were keen to promote their marketing innovations to the press, stressing, often incorrectly, that the "marketing" for BR services (as opposed to advertising) had only started with the "the introduction of the Inter-City idea."[2] Nonetheless, the Inter-City campaigns between 1965 and 1979 demonstrate that BR had effectively "professionalized" its marketing systems which equipped them with the ability to identify, understand, and target new audiences for railway travel. By the mid-1970s, BR had a greater understanding of who was using and would want to use the Inter-City product.

However, this professionalization of marketing was not without its challenges: despite bringing in new talent, BR's workforce remained largely conservative and wedded to the traditions of working on the railway—which included resistance to marketing on principle from railway staff on the ground—and as such those marketing efforts were often undermined by the more conservative staff. Furthermore, the ultimate battle against car travel was one BR would not win, especially as subsequent governments continually bet on the car as the future of personal mobility. Nonetheless, this ultimate change in BR marketing allowed it to position itself as a cutting-edge marketer in a context in which the railways were under serious political pressure to act commercially. This paper makes the case that BR serves as an example of a British nationalized industry as a responsive and adaptive marketeer.

This paper seeks to bring together the literature of consumer research, railway marketing, and business history. It echoes Schwarzkopf's argument that the history of marketing and consumer research "cannot be written purely as a 'business history,' but needs to be understood within a much wider framework of politics and society."[3] It uses a variety of materials located at the UK National Archives and History of Advertising Trust, including internal market research reports and documents compiled for BR. Many of these documents were compiled by Market Research organizations like Ogilvy & Mather, Young and Rubicam Ltd,

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1. *Inter-City Commercial: "Housewives Day Out."*
2. Colver, "British Rail Set New Trends in Marketing," 15.
3. Schwarzkopf, "Markets, Consumers, and the State: The Uses of Market Research in Government and the Public Sector in Britain, 1925–1955," 187.

Research Projects Limited and Economic, Social & Political Surveys Limited. Furthermore, this paper makes use of articles and advertisements in a variety of newspapers with the databases of the British Newspaper Archive and Gale Primary Sources, examining the ways in which BR promoted its services and improved its image through public relations, promotions, and personal selling.

Marketing Rail

"Marketing" is a broad concept with several definitions. As Gillett and Tennent describe, marketing is "a management process" and is "about exchanges with customers and other stakeholders (individuals and organizations) internal and external to the organization."[4] For practitioners of marketing, this is best known as the "marketing mix," consisting of the four P's for product marketing and seven P's for service marketing, which refer to the product, price, place, promotion, people, process and physical evidence which each help to target and meet the needs of customers within an organization. The process of "promotion" features the use of integrated marketing communications including the use of advertising, public relations, personal selling, and sales promotion.[5]

Marketing saw great advancement across the twentieth century, but in particular saw several key innovations derived from research conducted in the 1960s by scholars such as Philip Kotler, EJ McCarthy, and Niel Borden who have come to define the practice of marketing in institutions across the world.[6] While many theories and concepts of marketing see their origins in the 1960s, marketing continues to have a long history in Britain, *particularly* within the railway industry. Before the nationalization of Britain's railways in 1948, the railway industry had a long history of innovation in marketing. For example, the London & North Western Railway (LNWR) had recognized the importance of marketing discretionary travel and developed "sophisticated strategies to sell North Wales to… middle-class individuals" before the First World War.[7] Furthermore despite the regional nature of Britain's railway companies, by 1910 the "big four" railway companies in Britain - Great Western Railway (GWR), London, Midland and Scottish Railway (LMS), London and North Eastern Railway (LNER) and Southern Railway (SR) —had individually realized that marketing needed to be conducted on a national, and sometimes international scale.[8]

After the First World War, one of the key developments was the fact that several railway companies had started to realize the importance of different market segments, particularly in an effort to pull people away from the increasing popularity of the motorcar. As Medcalf argues, GWR employed sophisticated visual devices and marketing techniques "to better

4. Gillett and Tennent, "The Rise of Marketing."

5. See Gillett and Tennent., and see Borden, "The Concept of the Marketing Mix."

6. For example, see Kotler, *Marketing Management*; McCarthy, *Basic Marketing: A Managerial Approach*; Borden, "The Concept of the Marketing Mix."

7. Turner, "'Delectable North Wales' and Stakeholders: The London & North Western Railway's Marketing of North Wales, c. 1904–1914," 867.

8. Shin, "The Art of Advertising Railways: Organisation and Coordination in Britain's Railway Marketing, 1860–1910," 190.

understand all of its customers."[9] Within the same period, Divall similarly demonstrated that railway companies had shown an awareness of the importance of differentiating men and women as railway consumers in an effort to challenge the primacy of car travel.[10] Divall ultimately concluded that, despite branching out to meet the needs of consumers by gender, men remained the primary consumers of rail travel.[11] Consequently, there is clear evidence from before the Second World War of several key marketing concepts and innovations - including a basic level of market research, segmentation on the basis of gender, and an awareness of the importance of the marketing mix—on the railway.

However, one notable absence in the history of railway marketing is the lack of studies dedicated to the post-war period. Some studies go into the post-war period, but often only as a point of reflection and continuity. For example, Divall and Shin demonstrate that the railways had recognized "speed" as a powerful rhetoric with which to emphasize in marketing, but that this had to be cautiously employed so as to not alienate some travelers. Their study recognized the post-1960 period as one of "triumphant transformation," particularly because of the focus on speed and efficiency.[12] The post-war period matters for Britain's railway because it saw a number of important political and economic changes, often aimed directly at the foundational *principles* of operating a railway in the public service and it is clear that this affected railway marketing: for example, in 1979 BR recognized that its status as a nationalized industry was under threat from the Thatcher Government which prompted an advertising campaign which sought to engage the British public - in particular women and the family - with wider discussions about nationalization and industry.[13] This paper seeks to bridge this gap, between the moments around the 1965 modernization—where governments increasingly pressured nationalized industries to operate as commercial enterprises rather than social services—to the beginning of the politically sensitive messaging of the 1979 Age of the Train campaign. In so doing, this paper will showcase how BR's marketing evolved in response to the changing needs of consumers across the 1960s and 1970s. In addition, the paper seeks to explore how marketing materials can be used to better understand an organization's response to external challenges.

In addition to such social and cultural change on the railway, the *practice* of marketing saw several important shifts in the post-war period as it underwent a process of "professionalization." As Wilkie and More highlight, the post-1950 period "marked a watershed in the history of marketing thought,"[14] which firstly saw marketing as an increasingly management-led discipline that included a widespread uptake of marketing education and the rise of professional standards organizations.[15] Brought about in part by the general rise in living standards and the advent of consumer culture, several important marketing principles were introduced including the

9. Medcalf, "'We Are Always Learning' Marketing the Great Western Railway, 1921–39," 192.

10. Divall, "Civilising Velocity: Masculinity and the Marketing of Britain's Passenger Trains, 1921–39," 164.

11. Divall, 167.

12. Divall and Shin, "Cultures of Speed and Conservative Modernity."

13. Smith, "Marketing Modernity: Business and Family in British Rail's 'Age of the Train' Campaign, 1979–84."

14. Wilkie and Moore, "Scholarly Research in Marketing: Exploring the '4 Eras' of Thought Development," 124.

15. Wilkie and Moore, 125.

"marketing concept" and "marketing mix" which were theorized and introduced into wider strategies of marketing in several organizations.[16] Secondly, marketing saw a move to use more quantitative and behavioral science methods which sought to apply the scientific method, mathematics, and statistics—using the increasing availability of tools like computers—to model consumer attitudes and behaviors.[17]

In Britain, advances in marketing happened largely in parallel to the United States, however similar institutions and methods evolved from a different social context; for example, quantitative research and classification methods had been a mainstay of social research initiatives from philanthropists, statisticians, and industrialists as ways of exploring social issues through scientific methods in the 1840s.[18] Furthermore, such methods of research had been important tools within the British State and were regularly employed by government departments and agencies. Such a context served as an "important breeding ground for the development of methods to observe markets and to measure and interpret consumer behaviour" before the Second World War. Application in a commercial setting would boom in the consumer culture of the post-war era.[19] At the core of this difference was that social research in Britain evolved from the social democratic tradition rather than "big business".[20] Coupled to this, Britain's context in the Cold War also influenced attitudes to social research: the Cold War left Britain with a nervous disposition when it came to issues arising from motivational research, advertising, and consumerism in general, where in the context of the Cold War such methods were seen as "mass suggestion" and subversion of consumer will. Such anxieties meant that the Advertising Association, itself founded in 1926, launched pro-advertising campaigns stressing the language of "choice" and "freedom."[21]

Social research agencies saw a similar professionalization with the founding of the British Market Research Society in 1946, and in the 1950s saw discussions about the improved legitimacy and ethics of such research.[22] By the 1960s, there had been a boom in the number of research companies in Britain.[23] The period also saw change in some of the underlying principles of social research, typified by the "moment of sociology" which implemented new interview and survey methods to help social researchers better discern the "ordinary" and "everyday" subjects.[24] Such apparatus displaced the elitist "gentlemanly" research methods with a more rounded classification of subjects and society.[25] Older classification methods, like

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16. Gillett and Tennent, "The Rise of Marketing," 846.

