

Gender Roles: The effects of World War II on the American housewife's "sphere"

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Prospectus

The ideology of separate gender spheres has been a major theme in debates throughout much of history. Before World War II a middle to upper class American housewife's "sphere" was thought to be a private one, confined to the home, while men dominated the public sphere. This "cult of domesticity" advocated submissiveness and the upholding of values such as stability and morality. Women were encouraged to be passive creatures, accentuating their softness, while also running the household under the command of a husband. Synonymous with childbirth and housekeeping, the "role" of middle to upper class housewives was entirely domestic, making it practically unheard of for these women to work in their reproductive years. Rather than oppose the cultural norm, many housewives remained inside the confines of their societal role until circumstance drew them out.

World War II had colossal effects, not only on the battlefield, but also on the home front. Laborers were needed to fill new positions created by the war, as the government began making lucrative contracts with companies for war goods. This caused a massive industrial expansion that was met by a depleting workforce as men left to serve in the war. To replenish the labor pool, the United States government began recruiting housewives through a campaign of propaganda posters. I have chosen to investigate four posters released by the U.S. Government Printing Office: "The girl he left behind" (1943), "The more women at work the sooner we win!" (1943), "Do the job HE left behind" (1943), and "Longing won't bring him back sooner..." (1944). These posters all depict women in the World War II era and will serve as samples of the U.S. government's campaign as a whole. These posters will be used as evidence for my argument that propaganda brought women into the labor force, a feat that temporarily expanded the woman's sphere.

Through my research, I hope to discover how World War II affected the woman's sphere on the home front. The central argument I intend to prove is that through the Office of War Information's propaganda campaign, World War II caused the temporary expansion of the middle to upper class American housewife's "sphere." I will support this hypothesis by first establishing that World War II caused a depletion of the workforce, which prompted the recruitment of housewives through propaganda. Using image analysis of the posters I have selected, I will contend that propaganda made it possible for housewives to enter the workforce, not just by enticing them, but also by changing the opinion of society, thereby allowing many housewives to overcome the social and cultural obstacles that previously confined them. I will then assert that there was only an expansion of the gender role of the woman, not a complete shift, and that this expansion reverted after the war. I will support my argument that the sphere expanded rather than shifted by explaining that while women took on industrial responsibilities, they retained their domestic ones as well. I will also argue that the industrial responsibilities became reconstructed into domestic ones. I will then explain that this expansion ultimately contracted back to domesticity after the war ended because of both cultural norms and economic forces.

To support my argument that there was an expansion rather than a shift and that this expansion was temporary, I will use statistics and information about American wartime society provided by books and articles. While scholars are in consensus that many women entered the workforce during World War II, the magnitude of the effect of World War II is highly contested. Some scholars argue that women were already working for economic reasons so World War II only coincided with a trend of increasing women workers already occurring. Others contend that World War II, through propaganda or not, influenced many women to enter the workforce. Even

more debates occur when deeming whether or not this change was permanent. Using similar statistics with differing rhetoric, some scholars argue that the end of World War II had no effects, while others argue that it caused a reversion. Evaluating arguments from both sides, I came to believe that because of World War II propaganda, middle to upper class American housewives were able to enter the workforce, an accomplishment that resulted in a temporary expansion of their domestic sphere that reverted after the war.

While World War II propaganda allowed for a momentary expansion of the housewife's sphere, this expansion reverted post war because of circumstantial factors. Nevertheless, World War II caused openings in a new industrial sphere that propaganda allowed women to fill. Once women were able to enter a public sphere, the possibility of growth outside of the domestic sphere became a reality, albeit only conceptually due to the stifling circumstances of the time. This expansion, although temporary at the time, created a foundation for later, more permanent changes in the identity of women.

Gender Roles: The effects of World War II on the American housewife's "sphere"

Linda Kerber, in her article *Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History*, describes a "sphere" as "the figure of speech, the trope, on which historians came to rely when they described the women's part in American culture" (10). Before World War II, the sphere that middle to upper class married women inhabited was entirely domestic, existing "in a distinct 'world,' engaged in nurturant activities, focused on children, husbands, and family dependents" (Kerber 10). Then began World War II, bringing with it massive changes to the societal norm. A dire need for war goods caused an industrial expansion, as the American government turned to private companies for manufacturing purposes, making lucrative contracts that greatly expanded business and created many job openings. These openings could not solely be filled by men because some 84 percent of men aged 14 and over were either in uniform at war or already working. (Cardinali 122). Further increasing the labor shortage, many men that were currently working left to serve the country, leaving their jobs behind. As the workforce became depleted, the government began to look for a new source of laborers, ultimately leading them to women. To recruit these women the government began voluntary registrations, which failed miserably because of persisting social boundaries. Because the private sector was self-governing and the government had little more power than an overseer, the United States government began a propaganda campaign to influence the labor market and get women to work (Honey 28-29).

