"History" vs. "Herstory:" The Jobs and Roles of Women During World War II

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“HISTORY” vs. “HERSTORY:”
THE JOBS AND ROLES OF WOMEN DURING WORLD WAR II

Graduate Thesis

By

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Advisor

Dr. Mary Corey

December 15, 2013
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Secondly, I would like to thank my amazing fiancée, Nicole Winkelman for also pushing me to do my best and allowing me to be the person I am. I love you!

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Also, I want to thank the three amazing women who welcomed me into their homes and allowed me to hear and record their story: Mrs. Fern Pellett, Cpl. Marjorie Writz, and Mrs. Dawn Ellstrom.

Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Mary Corey for all of her hard work in helping me write, create, and organize this piece of work. In addition, thank you for all of your hard work and dedication during my graduate work at SUNY Brockport!!
Throughout all of mankind and the study of the past, humans have tried to figure out ways to properly communicate with each other. Language, first, played a major role in how early humans were able to communicate with one another, both positively and negatively. Second, humans started creating ways to communicate with each other over extensive periods of time through some type of writing; using either an alphabet, pictures, or symbols system. Early humans knew it was important to some how write down their ideas, values, and culture down. A word has even been used to represent these things that humans have written down; it’s been called “history.” For the most part, it has been men (“his”) who have been the ones to record information about a past culture. It is important to remember that women have, obviously, been around and been an important asset to every culture. But the “story” of women has been left out in a lot of “history.” Only until recently, in the stories of the past, have women been seen as an important factor and have they been investigated/researched. It is this idea that the written story of the past for women should be called, “herstory” (her-story) and this researcher will refer to the “history” of women as “herstory.”

Much of the early twentieth century saw women’s rights not change a significant amount due to the “dominant” gender still being that of the males. The course of the written past would be changed forever in the United States with the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment; giving women the right to vote. From this point on, the rights for (of most) women would start a trend of becoming equal to men. This trend was at one of its highest points during World War II. It was during this war that women held nearly the same exact jobs as men. Though the jobs of women were considered to be the
same as men, their roles were very different, more important in many ways, and usually more family oriented. In the final piece of research, this author intends to share the true differences between the terms “jobs” and “roles.” However, this beginning piece will only look at the specific “jobs” women held due to the very nature of “work-being done,” during this time of war.

To follow will be the explanation of the research that already has been done in the field of “herstory” for women in World War II. This researcher has looked at many articles, books, journals, magazines, and videos, and has come up with these five pieces of research to be the best in the field (This will not be a report to see how well done the research is, but simply to express what research is out “there” regarding the jobs/roles of women during this war.). The pieces will be explored alphabetically by the last name of the author for organizational purposes: The first, will be Kathryn J. Atwood’s Women Heroes of World War II: 26 Stories of Espionage, Sabotage, Resistance, and Rescue. Penny Colman’s book, Where the Action Was: Women War Correspondents in World War II, is the next book that will be discussed. Thirdly, will be another book by Penny Colman, Rosie the Riveter: Women Working on the Home Front in World War II. Next is, In Defense of a Nation: Servicewoman in World War II, by Major General Jeanne M. Holm, United States Air Force, retired. The last bit of research to be explored will be, Pushing the Limits: American Women 1940-1961. All of these books have been published with in the last two decades, 1990-2010. Every book brings something very different to the exploration of the jobs and roles of women during this war. Following the research within these books, will be other research that is out there that can coincide
with the research from each of the books. This section will be seen as the “support
section,” so the reader can learn more about the research that is out there about
“herstories” in World War II.
“WHO WERE THE heroes of World War II?”¹ Is a question that many Americans wonder about when they are in grade school learning about World War II. Many believe it is the men who landed on Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944. Others believe it’s the brave Marines who took Iwo Jima in February and March of 1945. Some might even feel it was the mighty and important leaders that led these men (and women) during the war; Dwight D. Eisenhower, Winston Churchill, George S. Patton, etc….In a very important piece of research, Kathryn J. Atwood discusses something that not many people around the world, including Americans, have ever heard of, women as being the heroes of World War II. Something that should always be brought to the attention of any researcher wanting to talk, discuss, and research, “herstory” during World War II, is this book. It is an important piece of research because Atwood is able to inform the researcher has to what jobs and roles women played in defeating the Axis Powers during the war. Each chapter involves a specific country and any where from two to five women who helped the cause for the allies. The countries that are discussed are Germany, Poland, France, The Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Great Britain, and the United States. Since this researcher is only discussing the herstory of American women during the war, the United States section is the only chapter that will be formally discussed.²


² It is important to note the other countries that Atwood has included in her book, because without the help of these women in their respected countries, the war could have gone on for much longer, many more innocent lives could have been taken, and the heroism of
Atwood’s chapter on the women in the United States, follows the works of five: Virginia Hall, Muriel Phillips, Marlene Dietrich, Maria Gulovich, and Martha Gellhorn. Each of these ladies was able to help the allies win the war with their very secretive, important, and trying role and job. For example, Virginia Hall had a very important and risky job in France. In fact, at one point, the Germans even gave her a nickname, the Limping Lady (La Dam Qui Boite, in French).

There were posters all over France portraying a sketch of the woman, believe to be Canadian, and including the following warning: “The woman who limps is one of the most dangerous Allied agents in France. We must find and destroy her.” The Germans knew that the Limping Lady had been a leader in the French Resistance, but so far she had successfully—and infuriatingly—eluded their grasp.3

Knowing that these agents were just roaming around France without being noticed was extremely frustrating for the Germans and using women as spies was an ingenious plan right from the start. In a time of war, most people would state that they feel men would be used as spies. So, by using women, information was passed on more quickly because most Germans were looking for male spies.

Other examples of these American women doing their part for the war effort are jobs/roles that most have heard of women doing during the war. Gulovich worked for the Office of Strategic Services during the war due to her Slovakian heritage. Martha Gellhorn was a famous war correspondent that wrote and told her stories of many battles in Europe. But Marlene Dietrich is one that many probably have never heard of for the

these women will never be forgotten. Pages nine through 191 allow the reader/researcher into these accounts.

work she did for the allies. Dietrich was a famous movie star and had been born in
Berlin, Germany in 1901 and was extremely well known for her beauty. In fact, even
Adolf Hitler wanted her to become the face of the German film industry in 1937. The
problem was that she was still in the United States under contract in Hollywood (she
received dual citizenship while she was in Hollywood). Also, she was not a fan of Der
Fuhrer. So with the help of the United Service Organization (USO) Dietrich would help
the Allied soldiers by keeping their spirits up and preforming live for them on the
battlefield.\textsuperscript{4}

For Marlene was frequently in serious personal danger. Gunfire and the
sound of exploding bombs often provided the backdrop to her songs.
More than once, her shows had to be stopped either because the soldiers
received order to “move out” (into battle) or enemy fire had come too
close to the stage. But Marlene didn’t care; she was a tireless and
determined entertainer. She would often urge her fellow USO entertainers
to drive as close as possible to the front lines of battle, do a short show for
the servicemen there—just a few songs and jokes—and then drive back as
quickly as possible.\textsuperscript{5}

This is the type of heroism that all of these women endured. They wanted to do the right
thing, even it that meant putting themselves in harms way. This was one job that should
not go unrecognized for the war effort.

\textsuperscript{5} Kathryn J. Atwood, \textit{Women Heroes of World War II: 26 Stories of Espionage, Sabotage, Resistance, and Rescue}, 218.
Not many Americans would think of women as being journalists during World War II. Most, if not all, would just “assume” that men did the writing and the reporting because journalism, as every other job, was a job for the men. Right away in *Where the Action Was: Women War Correspondents in World War II*, you learn just how many women were able to see combat.

World War II was fought around the world in what the military called ‘theaters of war’—the European theater, the pacific theater, and China-Burma-India Theater. After December 7, 1941, when the United States entered the war, 127 women managed to obtain official accreditation from the U.S. War Department as war correspondents. Although U.S. military policy prohibited women from covering combat, some women correspondents found a way to get to where the action was.\(^6\)

Of course, there were restrictions on visually seeing combat for women, but as stated, that did not stop them for witnessing battles of the war. From learning the exact number of war correspondents, not all being American, its extremely useful in seeing what these women were able to report because of where they were, their ethnic background, what languages they learned, and what their “gut” instincts were about the current European leaders. These instincts, naturally, were usually right. Women such as Sigrid Schultz reported about the cruelty of Adolf Hitler’s Nazi Germany. In fact she was seen as, “his greatest enemy,” because she was able to witness Nazi gatherings, Nazi propaganda, and Nazi treatment of the Jewish people. It helped Schultz immensely being able to speak several different languages and growing up in Europe she knew the culture. In addition,

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\(^6\) Penny Colman, *Where the Action Was: Women War Correspondents in World War II* (New York: Crown, 2002), VIII.
Schultz was very clever. When things in Berlin, where she did all of her reporting, became very scary and intense for any journalist, she was able to publish articles under the name of a man, John Dickson. Of course this made the Nazi party believe she had left the country and kept her safe from persecution.\(^7\) Schultz, Virginia Cowles, Sonia Tomara, and Martha Gellhorn, all made a name for themselves before the war broke out in Europe. Once the start of the war, the reporting became more dangerous and more intense.\(^8\)

When Germany invaded France in the spring of 1940, a lady named Sonia Tomara was there to report what was taking place. In fact, she was the only female reporter left writing what was taking place. Her article would make the front page of the New York Herald Tribune.

“For four days and four nights,” she wrote, “I have shared the appalling hardships of 5,000,000 French refugees…. As I finish this story there is a German air raid. The sound of bombs is terrific. Like the other refugees, and there are millions of us, I do not know tonight when I shall sleep in a bed again, or how I shall get out of town.”\(^9\)

It’s this heroism that gives us the drive to tell the story of these fearless women. Other names to go along with Tomara are the BBC’s Virginia Cowles, Chicago Daily News’ Helen Kirkpatrick, and Mary Marvin Breckinridge. All of these women were able to report important battles such as the Battle of Britain, the Battles in Holland, and even the

\(^7\) Penny Colman, *Where the Action Was: Women War Correspondents in World War II*, 9-10.