17. Wilkie and Moore, "Scholarly Research in Marketing: Exploring the '4 Eras' of Thought Development," 125–126.

18. Schwarzkopf, "In Search of the Consumer: The History of Market Research from 1890 to 1960," 62.

19. Schwarzkopf, "Markets, Consumers, and the State: The Uses of Market Research in Government and the Public Sector in Britain, 1925–1955," 172.

20. See Schwarzkopf, Stefan. "Managing the Unmanageable: The Professionalization of Market and Consumer Research in Post-War Europe." P.166–7.

21. Schwarzkopf, "They Do It with Mirrors: Advertising and British Cold War Consumer Politics"; Schwarzkopf, "'Culture' and the Limits of Innovation in Marketing: Ernest Dichter, Motivation Studies and Psychoanalytic Consumer Research in Great Britain, 1950s–1970s."

22. Schwarzkopf, *Managing the Unmanageable: The Professionalization of Market and Consumer Research in Post-War Europe*, 170–171.

23. Schwarzkopf, 163–164.

24. Savage, *Identities and Social Change in Britain since 1940: The Politics of Method.* 112.

25. Savage. 215.

the Registrar General's Social Class which had been a mainstay in the Census since 1921,[26] would go on to inform the basis of the newer National Readership Survey Social Grade classification which was widely used by sectors across marketing and advertising, politics and opinion polling—and most importantly, the research that would inform BR's market segmentation. Taken together, the post-war period saw an overall democratization of social science research that could make more valuable predictions about consumers and consumer behavior, where research methods before focused on identifying class.

Such research methods saw popularity across the private and public sectors. In the case of the public sector such methods, and marketing in general, have rarely been historicized and there remains a largely unwritten history of how the public sector's use of marketing evolved over the course of the post-war period. There are some notable examples outside of the period, including the use of intergrated marketing communications in use in the General Post Office as early as the 1930s.,[27] Like the wider historicization of the public sector, the use of marketing within nationalized industries has also been neglected and, in some cases, poorly researched. Many studies written contemporaneously with nationalized industries, such as Capon's 1981 paper, "speculated" that the railways in Britain "attempt to serve most potential customers regardless of cost and rely little on market segmentation."[28] In two publications, Lancaster and Brierley examined the emergence of marketing within three nationalized industries; The National Remote Sensing Centre, Royal Ordnance Environmental, and The Stationery Office, and conclude that before their privatization "there was no marketing culture," arguing that marketing culture was ultimately "imposed on industries to be privatized" and attributing this entirely to the efforts of the Conservatives who "used marketing to communicate plans in the form of exhibitions, seminars, and advertising and transposed marketing culture to all levels of society and the workplace."[29] All three previously nationalized organizations were "having difficulty in breaking free from an inbred philosophy of production orientation" and were suffering from symptoms of Marketing Myopia.[30] One objective of this paper is to challenge these assertions and recognize that in general, the literature has offered an unfair and often too simplistic view of the marketing activities within nationalized industries.

Examining marketing historically therefore helps to better understand how different political economies have integrated marketing into their core business. As Gillett and Tennent identify, "temporalities and geographies are very important, as are firms, their customers, and other stakeholders" when it comes to understanding marketing practices over time.[31] The BR case reveals that, while BR's messaging may not have been able to fully challenge the primacy of car travel, like other industries in the public sector nationalized industries increasingly

26. Pevalin and Rose, "The National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification : Unifying Official and Sociological Approaches to the Conceptualisation and Measurement of Social Class in the United Kingdom," 77.

27. Heller, "The Development of Integrated Marketing Communications at the British General Post Office, 1931–39."

28. Capon, "Marketing Strategy Differences between State and Privately Owned Corporations: An Exploratory Analysis," 15.

29. Lancaster and Brierley, "A Comparative Study of the Emergence of Marketing Culture within Three Formerly Nationalised Companies," 369.

30. Lancaster and Brierley, "An Empirical Investigation into the Transition of Change within Three Formerly Nationalised Companies," 280.

31. Gillett and Tennent, "The Rise of Marketing," 842.

demonstrated an awareness of, and engagement with, marketing principles in the post-war period. These changes did not necessarily have an impact on the railways' ultimate fate, but they did help managers conceive the railway "product" and at least advocate for the survival of the railways against the pressures imposed on them.[32]

Commercializing British Rail

In 1948, Britain's railway represented one of the largest of its nationalized industries. Britain's four largest private railway operators, known as the "big four" were nationalized under the 1947 Transport Act and put under the control of the British Transport Commission (BTC). The BTC operated several executives, one of which was the Railway Executive which traded as "British Railways."[33] Over the course of British Railways' early operational life, it had built a reputation as somewhat of a caricature of British industrial decline. In 1963 an "attitudes to railway travel" survey concluded that passengers saw British Railways as a "big, monolithic institution, not at all concerned with the welfare of the individual" and that the public was "regarded as freight" and that it was "futile to make suggestions or complaints."[34] From 1957 the number of passenger journeys by year had steadily declined only to reach its lowest levels in 1982 which would represent the lowest ridership level since 1885.[35]

Efforts to "modernize" the railway formed an important part of British Railways' corporate strategy in the 1950s. This was outlined by the BTC in the 1954 report *The Modernisation and Re-Equipment of the British Railways*, often shortened to the Modernization Plan, which sought "to exploit the great natural advantages of railways as bulk transporters of passengers and goods and to revolutionize the character of the services provided for both."[36] Despite the plan's ambitious improvements for both infrastructure and rolling stock, by 1960 the plan had failed to deliver any significant financial benefits. The realities of the impact of the plan are subject to much debate: Loft argues that the plan "did not represent a genuine attempt to deal with the railways' problems, merely the avoidance of an immediate crisis over pay."[37] Others like Gourvish are more sympathetic, arguing that while the report had several shortcomings owing to the small and conservative group of railwaymen engaged in its construction - a "group more likely to look back to the lost opportunities of the inter-war years than to forecast the railways requirements"—still contained important material for a "technically improved railway."[38]

32. In the case of BR, as Smith (2019, 369–371) highlights in the early 1980s BR used marketing to advocate further public support of the nationalized railway as part of the "Age of the Train" campaign. Other nationalized industries have been known to "advocacy advertise" in this period.
33. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-73: A Business History*, 3.
34. TNA, "Attitudes to Rail Travel and the Decision Process," 1.
35. LENNON ticketing and revenue database, "Passenger Journeys by Year."
36. British Transport Commission, "Modernisation and Re-equipment of British Railways," 6.
37. Loft, "Reappraisal and Reshaping: Government and the Railway Problem 1951-64," 76.
38. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-73: A Business History*, 264.