In 1942, the Office of War Information (OWI) was created by an executive order from President Roosevelt with the task of generating and distributing American propaganda (Young 28). The campaign's central goal was to make women economically valuable by recruiting them into the workforce. By 1943, the reserve of single women was exhausted, and the campaign began to target middle to upper class housewives who were not already working and would be

willing and able to return to the domestic sphere after the war. To achieve this, the Office of War Information commissioned a series of posters to be printed at the US Government Printing Office. Four of these distributed posters were “Do the job HE left behind” (1943), “The more women at work the sooner we win!” (1943), “The girl he left behind” (1943), and “Longing won’t bring him back sooner...” (1944). I have elected these four posters as samples representing four major aspects of the propaganda campaign, a campaign that I believe made it possible for many women to enter the workforce. Therefore, in this paper, I will contend that through the Office of War Information’s propaganda campaign, World War II caused the temporary expansion of the middle to upper class American housewife’s “sphere.”

Like most propaganda campaigns, the United States government’s campaign needed to be multifaceted because, along with humanity’s inherent aversion to separation from the norm, “a married working woman might lose her ‘dependency’ status and make her husband more vulnerable to the draft, and public disapproval of working wives still lingered” (Weatherford 117). During this time, society felt that wives had no right to take the jobs of men, evidenced by a 1936 poll that “found that 82 percent of Americans believed wives should not work if their husbands had jobs” (Yellin 39). Further, a Gallup poll conducted in early 1943 found that “only 30 percent of all husbands gave unqualified support to the idea of their wives working in industrial war jobs” (Yellin 45). To overcome these social barriers that would have otherwise kept housewives from the workforce, the OWI targeted both housewives and those around them.

One facet of the OWI’s campaign to recruit housewives was an appeal to housewives through emotions stereotypical of a woman’s nature, an agenda represented by the poster “Longing won’t bring him back sooner...” (Figure 1). This poster depicts a married woman (notice the ring finger) clutching papers close to her heart with a wistful look in her eyes.

Judging by the lack of industrial attire and the fact that her hair is styled down, it can be presumed that the woman represents a housewife who is not in the workforce. Images like this



Figure 1. Lawrence Wilber, “Longing Won’t Bring Him Back Sooner...” (1944). Printed by the US Government Printing Office. Courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.

would resonate with many housewives who were not working and longing for their husbands away at war. Using an appeal to the conscience, the poster’s message, “Longing won’t bring him back sooner” made housewives feel that if they were simply longing for their husbands rather than getting a war job, they were not doing their part in bringing their loved ones back sooner. The poster was further able to persuade housewives of this by using a well-dressed, beautiful woman with makeup, painted nails, and styled hair.

Considering the emphasis on feminine beauty of the time, this type of woman would represent the pinnacle of housewives, showing that even the

most elite should feel guilty for simply longing for their husbands rather than getting a war job. Because of this, the occupation of homemaker was disgraced, stressing that a woman would be a disappointment and a slacker if she was not “completely occupied with a job and a home” (Kimble 85). Propaganda even used extreme cases of guilt, evidenced by “images of women and children in danger” (Lewis 28) and “starving prisoners of war clinging to barbed wire under tropical sun, looking desperately for help beyond the seas” (Weatherford 117). By appealing to emotions such as guilt and shame, women felt obligated to enter the workforce and many women

who would have otherwise not felt responsible for working were persuaded that it was their duty to get a war job. Along with these emotional appeals that portrayed who women should not be, OWI propaganda provided role models, showing housewives who they should be.

Because gender boundaries became so distorted during World War II, the OWI was able to mold housewives' opinions of how to act.

Exemplified by the poster "The girl he left behind" (Figure 2), the OWI campaign recruited housewives by creating an ideal woman to be idolized in a time of social change. Similarly to the previous poster, the woman in "The girl he left behind" gazes at an image (made to appear like a memory), presumably longing her significant other. The contrast occurs in the actions of the women. In "The girl he left behind", the woman is holding a tool and working at a machine, wearing a uniform. For this, the woman is described as "still behind" her significant other and "a WOW,"

both positive attributes that women at the time would value. This opposes the attitude towards the woman in "Longing won't bring him back sooner..." who is chastised for simply longing for her husband rather than getting a war job. When comparing the two images, one grows almost frustrated with the woman who is simply longing, feeling as if she is not doing her part. Images like this would foster admiration for the woman depicted in "The girl he left behind," providing a foil to further elevate the woman



Figure 2. Adolph Treidler, "The Girl He Left Behind" (1943). Printed by the US Government Printing Office. Courtesy of the Library of Congress.

worker above those who choose not to work. Even the woman's upward gaze, while it is still directed towards the man above her, appears noble, strong, and admirable. Through messages like these, housewives were made to idolize those who took on war jobs and feel that it would gain them approval in the eyes of society.