\(^8\) Penny Colman, *Where the Action Was: Women War Correspondents in World War II*, 11

\(^9\) Penny Colman, *Where the Action Was: Women War Correspondents in World War II*, 15-16
initial invasion of Poland by Germany on September 1, 1939. Every single female war correspondent was hard at work, before the United States had even entered the war.

It’s very important to mention that Colman discusses the importance of these women in all of the major campaigns for the United States. When the Japanese bombed the United States Pacific Naval fleet at Pearl Harbor, women correspondents were eager to “get to work.” These women went to places such as the Philippines, Italy, and of course France (when the invasion of D-Day took place). Women wanted the same opportunities as their male colleagues. But they were denied the access. Even though they were just as, if not more, qualified than the men, the government gave them their excuses. “The women were told that there were no facilities for them. They were not physically strong enough. That they would distract the soldiers. That was a male subject. That the Articles of War established by the U.S. Army forbade women from going into combat.”

Colman goes on to say that its this anti-women mentality that caused many of the best female war correspondents to not actually report about the war abroad. Many of them stayed at home and did whatever they could.

Lastly, another important part of “herstory” should be able to look and see what jobs and other accomplishments they took part in after the war was over. Coleman goes that extra yard to give the reader a brief inside look at the work these women took part in after the war was over. This section can easily help out with other aspects to learning what women were doing, women who had a significant role/job during the war, once all

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of the fight was over. In fact, once the men came home, things became very hard for women in the journalism field. “Jobs in journalism got scarce for women as men returned from the military. Now that the war was won, the prevailing attitude in America was that women should devote themselves to their husband and children.”\textsuperscript{12} The role of women changed drastically after the role, according to Coleman. This “change” is proof that women went from having jobs, during the war because most of the men had left, and their role had to change once again. Instead of doing things for the war effort, the role of the woman was back in the household taking care of her family, just like the stereotype had been for many centuries.

\textsuperscript{12} Penny Colman, \textit{Where the Action Was: Women War Correspondents in World War II}, 102.
Rosie the Riveter has always been an extremely famous character in the course of not only “herstory” but in history. Rosie has always been the face of American propaganda during World War II. She stands for women taking up the tools that were needed to win the war. It is only fitting that another book by Penny Coleman, regarding the jobs that women held during the war, was about one of the most important jobs that women could have held during the war; factory workers. When the Japanese Empire bombed the United States Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the United States wondered who would go to work creating the wartime goods needed to win a war. The most obvious answer was women. Penny Coleman gives the reader/researcher another excellent source to read and research while looking at jobs of women during the war.

For the first three chapters, one reads about how a little girl named “Dot” was affected by the war and the many rules that go along with wartime needs and wants to support the war effort.

One change that Dot soon noticed was that many everyday items were in short supply: sugar, rubber, gasoline, heating oil, and coffee, among other things. And no new bicycles were made for almost five years. ‘My father had promised me that I could get a large two-wheel bicycle. When they stopped making them, I was heartbroken,’ Dot recalls. ‘When the war ended, I finally got a two-wheeler, but by then I was in the eighth grade.’

This viewpoint from Dot allows the researcher into the world of not only females of an older, mature age, but females who are having to grow up with a war taking place around

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them. This allows for an even more in depth understanding as to how all ages of women had to “endure” during the war. At the end of the third chapter Coleman discusses the exact number of women in the workforce during the war. This is an exact number a lot of researchers are looking for when researching the topic of women in World War II. In addition, Coleman gives an exact quote from a creditable source, Newsweek magazine.

During World War II, more than six million women joined the workforce. In August 1943, Newsweek magazine reported: ‘They [women] are in the shipyards, lumber mills, steel mills, foundries. They are welders, electricians, mechanics, and even boilermakers. They operate streetcars, buses, cranes, and tractors. Women engineers are working in the drafting rooms and women physicists and chemists in the great industrial laboratories.’ More than two million women joined the war effort as clerical workers, nearly one million of whom were hired by the federal government. Women also became police officers, taxicab drives, lawyers, statisticians, journalists, and members of symphony orchestras as men left for the armed forces. Women ran farms, planted crops, tended animals, and harvested tons of vegetables, fruits, and grains.14

Next, the extremely important aspect of this piece of research is the look into what African American and Native American women had to go through during this extremely difficult time. Not only do many Americans forget the role that women played in during World War II, the fact that African Americans and Native Americans are completely overlooked is a trend that needs to be halted. Coleman discusses this important aspect of World War II history throughout various chapters of this book, starting in chapter four. All women had to endure the unequal ways of sexism and not receiving the same amount of money that their male counterparts would have. But, for these women of “color” and different ethnic background, discrimination and hatred

happened almost daily. The fact that they were working extremely hard for a country, that was at war, in which the majority of the population did see them as equals, is an aspect that needs to be discussed in all research fields of the this war. These women should also be able to receive the title of “hero” for all they had to go through to not only put food on the table for their families, but go to work everyday to support the war effort.\textsuperscript{15}

Lastly, an important aspect that Coleman, just like all researchers needed to do for this topic, brings to the table that once the men came home most women lost their jobs so they could return to doing those stereotypical jobs in their home. Some women left voluntarily, but most were laid off.

According to Charlcia Neuman, who was a wartime riveter, ‘I was laid off in September of ’45. I just got a slip of paper saying that I wouldn’t be needed again. Most of us went at the same time; it was just a matter that there was no more work….The idea was for the women to go back home. The women understood that. And the men had been promised their jobs when they came back.’ By 1946, over three million women had left the workforce.\textsuperscript{16}

Once the men returned, women were put “aside” so the men could return to their jobs.

The GI Bill was another government issued act that made sure that of those men who fought for the country were guaranteed a civilian job to return to try and return to “normalcy.” It is the opinion of this researcher, and many others, that it is very noble of the government to make sure that the men returning have a place to work, a job to make money, and a job to support their families. However, it will be an important part of the

\textsuperscript{16} Penny Colman, \textit{Rosie the Riveter: Women Working on the Home Front in World War II}, p. 97
debate as to why women were “thrown off to the side.” Further research needs to be investigated as to the importance of this decision by the government after World War II.
Throughout the course of the written past, males have always been the ones to go to war and to fight for their nation. In every war from the Great Crusades to the American War of 1812, males have been the “fighters.” It was not until World War I that people started to hear women being able to join the military. Women, for the most part, still could not fight in battle, but they were in the military for other various jobs. Major General Jeanne M. Holm’s book, *In Defense of a Nation: Servicewomen in World War II*, is a piece of research that allows the reader to get a look into the jobs of women in every branch of the military during World War II. This is the type of research that anyone studying “herstory” needs to look upon, especially when researching the jobs and roles of women during this war.

One of the best known and understood jobs for women in the military has been that of a nurse. Holm discusses the importance of the nurse for two whole chapters (both Army and Navy nurses). Holm talks about how the Army Nurse Corps (ANC) has been around since 1901 and is thus the oldest female branch of the military. It is also important to note that the number of nurses grew in the ANC after Pearl Harbor (compared to that of men enlisting in the military) was attacked.\(^7\) Similar to the service of the United States Army, the nurses in the ANC were sent to any part of the world in which they needed for active duty. Active duty very simple put meant that women could

be fired upon at anytime, anywhere, it did not matter what “theatre” or country. “Army nurses assigned in the Philippine Islands also came under fire. The advancing Japanese line eventually forced American forces to withdraw to the Bataan peninsula, where conditions became increasingly desperate.”\textsuperscript{18} Navy nurses at Pearl Harbor is another example of how these women put themselves in harms way in order to help the troops defeat a very threatening enemy. For both Army and Navy nurses, Holm’s discusses the importance of the service of African American women. The discussion for these women is extremely important, and at times rare, because these “black” nurses not only tended to black soldiers, but they also tended to white soldiers. They were all extremely qualified and well trained for their jobs.\textsuperscript{19}

Following the discussion on Army and Navy nurses, the discussion shifts to research based on women who fought in all of the branches of the military. These branches are the following: Women’s Army Corps, Navy Women’s Reserve, Marine Corps Women’s Reserve, Coast Guard Women Reserves, Women Airforce Service Pilots, and Army Dietitians, Physical Therapists and Occupational Therapists. Not very many people truly understand the branches of the military and the jobs women held within all of these different branches. Women were responsible for many jobs within the armed forces. They were commissioned officers, they protected members working on the Manhattan Project, they operated equipment to warn others of incoming air raids, they

\textsuperscript{18} Major General Jeanne M. Holm, \textit{In Defense of a Nation: Servicewomen in World War II}, 10.

\textsuperscript{19} Major General Jeanne M. Holm, \textit{In Defense of a Nation: Servicewomen in World War II}, 15
repaired aircraft and other machines, etc…\textsuperscript{20} In the military, especially in these female unites, the jobs for these women was equal to that of their male counterparts.

Major General Holm discusses women in the Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, and Airforce, similar to the way that it is discussed for the Army. The jobs women held in these units, female based of course, would have been the same exact job as men were doing in the so called “regular” military units. Just like the men, the women had a job to get done and if they did not then there would be consequences.\textsuperscript{21}

Lastly, Holm brings to the table an aspect of military life that not a lot of Americans know and understand. Medical caretakers, were (still are today) an extremely important aspect of the war. These women were Occupational Therapists, Army Dietitians, and even Physical Therapists. They served to better the lives of every soldier who fought during the war. This piece of research is one that not many have looked into, and it should not be overlooked.

Dietitians and physical therapists had served in the Army Medical Department as civil service employees even before the United States entered World War I. They had established nationally accredited training programs, and many had served overseas, where some received decorations from foreign governments and others found their final resting places. Male and female occupational therapists, numbering several thousand during World War I, were by 1940 employed for individual Army hospital projects only. When President Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared a state of national emergency in September 1939 in response to the German occupation of Austria and Czechoslovakia, the anticipated U.S. Army wartime requirements for dietitians, physical therapists, and

\textsuperscript{20} Major General Jeanne M. Holm, \textit{In Defense of a Nation: Servicewomen in World War II}, 39-57.

\textsuperscript{21} Major General Jeanne M. Holm, \textit{In Defense of a Nation: Servicewomen in World War II}, 57-122.
occupational therapists far exceeded the staffing ceilings of the Army Medical Department.\textsuperscript{22}

Even President Roosevelt understood the need for these professionals once war came to the United States. The professionalism of these women (and men) has to be remembered as one of the toughest in the twentieth century. Having to work with wounded soldiers, both mentally and physically, even today, is a very trying and tough job to take on.