However as Gourvish states early on in his work, the "honeymoon of enthusiasm was relatively short,"[39] and the railways' operating deficit continued to mount.[40] In 1961, the Macmillan Government published the white paper *The Economic and Financial Obligations of the Nationalised Industries* which sought to ensure that nationalized industries were "organised and administered efficiently and economically to carry out their responsibilities, and that they are thus enabled to make the maximum contribution towards the economic well-being of the community as a whole,"[41] ultimately introducing "financial objectives" for such industries. Shortly after the white paper, the 1962 Transport Act abolished the British Transport Commission and established five successor bodies, which included the new British Railways Board in operation from 1963 ultimately until the privatization of the railways in the late 1990s. The period that followed featured a process of centralization: the 1953 Transport Act had facilitated a degree of decentralization and delegation of promotional activities to the six Area Boards,[42] but from 1963 regions had a say in some commercial affairs, including marketing, but in general the vast majority of commercially oriented decisions took place at BR headquarters.[43]

There were important outside factors affecting the finances of the railway: one of the biggest challenges to the railways at this point had been the increasing availability of motorcars. The railways had been engaged in a "commercial struggle" against cars from at least the end of the First World War,[44] and by 1955 "positive portrayals of cars and motorways were boosted by continued negative storylines about the railways, which in addition to previous criticisms, were now also portrayed as anti-modern, and not worthy of government investment."[45] This was a battle the railways would ultimately not win: after the 1979 general election, Thatcher herself "was brought up in a household which regarded the possession of a private motor car as a symbol of personal and family success."[46] Such hostility from the car-oriented society prompted advertising campaigns from BR to counter political hostility and pitch for additional funding in the 1980s.[47]

In an attempt to improve the cost-effectiveness of the railway, Richard Beeching, Chairman of the British Railways Board between 1962 and 1965, described in the 1963 report *The Reshaping of British Railways* that "the effects of modernisation were neither so rapid nor so pronounced as had been forecast, that the downward trend in some railway traffics would persist, and the operating losses were likely to go on increasing unless radical changes were made."[48] The Beeching Report suggested several important reforms, most of which were taken forward by

39. Gourvish, 256.
40. Gourvish, 299.
41. "The Financial and Economic Obligations of the Nationalised Industries," 3.
42. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-73: A Business History*, 149–150.
43. Gourvish, 341–343.
44. Roberts and Geels, "Public Storylines in the British Transition from Rail to Road Transport (1896–2000): Discursive Struggles in the Multi-Level Perspective," 523.
45. Roberts and Geels, 528.
46. Bagwell, *End of the Line?: The Fate of Public Transport Under Thatcher*, 1.
47. Smith, "Marketing Modernity: Business and Family in British Rail's 'Age of the Train' Campaign, 1979–84."
48. British Transport Commission, *The Reshaping of British Railways-Part 1: Report.* 3.

subsequent governments, including the closure of 2,363 stations.[49] The central motivation of these policies was to get the railways to pay their own way and reduce their overall deficit, putting pressure on British Railways to act "commercially." One of the most memorable legacies of this pressure to commercialize was the redevelopment of British Railways' corporate identity; in 1965 "British Railways" became "British Rail," a name that would endure until privatization in 1997 and of which elements of that brand remain in use across the UK rail network today. This change in *corporate identity*—that is, an all—encompassing notion of an organization including its business scope and organizational culture, communications, and values—as opposed to its corporate brand—which is primarily externally focused—signaled an attempt to redefine the overarching culture of the organization.[50]

Such a shift in corporate culture meant that this period also saw the railway became more amenable to those coming from outside the industry (at least at a management level). The industry had been historically "suspicious of outsiders (especially of senior executives from the private sector)" and internal attitudes meant that railway leaders were "unduly deferential to politicians and civil servants."[51] After 1965, BR was more open to outside experts, including marketing and public relations specialists hired from outside the wider public and private sector including John Nunneley, Grant Woodruff, and Will Camp,[52] and others like Michael Hogg in 1973 who had previously worked with the L'Oreal Group.[53] What followed was a more considered approach to using marketing management methods, which included the use of external market research agencies. BR had used market research as early as 1957 to understand passenger views on railway carriages[54] but acknowledged at the same time that it had "not made use of 'Market Research' as understood by outside industry" and rather than using centralized research methods, had relied on internal contacts throughout the organization to gauge requirements.[55] The report concluded that processes "needed to be looked at through market research eyes" and worried that their research "may be unnecessarily wasteful and seem certain to be biased."[56] From the mid-1960s, BR worked with several Market Research organizations to better equip the organization with a more rigorous approach to identifying customer bases interested in railway travel.

Experimenting with Publicity & Market Research 1965–1970

Part of this brand modernization included the creation of a secondary brand called "Inter-City" which would be responsible for operating the long-distance services between major UK

49. Loft, "Reappraisal and Reshaping: Government and the Railway Problem 1951-64," 71.
50. Balmer and Gray, "Corporate Brands: What Are They? What of Them?," 979.
51. Gourvish, "British Rail's 'Business-Led' Organization, 1977–1990: Government-Industry Relations in Britain's Public Sector," 113.
52. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-73: A Business History*, 377.
53. TNA, "Inter-City Campaign: General," British Railways Board Public Relations: BR Strengthens Passenger Advertising Team, 84/73, 1973.
54. Divall and Shin, "Engineers v. Industrial Designers: The Struggle for Professional Control over the British Railways Mark 2 Coach, c. 1955–66," 159.
55. TNA, "Market Research: Traffic Research."
56. TNA. Market Research: Traffic Research.

cities.[57] Tanya Jackson described the new Inter-City brand as being "conjoined with the new identity and very much part of the Beeching revolution in terms of image" but in operation "was nothing other than a fulfilment of the new modernisation plan."[58] Inter-City was very much at the forefront of the new BR approach to marketing: In an interview with the *Sunday Times*, John Nunneley promoted his £250,000 national advertising campaign—featuring the first time BR would advertise on television—he described that "for the first time, British Rail will be selling a railway nationally. We are giving the railways a product image and Inter City is the brand name we are promoting."[59] Nunneley was partly correct: from as early as 1907 many of Britain's railway companies including those that would become part of the original "big four" had coordinated their campaigns for the purposes of selling internationally, and by the 1930s had ran national campaigns under the banner of "British Railways."[60] Additionally, while it did represent the first time Britain's railways would appear on television, it was not the first time it appeared on film.[61] However, it is the positioning of this message that matters here: The *Sunday Times* described Nunneley as "very much a new breed of railwayman, who came to British Rail headquarters by way of an impressive list of sales and marketing jobs."[62] Hence, his objective was to capture the railway industry from the perspective of an industry outsider. This would happen often, as BR management would utilise similar campaign strategies and messages it had historically used (including segmentation by gender), but these strategies would be framed as marketing innovations.

The ultimate ambition for the Inter-City brand was, as Jackson argued, to reach "a wide spectrum of the population, intending to reach out beyond the railways' traditional market base and to encourage people to travel for leisure."[63] This change in focus was described in a 1965 article for *Modern Railways*, a respected outlet on developments in the railway respected by both industry and the public, where noted author Geofrey Freeman Allen highlighted:

> Plainly apparent in today's BR advertising by comparison with that of a few years ago, is symbolic of the new attitude to passenger service marketing and production. The image of the grey-haired, cigar-smoking company director still sentimentally taking the train, because he has always done so since the days when Minis and Tridents were unborn, is out. A cardinal rule for all BR publicity offices these days is that graphic publicity must always feature the young, upcoming executive, thoroughly "with it" in dress, or the young family. The railway must always be projected as the discerning travel choice of the modern generation.[64]

Such imagery sought to stand in contrast to the "traditional" image of railway marketing that came before, in particular contrasting the post-war British Railways imagery of the "idyllic scenes of well-fed, happy families in beautiful Britain" that featured the "upright, dependable

57. Jackson, *British Rail: The Nation's Railway*, 86.
58. Jackson, 87.
59. "TV Drive for BR's Inter-City."
60. Shin, "Marketing Strategy in Britain's Mainline Railways, 1923-1938."
61. Kitt, "Train Time: British Transport Films and the History of Britain's Railways, 1950-1983."
62. "TV Drive for BR's Inter-City."
63. Jackson, *British Rail: The Nation's Railway*, 87–88.
64. Freeman Allen, "Blueprint for BR Passenger Travel," 499.

and solid father figure, the well-proportioned, wholesome (often blonde) mother, accompanied by a couple of beaming, well-behaved and radiant children enjoying the perfect holiday."[65] In so doing, it was thought that a new generation of travellers would think of the railway as a modern and relevant travel choice. In parallel to this was the recognition from car advertisers that there was a need to broaden their target audience and focus on improving the access and availability of cars, which included marketing the "spartan simplicity" of the car, emphasising the resilience, practicality, and cheapness of the car concerned."[66] Rail travel would see passenger fare increases over the following years, at which point BR had to create an effective marketing response against not only the *qualities*, but of the *costs* of car travel.

