

Long Island Women Go To War: Local Newspapers Report on the Changing Roles of Women, 1940-1946

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World War II altered the social and economic position of women in the United States and on Long Island in fundamental ways. These changes are well documented by articles in the Long Island press, published from 1940 through 1946.

In January, 1943, the Reverend Dr. Frank M. Kerr, pastor of Christ's First Presbyterian Church in Hempstead told a group of local men about to be sent overseas "that those at home will accept any and all sacrifices intended to help the war effort." For Long Island women, the war meant both the sacrifices described by Rev. Kerr, and the opening up of new life possibilities. The Valley Stream Mail had hinted at the extent of these new opportunities in a May, 1941 editorial, "Woman-Hours". The Mail underscored the importance of the traditional role played by women as volunteers and relief workers in wartime, but it also emphasized the emerging new role of American women as a crucial part of the nation's industrial army. According to the editorial, "Since America became the Arsenal for Democracy we know all about man-hours, but seemingly no one has yet publicized women hours. Why not? Wouldn't it be interesting to learn how many woman-hours are being worked in munition factories, in Red Cross workrooms and other war-relief organizations? How many woman-hours are being worked? Is the number per week increasing? How many potential women hours are not being utilized?"¹

Other local newspapers also recognized the growing importance of women workers to the war effort. In November, 1942, the Babylon Leader reported that the "(i)ncreasing demands by war production plants in the Suffolk-Nassau area has developed a manpower problem which can only be met by the active cooperation of all employable women. . . . Women power will have to be utilized. The switching over of employed women from non-essential industries to war work has been going on for some time but has not been sufficient to meet all demands. It is necessary that women who stopped working when they married; women able to work but who are not now looking for work; and women who have never felt the necessity for it; enter the labor market to meet production needs." In September, 1942, the Republic Aviation

Corporation in Farmingdale reported that 55 percent of their newly hired production workers were women. This was the first time more women had been hired at the plant than men. In another historic breakthrough, women working in the factory were being paid at the same wage rates as their male coworkers. Local newspapers proudly listed the names of these new workers. Babylon women working in the Republic plant included W.W. Watt, Asara Jarolamo, Vivian Harris, Clara Feeley, Myra Squires, Mary Baran, Anna Gosk and Lillian Small. Farmingdale women included Geraldine Polcastro, Beatrice Domemco, and Frances Milano.²

A 1942 headline in Republic Aviation's own company newspaper declared "Women's Place Now in Factory". According to this article, "A woman's place may be in the home (but we doubt it) during peace time, but under present war conditions the pretty sex is just as much at home in an aircraft factory." At Republic, women were now working on the assembly line operating drill presses, putting together electrical components, and as quality control inspectors.³

On May 28, 1943, the Port Jefferson Times told its readers that "if enough fighters and torpedo bombers are to reach our boys in the Pacific and European fronts, their wives and mothers, sisters and sweethearts, are going to have to build them."⁴

Women workers were not a new phenomenon to the United States. In 1940, 27.9% of U.S. workers were women and 51.5% of these women workers were either married, widowed or divorced. What the war changed was the way that American men and women saw the role of women in production and the attitudes that both men and women had towards the capabilities of women. As a result of these changes, by 1944, 36.3% of the U.S. work force was female and 59.1% of these women workers were either married, widowed or divorced.⁵

Wartime factory work brought about many subtle yet important changes. Women workers excelled in technical training programs -- completing four week programs in as little as two and a half weeks; made suggestions for improving production -- Kathryn Brazzell won a \$25 war bond for developing a new wire identification tape dispenser at Republic Aviation; and were named as outstanding war workers, -- including Mary Eldridge of Franklin Square, a policewoman in a defense plant, Beatrice Joyce of Lawrence, from the auxiliary Aircraft Warning Service, and Anna Beckvar of Valley Stream, who constructed radios for submarines and airplanes. All of these accomplishments helped challenge stereotypes about the kind of work that women were capable of doing. Men and women attended training sessions together, "adjusting themselves to the association which prevails in the shop." Because safety regulations were more important than sexual identification and stereotyping, women

were required to wear standard work clothes. At Republic Aviation, guidelines included "slacks, trousers or coveralls of standard cut or style. . . . Legs of the garments should be close-fitting at the ankles. Upper clothing must be of the coat, blouse or workshirt type. . . . Low-heeled, heavy shoes are advised, preferably with reinforced toes." Women workers were so crucial to wartime production that in November, 1942, the maximum hours women were legally allowed to work was temporarily raised from 50 to 58 hours per week.⁶

The employment of large numbers of women in Long Island's factories meant other changes as well. The Household Finance Company directed its ads in local newspapers to attract women borrowers. Under pressure from the defense manufacturers, local businesses advertised that they would stay open late to accommodate working women. To recruit women with young children, Republic Aviation established a "Freedom Shift" which allowed women to work every other day. Families with more than one worker in a defense plant were allowed to coordinate work hours, either so they could commute together, or so they could divide up household responsibilities. Federal and state funds were used to establish child care centers. In Hempstead, a child care center was opened at the Franklin School in September, 1942. It accepted children six days a week from 7 am until 7 pm and also enrolled older children in an after-school program which operated all day during the summer.⁷

As Long Island women fought War World II on numerous fronts, they learned that they were capable of doing both a "woman's" and a "man's" job. Factory work didn't excuse women from running households, caring for children and dealing with wartime shortages and rationing. Women volunteers led campaigns to stockpile silk, knit sweaters for servicemen, recycle animal fat, send used clothing to European refugees, and sell war bonds. They staffed the Red Cross and the USO, visited the wounded in hospitals, acted as fire wardens, and assisted at Mitchel Field. They joined the WAVES, the WACS and the Marines.

At the end of the war, American society had to face an unexpected consequence of the vast mobilization of women as industrial workers -- women did not want to leave the work force. In September, 1944, Newsday reported that "Rosie the Riveter probably will change her slacks involuntarily for a postwar housedress unless an unprecedented peacetime production is achieved." According to an article focusing on the nation's automobile industry, women were scheduled to be laid-off as wartime production ebbed and as men returned from the armed forces. But the women were not happy. Eighty-five percent told union interviewers that they wanted to continue

in the factories.⁸ In Nassau , 86% of women surveyed by the N.Y.S. Department of Labor in August 1945 said that they expected to work after the war.⁹

On Long Island, post-war jobs was deemed the "number one problem" by members of the Garden City-Hempstead League of Women Voters. By August, 1945, Grumman had placed all of its employees on "leave of absence status." The company's child care centers, essential for supporting working women, were closed in Brightwaters and Freeport. The Babylon Village Board was so concerned with cutbacks and lay-offs in the defense plants that it made its top priority cooperating "with the various industries and plants in the vicinity to keep as many workers in the neighborhood at work as possible."¹⁰

Working women realized that the closing of child care centers also meant the closing down of possibilities for women in a post-war world. The Hempstead Sentinel reported that 50 of the 58 women with children in the Hempstead Child Care Center attended a meeting to demand that the center remain open after the war, even if it meant they had to pay increased fees.¹¹

Post-war prosperity, the nurturing of delayed families, the rapid development of new towns, roads and businesses, federal mortgage subsidies for veterans, and the evolution of a suburban consumer society, changed conditions again for women on Long Island and in the United States. Advertisements in the local press sold both a new world of electrical appliances and the image of women as brides, mothers and contented housewives. Experts like Dr. Benjamin Spock recommended that mothers who didn't have to work should stay home with their children. Spock told women that "(t)he important thing for a mother to realize is that the younger the child the more necessary it is for him (*sic*) to have a steady, loving person taking care of him. . . . If a mother realizes clearly how vital this kind of care is to a small child, it may make it easier for her to decide that the extra money she might earn, or the satisfaction she might receive from an outside job, is not so important, after all." As a result of all of these social pressures, between 1940 and 1960 the number of single women in the United States aged twenty to twenty-nine declined from 36 to 20 percent and the American birthrate rose by 50 percent.¹²

Memories of the wartime experiences of the country's "Rosie the Riveters" and the ways that those experiences challenged traditional notions of a woman's role in society, were suppressed during the late 1940's and 1950's, but they were never completely forgotten. According to Betty Friedan, writing in The Feminine Mystique (1963), these memories "lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of

American women. . . . Each suburban wife struggled with it alone. . . . she was afraid to ask, even of herself the silent question - "Is this all?"¹³

By the late 1950's, as their children grew up, married women on Long Island and in the rest of the United States began to return to the work force in large numbers. In 1940, only 15 percent of married women held jobs outside the home. By 1960, the figure was 30 percent and by 1980 it had reached 50 percent. This included 40 percent of the women under age thirty-five with children under age six and over 60 percent of these women with children between ages six and eighteen. Today on Long Island, women are 45% of the employed work force. This includes 47.7% of women with children under age six and 73.1% of women with children between ages 6 and 17. "Rosie the Riveter", her daughters, and her granddaughters have returned to the work force with a vengeance.¹⁴

September 17, 1942
(Source unknown)
What is the main
idea of this cartoon?

United States Women in World War II

by Pamela K. Booth

Many changes took place in the United States during the "Roaring 20's" and the Great Depression, but women's traditional occupational roles remained relatively unaffected. When women were employed outside the home, their choices were limited. Generally they worked as domestics, nurses, teachers, or secretaries. Married women were expected to be homemakers, wives, and mothers, and leave the outside jobs to men. Especially during the Depression years, it was thought to be selfish of a woman to take a job that a man could use. However, after the attack by Japan on Pearl Harbor in December, 1941, hundreds of thousands of men went off to war and left behind jobs in factories, on farms, in offices, and in mines. Women were publicly recruited to fill jobs vacated by men. In 1942, President Roosevelt told the American people, "We can no longer afford to indulge such prejudice."¹⁵

A major concern of the U.S. government was keeping factories in operation. Many people regarded World War II as a "war of production" and the Germans and Japanese were believed to have a 10-year head start in amassing weapons. Production was essential to victory and women were essential to production.¹⁶

Government propaganda and advertising encouraged American women to get involved in the war effort. Posters, radio programs, magazine articles, and advertisements showed women in overalls with greasy hands. The Office of War Information (OWI) and other government agencies urged women to come out of their kitchens and move into the factories.

Propaganda efforts took two separate and distinct approaches that worked well together. The OWI appealed to women's patriotic sense as well as their emotions. Women were encouraged to enter the factories and build the implements of war that would bring their fathers, brothers, and sweethearts home sooner. The government utilized guilt by implying that soldiers might die unnecessarily if women did not "do their part". In addition women were urged to join the military as nurses and to be careful consumers.¹⁷

These campaigns were quickly successful. Women dug ditches, worked on road crews, tended fields and farms, and filled many office positions. Women volunteered for the Woman's Land Army, which brought women out of the cities and onto farms to work. The percentage of women working in the agricultural sector rose from one to fourteen percent by the end of the first summer of the war. In December 1941, about 12 million women were employed outside the home in the United States; by

early 1944, this number was over 16 million-- an increase of more than 33 percent. In manufacturing, a reported 6 million women labored to make weapons for the fighting men.¹⁸

Even while working in factories, women still had household obligations, including child care. These additional responsibilities often came at the end of a ten to twelve hour workday. Women had to handle those responsibilities without many of today's conveniences. Modern washing machines, automatic dishwashers, electric dryers, television for the kids, play groups and carpools were not available at the time. In fact, household chores in 1941 typically took fifty hours a week or more. Women also helped the war effort in more traditional ways. Women rationed meat, coffee, tin, rubber, nylon, and gasoline. Women saved and reused cooking fat, tin foil, soap, and nylon stockings. Victory gardens were common sights in backyards.¹⁹

In May, 1943, Congress passed a bill providing more funds for nursing schools. However, the wartime need for nurses was so great that a proposal to draft women into the nurses corps was considered. According to a public opinion poll, seventy-three percent of Americans approved of this idea. The House of Representatives passed the Nurses Selective Service Act in 1945 by a vote of 347-42 with 43 abstentions. The Senate Military Affairs Committee favored the measure, but one month later the war in Europe ended. When World War II was finally over, Americans were too busy rejoicing to notice this fundamental change in society's attitude toward women. If the war had continued, it is likely that women would have been conscripted.²⁰

The end of the war brought new challenges and considerations for American society and women in general. Women had served well in their new jobs. They proved they could build planes, tanks, and ships. Although thankful for the end of war and the return of men, many women were reluctant to give up the jobs they held during the war. The fact that most women defense workers stated that they wanted to keep their jobs signaled that women's aspirations for themselves and their sense of their own competence had been dramatically altered by their success in "men's" work categories.²¹

American working women and American society had different views on what their post-war roles would be. Society offered its appreciation for a job well done as it tried to usher women back into their pre-war kitchens. Advertisements for modern technology to assist in household chores and suburban lifestyles with large families became prominent. Women's magazines promoted the virtues of staying home and caring for post-war families. The government assisted women's early

retirement by cutting off federal funds for day care. According to one historian, the government wanted "to avoid massive unemployment after the war, and to government policy makers, unemployed was a male adjective."²²

After the war, both marriage and birthrates soared in new suburban communities. From a mid-depression low of 18.7 births per 1,000 population, the rate increased to 24.5 by 1949. Marriage was in vogue and home ownership was spurred on by the availability of GI loans and the savings that had been accumulated during the war.²³

Women's adaptation to the new roles created during World War II produced mixed feelings for women, men, and society in general, and forced many people to reevaluate their perceptions of women's capabilities. With the post-war surge in economic growth and the establishment of new families, communities, and suburbs, opportunities and dilemmas were created for American women. For many, traditional ideas won out, at least at the start. However, during the next two decades it became apparent that things would never return to the way they were before World War II.