\textsuperscript{22} Major General Jeanne M. Holm, \textit{In Defense of a Nation: Servicewomen in World War II}, 123.
This book by Elaine Tyler May is similar to that of the book discussed earlier by Penny Coleman, *Rosie the Riveter*. It is similar because it discusses the jobs of women in the workplace during the war. The major difference is that not only does May discuss the jobs women held in the workplace, but she goes into detail about the uncertainties of women going to work.

Nevertheless, the nation remained uneasy about these new work roles for women. As large numbers of married women took jobs for the first time, many observers expressed alarm. *Fortune* magazine reported, “There are practically no unmarried women left to draw upon….This leaves, as the next potential source of industrial workers, the housewives….We are a kindly, somewhat sentimental people with strong, ingrained ideas about what women should or should not do. Many thoughtful citizens are seriously disturbed over the wisdom of bringing married women into the factories.”

So far, in this discussion of research that is present in the world today, this is the first type of research in which society is actually afraid of women going to work. Though the individuals who are causing this type of negativism may only be a select few, it was still enough for a major American magazine to print a story about in an edition.

In continuing with the discussion of the jobs women had in the workplace, May goes on to discuss how recruiters and employers were simply telling women that they could accomplish these jobs because they are simply an extension of their domestic skills. Another form of negativism faced by women was the constant reminder that they were different from the men they were replacing. Many felt that by allowing women to work,

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was an interruption of their routines as a female. \textsuperscript{24} But as in many negative situations, the optimism and positivism was able to come through in various forms.

In spite of the harassment, teasing, and unwanted sexual advances women war workers faced, they enjoyed their new jobs, and most wanted to keep them after the war. Unlike the depression, the war emergency opened the way for a new labor force that would no longer be divided into ‘men’s jobs’ and women’s jobs,’ but would instead bring men and women into the same jobs, working side by side. \textsuperscript{25}

Women took great pride in their jobs and even though May wanted to show the negative side that the American public took, she also wanted the reader/researcher to see the positive. It is very important, in this type of research, to show both sides of the story in order to be able to place one’s “feet in the other’s shoes.”

Despite the talks of optimism and negativism, May moves on to discuss how minatory women took part in the workforce (a piece of research discussed in other books, that this researcher will also include). The minority groups that May is able to discuss are American Indian, Native American, and African American women. These women took many jobs across the country. They were machinists, inspectors, and riveters. (It is important to add that American Indian women, roughly 12,000, left the reservation for work.) Native American women also took part in new leadership roles on and off the reservation. These jobs included becoming teachers, farmers, lumber millers, silversmiths, and establishing urban community ties. \textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{25} Elaine Tyler May, \textit{Pushing the Limits: American Women 1940-196}, 27.
African American women not only took part in helping the war effort by working in the factories, in the military, and other various roles. These other various roles are ones that have to be a part of every type of research that has to do with women during World War II. “The fight against fascism abroad brought home painfully the need to overcome racism at home. Membership in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NCAAP) rose dramatically during the war, and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) was founded in 1943.”\(^\text{27}\) The civil rights movement would not officially make a “dent” in the history of the United States for another ten years, but it was during World War II, that African Americans started forming to take a stand. There was still a fight for African American women to find jobs and keep them. If a white woman wanted the same job, there was a strong chance that the white woman would win the job over.\(^\text{28}\)

May provides the reader/research with another aspect of what women, of all races, had to endure during this interesting time for women. It is important to add, again, that the majority of these women, as well, had to give up their jobs at the end of the war. The men were returning from war and they guaranteed their old jobs. Women simply had to go back to the jobs and roles of being in the house and being the “keeper” of the everything on the “domestic front.”\(^\text{29}\)

What else is out there?

This researcher understands that there is an ample amount of research out in the field of women working during World War II. These five books that were presented, as stated before, are just a few that should be used when writing about this very important topic. To follow, not in any particular order, will be another list of three other books, with a brief overview, then a list of books that are good sources for any researcher to use when discussing this topic in “herstory.”30 All of the research to follow are published books (not articles). Again, it is the opinion of this researcher to use published books rather than articles because one can receive more information in a book than in an article (not taking away from the hard work those put into their work in getting their research published).

The first book is by Sarah Gilbert and is titled, A League of Their Own. Published in 1992, this book describes the amazing job/role change of men and women in the field of baseball. As the war started for the United States on December 7, 1941, with the Japanese bombing of the United States Naval Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, men, for the most part, went to war and the women went to work. This was the case for baseball as well. Gilbert discusses how women played baseball in the All American Girls Professional Baseball League (A.A.G.P.B.L) while the men were off defeating Hitler, Mussolini, and Hiroito. This league allowed America’s favorite pastime, baseball, to “stick” around while most professional male baseball players went off to war. A League of Their Own really is an important job that women “took over” during the war.

30 All of these books will be included during the original research of this researcher.
Secondly, is a book entitled, *We Band of Angels: The Untold Story of American Nurses Trapped on Bataan by the Japanese*, by Elizabeth M. Norman, published in 2000. Another story many Americans are not aware of at all, is the one of the Army and Navy nurses who were stationed in the Philippines on December 8, 1941 when the Japanese invaded. These brave women were trapped on the island and faced extremely harsh captivity at the hands of the Japanese. Their story is one that should be told because of the hell they went through in order to survive and get back home. *We Band of Angels* is another book that should (and will) be included in any discussion of the jobs/roles of women during World War II.

*Our Mother’s War: American Women at Home and at the Front During World War II*, by Emily Yellin, published in 2005, is the third and last book to be discussed. The book is a combination of the five books discussed early as it allows the reader/researcher into the life of an American woman and all of the hardships they had to endure during the war. Yellin discusses how women were (still are today) one of America’s strongest fighting forces. In addition, Yellin talks about how World War II changed how society looks at women in a time of need differently than in any other time period in American history.
List of Other Books


The distinction between “history” and “herstory” will be made when all of this research is put together into an original piece of research at the graduate level. It is the idea of this researcher to discuss all, if not most, of the jobs and roles that women held during World War II that have just been described. Once again, though only the surface has been scratched with the research described and presented in this piece, the hard work that has gone into the hundreds and thousands of other books, articles, and journals, in this field, is thanked and welcomed. Many others have tried to get their message across to this country and the world, that women did in deed play an enormously important part of the success of the United States during World War II. This researcher hopes, too, that he can do the same and prove their importance in the original work to be done in the coming months. In addition, though the term “herstory” may never receive the recognition that it is needed, it is the hopes of this researcher that at some point in the near future, that the word “herstory” will be used to describe the written down study of the work of women in the past.
Bibliography for Historiography


The written past of this nation, the United States of America, has seen its fair share of war and conflict. From the “French and Indian War,” 1756-1763, the “American Revolution,” 1775-1783, the “War of 1812,” 1812-1815, “United States Civil War,” 1861-1865, to the wars in the twentieth century, “World War I,” 1914-1918, and “World War II,” 1939-1945, leading up to World War II, this nation has taken part in more than a dozen wars since its foundation on July 4, 1776.\(^{31}\) Answering the “call to arms,” has always been men. Men were/have been the ones, typically, to “report for duty” to defend the freedoms of this country from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. However, women were given the chance to do their part starting in the early parts of the twentieth century.\(^{32}\) As discussed earlier, women have never been fully credited for their efforts during war until more recently in the later part of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. That is why I believe there should be a direct distinction from the word “history” and a word not used or known, “herstory.” Again, men have always been the ones to write down accounts and events of the past. The term “history” can be broken down into, “his” “story.” Women should be given the same opportunity to telling their stories of the past. That is why the term “herstory” has been used so frequently in this research and will continue to be used during this part.

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\(^{32}\) This is just a general statement. Women have always given assistance during wars. From taking care of wounded men, keeping up on the work-load back home, and working to “get by.” However it was not until the twentieth century that women were allowed to “enlist” in the military as nurses, aides, and eventually soldiers.
It is that term *herstory* that I wanted to learn, understand, and investigate, the “Greatest Generation’s” herstory. We as a nation have heard the story of the horrible fighting conditions the men have gone through, the loss of friends, and the terrible sights that were embedded into their minds forever and had to come home and live with for the rest of their lives; But what about the women? What did they experience during the war? How did they influence the war and make a difference? These three questions guided and prompted me to want to interview and learn from the women who had the experience of being alive and in adulthood during World War II.

I was lucky enough to have been able to interview three women (and one man). The interviews took place in early July and usually in their respected homes. Each one had a different story to share and had difference experiences during the war. First, you will read the experiences from the interview with Fern Pellett. Fern is a 95 year-old retired teacher living in Webster, New York. She taught third through sixth grade during her time as a teacher. Second, you will read about my interview with retired United States Marine Corporal Marj Writz. Marj enlisted into the Marine Corps in October of 1944, roughly a year after her brother Harold was killed in action. Lastly, you read about the interview I had with Mrs. Dawn and Mr. Ted Ellstrom. During the war, Dawn was in college at State University of New York at Geneseo. During the summer time she worked at an ammunitions factory. (Ted was in the United States Army Infantry Band before joining the 13th Airborne Division.) All of the interviews lasted anywhere from thirty to sixty minutes. I made sure to have two pieces of equipment with me in order to “cover myself”, in the case that one piece of technology failed (a voice recorder,
ipod touch, and a video camera). Going into all of the interviews I made sure to have five
general questions to ask each of the women. These are the general questions: 1. Name
and correct spelling of name. 2. What was your initial recreation to the start of
World War II? To the bombing of Pearl Harbor? 3. During the war, what was your job?
Did you have any other “roles” throughout the war? 4. How would you describe the
state of mind of most Americans during the war? Were you in that same mind-set? 5.
What was the hardest part, for you, of the war? As most interviews, other questions
arouse with my time with these women. In addition to the interviews, I will do a section
on the similarities were formed from each of the women during our interview. Lastly, in
order to form a link between these women and past research, comparing and contrasting
these stories of women during World War II will follow. Here are the stories from these
three amazing, hard working, and strong women.\footnote{The interviews are being presented in the order in which they took place. From the first to last.}
Mrs. Fern Pellett

My first interview was with Mrs. Fern Pellett on Saturday July 6th, 2013. Fern is a member of my church in Webster, New York. As we started, Fern told me she was ninety-five years old. I immediately was in a state of shock because she, in no way, acted, looked, or seemed, to be of that age. Fern had been a teacher for the Kendall School District for five years before teaching in the Webster School District, where she taught for twenty-five years. In fact, Fern had just come to the Webster area to teach when the Japanese attacked the U.S. Navy’s Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor. “I had just come to Webster to teach and another teacher and I were directing a play at the Grange Hall. Somebody said to us (the other teacher) did you hear that Pearl Harbor had been bombed? That was unbelievable!” Fern, being a teacher, knew what Pearl Harbor was and what it meant for the Japanese to have bombed the naval base. Though World War II had, officially, already started over two years prior, the war took a more personal turn for the United States and its citizens. Fern remembers the state-of-mind of the country after Pearl Harbor was attacked and the U.S. entered the war.