Aside from the obvious adulatory message designating the woman laborer as a "wow" for working while her significant other is at war, the woman in "The girl he left behind" is depicted with many enviable qualities, serving as a testament that "women could maintain their femininity and still be useful" (Yellin 46). While still appearing strong, the woman in the poster appears glamorous and feminine, a sight that would be uncommon in an industrial line of work. The image features a girl in jeans and a bandana, holding a tool, showing off her strength and utility, yet she wears makeup and has an hourglass figure defined by her uniform. With the addition of white gloves and a crisp white shirt, the poster implies that women workers are clean and dainty, unlike the reality of many industrial jobs. The goal was to emphasize that dressing in a work style would not detract from a woman's femininity, a fear of many housewives. The beauty and glamour of the woman in uniform would make women want to work in order to achieve that same look, similarly to how women buy clothes after seeing people they aspire to be like wearing them in magazines. Because of the lack of stability of the time, women searched for guidance that they ultimately found in propaganda, effectively persuading them to join the workforce. Nevertheless, without the approval of society, namely the husbands, the middle to upper class American housewives of World War II would not have been able to overcome the social barriers stopping them from joining the workforce.

Because of immense pressure to follow the cultural norm, an appeal solely to housewives would not have proven effective. Functioning at a time that valued conformity, the campaign

aimed to alleviate the pressure housewives felt to remain within their domestic sphere. Because a departure from traditional values would have been perceived as too radical, the OWI



Figure 3. Alfred T. Palmer, “The More Women at Work the Sooner We Win!” (1943). Printed by the US Government Printing Office. Courtesy of the Library of Congress

commissioned posters that were not dramatically different from societal norms (a tactic that also alleviated anxiety from women who were adverse to change). The poster “The more women at work the sooner we win!” (Figure 3) displays many subtle encouragements while still retaining the traditional morals of the time. In a direct manner, the poster sheds a positive light on women workers, stating that an increase in the number of women workers would lead to a quicker victory. Statements like this made it difficult for society to oppose a woman laborer for fear that they would seem to be against a quick

victory for the United States. A more subtle aspect of the poster is the demeanor of the woman depicted.

Her general sense of calmness creates a feeling that her acquisition of a war job did not cause a pivotal change in her life, something that society feared happening. Propaganda like this eased society into the idea of women working by remaining within gender boundaries so that society did not perceive a great cultural change, while also advocating the necessity and effectiveness of women workers.

Within society, the OWI gave special focus to husbands (they were recruiting *housewives*), who often retained the decision making power. The husband was appealed to with

dominant themes of femininity. “The more women at work the sooner we win!” sheds the woman worker in the least threatening light, with all aspects of her screaming submissive and feminine. The woman retains her beauty, with a fully made up face complete with lipstick and rosy cheeks, alleviating the husband of the fear that his wife would lose her feminine side if working. The creator even went as far as giving her nail polish, drawing the viewer’s eye to the purposely present wedding ring, an obvious implication that workers could be wives. Along with providing an angle to make the ring visible, the workers dainty grip on her otherwise masculine tools accentuates her fragile nature. To assuage the husband from thinking that his wife would allow her newfound independence to cause her to become ornery, the woman looks down, in a quintessentially submissive pose. Thus persuading the housewives and those around them, the only campaign objective left was to persuade employers to hire women.

Contrary to the belief that the World War II labor shortage led to the immediate acceptance of women into the workforce, “employers refused to remove prewar barriers against the employment of women until the last possible moment,” insisting that women were not well suited for their labor needs (Honey 29). In order to get employers to hire women, OWI propaganda stressed that the job situation was only temporary and would not upset traditional moral standards, a strategy represented by the poster “Do the job HE left behind” (Figure 4). The poster remains aligned with traditional values by proposing industrial duties as an extension of domestic duties. This is achieved through the theme of self-sacrifice, a stereotypically feminine concept, evidenced by the statement on the poster that commands women to do the job that the man left behind. This conveys self-sacrifice by giving housewives the duty of taking over a responsibility that is only theirs because someone else left it behind. In this aspect the woman, with white gloves, rosy cheeks, and an hourglass figure, is simply sacrificing herself for her

husband, serving him in a new way. Rather than promoting the acquisition of a job by the woman, the message commands housewives to spend their time picking up the jobs that their husbands left behind as the husbands expanded their public sphere to include foreign countries during the war.