Sources

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Women as a percentage of the United States Work Force

Year	Percentage
1940	27.9%
1941	28.5%
1942	30.9%
1943	35.7%
1944	36.3%
1945	35.8%
1946	30.8%

How do we explain these changes?

The Janes Who Made the Planes: Grumman in WWII

**adapted from an article by Christine Kleinegger,
Senior Historian, New York State Museum**

In March 1942, three months after the United States entered World War II, six women walked on to the factory floor at Grumman's Plant No. 1 in Bethpage, Long Island. They were the first female aircraft workers on Long Island. By the end of 1943, 8,000 more women were part of the Grumman War Productions Corp. Eventually, women comprised approximately 30% of Grumman's wartime work force of 25,400 workers. The "Janes Who Made the Planes" built Wildcats, Hellcats, and Avengers for the Navy.

Before World War II, women were considered unfit for aircraft production. However, after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, women suddenly were a perfect pool of potential workers. Once on the job at Grumman, Long Island's women were often commended because of their alleged patience with repetitious, monotonous tasks, their dexterous fingers, their docility in taking orders, and their ability to squeeze into small, awkward spots. Women soon predominated in certain departments. For example, the Electrical Department of Plant 14 had 52 women and only two men.

Grumman offered training to women at several "aviation schools" around Long Island. In 6-10 week courses, women learned the rudiments of riveting, blueprint reading, sub-assembly, and other semi-skilled functions associated with aircraft production. Many women enjoyed learning new skills. Ethel Nelson Surprise was animated when she recalled her training: "I remember coming home and telling my father about the different things we were doing and he'd shake his head and say 'I can never imagine my daughters riveting and working at a drill press.' We'd sit around the table and talk about things we learned that day and he couldn't get over it."

College-educated women were recruited as apprentice engineers to assist male Grumman engineers in designing aircraft. These women were given crash courses in drafting, calculus, mechanics, and aerodynamics. Grumman was also the first company to hire women to test military aircraft as it came off the line. Pilots Barbara Jayne, Elizabeth Hooker, and "Teddy" Kenyon were no doubt the most glamorous and famous of Grumman's female defense workers, and they were featured in magazine advertisements for cosmetics and cigarettes.

World War II was a watershed in the history of women in the United States. A new working woman emerged: middle-class, middle-aged, and married. Although women ranged from recent high school graduates to grandmothers in their sixties, the average age of women working at Grumman was 36. Management at Grumman understood that in order to recruit mothers of small children and to reduce absenteeism, consideration had to be given to the family responsibilities of working women. Wartime innovations designed to make life easier or more pleasant for harried Grumman defense workers included cafeterias, exercise breaks and recreational sports, morale-boosting social activities and entertainment, comfortable rest rooms, a lending library, and a service for running errands. Women counselors were hired to orient new women workers to factory life and to help solve family problems that interfered with productivity.

The chief problem for many working mothers was the need for child care. Grumman operated three "war-time nurseries" in nearby communities that accommodated up to 50 children between the ages of two and five, and cost 50 cents a day. Yet with 8,000 women working at Grumman, most mothers relied on more informal forms of child care--usually relatives or neighbors. Dorothy Nelson Rabas, an inspector at Grumman during the war, had to quit her job when her neighbor would no longer take care of her daughter. When asked why she hadn't used the war-time nursery, Rabas recalled it was too far away. Car pooling and gas shortages, in addition to the ten-hour work day, made child care in neighboring areas impractical for many mothers. The "war-time nurseries" were disbanded after the war, reflecting the view that child care was a war emergency measure and not an employment benefit of working parents.

Throughout the war, the Grumman newspaper, Plane News, printed dozens of editorials, cartoons, articles, and features on individual women that applauded women's patriotism and celebrated their skill and perseverance. In December, 1942, an editorial in Plane News titled "A Merry Christmas to the Ladies" even presented a feminist analysis of the war: "The place of women in the world is one of the points of issue in this war and the outcome of the war will determine whether she is to be an inferior creature according to the Nazi scheme or a free person of equal rights which she holds in the democratic way of life." The editorial went on to predict that women in the shop would have further opportunities ahead of them.

Grumman management used articles in Plane News to motivate women and minimize male doubts about a woman's ability to do the job. Men in the shops were not wholly receptive to the idea of women joining the ranks of a traditionally male industry. Grumman women who recall male co-workers treating them with friendliness and cooperation also remember that practical jokes were played on them like being sent on errands for bogus tools. In an article in Plane News marking the two-year anniversary of the first women workers, a male foreman recalled the first day on the job for the women workers assigned to his shop: "Catcalls and whistles followed the girls from the minute they appeared that morning."

Women hired specifically for the "Grumman War Production Corp" knew they were hired only for the duration of the war. As the war wound down, foremen made lists of their workers in "order of proficiency" to plan the massive lay-offs that would occur when peace arrived. Despite all of the wartime praise for their efforts, no women were deemed proficient enough to keep on after the war ended. The day after V-J Day, Grumman laid off all its employees; two weeks later only male employees were called back and rehired. Ironically, Grumman's production manager found himself without a single riveter. Riveters are essential to building planes, and certainly thousands of women were trained as riveters. Yet even when emergency telegrams were sent out to riveters to be rehired, no women were invited back.

Traditional Roles For Women Expand

A) Recycling, Civil Defense and War Bond Sales

Hempstead Sentinel, January 14, 1943

Hempstead Woman Praised For Work In Silk Stocking Salvage Campaign

Col. Edward C.O. Thomas, Nassau County director of civilian protection in a letter to Miss Susan Schenck, proprietor of Miller's Bridal Shop at 261 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead, commended Miss Schenck for collecting and contributing 1,000 pounds of women's silk and nylon stockings for the county salvage drive.

"May I thank you for your outstanding accomplishment in accumulating within the period of one month, approximately 1,000 pounds of silk and nylon stockings for our salvage," said Col. Thomas. "These are now being reprocessed for use as powder bags for our high calibre guns."

"May I say that it is women like you, with a high resolve and patriotic spirit, who are making civilian history. In this war, as in all wars, women can and do accept responsibilities. They do their job modestly, humbly, but well. I could not let this splendid effort go by without a personal note of thanks," Col. Thomas concluded.

Farmingdale Post, February 11, 1943

Six Month Report Reveals Activity of Women's Division

The Women's division of the Farmingdale War Savings staff rendered an account of their first six months' activity. This group under the leadership of Mrs. W. T. Schwendler has maintained a selling crew for the First National Bank, the Bank of Farmingdale and in the Farmingdale Theatre during week-ends for the aforementioned period. They have been able to capture, attract, convince, and literally pull out of the pockets of those who have money to deposit, withdraw, invest, or to those who are pleasure bent, the total of \$14,999.45. This represents a profit of almost \$5,000 to those who have seen the light and who have invested in War savings bonds and stamps.

The Farmingdale Post, June 17, 1943

Fire Guard, Under Warden Service, Open to Women Also

Although Fire Guard is considered the most difficult and dangerous of volunteer Civilian Defense assignments, women will be recruited as regular members of Fire Guard Squads, and will work on exactly the same basis as men. In fact, women outnumber men in the British Fire Guard organization. Women will also serve in staff positions, organizing and directing thousands of Fire Guards. Their job will be to locate and extinguish incendiary bomb fires while they are still small, thus releasing city fire equipment and personnel to fight blazes too large for pump tank or stirrup pump treatment.

The Babylon Leader, March 10, 1944

Mrs. H.R. Smither Prize Winner for Booth Bond Sales Will Receive Bond for Booth Worker Selling Most During War Loan

Mrs. Harriet R. Smither is winner of the \$25 War Bond donated by an anonymous local citizen to be awarded to the booth worker who sold the most War Bonds and Stamps at the Babylon Theater War Bond Booth during the Fourth War Loan Campaign, is announced by Mrs. Joel A. Davis, chairman of Booth Committee.

Questions:

1. Why was the recycling of silk and nylon important to the war effort?
2. Why were women encouraging people to put their savings in banks? Why were people suspicious of banks?
3. Do you think women could be good fire guards? Why?
4. Why was an award given to the best war bond sales person?

B) Knitting, Collecting, Entertaining, etc.

Hempstead Sentinel, January 30, 1941

Grateful to Unit Workrooms for Youths' Clothing

Miss Dorothy L. Tapacott, executive secretary of the Nassau County Chapter, American Red Cross, today received a letter from the Hon. Lady Ward, C.B.E., chairman of the Dudley House Committee. Dudley House in London is a depot for gifts for America to Great Britain. Lady Ward in her letter says, "We have just received in this house a beautiful shipment of boys' flannel shirts. They came at a particularly fortunate time as we were short of boys' clothing and it is in great demand for all the poor people who have lost all their possessions in the bombed areas."

Valley Stream Mail, 1942

100 Girls Entertain Soldiers at Hop

More than 100 girls from the auxiliary drum and bugle corps, Nassau County Veterans of Foreign Wars, entertained seventy-five soldiers from Mitchel Field at a sports hop, Thursday night at headquarters. Mrs. Nellie Ahemns, drum major for the corps, was in charge of the dance.

Valley Stream Mail, 1943

Many Women Knitting Sweaters for Boys Who Leave From Local Board

The splendid work being done by the newly organized unit of the Citizens Committee for the Army and Navy . . . was disclosed by Mrs. John L. Knowles, chairman, that 150 members had been enrolled and more than 40 beautiful sweaters delivered for distribution. Of the membership, 130 are knitters and are now applying themselves to making a sweater which will be ready for the next contingent of boys to leave Valley Stream for active service. Mrs. Knowles praised the excellent workmanship of the articles and said she was delighted with the cooperation given in the worthy cause. . . . The actual cost of wool for each sweater is about \$1.50 and any resident who feels inclined to donate the cost of a garment, his or her contribution will be accepted with the warmest thanks.

The Hempstead Sentinel, Thursday, January 28, 1943

Local Committee Gets 2 Emergency Calls for Books

Librarians throughout Nassau County have been urged by Mrs. Adelaide M. Faron, chairman of the county Victory Book Drive to send in their collection of books immediately to meet the second emergency request this week from campaign headquarters in New York City for additional books for servicemen. The first call came Monday and 2,700 books were brought to Prospect Street School from various collection points and loaded on an army truck and hurried to New York to be placed upon ships to be taken to men overseas.

Newsday, January 6, 1945

Used Clothes for Europe's Needy Makes Real Contribution to War

It took the war and its resultant hardships to millions of people to teach us a graphic lesson about the importance of even the simplest piece of clothing. The heart-rending reports and pictures of the victims of bombing in England, the plight of the Italian, Russian, Greek, Dutch, and other peoples and their gratitude for our old clothes, is making a deep impression on most women. How wonderful it is that even in these war years when every stitch of clothing is precious, the average household is able to spare something for these gallant but less fortunate allies. Whatever clothing is not aside for foreign relief associations and other appeals should be perfectly clean and mended.

Newsday, January 19, 1945

ARC Names Mrs. Ponvert to Post for Fund Drive

Mrs. Antonio Ponvert of Glen Head will head the Special Gifts Division of the coming Red Cross War Fund. She heads the Staff Assistance Corps of Nassau Red Cross Chapter and formerly was chairman of the Brookville Red Cross Branch. She will direct the fourth wartime appeal of the Chapter to residents of the county whose gifts in the past have been in the higher brackets.

Newsday, January 25, 1945

Legion Ladies Visit Wounded

The Nassau County committee of the American Legion Auxiliary entertained 200 patients at Santini Hospital, Mitchel Field, on Monday night Mrs. Jane Cox, president of the Auxiliary and Mrs. Mildred Kelly, rehabilitation chairman, were in charge. Twenty-five assistant hostesses served the men in the wards, who were unable to come to the recreation room. The Women's Auxiliary Band presented a program of band music. The soldiers were given pocket editions of popular books, cigarettes, and chewing gum.

Questions:

1. Why were clothes collected and sent to Europe?
2. Why did young women from the Drum and Bugle Corp go to Mitchel Field?
3. How are Valley Stream women helping the war effort?
4. How do books help the war effort?
5. What is Mrs. Ponvert's role at the Red Cross?
6. Why did women visit the Santini Hospital?
7. Why were women volunteers important to the war effort?

C) Recycling

October, 1942 (source unknown)

What is the main idea of this cartoon?

D) Hofstra Women and the War Effort

Hofstra Chronicle, November, 1942

Red Cross Workroom Set Up on Campus

Kate Mason (a Hofstra student's women's organization) will open the first Red Cross college workroom for the preparation of surgical dressings in the North Atlantic area on Monday, November 23, in Hofstra Hall. Sponsored by Kate Mason and the Faculty Women's club, the workroom will be operated under the auspices of the Nassau County chapter of the American Red Cross. Mrs. Marcus C. Old of the Faculty Women's club will be in charge of the group.