Oh they were ready to fight. It (the citizens/nation) was very unified. People in Webster were night watchers. You couldn’t have any lights on in your house that showed to the outside. You had to have black curtains over all of your windows at night. It was a precaution because we didn’t want anything to happen.

When a nation goes to war supplies become more and more valuable as the war continues onward. Factories shift from producing cars, radios, and other consumer goods

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34 I went on to discover that Fern had been a graduate of SUNY Brockport in 1936.
and go into “war-mode.” However, money is needed to assist with the cost of all of these war-time goods. Being a teacher during the war, Fern and her students were asked to do their part as well. “Tuesday Bond Day,” was created so all of the students (and teachers) could help with the war effort.37

Every Tuesday was bond day. Every kid in the classroom had a booklet. Which had a place to put all of their stamps. The stamps were a quarter a piece, if they brought in one quarter they got one stamp if they brought in a dollar they got four. Once the book was filled it was worth eighteen dollars and seventy-five cents. I would turn that in and the student would receive a twenty-five dollar bond. Of course after the bond matures it will be worth more.38

Not only was the United States a unified country, but the United States wanted to do whatever it could to help and assist its allies. Rochester, as many know, is the home to Kodak, the photography company’s headquarters.39 Something very few Americans probably ever knew was that Kodak had buildings and businesses overseas. In fact, England was home to a few different Kodak places. Fern went on to “enlighten” me how the U.S. and Kodak helped the families of Kodak overseas during the war. “Kodak had a big facility in England. Due to all of the bombings in England, they (Kodak) brought all of the “Kodakids”40 to Rochester. All of the children of the employees in England were brought over to Rochester.” After informing me about what Kodak was able to do for the children of the employees. Fern happen to mention that she had a “Kodakid” in her

37 Mrs. Fern Pellett, Audio/Video Recording with author, July 6, 2013.
38 Mrs. Fern Pellett, Audio/Video Recording with author (3:00-3:40), July 6, 2013.
classroom. What Fern told me about this fifth grade girl was something that really put the war into perspective for those living in England.

Her name was Very Ann Hammends and she was a red headed girl and had a little temper. The boys in my class used to tease her mercilessly. Finally, one day I said to her, “you know Very Ann if you would just ignore them they would get tired of teasing you.” Very Ann responded with, “You know what Miss Poelma, if we (England, the Allied Powers) had ignored Hitler, he’d have all of England right now.”

Of course, we should always leave the great sayings to kids. Very Ann was another example of how even the kids were interested in winning the war and defeating Hitler.

As the interview went on I continued to learn a lot from Fern. One of the most interesting aspects of the interview was when I asked her what was the toughest part of the war from her point of view?

Well, getting along without the men and the rationing of butter and sugar and other goods. Ladies couldn’t get any nylon stockings. That was pretty tough. Also, you couldn’t get a car. I had an order in the entire time I taught in Webster for a new car and I never got the car.

Two aspects of her answer to that question really made me wonder. The first being I obviously wondered how she traveled from place to place. Being a teacher one needs a way of transportation to get from school back home. Also, I wondered without the men being there, did women still go out to the movies or dances? “So all of us lady teachers

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41 Fern’s maiden name.
43 Mrs. Fern Pellett, Audio/Video Recording with author (15:45-16:15, 11:50-12:10), July 6, 2013.
bought bicycles. We bought ‘victory bikes.’ That’s what they called them. We biked all over. We biked to restaurants, to the beach, and all over Webster. That was our vehicle. Gosh, I think we even rode them in the Winter.”

In response to the second question, Fern made it very clear that it was a good time during the war to have close friends to help keep your mind off the war (though it was hard because the men were all gone). “You just did everything with girlfriends. Instead of going out on dates, you just went out with girls. We went to plays, movies, and dinner. We formed a stronger bond.”

As she stated during the interview, during the war it was tough on many accounts for women living in the United States. Not having any men around, not being able to buy consumer goods, and even not being able to buy nylon stockings. However, Fern can remember, like it was yesterday, the relieve she felt when the war was finally over. In fact, she remembers the end of the war as a big party. Fern was on a biking adventure with American Youth Hostels in New England. This was a trip where you would bike across a certain part of the nation with everything you needed on your back. You would stay in the homes of people who volunteer to have you stay a night as you are making your journey.

Twice I went biking with American Youth Hostels in New England. The last time we went to Boston. We took a train to Boston and had our bikes shipped there. We then biked from there to Connecticut, Rhode Island, and out to the tip of Cap Code. When we were in Connecticut that was

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44 For more information on victory bikes, [http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_1313316](http://americanhistory.si.edu/collections/search/object/nmah_1313316).


46 Mrs. Fern Pellett, Audio/Video Recording with author (14:15-14:30), July 6, 2013.
when the bomb was dropped on Japan. So, then we would bicycle around to different houses, pop our heads in and ask the families what’s happening, did they surrender? By the time we got to the tip of Cap Code victory had been declared. Everybody from the town came outside and made a bon fire. Everyone was dancing around the bon fire. I’ll never forget that! That was so exciting!\footnote{Mrs. Fern Pellett, Audio/Video Recording with author (22:10-23:14), July 6, 2013.}

After the war was over, Fern met her husband Clayton and they were married in 1946. Fern is an amazing example of women living on the home front during World War II. Though times were tough, they did whatever they had to do to help with the war effort and help pass the time. Fern Pellett, in my mind, is another American hero doing her part to help her/our country win the war.
Cpl. Marjorie Writz, United States Marine Corps (Ret.)

Before I was able to interview Cpl. Writz, I did not know who she was, where she lived, or that she was in the Marines. It was simply a coincidence, and luck, that someone from my church is a friend with her and she was able to guide me on the right path to contacting Cpl. Writz. After hearing that Cpl. Writz had been in the Marine Corps I, like any history nerd in the technology age, “googled” the name, “Marj Writz,” and an article caught my eye.⁴⁸ I, indeed, had no idea that Mrs. Writz was Cpl. Writz of the United States Marine Corps (let alone that she had been made famous by the news). Cpl. Writz is ninety-one years old and currently still resides in the Rochester area.

I had the privilege of interviewing Cpl. Writz on July 6, 2013. As I walked into her apartment I was in awe of all of the photos that were on the wall. These photos consisted mostly of wartime photos of her and her husband, Hoarse, in their respected uniforms. War was something that Cpl. Writz was afraid of from the start due to not knowing what was about to happen. It truly did not set in until some time after Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939.⁴⁹ “I think in the beginning when war was declared on December 7, 1941, I think it took a while for it (war) to sink in. You know after a while we started doing covering windows at night. I had a lot of fear. I also had a lot anger for the Japanese.”⁵⁰ Cpl. Writz continued to inform me that many years after the war she still had a hard time “liking” Japanese people. Even though she knows it’s

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⁴⁹Most historians consider this to be the “official” start of World War II.

not the people living today that caused the war, but its something that she says she is still trying to get better.\textsuperscript{51} Though she is still upset about the start of the war.

Very early in our conversation I learned that Cpl. Writz’s brother, Harold, was killed during the war.\textsuperscript{52} Harold was in the Army’s armored division. He had enlisted in 1942. “He was in a very famous battle, Kasserine Pass (1943). The Germans came down from the mountains and it was a big mistake. The commanding officer was way in the back so he was fine. But the rest were just mowed down in this valley. There were a lot of corpses, some 3,000. They didn’t know who was who.”\textsuperscript{53} Kasserine Pass is in the country of Tunisia. Tunisia is located North-East of Algeria on the African continent.

Cpl. Writz went on to tell me that her niece actually traveled to Kasserine pass, was able to see the memorial, and saw Harold’s name on the memorial. It was the death of her brother that influenced Cpl. Writz to join the military.

“It was kind of a decision to take his place. I wasn’t doing anything for the war effort. So, I finally decided that I was going to do it (become a Marine). I enlisted in October of 1944. I joined very late.”\textsuperscript{54} Cpl. Writz discusses that since she was working at Kodak, had a high school education, making colored pictures. She always felt that she could do more to help. The next topic, of course, was how Cpl. Writz thought of basic training (boot camp). Many Americans, today, can see what basic training is like by simply watching videos on youtube or any other online source. However, Cpl

\textsuperscript{52} This would later come up in the interview as the hardest part of the war for her.
Writz and all of the Marines that went through basic training, before the technology age, did not know what to expect. The only aspect of basic training that they expected was that it was going to be mentally and physically tough. One only knew as much as they heard from others who had joined the Marines before them. Cpl. Writz, as most Marines say, provided me with a very basic and shocking answer has to how she felt about boot camp.

Actually, it was kind of fun. They (Marine Corps/Drill Sergeants) make it rough. We endured a lot of verbal abuse. Boot camp was six weeks long. I actually had a very interesting experience at boot camp. President Roosevelt (Franklin Delano Roosevelt) came down to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, while I was in boot camp. We got up along the fence and saw him go by in his touring car with his hat on and of course he had a cigarette in his mouth.

The fact that Cpl. Writz had the opportunity of seeing President Roosevelt during basic training meant, to her, that she was in the right place.

Another aspect of Marine life that not many Americans understand are the jobs of women during World War II. Americans usually think of women in the military as nurses or medical aides. However, their job was much more than that. According to Cpl. Writz her job was one of extreme importance. It’s a job not familiar to her, but it was a job that would help a lot of Marines.