In a more subtle way, the poster's instructions to do the job *he left behind* emphasizes the temporary nature of housewives' employment. The message implies that women are only taking the jobs because the men are gone and left them behind temporarily, instructing that a woman should just mimic the man by simply "doing" his job for the duration, rather than making it her own. In this sense, the woman is like a sort of understudy, standing in for the man during the time that he cannot be

there. The command "do the job he left behind" also entails that the job will remain his for when he returns by implying that the job is only the woman's because her

husband left it. Following this logic, if the husband returned, the job would no longer be "left behind" and would therefore revert back to being his. Through this, the poster assured employers that the housewives would not assume the role of breadwinner when men returned, letting gender norms remain untouched. The production of these types of nonpermanent images that remained aligned with traditional gender norms, persuaded employers to open up employment to housewives. Effectively persuading women, society, and employers, World War II propaganda facilitated the employment of housewives during the war, expanding their sphere.



Figure 4. R.G. Harris, "Do the Job HE Left Behind" (1943). Printed by the US Government Printing Office. Courtesy of Getty Images.

Rather than causing a shift of middle to upper class housewives into the industrial sphere, World War II propaganda only caused an expansion of their domestic one. These housewives did not enter the workforce and leave behind all of their past responsibilities, but instead gained a double responsibility. In addition to putting in many hours at their new jobs, “many women had to cook, clean, and shop for their families as they always had” (Anderson 49). Even the new responsibilities that women took on were inherently domestic. Women were still taking care of the “home front” while the men fought away from the home, an idea central to the traditional housewife’s sphere. Further, those housewives who were able to take on previously male jobs were not fully accepted into the industrial sphere. Rather than being acknowledged for doing men’s work, men’s work was temporarily transformed into women’s work. Through the use of propaganda, “jobs which had previously been cast in terms suggestive of the very quintessence of masculinity were suddenly endowed with femininity and glamour,” exemplified by the use of dainty white gloves in two of the sample posters where women held tools (Milkman 341). By encasing something so essentially masculine in something as feminine as dainty white gloves, the propaganda softened the tools, giving them a feminine overtone. Because of this tactic, and the custom of designating all jobs as either male or female, any job could become branded as “woman’s work” (Milkman 341-344). Because women were not able to give up their domestic responsibilities and the new industrial responsibilities they took on became stereotypically domestic, the woman’s sphere could only expand, not shift. While this expansion included an increase in housewives in the workforce, the end of the war brought a retraction because of economic and social circumstances.

As the end of the war came into sight, the OWI propaganda campaign took on a new agenda: removing the housewives from the workforce. As quickly as she was born “Rosie the

Riveter' was... transformed... from a wartime heroine to a neurotic, castrating victim of penis envy" (Anderson 176). In a post war world, "women who continued to work outside the home were critically portrayed in the popular culture as selfishly and willingly causing divorce, juvenile delinquency, crime, and other problems affecting the post-war population" (Frank, Ziebarth, Field 95). Once again, the tactic of emotional appeal was used. Housewives were warned, "to subordinate their interests and needs to those of their husbands" to achieve domestic harmony (Anderson 174-5). Heightening this emotional appeal was the advancement of psychology. Propaganda could now operate under the guise of science, advocating the stereotypical maternal instinct, inherent in all females, leaving women better situated in the home caring for offspring. Because of the social pressure, many economically stable housewives left the jobs voluntarily. Also as men returned home, many of these women chose to bear children and plan marriages that were deferred because of the war (Anderson 155). The complete social upheaval caused by World War II threw the United States into confusion and many people understandably chose to return to the stability of traditional gender roles.