Hofstra Chronicle, December, 1942

Workers Make 800 Bandages in First Month

Under the auspices of the Nassau County Chapter of the American Red Cross, a unit for the preparation of hospital bandages has been established on the west porch of Hofstra Hall. Mrs. Marcus C. Old is chairman of the unit, and she and Miss Eleanor D. Blodgett were instrumental in establishing the workroom. Mrs. Old, who has formerly worked with surgical dressings in the Hempstead Red Cross Chapter, and Miss Blodgett, who knew of such workrooms in colleges in the first World War, approached Mrs. Moore, head of the Nassau County Red Cross, on the subject. President Brower has donated most of the equipment for the workroom.

Hofstra Chronicle, December, 1942

Teachers Hold Education Talk On Campus

Hofstra College was the arena on December 1st of an educational conference on "The Responsibility of Education Toward Children In War Time, Especially as Regards Nursery Schools and After-School Care."

Attending the conference at the invitation of Dean William Hunter Beckwith, were Dr. William Young, Director of the Division of Elementary Education, State Education Department; Dr. Ruth Andrus, chief of the Bureau of Child Development and Parent Education of the State Education Department; Mrs. Lyle Morris of Northport, L.I.; Mrs. Grace DeKay, principal of the Glen Head Schools, Glen Head, L.I., all of whom participated in the panel discussion. Also participating in the conference were presidents of parent-teachers associations, directors of civilian mobilization units and representatives of similar groups.

"War has brought with it a condition not only to education but to community life as a whole that demands deliberation. It is probably one that will not end with the termination of the war, but one that will reach into the future," Dean Beckwith stated in discussing the problem of children whose mothers are now engaged in war industries.

Hofstra Chronicle, February, 1943

War Duty Calls "Ma" Clarke; Veteran Nurse Here Since '35

"I'll be back as soon as the war is over, but I'm needed elsewhere now."

Thus, Mrs. Winifred Clarke, assistant professor of health education and resident nurse at Hofstra since its establishment in 1935, bade good bye to Hofstra students last Friday afternoon. Mrs. Clarke was granted a leave of absence for the duration so that she may enlist in essential nursing service. She assumed the duties of assistant director of the School of Nurses, Methodist Hospital, of Brooklyn, early this week.

"Ma" Clarke, as she was affectionately known to Hofstra students for the past eight years, has assisted hundreds of students. In her years here she has helped repair everything from broken baseball fingers to broken legs.

Hofstra Chronicle, April, 1945

WAC Program Set For Little Theatre Teachers Hold Education Talk On Campus

Ways in which college trained women can contribute their skills to the war effort in the Women's Army Corps will be explained to students of Hofstra College on Wednesday, April 25. The program will open with a showing of the Army Film, "To the Ladies," which explains the work done by WAC's serving with the Army Medical department. This will be followed by a short address by Lt. Madeline F. Bushman, 2nd Service Command College Liaison Officer. Students will be encouraged to ask questions regarding the Women's Army Corps, and the opportunities the Corps offers students to utilize their college training in one of the many jobs available to eligible women.

- 1- How did Hofstra women help the war effort?
- 2- In your opinion, how did the statement by Dean Beckwith predict the future?

E) Summing it all up. . . .

Hempstead Sentinel, August 30, 1945

Hempstead's Work on the Home Front

Now that the war has been won on all fronts, and peace time will bring things back to normal, it is time to look around and remember all the many sacrifices and good deeds performed on the home front. There are many men and women of Hempstead who deserve a great deal of praise for their work in war times but probably will never get anything beyond their own thoughts of work well done.

Civilian protection workers are deserving of more than a pat on the back. This group, numbering hundreds of men and women, gave of their time freely and in Hempstead built up an organization which was ready and able to meet any emergency that might have arisen. Each and every one of them earned the commendation of the community and the nation.

The men and women who worked on the various ration boards also performed a necessary and difficult task. They gave of their time freely and helped in a major way to make the rationing system work. They contributed greatly to the war effort on the home front and in so doing deserve the highest praise.

The Red Cross program was so extensive that it would take pages to cover even the high spots in Hempstead alone. Women and men engaged in this work were active in practically every phase of the war effort. It seems silly to try to praise this group because its work calls for more than that. Maybe, it can be reflected in future Red Cross drives for funds.

Workers in the USO, especially the Girl Service Organization, did a great job in keeping up the morale of servicemen. It is difficult to estimate just how great a job this group did--it was so fine. All women, church groups, entertainers and others who had a part in this program were real war workers.

The men and women who helped stage the war bond drives and other drives for war funds, the men who went to Mitchel Field at early and late hours to help unload, wounded servicemen from ambulances, the men who served as male nurses in hospitals and all others who did their part can look back with the satisfaction that they helped win the peace.

Summing it all up--Hempstead's men and women did a swell job during the war and now are ready to do as well, if not better, in the formation of a just and lasting peace.

Questions:

1. According to this article, what important jobs did women do on the home front during World War II?
2. Why were these jobs important to the war effort?
3. Do you think these women should be credited with helping to win the war? Why?

Long Island Women Join the Armed Forces

Newsday, October 5, 1942

4 Nassau Girls Go In WAVES

Four Nassau women will enter WAVES training schools as apprentice seamen next Friday, and after training will be promoted to special ratings. One of the girls, Miss Gundacker, 21, is following in her father's footsteps. He was a Navy veteran of World War I.

Newsday, October 9, 1942

Quit Job to Learn Radio, Nassau Girl Joins WAVES

Garden City- A gal who wanted to be a radio operator so badly that she quit a good job to take full-time code lessons, got her wish yesterday when she left for the University of Wisconsin as an enlisted WAVE on her way to be a Navy radio operator.

She's Lucille Seielstad. She was employed as personnel woman for eight years, did volunteer radio work when the AWVS was first organized, and liked it so much that she left her position to take private lessons, full-time.

Then she went to radio school and eventually got her amateur radio operator's license, becoming a full-fledged "ham".

Lucille hopes, after her training is completed, to be made a radio code teacher, but she'll settle for any type of job that will help win the war.

Farmingdale Post, February 25, 1943

Mrs. Wm. Heath Enlists in U.S. Marine Corps

Mrs. William Heath enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps Women's Reserve, was sworn in on Tuesday. She will leave for active duty this weekend. Her husband, Sergeant Heath, is stationed somewhere in New England.

The Babylon Leader, May 14, 1944

Mimi R. LeSauvage is Sworn into WAVES as Apprentice Seaman

Florence (Mimi) Rollins LeSauvage was sworn into the Women's Reserve (U.S. Naval Reserve) on Thursday, May 6, as an apprentice seaman in the enlisted quota of WAVES. She is the daughter of Lieut. Commander and Mrs. George Le Sauvage of West Islip Road.

She will soon be ordered to the training school at Hunter College, New York, for indoctrination into the WAVES.

- 1- Why are women being recruited into the armed forces?
- 2- Why did these women enlist?
- 3- The role of women in the armed forces continues to be debated. In your opinion, should women be allowed in combat or restricted to support roles? Why?

Newsday, November 2, 1995

The Women of War

Events to honor female veterans of many wars

By Merle English

As the nation marks the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, a Queens group is paying tribute to women veterans from New York who served in every international conflict from World War I to the Gulf War.

Approximately 58,000 women veterans live in New York state. Women veterans were an obscure group until the 1990 Census revealed there were 1,158,900 nationwide, representing 4.1 per cent of the veteran population.

Ruth Young is president of Military Women of New York City and Friends, which she founded two years ago "to give voice and visibility to women veterans," especially "women of color." She said 8,500 (New York) women were veterans of the Gulf War; 8,700 served in the Vietnam; 4,500 in the Korean War; 16,900 in World War II and 100 in World War I, while 21,400 are in peacetime service.

Young, who did clerical work in intelligence and security in the U.S. Women's Army Auxiliary Corps from 1962 to 1964, and Syslin Francis, administrator of the New York State Veterans Home in St. Albans, are organizing the tribute. It takes place during National Women Veterans Recognition Week, Nov. 6 to Nov. 10.

Among the honorees is Evelyn Decker of St. Albans, a registered nurse who worked in the segregated Army Nurse Corps and with another group that were the first "colored" nurses assigned to a prisoner-of-war ward, caring for Japanese captives.

Decker was honorably discharged with a war-related disability and was awarded the Army Campaign medal, the WWII Victory Medal, the Army Occupation Medal of Japan and Germany, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal and the Korean Service Medal with two Bronze Stars.

The honorees also include Adele Brenner, a Rockaway Park resident who, as a WAC corporal, supervised the dental clinic at Camp Monticello, a Japanese internment camp in Arkansas.

Nancy Lieutenant-Colon, a former Amityville resident now living upstate who achieved the rank of major in the U.S. Air Force Nurse Corps and retired as chief nurse, will also be recognized.

Lieutenant-Colon, the first black nurse to be commissioned during World War II, according to Young, integrated the Regular Army Nurse Corps. As part of her duties she supervised medical evacuations.

- 1- How many women who are World War II veterans live in New York state?
- 2- Why were these women veterans being honored?
- 3- Design a certificate of appreciation for one of the women being honored.
- 4- Did you know that the U.S. armed forces were racially segregated during World War II? In your opinion, why were African American women, who were suffering from discrimination at home, willing to serve in the armed forces?

Long Island Women Enter New Industries

Background:

Large numbers of young men from Long Island entered the United States armed forces during World War II. At the same time, additional workers were needed to produce weapons and materials for the war effort. A serious "manpower" shortage was felt throughout the nation's economy. This opened the door for an infusion of "womanpower" on a number of jobs and in many industries that had previously only employed men.

Women workers were not new to the U.S. work force. In 1940, 27.9% of U.S. workers were women and 51.5% of these women workers were either married, widowed or divorced. What the war did was start to change the way that American men and women saw the role of women in production. By 1944, 36.3% of the U.S. work force was female and 59.1% of these women workers were either married, widowed or divorced. Partly as a result of trends that started during World War II, women on Long Island are now 45% of the employed work force. This includes 47.7% of women with children under age six work and 73.1% of women with children between ages 6 and 17.

On Long Island during World War II, large numbers of women workers were needed in a number of important industries. Rural areas of Suffolk County recruited women as agricultural workers. The Grumman plant in Bethpage needed to replace thousands of male employees on the assembly lines that were building the Wildcat fighter and the Avenger torpedo plane. The wartime demand for workers meant that women had new opportunities for job training and for employment on jobs that paid high salaries. National and local governments, schools and local colleges, and industry cooperated to provide training programs that paid women while they learned the job.

New possibilities for women also created new problems. Women and men both had to rethink traditional ideas about what they considered women's work and the proper role of women on the job, in the family and in society. Companies were concerned about how well men and women would work together. Many Long Island women responded to these challenges by becoming outstanding workers.

A) The Farm Emergency

Babylon Leader, January 29, 1942

Farmerettes Will Stage Comeback in Suffolk County

Farmerettes will stage a comeback in Suffolk County next summer.

They'll stage a comeback because farmerettes are going to be the only solution to what farm prognosticators say will be by midsummer a "semi-acute" shortage of farm labor.

With increased crop goals, more acreage in production, and more livestock and poultry being raised, the demand for farm labor will be greater this year than for many years past. At the same time, the supply will be greatly reduced, largely because of two factors: (1) the draft, and (2) movement of farm workers, particularly itinerants, to employment in defense industries.

Deferment of farm workers from the draft will help the situation but will fall far short of solving the problem; nor will recruitment of farm workers from draft rejects, boys under draft age, and men over draft age provide a solution. For one reason, there won't be enough of them; for another, most workers in these groups who would be capable of farm labor, will prefer to take the higher wages which defense industry will offer.

Even counting draft deferments, and the men and boys not now working on farms who can be induced to go "back to the land", Suffolk County still will need a minimum of 3,000 additional farm workers during the summer of 1942, conservative estimates indicate.

That means at least 3,000 farmerettes.

It means convincing at least 3,000 Suffolk County women preferably young, strong, unmarried women - that the best way to serve their country is to don overalls and go "down to the farm".

Patriotism . . . will be the only motive which can persuade potential farmerettes to put up with callouses on their hands, dirt under their fingernails, sunburn on their noses, and aches in their backs. . . . Volunteer farmerettes must be ready to do men's work to the best of their abilities; diletante debutantes definitely not wanted!

Questions:

- 1- What is a "farmerette"?
- 2- Why do "prognosticators" think "farmerettes" will be needed in Suffolk County during the summer of 1942?
- 3- Why was farm work considered less attractive than defense work?
- 4- What stereotypes about women are expressed in this article?

B) New Jobs Open

Republic Aviation, June, 1942

New Girls, Switchboard For Telephone Division

A force of five new operators and an additional three-position switchboard have been added to the Company's telephone division to provide 24-hour-a-day telephone service. The telephone department went into rapid expansion immediately after the national war emergency brought three shifts to the production lines and longer hours for office workers at Republic. When the order for immediate 24-hour service went through on December 15, the Company's three veteran operators, Jeanette Bohing, Dorothy Simpson, and Virginia Dick manned the switchboard night and day until additional operators could be hired and adequately trained to control the board. For a period of ten days the only sleep they obtained was snatched in the hospital bedroom at short intervals off-duty.