I was given the job of projectionist. Since I worked at Kodak, they thought it would be a good job for me, working with sixteen-millimeter film. I ended up doing the movies of eighteen-millimeter film. I showed training films. I kept begging for a transfer out of Camp Lejeune. There were 20,000 men and 900 women on the base. It got very tiresome being

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followed or hollered at. We would have dances on the base three or four times a week and it just got very tiresome.\textsuperscript{56}

Since Cpl. Writz was getting very tired of Camp Lejeune and everything that went with the base, she continued to want a transfer somewhere else to help out with the war. As a projectionist and showing movies/training films, she needed to be transferred to a place where there was already a male projectionist.

I finally got a transfer to Washington D.C. I learned to do commercial movies. I worked with nitrate film and it was extremely flammable. You couldn’t have a cigarette or anything around the film. I like to think, when I worked with the nitrate film, that I lived dangerously. Also, I have trouble bringing back faces after all of these years to remember. But there is one face I can still remember from my time in Washington D.C. The Marine’s job I took over for was sent over to the Pacific at Peleliu to fight. This Marine had a wife and three kids. He thanked me and said if it wasn’t for you I wouldn’t be going to Peleliu. He wanted to go and fight and not be stuck back home. I will never forget his face or what he told me as long as I live. But that was our purpose. Our purpose was to release a Marine into active duty. That is what the women Marines were for.\textsuperscript{57}

So, the jobs of women Marines during World War II, were to release the men so they could go over and fight for their country. As Cpl. Writz said, “They were all happy to do it.” This was a job that was similar to civilian women working in the factories. It was necessary so these men that wanted to fight could go and do just that.

Finally, at the end of the interview Cpl. Writz shared something with me that I will never forget. It was something that was very simple; a word “BAMs.” An acronym. It showed just how women in the Marines were able to “adjust” to the men. “The

male Marines liked to call us BAMs. That stood for, Broad Ass Marines. However, my friends and I believed it to stand for something else. We liked to think it stood for Beautiful American Marines.”

Ending the interview on that note put another smile on my face with my time with Cpl. Marjorie Writz. She was another example of a woman who wanted to do her part during the war. So, in honor of her brother, she enlisted in the Marine Corps, and did a job so the male Marines could go off and fight. Cpl. Writz, again in my mind, is an example of another American hero doing her part for her country.

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Mrs. Dawn Ellstrom (Mr. Ted Ellstrom)

My third and final interview was with a couple from my church in Webster, New York. These are two of the most friendly and loving people I have ever met. I interact with this couple every time I am in church and I can honestly say they put a smile on my face. Also, obviously, this interview was unique because I had the opportunity of interviewing both of them. For the purposes of this research, the majority that will be covered is Dawn’s experiences. Some of the very unique experiences that Ted shared with me, that go along with Dawn’s will be discussed.

From the start of World War II, Dawn did not know what to really expect. But there was one main concern that I am sure all Americans felt from the beginning of the war.

I worried that my friends were going to have to go into the service if the war were to effect the United States. After the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, I remember very clearly what I felt. I was a sophomore in college. I can remember sitting in the lounge in our dorm when the president declared war. Of course it was very emotional. One of the girls in our group had a boyfriend who was already in the service so she was in tears.\textsuperscript{59}

After the declaration of war, the United States was officially at war on two fronts: Pacific and Atlantic. Dawn, being a college student at SUNY Geneseo, could not find a job during the school year. However, during the summer break, Dawn was able to work in a factory. “I worked in an ammunition factory, Poscam Meter where we made guns. My job was to take the gun part and if it didn’t fit I had to file it. If it still wouldn’t fit then I would send it on to another person. I made twenty-eight dollars a week. That was a lot

\textsuperscript{59} Mrs. Dawn Ellstrom, Audio/Visual Recording with Author (1:00-1:45), July 7, 2013.
of money back in that time.”  After the job in the ammunition factory, Dawn went on to hold two more jobs that she called her, “war-time effort jobs.” Though she does not remember much about the second job, the third job she remembers very well. It was not working with guns or ammunition. In fact, it was quite the opposite of that job. “My senior year in school (college) they were very short-handed at the local canning factory. So, we got out of school to work in the canning factory. We canned corn. The corn would come down the line and we just put the corn in the can. It was cool because not only did we get to leave school but we got paid for the job.

Another important question I asked Dawn was regarding transportation during the war years. Since my interview with Fern was the day before, and I thought it was very interesting that she made her way around town on a bike, I asked Dawn how she made it from place to place around town. She stated that, women her age did not drive and did not have cars. She can remember her dad taking her, in his car, wherever she had to go. In addition, she can also remember one guy who had a car at Geneseo. He was one of the very few males still left on campus and he just so happen to have a car. Dawn said she remembers that because he drove us all to work at the canning factory. Being a crafty guy, Ted chimed in and asked his wife if they ever gave the guy money for gas. She replied she did not think so. Ted again snickered and said that gas, during the war,

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was around twenty-four to twenty-five cents. Not only was it interesting learning about the jobs and roles that Dawn and Ted had, but its always amazing to find out little “fun” facts about this time period such as gas prices. Another little fact, that Dawn can remember very well, was that women could not purchase nylon stockings. Now Dawn remembers this because of what the dean said at Geneseo. She said that the dean told all of the female students who wanted to be teachers that they had to wear stockings. They could wear socks if they wished, but stockings had to be under the socks to cover their knees. Dawn said something that as a male I will never know what it is like. “Those darn stockings (the non-nylon ones) bagged at the knees.” Once again, a little fact about life during the war that very few Americans knew about.

Since Ted was in the military during the war he can remember seeing women in uniform first handed. It is a great perspective to have heard/learned. I figured this would be a good part in the research to share with you what Ted said he knew or understood about the women in uniform (it’ll be up to the reader to decide if he or she thinks Cpl. Writz would agree).

Our first experience with the WACs was down in Louisiana in late 1942. They came in as service personal. One of our bands-men, fell in love with one of them and married her while they were in the service and went on to have kids after the war was over. I think our thought, back then, was that these girls were looking for a guy. That was the reason they went in. Usually, they were small town girls who wanted to get away from home. Kind of like us guys. We just wanted to get away from home.

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62 Mrs. Dawn Ellstrom and Mr. Ted Ellstrom, Audio/Visual Recording with Author (7:00-8:45), July 7, 2013.
63 Mrs. Dawn Ellstrom, Audio/Visual Recording with Author (9:00-9:25), July 7, 2013.
64 Women’s Army Corps.
65 Mr. Ted Ellstrom, Audio/Visual Recording with Author (10:30-11:50), July 7, 2013.
Ted went on to inform me that there definitely was a form of respect from most of the men towards the women. The women were wore the same uniform as the men so they received respect for doing their part and not staying home.

The aspect on the home front that I wanted to know the most about was the state of mind most Americans had after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. I wanted to know about this state of mind due to the fact that the United States was attacked on home soil. The only event that has happened in my life was September 11, 2001. I am trying to see if there are similarities between what Americans felt then and what Americans felt post nine eleven. Naturally, I asked Dawn and Ted their opinion about the state of mind of this country after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

I thought everyone was very concerned, of course. We also worried a lot. It was hard in school because some of my friends lost boyfriends during the war. It was hard for me personally because my brother fought during the war. (Ted) I remember that the country had severe anger towards the Japanese. We hated the Japanese. There was no question about it. We saw them as the lowest form. The same went for the Nazis in Germany. We hated Hitler as well. Some of us knew that not all Germans were Nazis but we also knew that the Japanese were all the same, all in one box.  

What the Ellstroms shared with me from that last question, to me, is exactly what all Americans felt day to day during the war. They were angry, worried, and concerned. The feeling a person goes through when their country is at war, is something not everyone will go through in their lifetime.

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66 Mrs. Dawn Ellstrom and Mr. Ted Ellstrom, Audio/Visual Recording with Author (15:10-16:45), July 7, 2013.
At the end of the interview, just like the other two, I asked Dawn what the hardest part of the war was for her personally. “The hardest part of the war for me was worrying about my brother. At that time I had a few boyfriends that were in the war, but I worried about my brother the most.”

Again for Americans back home, for most of them, their days revolved around working and worrying about loved ones over seas.

Yet again, I have the utmost respect for Dawn, and Ted, for everything she/they did during the war to help with the cause. Whether it was fighting over-seas, making ammunition, or not being able to wear nylon stockings, the Ellstroms, both, prove that Americans did what they had to do in order to help win the war for the United States.

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Similarities

During the time I spent with each of these three women, it was quite the experience hearing each of their stories during the war. They brought different stories to the interview. A unique aspect to the interviews as a whole was the similarities I found to be between the three of them. The first similarity that Dawn and Fern shared were how they remembered how there were no men around the time of the war (post Pearl Harbor). Both described their town’s has more of a “ghost town” due to their only being prominently one gender around town. Since all of the men were not in town, each described how one got by, by simply hanging out with female friends. Movies, dinner, and dances, would have to wait until after the war.

The second similarity that I found to be of great importance to these two women, Dawn and Fern, was how they distinctly remember the lack of nylon stockings available for women. Both could simply not believe that they did not have access to nylon stockings for fashion. Of course nylon was being rationed for the men for uniforms and other war-time goods. It really was interesting to hear just how “dreadful” it was for women not to have nylon stockings. During the interview Dawn referred to the other stockings as terrible because they “bunched” at the knees.