Even those who withstood the cultural pressure were not safe from the economic effects of the end of the war. Reversing the creation of jobs during the wartime economy, the end of the war prompted the cancellation of war contracts and the retraction of industry. Along "with the dismantling of the war machine came the very real possibility of limited job opportunities and a substantial decline in the standard of living of those same Americans" (Anderson 154). Because of this, many companies found themselves having to lay people off, often beginning with the women that they hired as a temporary solution and a last resort. The opportunities left for women paid much less, and housewives had to decide "whether to accept a low-paying job and see much of their earnings going for child care and other expenses or to go on welfare and stay at home

with their children” (Anderson 163). At the same time that the economy was retracting, men were returning from the war to take back their jobs. Seniority systems forced out women in the high paying traditionally male jobs, because the returning men were still above those women who became employed during the war (Goldin 12). Some employers, who purposefully divided labor by gender roles, were able to realize their goal of the temporary use of women by “tormenting women into resigning their jobs by giving them the graveyard shift, closing down daycare centers in the factories, and transferring female employees to other factory locations (Goodwin, 1994)” because they had the *manpower* to operate without women (Gordy, Hogan, Pritchard 86).

During World War II, eighteen million women occupied the workforce. Out of these eighteen million, six million women worked for the first time, mostly in traditional roles, with the exception of three million in defense industries (Frank, Ziebarth, Field 16). With the movement of the economy into peacetime production and the return of societal boundaries, 3 ¼ of women left the workforce within one year, some voluntarily, others involuntarily (Frank, Ziebarth, Field 19). The majority of the women who left the workforce were the housewives, those who were specifically recruited with the belief that they would be willing and able to give up their jobs to their returning husbands. Another large group included those women who were working in traditionally male jobs, laid off and replaced by men returning from war. Because there were already many single and lower class women working before World War II for economic reasons, the departure of middle to upper class housewives from the workforce left only those who were already working, and for the most part, in traditionally female jobs.

While, through propaganda, World War II only caused a temporary expansion of the upper to middle class American housewife’s sphere, the lasting effects of this expansion can be

seen years in the future. Propaganda temporarily made it acceptable for women to enter the workforce, a feat that would not have otherwise been possible. Although there were no immediate postwar effects on the woman's sphere, for a short amount of time, women achieved the capability of stretching past their socially prescribed boundaries, allowing them to perceive themselves as greater. American housewives who initially did not want to enter the workforce were pressured to enter, experiencing economic independence. On a more practical note, "even husbands initially hostile to their wives' employment could find the financial benefits quite seductive" (Anderson 30). Along with providing job training and opportunities to discover alternative childcare, the time served as a sort of testing period, showing women and those around them that they were capable of doing male jobs. By 1950 the number of women in the labor force became equal to the amount during the war, and has continued growing since, not because of those women working in World War II (only 22% of women working in the 1950s had joined the workforce during World War II), but because of the lasting ideology that they passed down to future generations. A housewife's self worth and her legacy was no longer "a function of her success at arranging bits of fruit to form a clown's face in a gelatin salad" (Cowan 23) but rather the triumphs she accomplished during her brief advancement during World War II. Author Emily Yellin states it best explaining that "women had had a taste of making their own money and having their own life outside the home, and many had liked it. Although society in general could not discern it right away, in hindsight it is clear that no matter how hard anyone tried to coax her, that genie was not going back in. A revolution had begun in working life and home life in America" (71).

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Annotated Bibliography

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Harris, R. G. *Do the Job HE Left Behind*. 1943. Poster. Hulton Archive. *Getty Images*. 2013. Web. 17 May 2013.

R.G. Harris' poster "Do the Job HE Left Behind" depicts a woman in a uniform and bandana drilling holes in a piece of metal. The bottom of the poster commands women to apply for jobs at the U.S. Employment Service. This poster was published by the U.S. Government Printing Office as part of the propaganda campaign commissioned by the Office of War Information to recruit women into the depleting workforce. I will use this poster as evidence of how the propaganda campaign appealed to employers. The message "Do the job HE left behind" represents evidence of my argument that the campaign proposed only a temporary acceptance of women into the workforce so that apprehensive employers would not feel like they were disregarding traditional values by hiring women.

Palmer, Alfred T. *The More Women at Work the Sooner We Win!* 1943. Poster. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington D.C. *Prints & Photographs Online Catalogue*. Library of Congress. Web. 18 May 2013.

This Alfred T. Palmer poster encourages women to apply for one of many war jobs at the local U.S. Employment Service. The poster was a part of the World War II Office of War Information's propaganda campaign and was published by the U.S. Government Printing Office in 1943. It encourages women to join the workforce, asserting that more women workers would ensure a quicker victory for the Allied forces. This poster will support my claim that the propaganda campaign was able to bring women into the workforce by

changing society's negative conception of women laborers. The poster's positive message concerning women workers along with the obvious femininity of the woman depicted will serve as evidence in my argument.

Treidler, Adolph. *The Girl He Left Behind*. 1943. Poster. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington D.C. *Prints & Photographs Online Catalogue*. Library of Congress. Web. 17 May 2013.