Newsday, September 17, 1942

There's No Stopping 'Em, Fellow

First it was war plants, then the Army, then the Navy, then the air ferry service - and now women have invaded one of the last male strongholds, the filling station.

The Gulf Oil Corp. has set up a school at its station at Lond Beach Rd. and Seaman Ave., Rockville Centre, to teach girls how to pump gas, wipe windshields, change and fill tires, change oil, do a grease job and perform all the other little tasks and courtesies expected of good station attendants. The girls are paid while they learn, and when they've completed the training course successfully, they'll take over Gulf stations all over the County as male attendants are drafted or lured away by war jobs.

Hempstead Sentinel, December 3, 1942

Local Western Union Hires First Girl As Messenger "Boy"

The Western Union office on Main Street now has a girl messenger "boy." She is Mary Gerehan, a senior at Hempstead high school. She gets around the village with her messages on a bicycle. Miss Gerehan is the first girl engaged by the Western Union office for this type of work. She still goes to school but works afternoons and on Saturdays and Sundays.

Farmingdale Post, February 4, 1943

Radio Program To Recruit Women Workers At Grumman

The nation's need for several million more women to replace men experienced in aircraft assembly lines is so pressing that on Monday night, February 8, the radio program VOX POP will begin a drive. The initial broadcast will be from the plant of the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation at Bethpage from 8:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Several thousand Grumman male workers, most of them residents of Nassau and Suffolk Counties, have entered the armed services and the company has been making a valiant effort to replace them with women from Long Island. In hundreds of cases, the patriotic women relatives of these former Grumman workers, have entered the plant to fill the places formerly held by the men. Thousands more women are needed if the Grumman record which won the company two Navy "Es" for production last year is to be maintained.

Questions:

- 1- Which of the jobs discussed in the articles were traditionally held by men?
- 2- Why was it necessary for women to fill these positions?
- 3- In your opinion, are women able to do these jobs as well as men? Why?

C) Training for New Jobs

Farmingdale Post, October 8, 1942

Women Cut Class Time

Women are adapting themselves to aircraft work so rapidly and well that many of them become fully qualified for employment after as little as two and a half weeks of training. . . . "Although the course has been cut to four weeks, still further savings of time can be brought about, for when we see that the student has had enough learning to do a job we give her one," Morgan C. Monroe, employment manager at Republic Aviation Corporation, Farmingdale, asserted.

While many women have responded patriotically to the training and placement offered at the 10 schools which supply Republic Aviation with personnel, there still remains a need for many more workers.

Newsday, October 13, 1942

Women Will Learn Tracing, Drafting

Classes in tracing and drafting will be offered to women by the Port Washington Vocational School this month to meet the demand in industry for tracers and draftsmen, to replace men drawn into the armed forces.

Prospective trainees for the course should have the following qualifications: some training in drawing; first year high school mathematics; a sample of the trainee's workmanship in drafting or drawing.

Newsday, October 16, 1942

Free Technical Courses For Women at Adelphi

Tuition-free war engineering training will be made available to Long Island women through a war industries training center to be established at Adelphi College by N.Y.U.'s college of engineering. . . .The proposed course, . . . will be given eight hours daily for eight weeks, and will be limited solely to women high school graduates who have a math and science background. . . .

Purpose of the course is to prepare women for the many vital jobs that will be opened when deferred men are drafted from their aircraft and other war work jobs. . . . It is expected that many low-salaried high school graduates, presently employed in non-essential industries, will be made available for war service.

The course will cover aircraft mathematics, elements of engineering, drawing, and aircraft materials processes, and will equip women for positions as testers, inspectors, and engineering aids.

Farmingdale Post, January 7, 1943

Women Will Net Weekly Salary of \$31 At Ranger While Training

Some will be selected for the engine-testing positions; and others will be accepted and trained as drill press or milling machine operators, lathe hands, or for placement in the burring department. The placement of women on the test jobs is not new; many classes have been graduated since the program was inaugurated last September.

Questions:

- 1- Do you think employers were surprised that women learned to do these jobs so quickly and effectively? Why?
- 2- In your opinion, why didn't women perform these jobs before World War II?
- 3- If you were a woman in this time period, would you have been interested in one of these jobs? Why?

D) Recruiting Women Workers

Babylon Leader, February 4, 1944

Mary Marden Fights with Him on the Ranger Assembly Line

When Mary gave up her stenographic job in a law office to marry Bill Marden, she thought she was through working for anyone but Bill. Bill worked at Ranger. Even when war came, the only experimental tests she planned were those in child care that developed when their baby, Delphine, arrived.

But Bill joined the Air Force in January a year ago. Today he is piloting a P-40 somewhere overseas.

Last March, three months after Bill joined up, Mary joined up too. She came to Ranger and entered the Training School. After completing her course she took over the job that Bill had left.

Today she is at the controls of one of the test cells, preparing engines for stationary operation and recording their performance on test.

Bill and Mary Marden are both working for Victory. Delphine, now five years old, plays in her home on Knolltop Road, while her mother is at work, cared for by a young woman whose husband is in the Marine Corps.

Newsday, May 17, 1944

Backs Invasion at Local War Plant

Mrs. Virginia Fatacber. Her sister's a Marine, her husband a Sergeant in the Signal Corps overseas. She's backing them up with practical help at the Aerial Products, Inc., where an expansion program to fill important war-goods orders is now underway. Aerial Products, Inc. needs more men for good pay, interesting jobs with plenty of overtime on day or night shift. Upgrading and a chance for advancement. Good working conditions include cafeteria, free life insurance, free health and accident insurance for you and your family.

Questions:

- 1- Why were these women highlighted in ads for new employees?
- 2- How do these advertisements try to attract women workers?
- 3- What traditional attitudes about women workers remain in these advertisements?

E) Changing Attitudes Toward Women

Babylon Leader,
March 10, 1944

Newsday, May 12, 1944

USES Issues Hurry Call For 4,000 War Workers

A hurry call for more than 4,000 workers for Nassau's war plants was issued yesterday by Lester M. Cooley, chief of the Hempstead branch of the United States Employment Service.

Particularly needed, Cooley said, are thousands of engineers, and either full time or part time clerks, typists, stenographers and secretaries. They're needed at once because a number of the plants in this area are currently designing new models of war products - an operation that requires greatly increased staffs.

In order to lure workers for the white collar jobs, Cooley said that college students and teachers will be accepted for employment during their vacation periods. Housewives, too, will be welcomed, even if they can give no more than four hours a day at the plant. . . .

While both men and women may qualify for the jobs, Cooley said he expected his biggest responses to come from women who discover they have part of a day to give to producing war materials. "The plants are now working on plans to supply transportation service for new workers," he said. "As far as is possible, the road to these jobs will be made easy."

Republic Aviation, March, 1945

"The important role of women in aircraft production is indicated by the fact that they represented 40 per cent of the labor force in August, 1944 compared to five per cent in January, 1942."

Questions:

- 1- What percentage of the workers in the aircraft industry were women in January, 1942? What percentage of the workers in the aircraft industry were women in August, 1944?
- 2- Why were companies willing to pay workers while they trained for jobs?
- 3- How was the U.S. Employment Service making it easier for women to work in the defense industry?
- 4- In your opinion, how did the war changed attitudes about women workers?

F) Women Aren't Sure

Babylon Leader, November 5, 1942

Ranger Finds Women Averse To Applying At War Plants

Many women show reluctance in applying for work in war plants because they believe they do not possess the necessary ability to perform mechanical work which has heretofore been accepted as men's sphere of operation and responsibility. This was the summary of a statement made today by Frank Shugert, industrial relations director of Ranger Aircraft Engines, Farmingdale.

"I believe women are so accustomed to accepting man as the custodian of the technical phases of industry that, as a result, they regard berths in this field out of place with their cultural background," Mr. Shugert added. "This is not true, however. When we interview applicants for engineering positions, we demand that they possess not only manual dexterity but the ability to apply themselves diligently and to use keen analytical judgment in executing the duties at hand. If a woman possesses these qualities, we don't care if she has never touched a can opener."

"The very fact that we have selected women with such characteristics who have a minimum of college mathematics and physical sciences, that they have been trained and are now holding posts in our engine-test laboratories, is proof that they are fully capable of mastering technical work. The work they are performing was executed entirely by men engineering graduates in pre-war days."

Other reasons were also given as contributing to the hesitancy on the part of women to look to war plant work. One cited the hardship brought about by lack of financial reserve to carry applicants through the necessary transition training period. Another pointed out that women not familiar with factory working conditions have a tendency to believe it drudgery and unprofessional.

Although women were only placed at engine-testing positions four months ago, the company has found in this short time that they excel men in many instances despite their lack of mechanical experience prior to entering training schools. They have shown a great degree of versatility and are most efficient at positions requiring attention to detail.

Farmingdale Post, March 18, 1943

34 Percent Women Don't Think They Are Needed in War Plants

Thirty-four percent of the women of Nassau and Suffolk Counties do not believe that they are needed to supplant men in the aircraft industry, is the startling disclosure indicated by a study among Long Island women to determine their attitudes. J.S. Wilson, employment manager at Republic Aviation Corporation, here, declared "It means that they do not realize the manpower shortage which is growing more acute daily." He pointed out that this attitude is identical to the one which existed in England for many months after the outbreak of the war. Once women became inculcated with the feeling that prosecution of war is no longer solely the domain of men, they flocked to the production plants." It is found that women who have husbands, sons or other relatives in the armed services, see more clearly the necessity of foresaking many pre-Pearl Harbor pursuits and applying for essential occupations.

Questions:

- 1- According to the company spokesmen, why were women unwilling to take jobs in defense factories?
- 2- Can you suggest other reasons why women hesitated to work in the defense factories? Why do you suggest these reasons?
- 3- Based on the experiences of these women and the aviation companies, what would you expect to happen in the post-war era? Why? Did it happen? Why?
- 4- If you could ask a representative of an aviation company a question about these articles, what would you ask him? Why?

G) New Issues

Republic Aviation, 1945

Tuck Hair Into Safety Cap and Avoid Scalping

Realizing the pride a woman takes in her tresses, whether they be blonde, auburn or brunette, the Safety Division has issued a warning to women handling dangerous equipment, particularly that of a revolving nature, to tuck their hair into a safety cap. Stray locks are especially perilous around hand drill motors. Aside from the beauty angle, a partial scalping is a painful experience and an unnecessary one.

So keep 'em covered. Then when you go home at night, your one hundred strokes will result in a shining halo rather than a shining pate.

Shop in Comfort

Selecting attractive, as well as durable, attire for plant wear need not be an expensive headache involving crowded shopping tours. To save its women employees time and money, Republic has set up an apparel shop of its own in Locker Room B where Racers may purchase articles at wholesale rates.

The serviceable slack set, modeled by pretty Rita Micieli of the Wing Shop is obtainable in cadet or navy blue at only \$5.65, while the powder blue overalls worn by vivacious Terry Picaro, of Fuselage, set her back a mere \$3. Both are washable.

Both girls are backing up the service members of their family by doing a man size job at the plant. Terry has three brothers in the armed forces. Rita's brother, Anthony, is in training with the Coast Artillery in Texas.

Questions:

- 1- How do factories and stores try to meet the needs of women workers?
- 2- What ideas about women continue even as their role in the war effort changes? Why do you think this happens?

H) "If You Ask Me!"

Republic Aviation, 1942

Question: How do you like working with men in the shop?

Ann Boyles, Detail Assembly, is married and lives in Rockville Centre. "We all found Republic a good place to pitch in and turn out those P-47's. When I first came into this plant, I wondered whether I'd get the knack of this industry, but the men very graciously helped me over the tough spots."

Josephine Walz, Detail Inspector, of Lindenhurst. "The men with whom I have come into contact are courteous, helpful and encouraging. Their assistance means we will produce plenty of Thunderbolts."

Inge Gnieweck, Detail Assembly, lives in Hempstead. Her husband is a soldier. "My answer takes only two letters, O.K. Newcomers whose knowledge of rivet guns, drills, wrenches and other aircraft tools is only rudimentary, certainly appreciate help they get from the men. They're hard-working boys whose efforts are an inspiration to all of us."

Question: What was your girlhood ambition for a career, and what was your occupation before you came into the aviation shop?

Evelyn Walters: "I guess my ambition was to own a beauty parlor. . . . When the opportunity to attend aircraft school presented itself, I thought it would be something different and refreshing, in addition to being of value to the war effort. I'm certainly glad to have taken up aviation work."

Pauline Ordway: "One of my earliest ambitions was to be an egg candler, as I was very intrigued when my father examined the eggs. Actually though, I became a dental assistant. Later, I worked in the Republic cafeteria and when I had a chance to go to training school, you can bet I grabbed it. As a drill press operator, I find the work interesting, and after a day's work it makes me feel good that I have accomplished my small share in the drive to fill the skies with planes."

Agnes Nelson: "After I took a beauty culture course, I went to work in a beauty parlor. Then, when things didn't go too well, I went into the electrical assembly department of a company which manufactured permanent waving machinery. So although this work is not new to me, I'm happy that I'm helping build ships instead of waving equipment."