The third and final similarity I found between all of these women was the fact that living in a country during such a major war, as World War II, at one point or another receives some type of negative feeling. These feelings consist of worriedness, nervousness, and sadness. At one point during the war all three of these women can remember feeling if not all of these feelings, at least one. For Fern, it was a simply worry
for all of those soldiers who had to go overseas and fight. Cpl. Marjorie Writz was diagnosed with what doctors called “war nerves” because of the fear she felt when the war started. She also worried about her brother Harold fighting overseas. Later she would have to mourn the loss of his life to the war. Dawn too, felt the sense of worrying for a brother fighting overseas. She could remember, on top of worrying for her brother, worrying for friends’ boyfriends that were overseas. At least once she shared me mourning the loss of one of those friends’ boyfriends because he had been killed overseas. War can truly bring out the negative feelings in all of us. Something I will always truly remember from learning from these women.
The stories told from these three women confirm many aspects of life at home for women. First, as was discussed in the historiography section, women were called to the factories to do the work. *Rosie the Riveter: Women Working on the Home Front in World War II* showed how much women were needed for the jobs and Dawn’s work in the factories proves that all women not only wanted to help with the war effort, but wanted to make a little money and take advantage of having a full time job or a summer job (during college). Secondly, again from *Rosie the Riveter: Women Working on the Home Front in World War II*, rationing played a major role in the war effort. Women had to ration things such as butter, milk, and silk. Fern and Dawn expressed the hardship of rationing these items to confirm that from the book. Thirdly, Cpl. Writz puts things into perspective when she (and many other women) joined the war effort. Again, this confirms the research in *In Defense of a Nation: Servicewomen in World War II* from the historiography section of this research. Women truly wanted to do their part in the war effort and that, at times, meant enlisting in the military. The final aspect that can be drawn is that “women had it easy” when the men were overseas fighting. In fact, that is the one statement in which many historians have heard over and over again. Women did not have it easy on any front: home or war. Women not only had to hold their “typical” roles but also had to fill the roles and jobs of men since the majority of them were overseas fighting.

The memories of Mrs. Fern Pellet, Cpl. Marjorie Writz, and Mrs. Dawn Ellstrom confirm that, for women, one of the more upsetting sacrifices of the war was not having men at home so they could take part in activities that were age appropriate and a part of
growing up (dating, dancing, going to movies etc…). In addition to the men being gone, it was extremely hard to ration and not use basic goods that were/are used in everyday life. In fact, some of the things that had to be ration were things that everyone uses on a daily basis without really thinking about. It is just a part of daily living.

In regard to the term herstory, though it is not used in everyday language, it is a term that I (we) as teachers can apply to classroom use so, at the least, students can distinguish as to which topic is being referred. Doing my research on the jobs and roles of women during World War II, I found out that women held many new jobs and roles during the war that they were never able to before: Soldier, Factory Worker, Head of House, Marine, Rationer, to name just a few. In today’s society, women and men are finally being seen as equals. However, it was not for the hard work of the millions upon millions of women before them, this equality would be even farther away. It is thanks to women like Mrs. Fern Pellett, Cpl. Marjorie Writz, and Mrs. Dawn Ellstrom that truly prove that women did their part in winning the war for the United States. This was just one war/conflict that this nation has endured. There were many before and after in which women played their role in helping form this nation into what it is today.
It has been proven, not only through this research but through the last forty years and more of women’s studies, that women have held many jobs and roles over the course of this nation’s past. When the time has come to go to war, those jobs have increased significantly and everyone had to do their part. Women have held the exact same jobs that men have held during times of war. What has been discussed throughout this research is how valuable women have been to the growth of this nation. It was not until world war two, that there had been a strong sense of equality among men and women for these different wartime jobs.

Having extensively researched my topic on women in world war two, as a teacher, the next step is to be able to move my topic from written research to practicum use in the classroom. There are a lot of materials out there regarding the jobs and roles of women during world war two, but they are not set up in any way for teachers to use in the classroom. When teachers are looking at textbooks and other teaching sources when creating unit and lesson plans for wars in the twentieth century, many try to create a lesson or two on women and their significance during the war. I have seen this first hand. During observations in classrooms, during student teaching, and even as a student I can remember not covering a lot of material about how important women were during war(s). Instead of devoting much more time and resources to truly teaching students the importance of women during world war two (and other wars), teachers are simply just “covering” it in a day or two. I am truly an advocate of generating more classroom time to giving these women the recognition that there needs to be. There are some obvious
questions that will come up when trying to accomplish a large task like this one. These would be; Is there enough time in the school year to add an extra unit or extra lesson plans within a unit? How am I as a teacher going to find the extra time to do the research and find the proper materials in order to teach this extra material? By talking about the importance of women within each unit aren’t I doing my part and giving them the recognition? There are many more very similar to those questions. My answer would be, you can never give a group of people too much recognition (or much needed recognition) for their hard work in shaping this nation. What can be done then? Well, many times, teachers have to use their own creativity in order to create lessons and units when reviewing all of these materials. Since the list of materials is so excessive, some teachers actually might not have the training or the means as to organizing the materials they find to put into strong classroom use. Because this is a work of my own research, and interest, I decided that the best way to use that research to enrich teaching on this topic is to create a course portfolio of teaching materials and strategies. This way other teachers can replicate the materials and put them to good use in their own classroom. Of course, it is up to the teacher to pick the materials they wish to use in order to help their class be successful. In addition, proper modifications are encouraged for every type of student learner to assist them in properly grasping, comprehending, and applying the material into everyday use. Modifications are encouraged also to be made, when and where necessary, to help student reach mastery of the material.

To follow will be the course portfolio of materials to help guide teachers through an overall unit on women in World War Two. The first will be a cartoon analysis.
Provided will be three different cartoons that can be used and questions to guide an analysis of the cartoons. Next, will be a list of websites that can be used as a webquest, for student exploration, with questions to go along with the webquest. The third piece of material included will be two examples of compare and contrast essays that can be used either as a formative assessment or a summative assessment. Next, will be materials to set up a “Women in Espionage” stations activity/lesson. The fifth material included will be an activity/lesson that can be used to help students make inferences about the war, how women were treated in various roles/jobs during the war, and inferences about what was said about women during the war. Finally, another station activity/lesson will be included. This station activity will be about all of the various jobs and roles women held during the war. All major roles and jobs will be a part of this stations activity. Following the materials in the portfolio will be an analysis as to why these particular materials were chosen. The particular materials will be linked to the best and most proven instructional theory in education today.
Cartoon Analysis

By having students look at cartoons or “propaganda,” allows a student to step into the shoes of Americans during the war. They can really get a feel for what Americans were thinking, seeing, and feeling by breaking down the cartoons. Here are three of the best, of my opinion, cartoons that were printed during the war.68 Obviously, all three have to do with women fighting in the armed forces or on the home front. Each cartoon is accompanied by five questions. Every question allows the student to move up the ladder of Bloom’s Taxonomy of learning domains.69

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68 http://punch.photoshelter.com/gallery/G0000ACxpJLGwC0s/ Most of the cartoons from world war two can be found from this link. In addition, by simply typing into google, “world war two cartoons,” many more can be found.

69 http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd/bloom.html For more information on Bloom’s Taxonomy.
1. Come up with your own title for this cartoon. Why did you choose that name? Explain.

2. Predict what you think was the major role of women in the armed forces, according to this cartoon. How does it relate to other jobs they held during the war?

3. Analyze how this cartoon could be a positive piece of American war propaganda. Why would women want to fight?

4. Explain another image that could be added to this cartoon in order for it to stand out. What would you add?

5. Compare and contrast this cartoon with the other two. Evaluate this one compared to others. Rate each on a scale of 1 to 10. 10 being the best and 1 the worst. Why did you give them the score that you did? Explain the score for each with evidence.
1. Come up with your own title for this cartoon. Why did you choose that name? Explain.

2. According to this cartoon, what is the major role of the woman?

3. Analyze how this cartoon could be a positive piece of American war propaganda. Why would women want to join the war work effort?

4. Explain another piece that could be added to this cartoon in order for it to stand out. What would you modify?

5. How does this cartoon send a clear message to women in this country during the war? What can you tell me about the sizes of the figures in the cartoon? How is that relevant?
1. Come up with your own title for this cartoon. Why did you choose that name? Explain.

2. Predict what you think the role/job was of this woman in the cartoon. What evidence is there in this cartoon to support your answer?

3. After seeing this cartoon, why would you believe this to be a positive piece of American war propaganda?

4. What could be added to this cartoon, if anything, to allow it to stand out more? Explain your reasoning.

5. Compare and contrast this cartoon with the other two. Evaluate this one compared to others. Rate each on a scale of 1 to 10; 10 being the best and 1 the worst. Why did you give them the score that you did. Explain the score for each with evidence.
Webquest

Here are six of the best websites, again of my opinion, on the web dealing with women in World War Two. Each of the websites as a set of questions students can follow while on their webquest. Webquests are a great tool for teachers to use in order to give their students a little bit of independence and freedom while learning a lot about a topic. The teacher is allowing the student to be the researcher and it is a way to prove to students that you as the teacher trust them to do the work on their own. As in most cases, the teacher needs to be a “guide” or a “coach” in this case to make sure students are not getting lost within the website.

http://www.nps.gov/pwro/collection/website/rosie.htm

1. Name some of the civilian goods factories that were transformed into war time materials.

2. How did the American government lure women into the workplace?

3. What, eventually, led women to want to work during World War Two? Be specific!

4. On the left hand side is a link to “Women’s Stories.” Click on the link and click on one of the women workers and tell me in no less than five sentences about them and the job they did.

5. Do some more exploring on the website. Pick two other things that either “caught” your attention or “sparked” your interest. Tell me about each in no less than five sentences.


1. What was the necessary material that the ALCOA plant produced? How was it significant to the war?
2. Click on one of the documents at the bottom of the page. Read over the document. In no less than seven sentences, describe the purpose of the document.

http://www.nationalww2museum.org/learn/education/for-students/ww2-history/at-a-glance/women-in-ww2.html

1. This website consists of a lot of information. Be the researcher and provide five things that you found to be the most useful in learning about women in World War II. Where did you find the information from the website?


1. There are pictures of women of different ethnicities doing different types of jobs. Pick two pictures and analyze them. What do you see? Who is in the picture? What are they doing? Why do you think the picture was taken?

2. Look at picture number ten. What are the women making? What do you see on the walls in the background? Which country are these women from?

3. Picture forty-four provides a look into how Soviets felt about Germans. What can you infer about this picture?

http://www.history.com/topics/rosie-the-riveter

1. Pick a video from the selection about women in World War II. Watch the video and discuss what you learned in no less than five sentences.

2. Pick a different video and do the same as in number one.


1. Go to page five of the document and read about Cpl. Marjorie Writz. What is the significance of Cpl. Writz? Why was she honored?