Printed by the U.S. Government Printing Office, this Adolph Treidler poster was used by the Office of War Information to further their campaign to recruit women workers into the labor pool during World War II labor shortages. Published in 1943, the poster shows a woman, longing for a loved one at war, simultaneously holding a tool and working. I will use this poster to represent the campaign to recruit women through providing a role model during a time of confusion. The poster depicts a woman in industrial attire, showing her strength and utility, yet concurrently uses that same uniform to emphasize her hourglass figure. The woman wears white gloves and makeup to look feminine while she serves her country on the home front. I will argue that this image, combined with the message below, praising this type of woman, enticed women to follow in the footsteps of someone so pointedly approved of.

Wilber, Lawrence. *Longing Won't Bring Him Back Sooner...* 1944. Poster. NARA Still Picture Branch. *National Archives*. U.S. National Archives and Records Administration. Web. 16 May 2013.

Lawrence Wilber created the poster “Longing Won’t Bring Him Back Sooner...” in 1944. This poster was published by the U.S. Government Printing Office and was part of the government created Office of War Information’s propaganda campaign during World War II. The poster encourages women to seek employment because it will bring their loved ones back faster. It tells women that by simply “longing,” they are not doing their part in ending the war. This poster will represent my argument that the propaganda campaign targeted women by appealing to their emotions. I will use the condescending message, that women who aren’t working are not doing their part, along with the sad image depicted as evidence that the campaign took advantage of the emotions of the women during World War II.

Secondary Sources

Anderson, Karen. *Wartime Women: Sex Roles, Family Relations, and the Status of Women during World War II*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1981. Print.

Karen Anderson, Assistant Professor of History at the University of Arizona, is a specialist in women’s studies. In her book, Anderson argues that women, specifically in Seattle, Detroit, and Baltimore, were still affected by traditional values and sex roles during World War II. Anderson supports her claims with manuscripts, public documents, newspapers, and periodicals, along with various books. By focusing on three cities, Anderson provides scholars within the field a more specific account of women during World War II. Anderson provided me insight into the responsibilities of women both in industry and in the home. She also provided me information about the removal of women from the workforce when the war ended.

Cardinali, Richard. "Women in the Workplace: Revisiting the Production Soldiers, 1939-1945."

Work Study 51.3 (2002): 121-33. *Emerald Insight*. Web. 5 May 2013.

Richard Cardinali is the National Faculty/Dissertation Advisor of Nova Southeastern University. In his paper, Cardinali argues that women during World War II rose to the challenges caused by wartime production, changing their lives forever. He discusses the entire process of the women's entrance into the workforce, starting with the industrial revolution and ending with post-war implications. Cardinali uses statistical and monetary analysis, comparing the United States with many other countries, to argue the enormous impact that women had on the production of war goods in World War II. This paper, aimed at scholars, successfully addresses many fields such as war, industry, history, and sociology and explains their importance to World War II women. I will use this paper for its discussion of the immense need for war goods along with its statistics regarding the decreasing labor supply in World War II. Cardinali also provided me insight into the agenda of the employers of the time and the reasons that women did not enter the workforce without propaganda.

Cowan, Ruth S. "The "Industrial Revolution" in the Home: Household Technology and Social Change in the 20th Century." *Technology and Culture* 17.1 (1976): 1-23. *JSTOR*. Web. 17 May 2013.

Ruth Schwartz Cowan, Professor in the History and Sociology of Science Department at University of Pennsylvania, has a Ph.D. from The Johns Hopkins University and serves on the board of many committees and societies in the field of history. This paper centers

on the increase in household technology during the 20th century and its impact upon the women of the time. Cowan argues that, while the technology of this time made many chores easier, other aspects of women's lives became more demanding. Women were required to become a "Jane-of-all-trades," as servants became less and less common and new domestic duties became a function of how much one loved their family. Using magazines from World War II, such as *Ladies Home Journal*, Cowan provides evidence of the ways that technological advancements and the discoveries made possible by them, such as the discovery of household germs and the importance of good nutrition, created new duties for women. Contrary to scholars in the field that believe household technology decreased the amount of work of homemakers, Cowan argues that technology simply shifted the concentration of duties from physical chores to nurturing. Intended for scholars, this paper was based on Cowan's presentation at the 1973 annual meeting of the Society for the History of Technology. Because of her vast knowledge about the responsibilities of women who could afford technology in the 20th century, I will use Cowan's paper to gain a better understanding of the middle to upper class American housewife's sphere prior to World War II.