Questions:

- 1- What did you learn about these women from the interviews?
- 2- What else would you like to know about them?
- 3- Why do you think Republic Aviation printed these interviews in its company newspaper?
- 4- In your opinion, do these interviews challenge stereotypes about women? How?

D) Accomplishments by Women

Republic, July 10, 1942

Women Join Parade of Idea Prize Winners

Women in the shop have begun submitting suggestions here, and judging by the success of Kathryn Brazzell of Final Assembly, they are on the right track.

Mrs. Brazzell won a \$25 war bond for her idea, a wire identification tape dispenser, designed to facilitate the use of tape in assembling of electrical units. Her suggestion also resulted in a time-saving system of storing tape. Under it, tapes can be stored and handled in complete series as called for on work orders.

Though they are not eligible for awards, foremen, too, are presenting worthwhile suggestions to speed production of Thunderbolts. Serafin Cirigliano of Shop 10 devised a wooden vise and special cutters to square aluminum tubing ends. The job is done in half the time previously required and a perfectly squared cut results. Patsy Failia of Material Production came forward with a method of forming windshield bows. His die forms this difficult piece in 10 minutes instead of the one hour needed before.

Hempstead Sentinel

Name Outstanding Women War Workers

Thirteen Long Island women were named outstanding representatives of Women in Wartime America and were awarded War Bonds at a luncheon in their honor yesterday afternoon in Hempstead Golf Club.

In a contest sponsored by Arnold Constable, the women were chosen for their "unlimited service to the cause of freedom," from photographs and letters submitted to a committee of judges.

Outstanding war workers are: Mrs. Grace S. Gleckneh, Hollis, of the National Security Women's Corps; Miss marion D. Schultze, Hempstead, N.C. War Council communications committee, who raises pigeons for military plans; Mrs. Mildred E. Brittingham, Freeport, a sheetmetal worker, and the Decker twins, Hope and Gloria, Hempstead schoolgirls who have done outstanding work in selling bonds and stamps.

Other winners are: Mrs. Mary Eldridge, Franklin Square, a policewoman in a defense plant; Mrs. Beatrice Joyce, Lawrence, Auxiliary Aircraft Warning Service; Mrs. Anna E. Beckvar, Valley Stream, who does radio construction for submarines and airplanes; Fay Gershon, Glen Cove, of the AWVS, who does guide duty, and Mrs. Jeannette Swanson, Ozone Park, nurses' aide.

Other outstanding women are: Ruth Milard Young, Franklin Square, a flyer in Civil Air patrol; Mrs. Theresa Tobin, New Hyde Park, Red Cross volunteer; Mrs. Mary Podeyn, Glen Cove, civilian protection volunteer, and Lt. Helen Summers, Mitchel Field, a U.S. Army nurse who was on the last submarine to leave Bataan.

Questions:

- 1- What contributions by women to the war effort are mentioned in these articles?
- 2- How did achievements by these women help challenge stereotypes about women?

J) Crucial to the War Effort

Republic Aviation, November, 1942

Women Working 58 Hours a Week

A 58 hour work week for women was instituted this week at Republic Aviation's Farmingdale Plant as a measure which will remain in effect until an adequate number of workers are experienced enough to assure continuation of the increased flow of production now resulting from the cycle system.

The new work week is in effect in those departments where emergency production is required in connection with the newly installed cycle system. It was pointed out by Republic production men that this system calls for co-ordinated teams who move from jig to jig at specified intervals, each worker performing a certain number of operations in the time allocated.

Republic Aviation

Introducing Our Reporter, Sandy Anthony

For the past year and a half, Sandy Anthony has been working a rivet gun like a veteran. Sandy is one of the most popular workers in her shop taking an active interest in all department sports contests and social activities. Sandy comes from an all army family, with her brother a motor machinist serving in the South Pacific, and her father building PT boats at one of the local ship yards. Sandy, an air raid warden, is a member of the first aid squad at Republic. Prior to coming to Republic, Sandy worked for 15 years with the telephone company in lower Manhattan.

Farmingdale Post, January, 1944

Only Woman Flash Welder in East Here

Anne Hollman has the distinction of being the only woman on the east coast operating a flash welding machine. In fact, Republic is the only aircraft corporation in the area equipped with this latest scientific device.

Wanting to do her share towards ultimate victory, Anne joined Republic a year ago last August as a sheet metal helper in the engine cowl department. She was recently transferred to steel detail and has been doing her unusual type of welding for about a month.

- 1- Why are women being asked to work a 58 hour week?
- 2- Why are Sandy Anthony and Anne Hollman such valued workers?
- 3- In your opinion, were these Long Island women essential to the United States wartime effort? Explain the reasons for your answer.

K) Cartoons p. 31

Source: New Yorker,
January 9, 1943

- 1- What is the main idea of this cartoon?
- 2- In your opinion, did the war effect women from different social class backgrounds in the same way? Explain your views.

Long Island Women Wage Two-Front War

Background

As increasing numbers of women joined the work force, Long Island women found themselves waging a two-front war. Not only were they responsible for expanding wartime production, but they continued to be responsible for raising children and maintaining households. Coupled with food rationing and gasoline shortages, this became a very difficult balancing act.

The war created pressure for child care facilities, which frequently operated at factory sites. Service industries, like laundries, adapted to meet the needs of women. Many factories created flexible or part-time schedules to enable larger numbers of women to join the war effort.

Republic Aviation, September 11, 1942

In your opinion, what is the main idea of this cartoon?

A. A Family That Works Together

Republic Aviation, November, 1942

Mom, Pop, Sis, Brother - Whole Gang Here Now

Airplane building is becoming more and more a family enterprise, judging by one of the trends at Republic Aviation, where almost every conceivable type of family relationship is in evidence. Fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, husbands and wives, sisters, and other family ties have cropped up now that the Company's accelerated hiring program has assimilated more than 1,000 women ranging from teenage girls to grandmothers.

Frequently, members of the same family work in teams, on operations where such a combination is possible. One of the riveting teams in the Wing Shop is William Kennedy of Smithtown and his wife, Stella. He has been at Republic for almost two years and slightly more than six months ago, when employment opportunities at the plant were expanded for women, he agreed when she expressed desire to take a training course.

Mrs. Kennedy says, "Every rivet we sink brings a closer bond between us. It's wonderful."

Mrs. Mary Rambars of Bay Shore doesn't have to wonder what her son and daughter are doing all day, and how they're getting along. She works at Republic with daughter, Isabella and son, Edward. All three are doing their share in producing the Thunderbolt fighter plane

Wives of night shift workers lead, in many cases a topsy-turvy life. Some of them complain and ask their husbands to request transfers to the day side, but that's not the way Ruth Diehl of Bay Shore handled the situation. She completed a training course and asked to be put on the night shift. With both of them living this upside-down way, there actually should be little difference.

Republic Aviation, 1943

Husbands, Wives on Same Shifts

Husbands and wives who both shoulder the war task of helping to produce the P-47 Thunderbolts here are being placed on the same shift whenever it is possible. The plan applies to people already in the plant, as well as those who will be hired for production jobs in the future, it was said by J. Sawyer Wilson, employment manager.

"Under this change, it will be possible for a man and his wife to lead a normal life, and still contribute to the war effort," Wilson remarked. "Whether they are both on the day shift or both on the night side, they still will be able to spend their non-working hours together."

Questions:

1. How is family life changing during the war?
2. Do you agree with the statement by Mrs. Kennedy? Why?
3. Would you want to work on the same shift or the same team as your husband or wife? Why?
4. In your opinion, how will working together affect family relationships?

B. "If You Ask Me!"

Republic Aviation, April, 1943

Question: How do you manage your domestic life now that you're working in the plant?

Phoebe Butler, electrical assembly: Phoebe has two boys and a girl "I keep the children in a boarding school, but they come home on my days off. After leaving here at night, I do my housework and even find time to work in the machine shop which I have at home. Guess I have no domestic problems."

Olive Ketcham, wing shop: She has a 14-year old daughter. "Before leaving for work, I get my daughter, Florence, off to school. Then, before I come home, she does the housework and prepares supper for us. On my day off, we get together and give the house a thorough going-over before we settle down to some recreation such as attending movies. My husband is in the Coast Guard, but we manage to take care of the home."

Florence Reddy, electrical assembly : She has a seven-year old daughter who is the pride and joy of her life "I have an aunt who lives with us in Huntington. She takes care of the child until I get home. After my day here, I manage to do some of the housework. On my days of, I get a kick out of taking my daughter to a show."

C. Child Care Programs

Valley Stream, 1942

Want Women to Aid War Work

Because of the drain made by the draft on plant personnel, additional workers must be drawn from women with leisure and the patriotic urge to help the war program. The Valley Stream Defense Council of the Civilian Mobilization wished to call attention to a special meeting which is of vital interest to all such women next Tuesday, November 24th, at 8 p.m. in the auditorium of the Brooklyn Avenue School. Miss Grace Gillet, supervisor of war production training for women, is scheduled to speak. Also, Miss Myra Woodruff, superintendent of child's care and development who will discuss plans for the care of children of working mothers.

Newsday, May 25, 1944

Child Care Film to Appear in Hempstead

"What of Your Child", a film which shows the program for children of working mothers at child care centers established throughout New York State through the use of federal and state funds, will be shown at the Hempstead and Rivoli theatres it was announced by the Hempstead Child Care Committee yesterday.

The local Child Care Center set up in September 1942 is open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Applications for entering children between the ages of five and 14 for the after-school program may be made at any time. After the closing of the schools for the summer, the program will be expanded to provide all-day supervision for children between those ages.

Questions:

1. What is meant by "domestic life"?
2. What problems do these women face because they are working?
3. Have you or a brother or sister attended a child care program? If you did, how did you like it? Why?
4. Do the adults in your family work outside of the home? If they do, how does your family manage?

D. Rationing Makes Life More Difficult

The Hempstead Sentinel, January 14, 1943

Up to the Minute Ration Rules

Fruits and Vegetables

Beginning some time in February, when new ration books will be issued to the public under the point rationing systems, all dried, canned, bottled, and frozen fruits and vegetables and their juices will be rationed. Included are canned soups of any variety. Not included are fruit and vegetable juices in containers of one gallon or more, meat stews, containing some vegetables; jams, jellies, and preserves, olives, pickles, relishes and potato salad, paste products (spaghetti, macaroni and noodles); chili con carne; frozen fruits or vegetables in containers of more than ten pounds; fruit cakes, fruit pudding and candied fruits.

Coffee

The Stamp 28 in War Ration Book 1--used for sugar rationing--is good for one pound of coffee, through February 7.

Sugar

Three pounds of sugar may be obtained with War Ration Stamp 10, which expires January 31.

Meat

War Ration Book 1 must be presented at a date to be announced before War Ration Book 2 for meat and other items to be rationed in 1943 can be obtained. Book 1 is obtainable, for those who have none, at local rationing boards. Application must be made before January 15.

Gasoline

All pleasure driving is now forbidden. A, B, and C coupons are each worth three gallons, and T coupons are worth five gallons. Motorists must write their license number and state on the back of each coupon. A coupon numbered 3 may be used until January 21 and coupons numbered 4 become valid January 22. B and C books bear their own expiration dates.

Fuel Oil

Rations for all non-residential buildings have been reduced an additional 25 percent. Ration books covering Periods 3, 4, and 5 for such buildings must be returned to local ration boards following a written request which will be made soon, and the appropriate number of coupons will be torn out. All oil-burning buildings other than private dwellings are ordered to convert to coal at once on pain of losing their rations. Previously Period 3 coupons for all users, residential and their full original value of ten gallons, are valid through January 26. Period 3 coupons are good through February 20.

Tires

Automobile owners must have their tires inspected at an O.P.A. authorized gas station or automobile agency. Originally this was ordered done not later than January 31, but the time limit has been extended--those with A cards must comply by March 31, those with B and C cards by February 28. This inspection must be recorded on the O.P.A. form which every motorist must carry in order to renew gasoline rations or get new or recapped tires. The form may be obtained at local rationing boards. Tires for essential driving are available on application to rationing boards.

Questions:

1. What does the word "ration" mean?
2. List 3 food items that are rationed. List 3 food items that are not rationed.
3. How much coffee can be purchased at one time? How much sugar?
4. How does a family get a ration book?
5. Why is pleasure driving forbidden and why are buildings supposed to convert to coal for heating?
6. Why must someone apply to purchase new or recapped tires?
7. In your opinion how did rationing affect life during the war?

E. Rationing forces careful planning

The Hempstead Sentinel, January 14, 1943

Shopping Problems

The no-pleasure driving regulation is going to have a considerable effect on shopping in Hempstead and the merchants and Chamber of Commerce officials should get together and make the former motorists, who are now restricted in the use of their cars, realize that they can get everything they want here in the village. For years the merchants have insisted that many local residents passed up their shops in favor of those in other communities. Now they have a chance to show that type of shopper that Hempstead has a shopping center that will take care of all of their needs. Motorists are allowed to use their cars for "essential shopping" but no one is certain just what that means. It doesn't seem likely that it would be considered "essential" to drive in to Jamaica or New York to get what could be bought right here in Hempstead.