The solution was to market the flexibility of the space on board the railway carriage, stressing that unlike the car, the train could cater to several different traveler needs beyond getting to one's destination. This meant highlighting that the railway carriage included spaces that could meet a variety of needs whilst travelling, which included facilities for work, toilets, food, and relaxation. In 1965, the first round of press advertisements for Inter-City saw a focus on both "the business man" and the leisure traveller.[67] These were followed with the tagline "the fast way to travel in crowded Britain" which headlined a series of press advertisements such as "This office leaves Birmingham for London at 09.00," "A quick story," "He is an export," "Even on Sunday," and "What do you miss when you travel British Rail to Dundee or Aberdeen?". As a Young and Rubicam Copy Test Report described, these advertisements were designed to present Inter-City services as "fast, convenient and comfortable—particularly in comparison with other means of transport" as well as to showcase that services were "no more than an extension of one's normal life with the facilities to take full advantage of one's time travelling."[68] This "extension of one's normal life" was a direct challenge to the calls made by car manufacturers who claimed that convenience in daily life was the boon of the car. Train travel may well have taken longer in all, but more could be accomplished *while* traveling.

Similarly, the "extension of one's normal life" also included benefits for travelling families. In partiular, this meant drawing attention to toilets: Toilets had been a feature on board the majority of railway carriages since 1900[69] but had generally been identified as a symbol of first class and luxury long-distance railway travel.[70] One advertisement highlighted "a toilet at each end of the corridor" so that "children don't present the problems that they do in car or coach travel" where "restless children, and adults, too, can stretch their legs while still travelling at speeds that you could never maintain on today's crowded highways."[71] Similarly, "What makes the trip to London child's play?" described that children could "stretch their legs without delaying the journey. And a meal in the restaurant car, or a snack in the buffet (all trains have both!) is guaranteed to make the time fly" picturing a mother with her young

65. Hopkin and Cole, "The Railway Poster in Britain."
66. Gunn, "People and the Car: The Expansion of Automobility in Urban Britain, c. 1955–70," 231.
67. TNA, "'British Rail Intercity Services: Print Advertisement Copy Test Report' Prepared by Young and Rubicam for British Railways Board," Section 1. 1.
68. TNA. British Rail Intercity Services: Print Advertisement Copy Test Report'. Section 1. 1.
69. Bryan, *Railway Carriages*, 71–72.
70. Pring, *Luxury Railway Travel: A Social and Business History*, 55–56.
71. Inter-City, "This Little Girl Is Going from Swansea to London at Nearly a Mile a Minute," 26.

child.[72] BR's construction of these spaces in terms of the "ordinary family" helped to democ-ratize the space within the railway carriage and reinforce the broad base appeal of long-distance services for families.

The mid-1960s campaigns were broadly successful in raising the profile of both Inter-City and BR but often failed to gain traction with different demographic segments—in particular, women. One investigation, commissioned to investigate how a sample of 80 men responded to representative advertisements from the 1966 campaign, found that such advertisements were successful in communicating "speed," "specific towns/trains" and the "suitability of the service for the businessman" they were "somewhat less successful on the points of 'com-fort/ease of travel' and of 'convenience'."[73] Perhaps more importantly, an Advertising Research Study in 1967 submitted to the Corporate Identity Steering Committee found that "6 out of 10 men, but only 3 out of 10 women, identified the BR mark correctly."[74] The result of this study was a new campaign strategy in which BR would segment its traffic into two audiences: the "business" and the "optional" travelers. These categories were further seg-mented, assessing that "optional travel is often initiated by the wife or girl friend and our advertising will take account of this."[75] Such a strategy was observable in marketing efforts in the post-1968 context. In general, Women were marketed to as "optional" travelers, and even when optional travel involved men it would target women as the initiators of optional travel.

Corporate Publicity in Full Swing 1970–1980

The period following 1968 represented one of transformation for BR as the railway had largely shifted to a corporate planning style, with "substantial efforts… made to streamline the rail businesses, to distinguish and attribute costs, to improve labor productivity, and to alter the management framework."[76] This included a significantly improved marketing division of which, by 1970, BR's attitude to market research had been transformed as "marketing plans were developed for each commodity and major customer, and market information and fore-casting were improved."[77] Consequently, there was a notable uptick in the number of mar-keting activities, including research, advertising, and promotion activities. This included research to assess not only the effectiveness of marketing already in circulation but also the effectiveness of prospective marketing materials.

There were important reasons for such an aggressive uptick in marketing efforts in the 1970s: This was in part a result of the fact that BR had raised fares by about 20 percent to cover new revenue targets and to increase business in subsequent years to meet higher revenue

72. Inter-City, "What Makes the Trip to London Child's Play?," 26.

73. TNA, "'British Rail Intercity Services: Print Advertisement Copy Test - "Phone Call" and "Cigarettes"' Prepared by Young and Rubicam for British Railways Board," 2.2.

74. TNA, "Measurements of Advertising Effectiveness." Memorandum to the Corporate Identity Steering Committee, 1967.

75. TNA, "'Marketing Plan 1968' Prepared by British Rail London Midland Region," 16.

76. Gourvish, "British Rail's 'Business-Led' Organization, 1977–1990: Government-Industry Relations in Britain's Public Sector," 113.

77. Gourvish, *British Railways 1948-73: A Business History*, 505.

targets.[78] High-level management in the marketing and PR roles of BR was keen to emphasize this shift in direction for the railways. In an interview with the passenger sales manager, Eric Jones, *Financial Times* reporter Antony Thorncroft described:

> Many people still regard the railways as part of our national heritage; others as a public service. Eric Jones sees seats on trains as a product to be sold like washing powder or cream of tomato soup. Since the start of this year Jones has been the passenger sales manager of British Rail and during this time he has endeavoured to give the railways the complete consumer marketing treatment.[79]

Interviews with BR marketing staff were common in the 1970s as BR was keen to showcase modernization not just of the railway service, but of the business systems and practices in general. Such methods also included a more astute effort to profile potential passengers and their travel, often using scientific data analysis. For example, in 1971, BR's Marketing Division was "carrying out a £1m programme to improve catering premises" with staff collecting information "to assess scientifically the needs of the consumer" because "a sophisticated approach is vital as more inter-city stations are modernized and high-speed luxury trains come into service."[80] This effort to better understand the profile of individuals traveling by train was split into two key market segments; the Business Travel sector and the Leisure, or optional, travel sector. This often meant that such market segments were characterised in gendered ways.

"Business" Travel

One of the key themes in the marketing of business travel was the prominence of work, efficiency, flexibility, and luxury for individuals traveling—often pitched as a challenge the perceived time advantages of driving. In demonstrating these themes, marketing methods saw a parallel with the early twentieth century: Divall identified that the Big Four railways of Inter-war Britain sought to reframe railway travel as a masculine alternative to the car,[81] in which early campaigns were underpinned by an "understanding of gender relations across the spheres of work, leisure and the home" which "encouraged a conservative, patriarchal construction of female mobility enacted chiefly within parameters defined by men's social roles and mobilities."[82] In other words, railway travel was presented by marketeers as a primarily masculine endeavor, with women very much a secondary market segment. The 1970s Inter-City campaign saw a similar attempt to frame business travel in more masculine terms, often not explicitly but implicitly suggesting, through imagery and language, that "work" was very much a masculine world and that railway travel was the discerning choice for the world of work.

78. Thorncroft, "Hard Sale, British Rail," 21.
79. Thorncroft. "Hard Sale, British Rail," 21.
80. By a Staff Reporter, "BR Wants to Know Meals Passengers Like," 2.
81. Divall, "Civilising Velocity: Masculinity and the Marketing of Britain's Passenger Trains, 1921–39," 164.
82. Divall, 184.

Inter-City market research indirectly recognized the importance of the working man as a market segment early on. In particular, was the theme of providing these individuals with the space—and time—needed to compete within the economy. One 1968 advertisement described Inter-City as "the quickest way to the top" describing a "100 mile-an-hour office," describing how "our train cleaners have noticed a strange phenomenon. Paper clips. On the seats. Under the seats. Even coupled in the ashtrays. But don't think we mind. If you go to work electric, we're only too pleased to give you a head's start over those who don't."[83] These messages were implied in several different images throughout the 1970s, including a 1971 advertisement that pictured a man sitting in a train seat holding a whiskey and cigar, wearing a plain suit, and carrying a briefcase with the leading line "our services always fit your schedule,"[84] and another 1972 advertisement compared the space offered to aircraft, entitled "The plane man's guide to Inter-City" which illustrated that on board an Inter-City train was a space with the flexibility to be a "Dining room," "Leg room," a space with "Elbow room" and a "Bed room,"[85] each offering the space to ensure productivity for business travelers. This "work" was clearly displayed as white-collar work. BR advertising framed its business message within the needs and priorities of the successful organization man by emphasizing how rail travel could help to prioritize productivity, efficient time use, and individual needs.