Frank, Miriam, Marilyn Ziebarth, and Connie Field. *The Life and times of Rosie the Riveter: The Story of Three Million Working Women during World War II*. Emeryville, CA: Clarity Educational Productions, 1982. Print.

Published by Field, Frank, and Ziebarth, this book is a literary adaptation of Connie Field's 1980 documentary, *The Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter: The Story of Three Million Working Women during World War II*, which was selected to the National Film Registry in the Library of Congress in 1996. Frank, Ziebarth, and Field articulate the

experiences of women working during World War II, arguing their significance. Using propaganda images, songs, and first hand accounts of woman working, Frank, Ziebarth, and Field describe the lives and struggles of the women at the time. Supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities, this book represents a film widely acclaimed in the field of women's studies. While the film was intended for popular audiences, the literary adaptation is intended for educators, including notes regarding discussion topics. I will use this book to aid many aspects of my research. The book provided insight into the amount of women working, including how many worked in defense industries. It also aided my discussion of the nature of the campaign sending women home and why women left on their own. Along with this, the book provided information about how propaganda works, and more specifically, about the OWI propaganda campaign.

Goldin, Claudia. "The Role of World War II in the Rise of Women's Work." *NBER Working Paper Series* 3203rd ser. (1989): n. pag. *D&B International Business Reports*. Web. 17 May 2013.

Claudia Goldin, keynote speaker and Henry Lee Professor of Economics at Harvard University, is a labor economist and economic historian who serves as the director of the NBER's Development of the American Economy program. In her paper, Goldin argues that World War II had only indirect impacts on future female employment. Using two retrospective surveys (1944 and 1951), Goldin argues that, contrary to the popular belief that World War II permanently affected the labor status of women, there was actually a previously occurring trend. Widely known for her historical work in the field of women in the United States economy, Goldin uses this paper to deny World War II's direct

influence on women's employment. Intended for scholars, this paper provides statistical evidence to back up claims about the trend of women entering the workforce. I will use Goldin's paper for her statistics regarding the number of women working before and after the war and insight into the indirect effects of World War II. While we are in consensus that World War II did not directly impact married women's labor status permanently, I argue that World War II propaganda made it possible for more housewives to enter the workforce than would have otherwise been possible, evidenced by the reluctance of women to join the workforce and the disapproval of the employers.

Gordy, Laurie L., Jennifer Hogan, and Alice Pritchard. "Assessing "Herstory" of WWII: Content Analysis of High School History Textbooks." *Equity & Excellence in Education* 37.1 (2004): 80-91. *Taylor & Francis Group*. Routledge, 11 Aug. 2010. Web. 14 May 2013.

Laurie L. Gordy, Associate Professor of Sociology at Daniel Webster College, Jennifer Hogan, researcher for the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund, and Alice Pritchard, Executive Director of the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund, collaborated on this paper regarding the content of high school history textbooks. Gordy, Hogan, and Pritchard argue that women are included in history textbooks, but their full significance is not disclosed. Through the close reading of various high school history textbooks, Gordy, Hogan, and Pritchard use Banks' scale, a curriculum integration measurement, to assess the prevalence of women in textbooks. In the field of education, this paper provides insight into the debate of whether or not history texts focus primarily on males. The paper provides scholars, and presumably, textbook authorities, with analysis to prevent a distorted and exclusive interpretation of history. Using this paper, I

will gain insight into familial responsibilities during World War II and why women left their jobs, voluntarily or involuntarily.

Honey, Maureen. *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender, and Propaganda during World War II*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1984. Print.

Maureen Honey is a professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln who specializes in women's studies. In this book, Honey argues that propaganda was used to encourage women to enter the workforce. She also argues that World War II had limited effects on women's position in society. To support these arguments, Honey uses advertisements published during World War II encouraging women to enter the workforce. Within the field of woman's studies, Honey provides interesting evidence contrasting the view that World War II immediately changed the position of women in the post war society.

Intended for both scholars and readers interested about the topic, this book provides comprehensible yet analytical research. Due to the complete pertinence to my topic, I will use this book for knowledge about all aspects of women in World War II. Honey aided my description of the role of women in society, along with employers' antagonism towards women workers. Along with this, I used this book to better understand the need for the propaganda campaign during World War II.

Kerber, Linda K. "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History." *The Journal of American History* 75.1 (1988): 9-39. *JSTOR*. Web. 14 May 2013.