The Hempstead Sentinel, January 14, 1943

Sen. Glass Rules Wedding Guest May Use Autos

Principals, members of the family and guests at weddings can use their automobiles to go to and from the ceremonies despite any other regulation pertaining to no-pleasure driving. . . . The question was settled today in a telegram received from Senator Glass by Arthur Vincent Adamson, of 101 Chestnut Street, Garden City, father of Miss Catherine Markham Adamson, who is to become a bride Saturday. The telegram states, "The Office of Price Administration here has specifically ruled that a wedding is religious ceremony and that the use of automobiles to and from the ceremony is permissible. Any ruling to the contrary is in flagrant disregard of specific instructions of the National OPA."

The Hempstead Sentinel, January 21, 1943

Good Neighborhood Policy

The no-pleasure rule which prevents mama from taking junior over to see grandma and also frowns on all purely social motor trips should not be allowed to break down our social contacts. In fact, it could be the means of building up something that is lacking here and in most communities. That is -- a better social understanding of our neighbors. . . . Even in our strictly residential neighborhoods the residents on the same street are often strangers to each other. . . . It used to be easy to jump in the car and drive over to Port Washington or out to Patchogue. Now it is different. We will have to make our social calls afoot and that means we won't go very far out of our own neighborhood. Most neighborhoods have civic organizations but only a handful of the total population of the area join and become acquaintances. Now is the time for neighborhood social clubs. . . . In this way we can get to know our neighbors and we will all be surprised how many fine people live all around us.

Newsday, March 1, 1943

Mathematical Shopping Faces Nassau Housewife

Money became a secondary consideration as Mrs. Nassau faced a complicated array of figures on her grocer's shelves today -- the first day she will make "point" purchases. Accustomed to computing price and dividing it into her weekly food budget, she found herself with the additional problem of dividing the number of ration points into the number of stamps in her ration book. In most cases, the number of points remaining looked small.

Questions:

1. How will rationing make shopping difficult?
2. How might rationing help local businesses and communities?
3. Do you agree with the ruling on wedding guests? Why?
4. Write a letter to the editor of the Hempstead Sentinel explaining your views on rationing.
5. How would gasoline rationing change your family's life today?

F. Rationing Creates Problems and Contributes to Tensions

Republic Aviation, 1943

Question: How are you going to manage with a ration limit of three pairs of shoes per year?

Edna Fett, Mail Service: Recently moved to Brightwaters. Graduated from Our Lady of Wisdom Academy, Ozone Park. "We mail girls can't possibly get along on three pairs of shoe a year because we use our feet more than anyone else in the Plant. I'd like to borrow a scooter from Maintenance and whip around it. Anyway, I'm in favor of asking the OPA to let mail girls buy more footwear."

Helen Marie Tenca, Page : Goes for long walks on Sunday afternoon and likes to dance. "I wear saddle oxfords with rubber soles -- they seem to last longer besides speeding up my trips. If the shoe situation gets extremely tough I shall wrap bags around my feet -- might be better to have bags on my feet than under my eyes."

Jane Airing, Mail Service: Likes swimming because it takes her off her feet after being on them nearly day. Lives in Sayville, about 28 miles from Republic. "I don't see how I can possibly make out with only three pairs of shoes a year. Oh, maybe I can borrow my mother's if she'd let me; she wears the same size I do. If I run out of shoes I'll wear boots to continue my eight-miles-a-day rounds at Republic."

Questions:

1. Why do these working women feel it is unfair to ration shoes?
2. What plans do they have to manage if shoes are rationed?
3. In your opinion, should materials be rationed to insure that soldiers have them first? Why?

Hempstead Sentinel, June 21, 1945

Just Some More

By Justa Nother

It was just six by the clock striking in the Town Hall as I walked along Greenwich street the other morning and already four women were waiting outside of a meat market door on which was a sign: "Open at 9:30 a.m." Three and a half hours to wait. . . . I learned that on the previous Friday the women had stood in line for six hours so this week they were determined to get an early start. . . . One came from Roosevelt, the second from Mineola, another from Elmont and the fourth from New Hyde Park.

A few moments after talking with the women on Greenwich street I was on Front Street at a poultry market, which had a sign that it would sell "parts of chickens and ducks only." Gathered in the front were nine colored people and I observed, "Well, your people have a long wait ahead of you," to which an enormous woman almost belligerently barked out, "We gotter eat, ain't we?"

Question:

1. Why are these women waiting in line?
2. Why did people travel to Hempstead to make their purchases?
3. Why do you think the African American people were so upset?
4. Do you think the reporter is sensitive to the reasons they are upset? Why?

G. Advertisers Remind Women They Have Less Time For Housework

Farmingdale Post, January 14, 1943

**Time Too Short?
LET US DO YOUR LAUNDRY ...
Never lack a fresh uniform by putting laundry in our hands
STATE LAUNDRY
Newman Court, Hempstead, L.I.**

The Babylon Leader, February 4, 1944

**"I Also S-E-R-V-E my country"
"Full of energy -- THANKS to BLUE POINTS
time-saving laundering and dry cleaning!!"**

There is much to be said for a service that leaves you FREE for all the tasks of a busy wartime world! I have learned to make every minute count tenfold by eliminating all the irksome chores BECAUSE NOW--MORE THAN EVER--I MUST KEEP FIT! And keeping fit is more than protecting my energies and storing my time. It's also looking and feeling tip-top! Cleanliness and good grooming go hand-in-hand for building up morale.

ONE BLUE POINT LAUNDERING SERVICE DOES ALL THE WORK FOR YOU--LEAVING NOTHING TO BE DONE AT HOME. All Blue Point Services are economical and practical. It's patriotic to CONSERVE cleansables and it's sensible to let us help you do it!

Newsday, May 1944

**Even if you must Skimp on House Cleaning time ...
Don't Skimp on Health Protection ...
Make your Home Clorox-Clean!**

Even, when your house cleaning time is limited there should be no slackening of the sanitary measures that are so important to greater health protection in the home. Keeping healthy is more necessary than ever during these critical times when there are fewer civilian doctors and when America's manpower must be kept on the job for Victory. It's easy to provide increased home health protection by making Clorox a standby in your daily cleansing routine.

Questions:

1. What products and services are being advertised?
2. How do these advertisements sell their product or service to women?
3. Why do these advertisements appeal to patriotism?

H. Recycling Helps The War Effort

Hempstead Sentinel, October 5, 1942

Katherine Rhodes, Hempstead, schoolteacher : Well, of course the schools are doing their part to help get all the scrap together, and we have been organizing the children as best we can. My class, all first graders, brought in over 200 keys last week, which will provide quite a bit of nickel. Then, too, the children have been encouraged to have their parents go through their homes and give them anything they could find that would qualify as scrap, and they have been bringing it in to the school scrap piles.

Hempstead Sentinel, August 22, 1946

Six Tons of Dishes Washed in Average Home Annually

It has been calculated that every American housewife washes six tons of dishes every year. Add up the accumulation from 265 breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, and in between snacks and the total would fill six trucks, experts say.

Staggering as the task of washing six tons of dishes sounds, imagine how much more impossible the job would be without soap. The prospect of a soapless life is not on the horizon, however as long as housewives keep up their present role of salvaging fat.

Department of Agriculture authorities point out that if it had not been for salvaged fat in 1945, housewives would have had 13 percent less soap. Even so there are not enough industrial fats and oils available to meet the demand for soaps and other goods the public wants.

Supplies of edible and inedible fats and oils all over the world have never been as low as they are today. Fats and oils imports to the U.S. are still only a shadow of their pre-war tonnage. The only tangible way to get more raw materials for soap making and other essentials is by turning in more used cooking fat.

Questions:

1. What did Katherine Rhodes' class do to help the war effort?
2. What did the children learn from this activity?
3. Why were people urged to recycle fat during and after the war?
4. Why are people urged to recycle today?

Long Island Women Face An Uncertain Future

Background:

With the World War II entering its final phase, the government started reducing wartime production orders. Major Long Island producers like Grumman and Republic Aviation began cutting back their workforces.

Many women on Long Island faced the prospect of unemployment. In addition, low seniority meant they would be the first laid-off if the companies rehired the returning servicemen.

Loss of jobs was not the only problem faced by working women. Wartime support programs like day care and flexible hours disappeared. Nationally, women were being encouraged to return to more traditional gender stereotyped roles. It was expected that women would be satisfied as unpaid homemakers working in the kitchen, instead of as skilled and highly paid assembly line workers. According to at least one survey, a majority of women were not looking forward to these changes.

Hempstead Sentinel, June 20, 1946

- 1- What is the message in this ad?
- 2- What changes in technology are predicted for the future?
- 3- In your opinion, will working women be happy with this future? Why?

A. Women Lose War Time Jobs

Newsday, September 11, 1944

See Auto Industry Dropping Women

Detroit-Rosie the Riveter probably will change her slacks involuntarily for a postwar housedress unless unprecedented peacetime production is achieved in the automotive industry.

Interviews with high-ranking officials of leading automobile companies and with labor representatives showed one thing clearly--that the woman war worker, the lowest in seniority rating, will be the first to feel the blow of large contract cancellations.

Cutbacks already approximating \$2,000,000 have caused a drop of three percent in women's automotive employment since January, 1944 At the present time, 27 percent or 200,000 of the workers are women compared to 7 percent in pre-war automotive production.

A survey by United Automobile Workers (CIO), showed 85 percent of the women answered "yes" to the question: "If a job is available, will you continue to work outside your home after the war?"

Similar queries by the Thompson Products Co., and Bendix Aviation Corp. showed affirmative replies from 84 percent, and 64 percent.

Hempstead Sentinel, February 7, 1946

Ex-Servicemen Back At Old Jobs

Paul J. Cocchi of 105 Front Street, one of hundreds of ex-servicemen who have returned to their old jobs with Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation, Bethpage. A staff sergeant with the 878th Air Service Group, Cocchi saw action in Central Europe and the Rhineland. He entered the Army on March 9, 1943 and was honorably discharged on November 12, 1945.

Thomas P. Culk of Kendig Place, another ex-serviceman who has returned to his old job with Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation, Bethpage. An aerial gunner with the 351st Bomber Group, 510th Bomber Squad 8th Air Force, Culk was shot down on his mission and head prisoner of war in Germany for 2 years. He entered service on September 9, 1942, and received a medical discharge on September 13, 1945.

Questions:

1. Why did the percentage of women working in the automotive industry increase during the war?
2. Why did many women face unemployment at the end of the war?
3. According to the United Automobile Workers, did women want to leave the industry?
4. In your opinion, why would women want to keep their wartime jobs?
5. In your opinion, was it fair for returning servicemen to replace women who held these jobs? Why?

B. Post-War Cutbacks Hit Long Island

The Babylon Leader, August 23, 1945

Village Board To Hold Meeting On Employment

With job security, steady work and the fight against unemployment the number one problem facing every section of the country today, the Babylon Village Board is making plans to cooperate with the various industries and plants in the vicinity to keep as many workers in the neighborhood at work as possible

The nearby plants have indicated their initial plans to a certain extent but are not able to estimate how many of the old workers will finally be employed on the new peacetime program. In most cases the entire staff except a skeleton crew were let go and now the companies are engaged in calling back the employees as they are needed.

Grumman Aircraft Corporation will keep all their employees on a leave of absence status until they are finally dismissed The plant started to work again Tuesday and while he could not estimate at the present time how many employees would eventually get their jobs back, the company has enough government orders on hand to keep the plant going for at least a year and a half. An indication for encouragement is the fact that the company is beginning to look for outside commercial orders. One of the items to be manufactured there will be aluminum alloy canoes.

The child care centers in Brightwaters and Freeport have been closed there is no indication that they will be opened again.

Republic Aviation Corporation was one of the first companies to announce the extent of postwar employment and "tide-over" pay to released workers. "This is our effort to help carry over to a new job those faithful workers whom we cannot retain."

The Stratos Corporation is still advertising for employees who qualify for the type of work the engineering company does as a subsidiary of the Fairchild Engineering Corporation.

The Dzus Fastener Company has closed temporarily to take inventory and then plans to open on the basis of their findings. It was indicated that there are hundreds of contracts to be reviewed in view of the end of the war and each must be considered separately to see if it has been canceled. When the preliminary work has been done, the Dzus company will resume on a peacetime basis.

Questions:

1. Why were there cutbacks in production at the end of 1945?
2. What plans did Long Island companies have to switch to peacetime production?
3. Why were women especially affected by these cutbacks?

C. Child Care Threatened With Cuts

Hempstead Sentinel, September 27, 1945

Mothers Urge Operation of Child Center

There is a definite need for the continuation of the Hempstead Child Care Center and working mothers are willing to pay increased fees to assure its continuation after October 31 when the Lanham Act funds stop, according to sentiment expressed

There were 50 working mothers present at the meeting out of the total of 58 whose 73 children are now enrolled in the center. They voted unanimously that there is a need for the center to remain open after October 31.

Wives of men who are still in the service, who have 35 children in the center, mothers still employed at war plants, nurses, telephone operators, and owners of small stores urged the continuation of the center and vouched for its continued need.

Of the 73 children now registered at the center, 35 are from homes where the father is still in service, six are from homes where there are no fathers, eight are from "broken" homes and two from homes where the father is unemployed.