To showcase the value of the railway to white-collar individuals concerned with their own efficiency and productivity, advertising highlighted quotations from interviews with senior businesspeople from the private sector on how Inter-City's overnight trains, the Inter-City Sleeper, allowed these individuals to efficiently manage their schedules and maximise productivity. For example, one advertisement from 1971 pictured Nestle's factory manager describing how traveling by Inter-City Sleeper there was "no time wasted - no time lost - the travelling time doesn't come out of one's working day" (Figure 1).[86] Another from the same year selected an interview with the Manager of the Quality Control Division of the National Cash Register Company which described how "going by Sleeper is so reliable, and less wasteful of time, I can complete a full day's work at the Factory, see the family, have a meal and then join the Sleeper. I can rely on getting there in time, sleeping when I should be sleeping, in London for breakfast, ready for work at 9[…] And of course it cuts out hotel bills—which are expensive, but most of all its reliability and saving time."[87] As the advertisements described, these were designed to capture "the opinions of a successful business man, with working and travelling problems very similar to your own" and prospecting that "if Sleepers make sense to him, wouldn't they make sense for you?."[88] In using such perspectives, BR made an economic and business case for the use of Inter-City services (and had reputable, like-minded senior management verify those claims).

83. Inter-City, "We Give You the Quickest Way to the Top," 4.
84. Inter-City, "Our Schedules Always Fit Your Schedule," 2.
85. Inter-City, "The Plane Man's Guide to Inter-City," 59.
86. Inter-City, "Why Is Nestle's Factory Manager Sweet on Sleepers?," 9.
87. Inter-City, "Why Does the Man Responsible for Quality Control of Exports to 109 Countries Always Go by London by Sleeper?," 4.
88. Inter-City. "Why Does the Man Responsible for Quality Control of Exports to 109 Countries Always Go by London by Sleeper?," 4.

Figure 1. "Why Is Nestle's Factory Manager Sweet on Sleepers?"
Source: Aberdeen Press and Journal, 1971 (used with permission).

Inter-City advertising also emphasized the value of face-to-face communication in business: A 1976 advertisement pictured a handshake and described that "there's nothing quite like the personal touch when it comes to doing business[…] A businessman's time these days is worth a lot of money. Only by taking a train can you use travelling time sensibly by getting down to some useful work."[89] Meeting business contacts face-to-face was "the big difference between hearing what he says and seeing what he means."[90] Inter-City described that businessmen "know the importance of personal contact in business" and the "difficulties of finding time to meet clients in other cities," arguing that Inter-City was a "better way of doing business" because it offered the space to work while travelling alongside the advantage of conducting meetings in person.[91] BR's central message was that face-to-face was the best way to build effective business relationships, but that the travel time required in order to conduct business in that way did not need to be wasted. At its core, BR appealed to business travellers on an economic case, showing that productivity and efficiency were not sacrificed at the expense of travel.

Following this advertising message, in 1977, Ogilvy Benson & Mather conducted research that "sought to explore what might persuade travelers to use rail more often." The report examined the "personality and job profiles of car and rail travellers," concluding that there were "personalities" that "came through so strongly" that it was "of value to put them on record." The report described:

> the typical car traveller tends to be involved in the sales function of his company, and he is pretty entrepreneurial himself. He seems to be constantly on the move, dashing round the country, flitting from one sales prospect to the next. His trips are not very organised or planned; they are more in the nature of instant reactions to customer requests. Many of his journeys take him out from city centres, and he often has to carry materials with him. His job does not involve in the way of paper-work or reading, and he tends to be at junior or middle-management level in his company.[92]

Furthermore, the driver was also understood as a particularly 'active' member of society:

> the car traveller tends to exhibit all the classical aspects of extroversion. He is very active—'a doer'—and easily gets bored. He finds rail journeys exquisitely boring, preferring the stimulation afforded in driving. He is a demanding sort of person and gets impatient when things are not done properly or on time. For this reason, he is particularly intolerant of poor or slow service from rail staff. He is quite fastidious about cleanliness, whether this concerns general surroundings, clothes or serving of food.[93]

Such a profile suggested that the car traveler was someone who needed to be engaged in an activity and could not sit idle. Such members of society were therefore seen as naturally

89. Inter-City, "Bring the Personal Touch Back into Your Business Life," 5.
90. Inter-City, "Inter-City. It's the Difference between Hearing What He Says and Seeing What He Means."
91. Inter-City, "Mind Your Own Business on Inter-City."
92. TNA, "'British Rail: Research among Intercity Travellers' Prepared by Ogilvy, Benson and Mather for British Railways Board," 12.
93. TNA. British Rail: Research among Intercity Travellers, 13.

entrepreneurial, keen to climb the ladder of the organization, and saw flexible mobility as an important asset for work life.

These descriptions directly contrasted that of the typical railway traveler:

> Contrast with this impatient butterfly the man who travels by train. He is much more calm and cerebral. He likes thinking things out carefully, making plans, being systematic. He is much less sensitive to his surroundings than the car traveller because he can get completely wrapped up in his thoughts or his work. In fact, he tends towards being an introvert [...] Firstly, he's the sort of person who actually enjoys working out timetables and planning complicated journeys. And then too, he is not critical of the shortcomings of standards and service on trains—because he is less inclined to notice these things. The rail traveller tends to have a senior managerial or professional job. He is an organisation man, who gets involved in the internal workings and administration of companies. He can create and plan his own work schedule and sticks to it. He has lots of reading and paper-work— and welcomes train journeys because they provide an ideal opportunity for getting through this part of his job.[94]

The report recognized that the "organisation man" was the typical railway traveler—an individual that was meticulous, senior and with a penchant for planning. What is so striking about these profiles is the similarity to the sociological foundations of the "organisation man." In Britain, the "organisation man" represented an important conceptualization of masculinity in the 1970s. Noted sociologist Michael Roper argued that the Organization Man in Britain dominated business thinking in the 70s as an alternative to the collectivist ideas associated with the welfare state. This form of masculinity gained momentum against a background of economic stagnation in Britain and its advocates believed that a "hegemony of feminine values" had overtaken economic thinking and represented the basis of economic decline. The theory posited that "productivity" was a "signifier of managerial potency" and represented the only solution to Britain's economic problems.[95] Like before, the key message was about emphasizing the flexibility of space on board trains, but such messages were framed around the workspace and were shown to be compatible with notions of the "organisation man." .

However within a year of the assessment of the "organisation man," a report published for BR sought to investigate an overall decline in the use of first-class travel by 1977. It concluded that it was "misleading to regard people who travel first class on trains as a sociological type the dimensions of which can be expressed in numeric terms and a relatively constant behavioral pattern," rather first-class travel was "more helpfully regarded as an experience which is obtained by people whose current activity patterns and occupational status generates a need for travel which can be adequately satisfied by the experience."[96] This conflicted with the research conducted by Ogilvy Benson & Mather, arguing that such travel should be seen as an experience rather than a category of travel for a social class or type

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94. TNA. British Rail: Research among Intercity Travellers, 13–14.
95. Roper, *Masculinity and the British Organization Man since 1945*, 27.
96. TNA, "'Research into the First Class Intercity Rail Market' Prepared by Martin and Voorhees Associates for British Railways Board," 3.

of person. Despite these differences, it demonstrates an active effort to understand the needs of first-class travelers in a scientific way. Such marketing clearly took a step backward and drew upon some of the earlier themes of the "grey-haired, cigar-smoking company director" that BR had originally sought to move away from, but it nonetheless shows a more considered approach to understanding the ways in which value could be better generated for individuals looking to travel, or fund travel, for business purposes.

"Optional" Travel

Contrasting the business traveller was the marketing effort focused on "optional" travel. The earlier 1967 recommendations of the steering committee served as an important starting point by recognising the need to increase the awareness of BR services among women. Conveniently, the fact that such travel was found to be "often initiated by the wife or girl friend" meant a useful message could be constructed and targeted specifically toward women. Optional travel had historically been an important market for BR, but by 1970 as a result of the growing affordability of car and caravan travel, only 13 percent of domestic holidays involved rail transport.[97] In fact, travel trends in the 1970s had shifted to focus on optional travel in terms of individual days: the decade saw innovations in railway promotion including the "awayday" ticket which offered specific return services at 50 percent discounted rates,[98] and advertising campaigns encouraging people to get on the train to visit destinations across the UK.