2. What was her reason for joining the United States Marine Corps?
**Compare and Contrast Essays**

From a teacher’s standpoint, this type of essay is a great tool to use as either a formative or summative assessment. As a formative assessment, as the teacher, you can check for understanding mid way through a unit plan. If the student has been taking clear, concise notes, the student has been actively participating in class activities, and the student has a strong comprehension of the material thus far in the unit, then the student should receive a decent score/grade on the assessment. Plus, again as the teacher, you have more time to adjust your lesson plans for the rest of the unit to help students understand the material.

As a summative assessment, once again as the teacher, you can check to see how well the student comprehended the material at the end of the unit. Also, by giving the same type of assessment at the end of the unit, you increase the reliability of the students’ scores from both assessments (test re-test method). Here are two examples of compare and contrast essays that can be used for a unit on women in World War Two or could be used from a unit about women helping out the war effort from every American war in recorded history.

**Formative Assessment**

Pick one job that women held during World War Two that you have learned about thus far. Create an essay in which you compare and contrast that job to when men held it to when women held that job. What were the major differences when men were working the job? What were the major differences when women were working the job? How were the two similar?
Your essay should have each of the following:

1. A thesis statement in which you say what you are arguing.

2. The specific job that you are going to compare and contrast.

3. At least five paragraphs: Introduction (with thesis statement), three body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.

4. Evidence to support your thesis. This could be any notes, hand-outs, or quizzes we have done in class.

5. Proper grammar, sentence structure, and word usage. Do NOT use I, we, you, your etc…

**Summative Assessment**

The United States has been a part of many wars over its history. Pick one war and write a compare and contrast essay about the jobs and roles of women between the two. What were the major differences between the jobs/roles of women during that war? How were the two wars similar in the things that women did?

Your essay should have each of the following:

1. A thesis statement in which you say what you are arguing.

2. The specific job that you are going to compare and contrast.

3. At least five paragraphs: Introduction (with thesis statement), three body paragraphs, and a conclusion paragraph.

4. Evidence to support your thesis. This could be any notes, hand-outs, or quizzes we have done in class.

5. Proper grammar, sentence structure, and word usage. Do NOT use I, we, you, your etc…
**Espionage Centers Activity**

Doing a centers activity is a way for teachers to put multiple lessons into one. Usually, teachers have between four to six stations about a specific topic. Each station has pictures, readings, or a short video for students to collect information from. There are always questions associated with each station. Teachers can choose to either have students write on a separate sheet of paper or have the questions put together in a packet to allow for easier transitions between stations.

This centers activity is a reading heavy activity. There are six stations with different passages involving how women were involved in espionage during World War II. The actual text is accompanied with the station along with questions for students to answer in regards to the passages. All of the passages are from Kathryn J. Atwood’s, *Women Heroes of World War II: 26 Stories of Espionage, Sabotage, Resistance, and Rescue.*
1. What was the name that the Germans gave to Virginia Hall? Why were they afraid of her?

2. What major mistake did the Germans make in trying to figure out who this mysterious woman was? Explain.

3. How did Virginia Hall become to be a spy for the Allies? Explain.

4. What do you find to be most interesting about Virginia Hall and the work she did?

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1. Briefly describe Marlene Dietrich. Why was she significant?

2. What did the Germans say happened to Dietrich in America?

3. In response to Hitler’s offer, how did Dietrich respond? Why do you think she said this?

Station 3: Maria Von Maltzan

Maria Von Maltzan

As a young woman, Maria Von Maltzan knew she was called to a life of service to her country. Born in Germany, her family had always been involved in politics and were dedicated to the cause of freedom. When World War I broke out, Maria felt compelled to do her part.

She joined the German resistance movement, using her intelligence and her fluency in multiple languages to gather information and pass it along to the Allies. Maria also worked closely with other women from Germany who were fighting for the cause.

Despite the risks, Maria continued to work tirelessly, even after Germany surrendered. She knew that her work was not yet over, and she refused to rest until the war was truly won.

"Your work is not done until the very last enemy is defeated," Maria believed. Her dedication and courage inspired others to join her in the fight for freedom.
1. Why do you think Goebbels said that Berlin was “Judenfrei” when in reality it was not?

2. Describe some different ways of hiding Jewish people in the apartment. What else could they have done?

3. How did Maria avoid an official shooting her friend Hans on page twenty-seven?

4. Other than hiding people at her apartment, what else was Maria able to do to help?
1. Describe a little about “Hannie Schaft.” Who was she?

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2. Who did Hannie want to help escape Nazi persecution?

3. In order to stay at the university, what did Hannie have to do? What would you have done?

4. What was the RVV and what was their purpose?

5. How did Hannie get placed on the Nazi’s most wanted list?
United States Holocaust Memorial Museum: Early Days of Emancipation

THE WHITE ROSE

Sophie Scholl

ON FEBRUARY 22, 1944, A CZECH MUNICH STUDENT AMONG

Kathryn J. Atwood, Women Heroes of World War II: 26 Stories of Espionage, Sabotage, Resistance, and Rescue, 14-17.
The German people number in the millions and are spread throughout Europe. They are known for their industriousness, musicality, and love of nature. They have contributed greatly to the arts, sciences, and technology.

Sophie School

The school is located in the heart of Berlin, the capital of Germany. It was founded in 1850 and is one of the oldest and most prestigious schools in the country. The school is known for its rigorous academic program and its emphasis on creativity and individuality.

The school has a diverse student body, with students from all over Germany and the world. The school offers a wide range of courses, including mathematics, science, history, and languages.

The school has a strong tradition of sports and extracurricular activities. Students participate in a variety of sports, including soccer, basketball, and tennis. The school also offers a variety of clubs and organizations, including a music and drama club, a science club, and a debate club.

The school is governed by a board of trustees, which includes parents, teachers, and community members. The board is responsible for setting policy and overseeing the school's operations.

The school's motto is "Excellence through hard work and dedication." The school is known for its high academic standards and its commitment to preparing students for success in college and beyond.

The school is located on a beautiful campus with rolling hills and a lake. The school has state-of-the-art facilities, including a library, a computer lab, and a gym.

The school's faculty is composed of experienced and dedicated educators who are committed to helping students reach their full potential.

Sophie School is a member of the German Association of Independent Schools. The school is also accredited by the Middle States Commission on Schools.

For more information, please visit the school's website at www.sophieschool.de.
1. What were Sophie and he associated accused of in court? How did they defend themselves?

2. What was the “White Rose?” What purpose did it serve?

3. Describe euthanasia and why it was significant to the White Rose.
1. What was the job of Marie?

2. How did she accomplish her job?

3. Describe the dangers she had to endure.

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4. Out of the six stations and six women you learned about, which was most interesting to you?

5. What was the purpose of this activity?

6. How does this change the way you look at the significance of women during World War II?
Making Inferences Activity

A part of learning, for students, is being able to tell what is going to happen, what might happen, and making strong educated “guesses.” Of course, in education, we do not like to call them “guesses,” but “inferences.” This activity is one that is extremely important in helping students develop their inference-making skills. There are three quotes from Elizabeth M. Norman’s, We Band of Angels: The Untold Story of American Nurses Trapped on Bataan by the Japanese. The title, in itself, is one that any reader could make an inference. Not many know of the heroics, the pain, and the suffering these nurses went through in order to survive the war.\(^{76}\) (Every classroom across this country should at least be introduced to it and read bits and pieces.) This assignment allows students to read a few pages from the book and make strong inferences, using evidence from the text, as to what is going on and what these women are going through. Each quote has a few questions to guide the students through the text. The title is included in the inference list. In addition, the three quotes from the book come from the same chapter to help students stay on the same topic and thought process. It is greatly encourage to select more quotes from the book. When your students get good and confident in making inferences, then try quotes from different chapters of a book, or this one.

\(^{76}\) If you are interested in reading this book, it is highly recommended, but do not have the time, this website will give you a “spoiler.”

http://www.nytimes.com/books/first/n/norman-angels.html
1. What inferences can you make from just the title?

2. Where is the Bataan and why would the Japanese be there? (Look on a map for help.)

3. Why would the author call the nurses “angels”?

“Things were quiet for a while, then the looting began. They took everything—radios, binoculars, jewelry, pens, mechanical pencils, cigarette lighters, silver picture frames. They came by day and they came at night. “One night,” said Eleanor Garen, “I was aroused by someone at my side and realized it was a Jap. He had no business there, but I remained motionless as he took my ring from my finger and removed my most valuable tool, my wristwatch. That watch and I had counted the heartbeats of many men.”

1. Why do you think the Japanese were looting the nurse’s belongings?

2. What does Eleanor Garen mean by the last sentence?

3. From this passage, what can you take away about the Japanese? Explain.

“At 2:30 A.M. on May 9 Mary Brown Menzie felt someone shaking her awake from a deep sleep. She opened her eyes slowly, and as she began to focus she saw a man’s shaved head. The man was a Japanese and, save for the towel around his waist, he was naked. Just then Menzie caught sight of the knife.”

1. What can you infer about what happened to Mary?

2. Does this passage change how you feel about Japanese soldiers?


3. What are three possible outcomes from this situation?

“Soon the women began to forage for food. One nurse discovered a large hole in a wall near their sleeping quarters leading to a crawl space that opened into another lateral filled with canned goods the allies had stashed before the island fell. Night after night the nurses would tap this little stockpile. They waited for the guards to pass, then two or three of them would climb through the hole, while others acted as lookouts.”^79

1. How were the women able to get food? Where was it from?

2. What if the food was not there? List three possible outcomes that could have happened.

3. How would the nurses have been treated if the Japanese had found out about this?

Different Jobs and Roles Centers Activity

As previously stated, centers activities/lessons are great for teachers to use in order to get many points and objectives accomplished in one to two days. This centers activity is no different. For this activity the teacher would need access to Emily Yellin’s book, *Our Mothers’ War: American Women at Home and at the Front During World War II*. This is, by far and without question, the best and most valuable material for this activity for it gives students the opportunity to once again be the researcher and historian. In Yellin’s book each chapter is about one or more different jobs or roles that women held during the war. It is very easy to determine which would be the most significant for your particular class to investigate. Select between six and eight jobs and roles from the book and put them into different stations. For this activity, much like the espionage center, you can use only the text or you can accompany the text with different pictures or videos to assist students in visualizing the job or role. Here is an example of what a center could look like, with questions.