The center can be operated after October 31, without causing any increased taxes to property owners The increased fees, with state aid and federal lunch money and the usual local voluntary contributions will be sufficient to operate the center

The Hempstead child care center opened September, 1942 and operated until April, 1943 on voluntary contributions. In May, 1943, federal and state aid started.

Questions:

1. Why was a child care center started in Hempstead?
2. Whose children were cared for by the center?
3. Why were women fighting to keep the center open?
4. In your opinion, should child care have continued after the war? Why?

D. Job Opportunities for Women

Hempstead Sentinel, February 22, 1945

Girls and Young Women

The telephone business offers an opportunity for a fine career with many different kinds of positions available.

The New York Telephone Company Has Positions for Girls and Young Women Who Live Near Hempstead or Garden City.

Regular Employment	Congenial Associates
Frequent Pay Increases	Vacations with Pay
Opportunities for Advancement	Meals at Cost
Pleasant Working Conditions	Free Medical Advice
Convenient Locations	Attractive Recreation Rooms
Excellent Weekly Earnings	

High School Students who expect to graduate in June are also invited to make a definite business connection now. Some part-time positions are available.

Apply at:

199 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead or
101 Willoughby St., Brooklyn, NY
Weekdays: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays: 9 a.m. to 12 Noon
NEW YORK TELEPHONE COMPANY

A Word to Senior Miss:

Telephone work offers many interesting opportunities in Garden City and Hempstead to the girl graduate ready to enter the business world. Excellent pay, pleasant surroundings, and friendly associates are some of the advantages.

Come into the employment Office, 199 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead, L.I., between the hours of 9:00 A.M., and 5:00 P.M. weekdays; or 9:00 A.M. and 12:00 Noon Saturdays, and talk it over with our Representative.

Or Call Hempstead Official, Extension 433.
NEW YORK TELEPHONE COMPANY

Questions:

1. What kinds of post-war jobs are being advertised for women?
2. Do you think these jobs compare to wartime factory work in interest or pay? Why?
3. In your opinion, why would women be interested in these jobs?

E. A Woman's Place on the Post-War Long Island

Hempstead Sentinel, June 20, 1946

Here comes the bride!

June has swung around again, and this month brides by the thousands will start housekeeping--if they can find a house to keep.

In days soon to come, light housekeeping will be even lighter with electrical servants ready to wash and iron, clean and cook at the flip of a switch. And some day there will be many new electric aids--air conditioners, food freezers, electric blankets, television sets, and all the wonders of the era of electric living which lies ahead.

The electric service which powers these time-and-labor-saving appliances will continue to be inexpensive, friendly, dependable--ready around the clock and calendar--just as in the past.

Maybe 1946 brides will take the advantage of electricity for granted, just as you do. We hope they will. We're glad you just naturally count on the high efficiency and low cost of electric service. The men and women in this company worked hard to make electricity cheap and dependable. They'll work even harder to keep it that way.

Hempstead Sentinel, February 7, 1946

You'll Save Steps . . . Glow With Pride In Your New Freedom Gas Kitchen

You'll be the envy of every woman you know--in a beautiful New Freedom GAS Kitchen like this. You'll save hundreds of steps a day . . . be cooler . . . more comfortable. Yes! It's that kind of kitchen because it uses clean, economical GAS . . . and because it's built around three coordinated work centers!

1. Refrigeration and Food Preparation Center features a wonderfully roomy, silent GAS refrigerator plus a handy work counter for sorting groceries as soon as they come in the door.
2. Cooking Center . . . just a few steps away . . . stars that marvel of modern design -- a new GAS range. Built to CP standards, it's so completely automatic you'll cook faster, easier, better than ever before!
3. Clean-Up Center . . . with plenty of counter space to avoid crowding. And all the hot water you can possibly need -- thanks to the 24-hour-a-day efficiency of an automatic GAS water heater.

Questions:

1. Why is the first advertisement directed toward "brides"?
2. How is technology changing the way people live?
3. What vision of the future is shown in these advertisements?
4. Do you think women who worked in the factories during the war will be satisfied with this vision? Why?

F. Should Price Controls Be Continued?

Hempstead Sentinel, May 16, 1946

Women Urge Price Control Be Continued

Urging Nassau County residents to write their national legislators urging them to retain the OPA, without crippling amendments, the Garden City Hempstead League of Women Voters have been distributing circulars calling for the continuation of the governmental price control agency.

Mrs. Ann Nostrand, press chairman of the group stated, "The National League of Women Voters has supported price control legislation since its beginning. Remembering the inflation which followed World War I, the League believes that a strong Office of Price Administration is more necessary than ever."

Dollar Worth 76 Cents

"In spite of its small staff, lack of enforcement power, and other weaknesses, the OPA has served the American People well. At the close of World War I, the dollar was worth only about 40 cents. At the close of World War II economic disruption was greater than the previous war, but the dollar was worth about 76 cents. Price control had worked well enough to protect the value of our money."

"If the bill which recently passed by the House is also passed by the Senate, clothing costs for the average family will be increased \$30 per year. Average food cost increases per family will be \$70 per year and real estate and rent increases would average \$40 per year per family. These are taken from 'Trend', a news service published by the Washington staff of the National League."

The Garden City-Hempstead League's circular is headed by the bold-faced words, "We have meat lines today, Says the OPA, to avoid bread lines tomorrow. We cannot afford inflation."

Questions:

1. How was the experience after World War II different from the experience after World War I?
2. Why does the League of Women Voters want to keep prices controlled after the end of the war?
3. Why are price controls an important issue for women?
4. Do you agree with the idea of price controls? Why?

Long Islanders Remember the World War II Home Front

An interesting class project is to have students interview older relatives and neighbors about their experiences during World War II. Studs Terkel, The Good War, and Ray Hoopes, Americans Remember the Home Front, provide model interviews.

Frances Flanagan Helps the War Effort ²⁴

I was 19 years old when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. When the war started, I wanted to join the WAVES, but my mother would not hear of it. My parents were Italian immigrants, and were very strict. My mother felt I was too young to leave home and did not want me involved in the military. Shortly after the war started, I was called for an interview with the Veteran's Administration. They offered me a job in Washington, D.C., but my mother would not allow me to leave home. I had to turn down the job in Washington.

When the Veteran's Administration opened an office in New York City, I was hired to work at the office at 346 Broadway. It paid \$1,400 a year. When I first got the job, I worked in a large office with 179 people. I processed insurance forms for all the branches of service. We checked the information on the forms to make sure it was filled out properly and sent letters to verify information when needed. These forms were for life insurance for both men in service and for veterans.

I worked at the Veteran's Administration throughout the war. I was married in 1944. I met my husband at the office where I worked and we continued to work together for the remainder of the war. I stopped working in October, 1945 when I became pregnant with my first child. I had another child in 1948 and we had very large medical bills. When my daughter was 2 years old, I went back to work as a bookkeeper at Dell Publishing. I worked for about a year and then got a part-time job in a department store. It didn't pay very much and after a short time, I got a full-time job as a bookkeeper at the American Broadcasting Company where I worked until I retired in 1984.

I don't think the war changed the way people felt about women working. Unless it was a necessity, women stayed home to take care of their families. Wages were very low for men, so many women had to go back to work to help support the family.

- 1- How did Frances' parents react to her desire to support the war effort?
- 2- What type of work did Frances do at the Veteran's Administration?
- 3- Why did Frances return to work after World War II?
- 4- Frances does not think the war changed the way people felt about women working. Do you agree or disagree with her? Why?

Sophie Hencken Remembers a Changing Farmingdale²⁵

I remember the forties as affecting the entire world, as well as our peaceful, rural, agricultural community. The farms surrounding our village on four sides were sold to airplane companies, i.e.: Grumman, Liberty, Republic, Sperry, and Fairchild. Folks were now definitely aware of war in the Pacific and in Europe. The lifestyles and business activities in the Village changed. Many new businesses opened in the Village. For example, tool and dye shops, trucking firms, boarding houses, and eating establishments appeared. These companies enticed the working groups of our Village, as well as people from the surrounding communities. Our town became famous throughout the world because of these airplane companies. These companies offered good wages, retraining of people for new jobs, and overtime in order to fulfill their contracts.

We saw the need for extensive housing because people came seeking employment from other states--especially the young aeronautic engineers who came to train people in the field of aeronautics. Many came with families, but others were single people. Traffic became a problem. The companies worked three shifts around the clock. Therefore, the Village had constant activity. Parking in the Village became a problem. During this period, our three-man police force, which consisted of Barney Grossman, Alex Mayahoeffer, and Captain Art Powell, was disbanded and the Village merged with the Nassau County Police Force.

"Rosie the Riveter" came on the scene. Mothers and single women, especially girls graduating from the business course in high school, found secretarial jobs easily. Many were retrained in airplane construction. Dress for the shop women drastically changed; coveralls, hairnets, sturdy shoes with iron tips, and pants became the uniform of the day for these working women.

If both parents were working those of us dealing with young children in schools, were faced, for the first time, with "latchkey" kids. With the help of the PTA, we set up "block homes", in case of air raids and to help the child that lost his way. Life in school changed in so many ways due to the influx of families with children of parents who came to work from other states. We went on double sessions. Many new words were introduced to the child's vocabulary, i.e.: air raids, block houses, bombs, nuclear warfare, aeronautics, test pilots, outer space, and names of cities, countries and islands which had once been unfamiliar to most. We practiced air raid drills with the children, several times a week. This was a difficult concept for young children to understand. Because of work shifts, it became difficult to have conferences with working mothers.

- 1- Describe 3 changes in Farmingdale during World War II.
- 2- Why did the Village of Farmingdale suddenly become well known?
- 3- What new problems did Farmingdale schools have to handle?

Sara Howitt - Teacher and Civil Defense First Aid Squad ²⁶

I came to Main Street School as an elementary teacher in 1940. We had in-school air raid drills during the war years. Children had to go from classrooms into the hallways, facing the wall, legs folded, with their head in their hands as they bent over. They remained in this position until the all-clear sounded. I was a member of a Civil Defense First Aid squad. In addition to reporting inappropriate lights during air raid drills, we were responsible for spotting casualties. I remember during one drill, we found a young man walking; we quickly enlisted him as a "casualty." We taped him up and sent him to a hospital in an ambulance!

My Grandparents Go to Texas ²⁷

My grandparents were participants in World War II in San Antonio, Texas, where my mother was later born. My grandfather was working fixing the instruments on airplanes used in the war. My grandfather wrote an innocent letter to my grandmother saying how he met this woman down in Texas and they would often lunch together. My grandmother, thinking that perhaps she had her eye on my grandfather, was down there in a matter of days. My grandmother went to work constructing the instrument panel that pilots used. They offered her a monthly wage which was just barely enough to cover daily living expenses. My grandparents started out in a trailer park with many of the other pilots working on the base. They eventually moved to a small apartment. The women were usually trained by a pilot who showed the women how to assemble several of the instruments used on the planes. They would often learn one skill or how to assemble one particular part and that's what their job would be for several weeks.

Florence Schmitt Kaufold Remembers Rationing ²⁸

Gasoline was rationed. My father had to get ration stamps for gas to run the tractors and trucks. Tire or tube purchase certificates which farmers had to get for trucks and tractors on the farm were given out at rationing boards. We also had gas and tire stamps for the car. Meat and sugar were rationed. Besides getting stamps for our family, they allowed my mother enough stamps to get meat and sugar for the farm help, who had meals at our home.

- 1- Why did the Civil Defense First Aid Squad ask a young man to volunteer to be a "casualty"?
- 2- What type of work did the "grandparents" do in Texas during the war?
- 3- In your opinion, why did the government limit the gasoline, tires and food available to the civilian population?

Anne Kieselmann Helps the War Effort ²⁹

I was a teenager in high school. They taught Red Cross courses in school and I became a Junior Air Raid Warden. Every night, I made the rounds in my neighborhood to make sure all shades were down so that no light shone and also, that all outside lights were out. I also became an aircraft spotter. This was all volunteer. I was assigned a post atop a building at the State Agricultural school. We had to call in all aircraft flying in our area and identify the type of plane.

Farmers in our area who lost sons or farm hands to the service came to the school for help. Upper class students were excused, if they worked on a farm. They had a bus to take the students from school to the farms. I went a couple of times on the bus. We picked string beans and potatoes. I then went to work with a neighbor and a few other students on another farm picking potatoes. Our day started by getting up at 5 a.m. and we worked until dark. When you spent the days on your hands and knees with a break for two snacks and lunch, you learn to appreciate what the farmer's life was like. At the end of the day, it was bath and bed for me. I thought I would never stand up straight again.

The day I turned sixteen, I went for my working papers and then applied for a job in the Republic Aircraft's cafeteria. We worked after school, weekends and during the summer. I went to work for Grumman Aircraft in September, 1943. It seemed everyone worked in one of the aircraft plants: Liberty, Fairchild, Republic, Grumman or Sperry. Housing was built in South Farmingdale for those working in the plants.