One of the efforts to appeal to younger women was through the introduction of the "Inter-City Girls" in regional centers like in Birmingham which featured groups of young women in miniskirts promoting Inter-City services to act as customer service representatives, booking tickets, advertising, and handling passenger queries. One article in the *Reading Evening Post* described the "21-year-old Angela Young" and "Sue White, aged 18" who were selected as "part of a vast promotional drive backed by a nationwide advertising campaign,"[99] and another described how "the Inter-City Girls are on their way" knocking on doors across the Coventry region to hand out the "Easy Guide to Inter-City" promotional leaflets (Figure 3).[100] This also featured an openness to socially permissive imagery: In particular, for women the miniskirt symbolized liberation and embraced permissiveness, helping to capture a visual iconography of the permissive, liberated young women that were mobile as a result of Inter-City.[101] Such imagery capitalized on young women as a traveller group to highlight the relevance of railway travel to younger audiences.

One of the most recognizable symbols of the Inter-City campaign was "Monica" who epitomized this narrative of youthful rail travel. "Monica" first appeared in a 1968 television advertisement, though she is recognized more widely from a series of newspaper advertisements and posters picturing her with open arms in fashionable clothes (Figure 3).[102] A recent commentator characterized Monica as a young woman "represented in her most well-known,

97. Middleton and Lickorish, *British Tourism: The Remarkable Story of Growth*, 100.
98. Duffell and Harman, "Rail Travel and the Leisure Market in Great Britain."
99. Inter-City, "BR's Inter-City Girls," 4.
100. Inter-City, "Your 'Easy Guide to Inter-City' Is on Its Way!," 15.
101. Armstrong, *Swinging Britain: Fashion in the 1960s*, 67.
102. Inter-City, "See a Friend This Weekend," May 21, 1970, 16.

Figure 2. "Your 'Easy Guide to Inter-City' Is on Its Way!"

Source: Coventry Evening Telegraph, 1974 (used with permission).

blonde-haired, form by actress Phoebe Shaw" who "attracted a fan club of teenagers wanting to imitate her style of dress."[103] The Monica character was extremely popular: A 1970 marketing report described that a poster featuring her image was the "most recalled poster" and one in which "women respondents paid particular attention to the fashion aspect."[104] The same report indicated that "there is evidence that 'Monica' is being established as a personality ('nice', 'attractive', 'friendly') in her own right and that this is a highly desirable contribution to a satisfactory 'Inter-City' image."[105] The "Monica" character therefore represented an important demographic shift in the core market of the railways as it encouraged mobile young women to travel by train and ultimately helped to challenge perceptions of the traditional railway demographic. Monica's image was extremely versatile, capable of appealing to both people seeking to emulate her and her style of dress but also to act as an effective sales personality for others including the wider family and businessmen. In early advertisements, the idea of friendship was emphasized: "But do you know it goes to Monica? You see, we'd like you to think of her not just as one of those lovely friends who thinks you're lovely. But as a stop on Inter-City… your Inter-City: comfortable, relaxing. And fast—to save valuable Monica time

103. Lawrence, *British Rail Designed 1948-97*, 210.
104. TNA, "'Recall of Intercity Advertising Research Project' Prepared for British Rail London Midland Region," 7.
105. TNA. 'Recall of Intercity Advertising Research Project,' 7.

Figure 3. "See a friend this weekend."

Source: Daily Telegraph, 1970 (used with permission).

getting there."[106] In other instances, advertisements suggested she was a sexual partner as her heavily made-up eye was pictured with the caption "You remember Monica?."[107]

What becomes clear is that BR's advertising, like a number of other advertisers, embraced the socially permissive context of liberation by embedding a narrative of the "liberated woman" in Inter-City advertisements: Such messages echoed the vibrant context of women's rights brought about by Second Wave Feminism which sought to question the status of women in family and work life. Protest groups, like the Women's Liberation Movement, drew attention to inequalities across work, education, and the home and fundamentally challenged patriarchal assumptions about marriage, work, and leisure.[108] This message was not a new development for advertisers per se, as several advertisers had taken on what Talbot describes as a "feminist discourse" in advertising, albeit one that appropriated the language of the feminist movement for commercial gain.[109] However, while advertising positioned these advertisements within the theme of liberation, they ultimately echoed the broader trend in the period of using young women in a "demonstration" capacity, often used to promote technology, which suggested to viewers that women were largely valued on their appearance rather than their capacities within the organization.[110] This also reflected other prominent nationalized transport industries like Britain's airlines BOAC and BEA, which consciously underwent a process of eroticizing their flight attendants as part of a modernization program.[111]

Optional travel marketing was generally consistent in portraying the train as a mechanism of women's liberation. However, the way this message was constructed was dependant on the age and marital status of the women targeted. This shared similarities with prevalent cultural practices at the time: in Tinkler's analysis of young women in the 1950s and 1960s, representations of young women "urged girls not to miss out on the unique opportunities for mobility afforded by their youth, suggesting that once girls married (which was taken for granted) they would settle down and stay put."[112] BR's marketing followed a similar pattern as it adapted elements of its marketing message to reflect the age and marital status of the intended market, often within the economies of the postwar welfare state. Such marketing still maintained the idea that women were "liberated" through railway travel but for married older women this was framed around traditionally imagined nuclear families and the implied responsibilities they were seen to undertake.

BR's attention was focused on the "mass market housewife" which had been an invention of market research agencies in the post-war period. Such a demographic represented an image of femininity upon which marketers could target their advertisements.[113] In 1966 the

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106. Inter-City, "See a Friend This Weekend," March 20, 1969.
107. Lonsdale and Bartholomew Ltd. and Intercity, "Intercity Makes the Going Easy to Monica."
108. Thane, "Women and the 1970s. Towards Liberation?," 183.
109. Talbot, "Feminism in Advertising," 179.
110. Hicks, "Only the Clothes Changed: Women Operators in British Computing and Advertising, 1950–1970," 10.
111. Mills, *Sex, Strategy and the Stratosphere: Airlines and the Gendering of Organizational Culture*, 139.
112. Tinkler, "Going Places or Out of Place? Representations of Mobile Girls and Young Women in Late-1950s and 1960s Britain," 233.
113. Nixon, "Mrs. Housewife and the Ad Men: Advertising, Market Research, and Mass Consumption in Postwar Britain," 193.

"housewife" was used as a statistical measure to disambiguate the number of private house-holds within a single property in Britain[114] and by the 1971 census, a question had been integrated specifically to determine who the housewife of a household was (which could refer to a man).[115] Such a definition had been developed in consultation with government depart-ments, the Royal Statistical Society, the Market Research Society, and the Institute of Practi-tioners in Advertising.

Such language also held political significance in the 1970s as the notion of the "housewife" was at the center of a battle between patriarchal oppression and domestic virtue. On the one hand, the title was a target of fierce criticism by gender equality advo-cates; Ann Oakley, a well-known British sociologist, described in her 1974 analysis, *House-wife*, that "her primary economic function is vicarious: By servicing others, she enables them to engage in productive economic activity," and that "instead of a productive role," she would act as "the main consumer in the family."[116] Conversely, the "Housewife" title had amassed important political connotations with the election of Margaret Thatcher as Leader of the Conservative Party in 1975. Thatcher's status as a housewife "dominated her public image between 1974 to 1982" and her "presentation of domestic virtue continued to define her communication with female audiences thereafter."[117] Like BR, Thatcher's 1979 general election campaign was focused on very similar target groups under the collective of the "housewife" including the "working-class housewife" otherwise called the "C2 wives,"[118] who were seen as an influential and largely unreached group of both voters and consumers.

The "main consumer" of the family was an important target for promotional materials, one which BR was effectively reaching: the Kellogg's promotional campaign started in 1974 which "entailed families collecting tokens from current Kellogg's Cornflakes packs, and exchange them for travel vouchers." The scheme was considered a "test marketing exercise" for people in Wales.[119] Such campaigns were found to have "attracted some new travellers into the family rail market regardless of whether their journeys were of an abstractive or generative nature" representing "clearly an important gain for British Rail in terms of introducing the concept of rail into a family's travel repertoire,"[120] and perhaps more importantly, reaching a demographic beyond the traditional railway base with "significant revenue gains occurred from the C2's," or lower social class market.[121] Such success would

114. Brown, "Progress Notes: The Number of Households in Great Britain," 48.

115. UK Data Service, "Appendix IV 1971 Census: Definitions and Concepts. (Reproduced from Census 1971, England and Wales, General Report Part 1, Definitions)."