Station 1: Mom, Sisters, and Wives of Servicemen

1. What became the lifeline for many relationships? What was the problem with this lifeline? (Page nine)

2. Since the men were overseas, who did many women look to when they were going through a pregnancy or raising a child? How would this be beneficial to not only the child but to the mother as well? (Page fifteen)

3. How did a woman receive the name of “camp follower”? Explain. Did this cause any problems? (Page sixteen)

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4. Rose Truckey describes the hardships of being home during the war. Make a list of at least five things as to what she said was tough about being home. (Page nineteen and twenty)

5. Who was Betty Crocker and how did she do her part during the war?

Station 2: Women Icons, Characters, and Entertainers

1. Look at the opening paragraph on page seventy-three. How can you relate to what Yellin is talking about regarding music, pictures, or comedians? Would it be different during a time of war? (Page Seventy-Three)

2. Who had a huge influence on war bond drives during the war? How were they so successful? (Pages Seventy-Nine to Eighty)

3. On page eighty-two, Yellin talks about performers doing a “canteen.” What is a canteen? Use context clues and also a dictionary to come up with your answer.

4. Pages eighty-seven through eighty-nine are examples of how performers felt during their performance. Pick one and briefly describe what you read.

5. How did fictional women play a part during the war? What was their role?

Station 3: Women in the Service at Home

1. Describe how women worked in the navy. Give at least four examples. (Pages 137-145)

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81 Emily Yellin, *Our Mothers’ War: American Women at Home and at the Front During World War II*. 73-105.
82 Emily Yellin, *Our Mothers’ War: American Women at Home and at the Front During World War II*. 135-164.
2. Describe how women worked in the Marine Corps. Give at least four examples. (Pages 145-148)

3. Describe how women worked in the Air Force. Give at least four examples. (Pages 148-161)

Station 4: Nurses, Land Army, Volunteers, and Red Cross Girls

1. Stateside, what famous organization did women join to do their part for the war effort? How many women volunteered? (Page 168)

2. What was the “Woman’s Land Army?” Why was it important for the war effort? (Page 173)

3. Describe the purpose of the organization in number one overseas. Provide at least four examples. (Page 175)

4. What two branches of the military provided nurses to the soldiers? Provide at least four pieces of information for both.

5. Provide two theatres of war where nurses were near the front lines assisting soldiers in need. What were nurses there to do?

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83 Emily Yellin, Our Mothers’ War: American Women at Home and at the Front During World War II. 165-198.
Station 5: African American Women

1. Look through pages 199-224. There are five sub-headings throughout this chapter. Make five different lists with each of the sub-headings: Black Women War Workers, Black Women on the Home Front, Black Women in the Army, Black Women in Other Military Branches, and Entertainers. Provide five to seven pieces of important information, for each, to help you remember.

Station 6: Japanese American Women

1. Who was “Tokyo Rose?” Compare her to an American icon. (Page 256)

2. Describe what Chiye Tomihiro went through on December 7, 1941. What happened that was significant to her life? (Page 262-263)

3. Yoshiko Uchida describes her experience at a camp in the United States. Provide at least five pieces of information that were interesting and or shocking to you. (Page 269-270)

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84 Emily Yellin, Our Mothers' War: American Women at Home and at the Front During World War II. 199-224.
85 Emily Yellin, Our Mothers' War: American Women at Home and at the Front During World War II. 253-277.
In the world of education, in today’s society, most every type of instruction that is used in the classroom has some sort of credential. This means that a variety of educators have used the type of instruction in the classroom, over a long period of time, and it seems to have worked in helping their students learn the material. The creation and selection of materials to use in the course portfolio was no different. The materials and strategies I’ve included in my course portfolio will help students best understand and learn about the jobs and roles of women during World War II because I’ve included activities that use strategies like, “Identifying Similarities and Differences,” “Summarizing and Note Taking,” “Nonlinguistic Representations,” “Generating and Testing Hypotheses.”

To follow will be an analysis on the strategies used and which activities in the course portfolio fall under the given strategies. First, Identifying Similarities and Differences was used in the compare and contrast essay activity. Second, Summarizing and Note Taking was used for both centers activities. Thirdly, Nonlinguistic Representation was used in the cartoon analysis activity. Lastly, Generating and Testing Hypotheses was used in the making inferences activity.

Being able to compare and contrast two or more things in any given subject is a very important skill to develop and have in school, and in life. In a social studies classroom, a key component, as a student, is to compare and contrast two or more events, people, or results of a decision, and to decide which is positive and which was negative. Students need to be able to support their argument with evidence. “Researchers have

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found these mental operations to be basic to human thought. Indeed, they might be considered the “core” of all learning. Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock, came to the conclusion that being able to use this “core” of all learning strategies allows the student to be able to do four things:

1. Presenting students with explicit guidance in identifying similarities and differences enhances students’ understanding of and ability to use knowledge. 2. Asking students to independently identify similarities and differences enhances students’ understanding of and ability to use knowledge. 3. Representing similarities and differences in graphic or symbolic form enhances students’ understanding of and ability to use knowledge. 4. Identification of similarities and differences can be accomplished in a variety of ways. The identification of similarities and differences is a highly robust activity.

In addition to these four, the authors go on to discuss the importance of not only doing “teacher-directed comparison task,” but being able to get students to the next level and having them do “student-directed comparison tasks.” In order for students to reach the next level of understanding while doing a comparing and contrasting assignment, some type of graphic organizer should accompany the activity. This way students can not only go back and check their work but the teacher can check for understanding and comprehension. These reasons are why the compare and contrast essay activities are included in the course portfolio.

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After reading a short or long piece of literature, summarizing the piece is extremely important in order to totally comprehend the material. In addition, note taking while reading a story, annotating, has been a part of the education system for some time. When a student is actively reading and taking notes the process of summarizing the material becomes much easier. This in return allows the student to comprehend the material better. Marzano, Pickering and Pollock discuss three reasons as to why summarizing and note taking can greatly help a student’s learning.

1. To effectively summarize, students must delete some information, substitute some information, and keep some information.
2. To effectively delete, substitute, and keep information, students must analyze the information at a fairly deep level.
3. Being aware of the explicit structure of information is an aid to summarizing information.  

As the authors have stated, being able to summarize, annotate material, and then restate the material, students are able to “reach” to the next level of comprehending material. Also, by being able to pick out the important and less important information, a student can become a strong problem solver, better reader, and can interpret material better. In the course portfolio, summarizing and note taking will be a strategy students must use, too a great extent, in both centers activities, espionage and jobs and roles. The reason for two station activities is to give students the ability to practice this skill more than once, due to its importance. Similarly, the skill will be used in the webquest. Webquest are another great source for students having to learn this skill because they are to look over

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90 Robert J. Marzano, Debra J. Pickering, and Jane E. Pollock, Classroom Instruction That Works: Research Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement 30-32.
many pieces of material, figure out the answers, put the answers into their own words, and decided which website helped them learn the material the most.

Students can learn and remember materials in many different ways. Some students are very good auditory learners, some do well visually, and some do well with a combination of both. The importance is that we has teachers allow our students to be successful and adhere to both type of learner. That is why nonlinguistic representation is becoming an extremely important teaching strategy to use. The old way of teaching was to have students sit in rows and write down what the teacher was writing on the wall. The new and improved way of teaching is student centered and offers a variety of teaching techniques to assist students in their learning. Being able to show students pictures, graphs, cartoons, and maps, helps students comprehend what is being taught better.

Many psychologists adhere to what has been called the “dual-coding” theory of information storage. This theory postulates that knowledge is stored in two forms—a linguistic form and an imagery form. The linguistic mode is semantic in nature...The imagery mode, in contrast, is expressed as mental pictures or even physical sensations, such as smell, taste, touch, kinesthetic association, and sound.91

Any one of those “imagery mode” sensations greatly helps students learn in the classroom. There are a lot of examples of nonlinguistic representation in the course portfolio. The example that is in there for this reason, to provide a strong example for nonlinguistic, is the cartoon analysis. By seeing a cartoon students can learn what people in this country were feeling and then expressing through art, political cartoons. It is a

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91 Robert J. Marzano, Debra J. Pickering, and Jane E. Pollock, Classroom Instruction That Works: Research Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement. 73.
way of showing to students that they can express themselves in more than one way and more than just simply expressing it through language.

When any person asks someone to “form or make a hypothesis,” nearly ninety-nine out of 100 people would guess that the hypothesis is science related. In reality, hypothesis, though it is a part of the scientific method, can be a part of any subject. A hypothesis is really an educated “guess” with some evidence to support what the tester/student is trying to solve. In social studies classes, an example of a hypothesis could be a thesis statement in an essay or research paper. The student sets out to prove an argument about a topic and how to back it up with research and evidence. Historians, when looking at a specific topic in history, look at various points as to why a civilization crumbled or a certain nation lost a war. The proven hypotheses are the ones we hear about. We rarely hear about one that was proven wrong. According to Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock, there are two main reasons why this strategy is of great use to students. “1. Hypothesis generation and testing can be approached in a more inductive or deductive manner. 2. Teachers should ask students to clearly explain their hypotheses and their conclusions.”92 For the first reason, by generating a hypothesis students are not only using inductive reasoning, reaching new conclusions from what we’ve learned, but they are also using deductive reasoning, using a rule you have learned and figuring out a

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cause or reaction. The second reason is more obvious in that teachers should always ask their students to explain their hypothesis and how they reached their conclusions. It is important for students to take a stand and use strong evidence has to how they reached their conclusions. In regards to the materials in the portfolio, they are many aspects in which students will have to make educated “guesses.” The one that was made for this particular strategy was the making inferences activity. The entire activity allows students to be the investigator and come to their own conclusions. As long as their findings are supported with evidence, there is no clear right or wrong answer.

There are still many more materials that can be added to this research to assist teachers with teaching a lesson from this topic. Since teaching is a profession in which all teachers should be continuously learning, adjusting, and modifying materials, over time, the materials in this research have the ability to be adjusted and modified to help the learning process for a particular group of students. It is, naturally, up to the teacher to make these adjustments and modifications. In addition, because teaching is an ongoing learning process, more materials will be added to this research after proper “trial and error” within a classroom setting.

93 Robert J. Marzano, Debra J. Pickering, and Jane E. Pollock, Classroom Instruction That Works: Research Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement. 104.
Bibliography