I was writing to about twenty-two servicemen: a couple of relatives, some friends I grew up with, friends of friends I never met but wanted someone to write to, and some new friends. There was a thing called "V" mail. I received most of this type mail from my cousin Ernie Kaufold in the South Pacific. All mail from overseas was censored. Sometimes, if the person tried to tell where they were, etc., it was blacked out. My fiance, Clarence (Skip) Van Nostrand was shot down over Germany in December, 1944 and was a prisoner of war in Stalag I near the Baltic Sea. He was freed by the Cossacks and returned home June, 1945 after V-E day. We were married on August 11th, a couple of days before V-J day.

- 1- Describe the jobs that Anne Kieselmann did to help the war effort.
- 2- Which job did she find the hardest? Why?
- 3- In your opinion, why did people on the home front write to people they didn't even know?

John Rettaliata, Assistant Amphibian Production Manager for the Grumman Corporation during the War ³⁰

The aviation industry before that had been pretty well restricted to highly skilled mechanics who tended to know each other. They moved around a bit from plant to plant--the best type of mechanics. But the war meant fantastic training programs. We wound up with training programs in every major high school, I think, in every town on Long Island. We were training women, lawyers, dentists, bakers, and just about every kind of person you could find. People would drop their careers temporarily, often because they were motivated to do something to help out in the war effort. They were overaged or otherwise unsuitable for the armed services. They wanted to pitch in and help out. During the war I think you could walk down our production line and find any kind of skill that you wanted. A find artist, a sculptor, dentist, musician, anything.

Thirty-some percent of the people were women, at the peak of our war effort. We even had women test pilots. I think we were the only company that had three women test pilots. They are still flying today. You have to bear in mind, we set the world production record for one month, for one single plant location. That was something, over six hundred airplanes. In order to get that kind of production, you averaged three or four flights per airplane, because there are various small things wrong with a brand-new airplane. You have to have them corrected and fly them again to be sure they are corrected. That means we were busier than LaGuardia Airport.

The old-time fighters had miles of electrical wiring--very fine copper extended wire that winds up in a very complicated maze, because everything you have to do in an airplane has got to be as light as possible. You wind up with miles of wiring cramped into a space the size of a Hellcat or a Wildcat. Women were very good at that.

We set up what now you would call day-care centers. A mother could drop off her children on her way to work and pick them up on her way home. There were dozens of these around the Long Island area. We had what we called a little green truck service. If a woman came to work and remembered that she had forgotten to turn off an electric iron at home, she could call them and they would go home and take care of it. Or if she had a flat tire on the way to work, she could call them and they would take care of that.

Blacks also began coming into the industry during the war effort. We had a basketball team that was one of the finest in the U.S. We came in second in the national championship. The majority of our team members were blacks. This attracted other blacks to come to work here.

- 1- How did the average airplane mechanic change during World War II?
- 2- Why were women especially important on the assembly line?
- 3- What programs did Grumman use to attract women and black workers?

Black Women Work at Grumman¹

In 1940, only 240 black workers were employed in the industry nationwide. Recognizing that many defense industries were discriminating against African Americans, black leaders pressured the federal government to force companies to hire more black workers. In June, 1941, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802 which ordered employers "to provide for the full and equitable participation of all workers in defense industries, without discrimination because of race, creed, color, or national origin."

Grumman, Republic and Brewster aircraft companies were all cited for racial discrimination. Because of the Executive Order, they expanded job opportunities for blacks. Grumman promised to train every qualified African American male in Nassau and Suffolk counties. By 1942, African American women were also being recruited. The African American population of Long Island in the 1940's was relatively small and Grumman mostly hired local residents. However, by 1943, 800 African-Americans worked for the company.

Mary (Mae) Virginia Mayweather, an African American Woman at Grumman

Mary (Mae) Virginia Mayweather was born in Virginia but moved to Long Island as a child. She attended Jericho elementary schools and graduated from Hicksville High School. In school, she was active in sports, the glee club and the school band. After she finished school, Mae did housework for a family in Jericho. When she was nineteen, she attended riveting and sheet metal classes at the Prospect Street School in Hempstead and became a riveter at Grumman. While her husband Cpl. James Mayweather served overseas in the army, Mae and their son lived with her parents in East Williston. After the war, she became a registered nurse.

At Grumman, Mae helped construct the tail section of the "Hellcat." She and many of the other African American women volunteered to work the night shift so they could receive premium pay. A feature article in Grumman's Plane News described Mae as "a conscientious worker" with "a good attendance record" and as a member of the choir in the Union Baptist Church in Hempstead. She told the paper that she was saving her earnings to buy a house after the war.

After serving their country, Mae and her husband applied to buy a home in Levittown. Her husband waited on line all night for an application, only to be told by William Levitt that he was sorry, but selling to black families would be "bad for business." The couple finally purchased a home in Rockville Centre where another developer built houses for black veterans.

- 1- Why did President Roosevelt issue Executive Order 8802?
- 2- How did Grumman respond to this federal directive?
- 3- How did Plane News evaluate the job performance of Mae Mayweather?
- 4- What problem did Mae and her husband face after the war?
- 5- Write a letter to the company building Levittown expressing your reaction to what happened to Mae and her husband.

Mary (Mae) Virginia Mayweather at Work as a Riveter
(Photo courtesy of the New York State Museum in Albany)

Anna Katherine Siemers Remembers Life Was Difficult³²

At the beginning of the war, right after the depression, my husband was working in New York City. I was working as a secretary for an engineering firm. We were living in Richmond Hills, Queens. My daughter was born in May of 1943, and my husband was drafted right after Christmas of that year. We probably would never have had a baby if we had known he was going to be drafted. We were both in our thirties, and we had kept postponing it because we didn't know whether he would be called or not. Finally I said, "Well, they are not calling anybody over twenty-nine." But it didn't work out that way. Of course, I am very glad we had the baby.

I remember that it was very difficult to get meat. You would have to stand in line. And we didn't get very much money--I don't think more than \$125 a month. We had a coal furnace at the time. I had to go down and shake that up every morning, start the fire, and put coal on it. We lived near a railroad yard, and it seemed all I was doing the whole time was scrubbing. That's what I remember most about the war. I just had my hands full existing. I still have my ration books. We would trade stamps with our neighbors. I didn't care much for sugar, so I would give my neighbor the sugar stamps, and she would give me coffee stamps. That is how we got along. I really felt the burden, besides not knowing where my husband was. I think that really was the worst thing--the uncertainty of everything.

- 1- Why did Anna and her husband decide to have a baby during the war?
- 2- Why was it hard for Anna after her husband was drafted?
- 3- Do you think men with young children should have been drafted? Why?
- 4- Do you think women should have been drafted during the war? Why?

Jack Altshul of Newsday Remembers the Home Front³³

I had a deferment because of my eye. That made me a 4-F, not very happily. The first impact of the war you felt was the boys going away. All of a sudden you had almost a full female staff, which in those days was a little innovative. My wife, Edna, for instance, was the first female photographer in the metropolitan area at the time. She walked in, a beautiful girl looking for a job and she came out a hell of a good photographer.

All of a sudden, you had Grumman, Republic, and Sperry in our own midst advertising for women machinists, welders, and riveters. They must have hired 100,000 people. That was the first big influx of that kind of industry on Long Island. A lot of women had husbands away at war. I think they would have worked at these defense factories whether or not they were paid for it.

- 1- How did the war change the work force at Newsday?
- 2- Altshul thinks women would have worked in the defense plants for free. Do you agree? Why?

Movie Review: "The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter"
reviewed by Melissa Sorgen

This 1980 documentary video is about women who entered American defense industries during World War II. It includes interviews with five former "Rosies" combined with footage from old newsreels and recruiting films and posters, pictures and music from the 1940s. It is in both color and black and white. Running time is 65 minutes.

According to the interviews, women faced widespread discrimination in the defense plants, especially lower pay rates, and African American women were paid even less than their white co-workers. One African American woman reported that she was repeatedly passed over for a job assignment that was given to less qualified white women. She was finally given the job when they were unable to do the work.

One of the most interesting parts of the documentary is its discussion of child care. During the war, children were left with relatives or at day care facilities. After the war, these facilities were closed, forcing many women to stop working outside of the home.

While they worked in the plants, many of the women joined labor unions that protected their job rights. However, when the war ended, the unions did not fight for them to keep their jobs. The documentary explains how difficult it was for many women to return to domestic roles after the war. Paid work was challenging and helped them feel powerful, independent, and successful.

"The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter" is an excellent documentary for classroom use. It shows the problems faced by women workers and that women are capable of skilled physical labor when given the opportunity.

Movie Review: "Swing Shift"
reviewed by Jennifer Evans

This is the Hollywood version of the home front during World War II. Goldy Hawn plays a "typical" 1940's woman, a newly wed housewife whose husband enlists after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Christine Lahti, her neighbor, is a lounge singer. At the start of the movie, Hawn's husband discourages her from working, but once he leaves, she gets a job at the local airplane manufacturing plant. Lahti also works there so they become friends.

Too much of the movie centers around a love affair that Hawn has with Kurt Russell, a male co-worker at the plant. They are eventually caught by Hawn's husband when he returns home on leave. Hawn is forced to rethink her relationships and eventually decides to resurrect the marriage. Hawn and Lahti are also laid-off when the war ends.

Factory scenes show male supervisors harassing the new women workers. I thought this was interesting because rarely do we learn that anyone was "uncooperative" during World War II. However, I was surprised when Hawn was promoted to a supervisory position. I wonder if this was really a typical experience for a woman worker. I also think the movie exaggerates efforts by women to achieve equal rights at that time.

A movie like "Swing Shift" could be important in the classroom if it helped students understand what people felt and experienced. Unfortunately, I do not think the movie succeeds at capturing the American home front during World War II. The scenes with factory workers building the planes are really only a small part of the movie. We miss the problems women face as they single-handedly try to balance home, family and work with the demands of rationing and recycling.

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- ¹Hempstead Sentinel, January 21, 1943; Valley Stream Mail, May 22, 1941.
- ²Babylon Leader, November 12, 1942, p. 4; Babylon Leader, September 17, 1942, p. 1; Farmingdale Post, September 17, 1942, p. 1.
- ³Republic Aviation, 1942.
- ⁴Port Jefferson Times, May 28, 1943.
- ⁵U.S. Department of Commerce, Historical Statistics of the United States, pt. 1 (Washington DC, 1975), p. 131 and 133.
- ⁶Farmingdale Post, October 8, 1942; Republic Aviation, July 10, 1942; Hempstead Sentinel; Republic Aviation, November, 1942.
- ⁷Farmingdale Post, February 25, 1943 and September 2, 1943; Newsday, May 25, 1944.
- ⁸Newsday, September 11, 1944.
- ⁹N.Y.S. Department of Labor Survey, (Division of Industrial Relations, Women in Industry and Minimum Wage), August, 1945, cited in Christine Kleinegger, "The Janes Who Made the Planes: Grumman in WWII."
- ¹⁰Hempstead Sentinel, April 12, 1945; Babylon Leader, August 23, 1945.
- ¹¹Hempstead Sentinel, September 27, 1945.
- ¹²Dr. Benjamin Spock, M.D., Baby and Child Care. Reprinted in Thomas Baily and David Kennedy, The American Spirit, 5th ed., vol. 2 (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company), p. 973. Marvin Harris, America Now (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981), p. 84.
- ¹³Betty Friedan, "The Feminine Mystique". Reprinted in Thomas Baily and David Kennedy, The American Spirit, 5th ed., vol. 2 (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company), p. 975.
- ¹⁴Harris, p. 88.
- ¹⁵Sherna Burger Gluck, Rosie the Riveter Revisited (NY: New American Library, 1987), p. 10.
- ¹⁶Susan Mathis, "Propaganda to Mobilize Women for World War II," Social Education (February, 1994), pp. 94-96.
- ¹⁷Karen Anderson, "Teaching About Rosie the Riveter: The Role of Women During World War II," OAH Magazine of History (Summer/Fall, 1988), pp. 35-37; Mathis, p. 94.
- ¹⁸Mathis, p. 94-95.
- ¹⁹Gluck, p. 4.
- ²⁰Mathis, p.95
- ²¹Anderson, p.36.
- ²²Mathis, p. 95.
- ²³Gluck, p. 17.
- ²⁴An interview by Diane Tully.
- ²⁵Adapted from "The World War II Homefront: The Farmingdale Experience," Long Island Forum, Summer 1995, p. 23-24.
- ²⁶Adapted from "The World War II Homefront: The Farmingdale Experience," Long Island Forum, Summer 1995, p. 24-25.
- ²⁷An interview by Melissa Sorgen.
- ²⁸Adapted from "The World War II Homefront: The Farmingdale Experience," Long Island Forum, Summer 1995, p. 25-26.
- ²⁹Adapted from "The World War II Homefront: The Farmingdale Experience," Long Island Forum, Summer 1995, p. 27-28.
- ³⁰Adapted from Americans Remember the Home Front, by Ray Hoopes, p. 110-112.
- ³¹Based on an exhibit at the N.Y.S. Museum, "The Janes Who Made the Planes: Grumman in World War II". December 1991-June 1992. Christine Kleinegger, Senior Historian.
- ³²Adapted from Americans Remember the Home Front, by Ray Hoopes, p. 242-243.
- ³³Adapted from Americans Remember the Home Front, by Ray Hoopes, p. 143-144.