116. Oakley, *Housewife*, 3.

117. Prestidge, "Housewives Having a Go: Margaret Thatcher, Mary Whitehouse and the Appeal of the Right Wing Woman in Late Twentieth-Century Britain," 283.

118. Haigron, "Targeting 'Essex Man' and 'C2 Wives': The Representation of the Working Class Electorate in the Conservative Party Political Broadcasts (1970s-1980s)," 139.

119. TNA, "'British Rail/Kellogg's Research on a National Promotion' Prepared by Martin Voorhees Asso-ciates for British Railways Board," 1.

120. TNA. 'British Rail/Kellogg's Research on a National Promotion,' 6.

121. TNA. 'British Rail/Kellogg's Research on a National Promotion,' 1.

later inform promotions on Persil washing detergent packets in the late 1970s which achieved similar results.[122]

There was a remarkable parallel between the advertisements targeted at older women and several advertising efforts in the context of the interwar period. Advertisements continually emphasized that women could travel by rail to spend time shopping for leisure.[123] This was a key message throughout the late 1960s and 1970s: In 1968 Inter-City advertisement highlighted how rail travel allowed women to visit department stores cheaply, stating "We give you Swan & Edgar, Marshall & Snelgrove, Harrods, Harvey Nichols and Miss Selfridge."[124] Such advertisements highlight the premise behind the tagline to travel Inter-City "Like the Men Do," which pitched off-peak fares as an opportunity to escape from the monotony of domestic labor, but at a reduced cost. This echoed Victorian ideals of leisure and emancipation for women, particularly in reference to the rise of department stores where women enjoying these locations were seen as emancipated from their married duties.[125] More importantly, it shows that like the travel for business, BR's Inter-City fares were constructed on the basis of individual economies—in this case, those looking to minimize the costs of their leisure time. These economies were clearly gendered, but they demonstrated attention to ensuring that the central message appealed to specific audiences on economic grounds.

The gendered nature of these individual economies comes through strongly when considering the influential "travel Inter-City like the men do" advertising materials. This message was part of a 1972 musical television advertisement that pictured women riding an Inter-City train and singing about the advantages of travelling by train:

> *Travel Inter-City like the men do,*
> *Inter-City sitting pretty all the way,*
> *So join us on the Inter-city when you feel you need a little holiday,*
> *Away from the boring kitchen sink he needs you at,*
> *We're leaving behind the daily random common tasks,*
> *C'mon and travel Inter-city like the men do,*
> *We love a little outing now and then,*
> *So up with women's rights,*
> *Come up and see the sights,*
> *We'll be nice and bright and ready for the men,*
> *Away from it all and home again.*[126]

Women could "Travel Inter-City like the men do. But cheaper," which described how housewives should "find out if your friends, neighbours, husband or other members of the family would like a day in London."[127] Tongue in cheek though the message may have been as

122. TNA, "'Final Report on the Qualitative Research onto the British Rail/Persil Linked Promotion' Prepared by the Opinion Research Centre for British Railways Board."

123. Harrington, "Beyond the Bathing Belle: Images of Women in Inter-War Railway Publicity," 26.

124. British Rail Inter-City, "We Give You Swan & Edgar, Marshall & Snelgrove, Harrods, Harvery Nichols and Miss Selfridge… for 40 Bob," 7.

125. Rappaport, *Shopping for Pleasure*, 114.

126. *Inter-City Commercial: "Housewives Day Out,"* 1972.

127. Inter-City, "Travel Inter-City like the Men Do. But Cheaper!," 9.

a television advertisement, travelling Inter-City "like the men do" drew a clear distinction between male and female use of BR services. Such marketing efforts share remarkable similarities to the interwar period in which railway companies "saw women neither as powerless and ripe for manipulation nor merely as the source of stereotypical imagery that could be exploited to serve the image makers' own ends, but as an economically and socially important group which had to be approached in more subtle and nuanced ways."[128] The framing of these messages enabled BR to position the Inter-City brand as one that considered the economies of ordinary women, even if these economies were shaped by prevalent notions of what the economic position of women was at the time.

This informed several advertisements in the 1970s: In an effort to bring together both individual economies of married women and their husbands. BR recognized a market with an advertisement "Pussycat, Pussycat, where have you been" which described a wife that had been to various sites in London including "Harrods. And Oxford Street" to then meet up with a friend she had not seen "since she got married" only to be "whooshed smoothly back by Inter-City" describing that at the end of the day "And here's my darling husband waiting to pick me up and drive me home to bed."[129] Another advertisement described how "My wife and I have decided to go our own ways," describing that it is "a nice idea to take your wife along next time you Inter-City to London on business" picturing a man in a suit next to a picture of his wife where he recounts a joint trip to London with his wife. He described how "I shall have a contract in my pocket. She will have several dozen parcels marked Harrods and Peter Robinson and so forth. I suppose I'll have to be brave about that too" (Figure 4).[130] Furthermore, emphasizing the "motherhood" narrative of the advertising was demonstrated in a 1972 advertisement which described how readers should "take the children to the London you first saw as a child" and "See all those places again and take your kids. They'll be just as excited as you were" and that it was "the only way to travel with children!" (Figure 5).[131] Such advertising sought to reflect traditional economies of the post-war welfare state, like the narrative of the Housewife suggested, saw the wife as the main consumer of the family.

Like the advertising that came before, these messages were evidenced, though notably evidenced later by the agencies: Through a series of focus groups, panel interviews and questionnaires, research helped to "assist in the creative development" of promotional leaflets for the optional travel market, which often exclusively interviewed housewives, and which often split into two groups: "one group in the age bracket, 20–34 years and the other groups in the age bracket, 35–60 years," terming them either "younger" or "older" housewives.[132] The research found several potential ways of appealing to younger and older housewives, which concluded with two recommendations for advertisements, firstly, they needed to articulate a "sense of parental duty" as "a number of women felt they owed it to their children to show them the historical sites since this was of educational value."[133] Secondly, "shopping,

128. Harrington, "Beyond the Bathing Belle: Images of Women in Inter-War Railway Publicity," 24.
129. Inter-City, "Pussycat, Pussycat, Where Have You Been?," 10.
130. Inter-City, "My Wife and I Have Decided to Go Our Own Ways," 6.
131. Inter-City, "Take the Children to the London You First Saw as a Child," 10.
132. TNA, "'A Report of Three Group Discussions on a New Series of Promotional Leaflets for Intercity' Prepared by Ogilvy Benson and Mather for British Rail Eastern Region," 2.
133. TNA. 'A Report of Three Group Discussions on a New Series of Promotional Leaflets for Intercity,' 2.
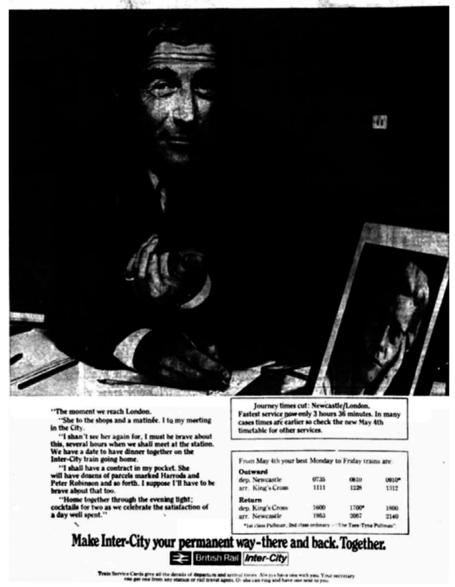
Figure 4. "My Wife and I Have Decided to Go Our Own Ways."

Source: Newcastle Journal, 1970 (used with permission).

Figure 5. "Take the Children to the London You First Saw as a Child."

Source: Coventry Evening Telegraph, 1972 (used with permission).

Figure 6. "Liverpool-London Only £2.50 Each for Two Ladies Together."

Source: Liverpool Echo, 1973 (used with permission).

window-shopping and browsing around the more exclusive shops, visiting relations, accompanying one's own husband on a business trip, going to a show or a play were other reasons for visiting London."[134] Additionally, other recommendations noted that "older informants accompanied their husband when he took a business trip to London" where "she is usually left on her own while he attends his conference" and "a leaflet could be especially designed with this fact in mind."[135] Of course, it is interesting that these reports *followed* advertisements with similar themes.

Advertising for both young women and housewives consistently emphasized the theme of freedom and liberation from ordinary life, but when targeting housewives BR had to be far more cautious. In one incident, an advertisement for a "Ladies Day" promotion offered discounted fares for two women traveling together as pictured in the *Liverpool Echo* offering "£2.50 each for two ladies together" (Figure 6).[136] An internal marketing note had noticed that this advertisement had "received a number of adverse comments about the graphic treatment of the two females who appear to be unclothed," which was described by a BR manager as "unfortunate on an advertisement directed to the mature female audience and it is felt it is a sure way of alienating the very people that we are trying to attract."[137] Research reports found

134. TNA. 'A Report of Three Group Discussions on a New Series of Promotional Leaflets for Intercity,' 4.
135. TNA. 'A Report of Three Group Discussions on a New Series of Promotional Leaflets for Intercity,' 11.
136. Inter-City, "Liverpool-London Only £2.50 Each for Two Ladies Together," 5.
137. TNA, "Inter-City Campaign: General." Letter addressed to the General Manager RE 'Inter-City Advertising 1973—Ladies Day.'

that "older women have much narrower, more traditional taste,"[138] and this needed to be reflected in any materials prepared for them. This echoed trends in the magazine industry, which similarly struggled to balance between socially conservative and permissive readerships. For publishers, to maintain the readership of both younger and older female readers, publishers offered more regular publications that targeted older readers that moved away from "permissive" themes and imagery to avoid alienating older audiences.[139] BR therefore sought to make a distinction between the economies of, and the presentation of "liberation" for, women based on age and marital status.

What becomes evident is the tension created between BR's depictions of the liberated woman, which drew upon both socially conservative and socially permissive narratives. For example, with reference to socially conservative advertisments, as part of research conducted by Ogilvy Benson & Mather into the use of a press advertisement for Inter-City in 1974, in which market researchers looked to "assess the effectiveness and acceptability" of a potentially controversial new advertisement, which consisted of a worried housewife looking out of the window with the caption "Last year nearly 8,000 motorists never made it home. Don't you wish he'd travel Inter-City?" which was described as "a rather different type of press advertisement has been produced, aimed at couples in which the husband makes long distance business trips,"[140] tapping into very real and very serious concerns about road safety.[141] Responses collected by Ogilvy Benson and Mather showed an uninspired response from the target audience: one respondent was quoted as saying that the pictured woman must lead "a very anxious life," another stated "I think she would lead a somewhat lonely life because he would be so absorbed in his business… she would spend all her time clearing up and tidying the house to pass the time… she would worry about him too, particularly if he was late home."[142] At the heart of the message was one about the family: long-distance rail travel was pictured as an investment in the family economy because a traveler could more efficiently use their travel time. This suggests that there was an effort on the part of BR to preserve the "breadwinner" model of the traditional nuclear family inherent within the post-war welfare state, much as other structures and institutions had done in this period.[143]

Such attitudes towards women were not simply portrayals, but stemmed from the generally hostile environment faced by women on the railway. There is a wealth of evidence to show that the railway was a workplace that was generally very hostile to women,[144] and it is evident that such attitudes persisted within the central marketing messages explored in this paper. For

138. TNA, "'A Report of Three Group Discussions on a New Series of Promotional Leaflets for Intercity' Prepared by Ogilvy Benson and Mather for British Rail Eastern Region," 13.

139. Payling and Loughran, "Nude Bodies in British Women's Magazines at the Turn of the 1970s: Agency, Spectatorship, and the Sexual Revolution," 10.

140. TNA, "'Report on Research on a Press Advertisement for Intercity' Prepared by Ogilvy Benson and Mather Ltd for British Rail," 1.

141. Roberts and Geels, "Public Storylines in the British Transition from Rail to Road Transport (1896–2000): Discursive Struggles in the Multi-Level Perspective," 529.

142. TNA, "'Report on Research on a Press Advertisement for Intercity' Prepared by Ogilvy Benson and Mather Ltd for British Rail," 24.

143. Millward, *Sick Note: A History of the British Welfare State*, 90–91.

144. See for example Wojtczak, *Railwaywomen: Exploitation, Betrayal and Triumph in the Workplace*; Robbins, *Wanted, Railman: Report of an Investigation into Equal Opportunities for Women in British Rail.*

example, a *Daily Mail* article in 1974 examined views constructed within the marketing campaigns: in the wake of multiple complaints that female BR workers were not offered the same spousal travel privileges, BR commented that "The reason we don't give free or privilege travel to the husband or children of married women working for British Rail is that we don't regard a husband as being dependent on his wife in the same way as a wife is dependent on her husband."[145] Furthermore, in an interview with a BR manager in the *Sunday Times* in 1976, BR were described as making "dubious sexy offers" arguing that it was "With a splendid disregard for the current convention and the niceties of the Sex Discrimination Act, British Rail is offering a selection of excursion tickets for women only" where a BR spokesman stated "we are offering these rail tickets to women in the daytime when, let's face it, men should be working."[146] The structures of the welfare state constructed a particular idea of social citizenship around the traditional nuclear family which sought to reinforce the "breadwinner" model of gender relations, often explicitly excluding women outside of the traditional economies of the nuclear family.[147] To "travel Inter-City like the men do" was to offer access to a section of the British economy traditionally seen as one used primarily by men to women, but with restrictions designed to fit within the breadwinner model.

Conclusion

In a 1974 interview with the BR public relations manager Grant Woodruff, *Financial Times* reporter Hugh Colver highlighted an important reflection on BR's approach to marketing:

> Railways have tended to be taken for granted as part of the transport net of every developed country for many years. People would say: 'Of course, there's always the train' - the implication being that here was a method of getting from A to B which probably ought not to be discounted. This was not very positive thinking, and it tended to rub off on the railmen themselves, who somehow managed to retain the air of novelty about railways that started with schoolboys and steam.[148]

The railway workforce had historically been very conservative and hostile to changes in tradition.[149] The changes in marketing practice and the emphasis on commercialization posed no exception to these structures: commercialization directly opposed the "social" role of the railway. But as the Financial and Economic Obligations of the Nationalized Industries report stated, nationalized industries "are not, and ought not, to be regarded as social services absolved from economic and commercial justification."[150] Acting more commercially meant challenging assumptions about the nature of a nationalized railway industry. The professionalization of BR's

145. Thomas, "'Perks,'" 12.
146. "British Rail Makes Dubious Sexy Offers," 6.
147. Noble, *Inside the Welfare State: Foundations of Policy and Practice in Post-War Britain*, 14.
148. Colver, "British Rail Set New Trends in Marketing," 15.
149. Gourvish, "British Rail's 'Business-Led' Organization, 1977–1990: Government-Industry Relations in Britain's Public Sector," 113.
150. "The Financial and Economic Obligations of the Nationalised Industries," 3.

Inter-City marketing demonstrates that commercialization was clearly not incompatible with the notion of a social railway: with effective marketing methods it was possible to present the railway as an infrastructure that supported the entrepreneur and *his* business. BR pitched Inter-City to the British public on the basis of individual and family economies of the welfare state, which brought with it a lot of economic assumptions about gender, work, and pay.

Despite some internal resistance, BR had demonstrated that it had professionalized its marketing practice: as early as 1971, a report summarized that "the Inter-City service was seen as a revolutionary and successful attempt to provide a fast, modern and comfortable service" and that there were "numerous allusions to the fact that Inter-City had given British Rail a long-needed face lift" in which there was "evidence to suggest that the old-fashioned image of British Railways is fast disappearing."[151] By 1977 it had conceived a notion of what passengers would be using which products.[152] The organization had a much-improved sense of the target consumer and their travel needs. BR's attempt to market to new audiences was broadly successful in its objectives to raise the profile of Inter-City and BR in general, but perhaps more importantly it enabled BR to position itself as an innovative marketeer. Ultimately BR would not win the battle for transport against the car, but it did enable it to pitch itself as a relevant form of transport that catered to the needs of those travelers and their travel needs.

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151. TNA, "'Creative Research on a Slogan Development for the Intercity Campaign' Prepared by Ogilvy Benson and Mather Ltd for British Railways Board," 3.
152. Smith, "Marketing Modernity: Business and Family in British Rail's 'Age of the Train' Campaign, 1979–84," 388.

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