Linda Kerber, May Brodbeck Professor in Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Iowa, is a highly respected, award winning authority in many areas of women's studies. In her paper, Kerber argues that "separate sphere" ideology is an idea that is still prevalent in society today. Using literary evidence from the 19th and 20th century, Kerber provides rhetorical analysis to argue the persistence of gender roles throughout women's history. Beginning with the rhetoric of Alexis de Tocqueville in 1835, Kerber provides the field of woman's studies a summary of the rhetoric of women's history and its implications. Intended for a scholarly audience, Kerber describes the changing role of the female gender throughout history. I will use this article for both Kerber's analysis of what a sphere is, along with her description of the woman's sphere before World War II. This article also will provide me insight into the women's post war departure from the workforce.

Kimble, James J. "The Home as Battlefield: Femininity, Gendered Spheres, and the 1943

Women in National Service Campaign." *Women's Studies in Communication* 34.1

(2011): 84-103. *Taylor & Francis Group*. Routledge, 18 May 2011. Web. 7 May 2013.

James J. Kimble, Assistant Professor of Communication and the Arts at Seton Hall

University, describes the complex campaign of the Women in National Service that

attempted to bring women into the workforce. He argues that the images of domesticity

used in the propaganda campaign to attract female workers ultimately ended in the

disempowerment of women. Kimble uses letters and magazine articles to build upon his

arguments and provide evidence that contradicts the common thought that the movement

of women into the workforce in World War II was empowering. This presents another

possible view in the field of the women's sphere in World War II. Intended for scholars, this essay was presented at the Women and Society Conference in 2009. I will use this essay to describe the women's sphere and explain how propaganda was used to encourage housewives to enter the workforce during World War II. I will also use this essay to describe how this movement into the workforce, caused by the propaganda, changed the lifestyle of American women in the long run.

Lewis, Brenda Ralph. *Women at War: The Women of World War II- at Home, at Work, on the Front Line*. Pleasantville, NY: Reader's Digest, 2002. Print.

Brenda Ralph Lewis is an established journalist and author who has written over 100 books, hundreds of articles, and radio and television documentaries. In this book, Lewis describes the various experiences of both British and American women during World War II, arguing that the home front experience was a war of its own for women. Lewis uses various forms of propaganda, along with period photography and personal experiences, as evidence for her arguments. This book provides popular audiences insight into the field of women's studies during World War II. I used this book for Lewis' knowledge about the propaganda campaign both during the war and afterwards.

Milkman, Ruth. "Redefining "Women's Work": The Sexual Division of Labor in the Auto Industry during World War II." *Feminist Studies* 8.2 (1982): 336-72. *JSTOR*. Web. 16 May 2013.

Ruth Milkman, Academic Director at the Joseph F. Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies and Professor of Sociology at the CUNY Graduate Center, earned her Ph.D. from the University of California Berkeley and served on the editorial

board for many scholarly journals such as *Feminist Studies*. In her paper, Milkman argues that, because of a lack of organized feminism, sexual division of labor had major effects on women working in the auto industry during World War II. Using both propaganda and first hand accounts from authorities in the United Auto Workers union, Milkman describes the gender segregation of women in an industry previously dominated by men. This article provides a specific account of one industry in the study of women workers during World War II. Intended for scholars, this article describes the entrance of women into the workforce during World War II and the subsequent struggles that came with working in the auto industry. I will use this article to enhance my argument that the expansion of the woman's sphere was not a shift because jobs that were typically male were transformed into female work. I will also use this article for its insight into the types of skills that were stereotypically considered female.

Yellin, Emily. *Our Mothers' War: American Women at Home and at the Front during World War II*. New York: Free, 2004. Print.

Emily Yellin, a graduate from Northwestern University with an M.S. in journalism and a journalism teacher at the University of Memphis, has been recognized by both the New York Times and the Washington Post for her expertise in women's studies. Yellin argues that women during World War II were equal partners in winning the war, transforming women's participation in society forever. Using personal interviews, unpublished letters, and diaries, Yellin provides evidence for the importance of all women during the war. This book has been described as the first in its field to give a complete account of those women behind the famous images of World War II. Intended for both scholars and

popular readers, Yellin provides interesting and relevant information about the women of World War II. I will use this book for its insight into the elements of the woman's sphere along with the lasting effects upon the sphere. Along with this, the book will aid me with statistics about women joining the war and the opinion of husbands regarding female workers.

Young, Dannagal Goldthwaite. "Sacrifice, Consumption, and the American Way of Life:

Advertising and Domestic Propaganda during World War II." *The Communication*

Review 8.1 (2005): 27-52. *Taylor & Francis Group*. Routledge, 18 Aug. 2006. Web. 14 May 2013.

Dannagal Goldthwaite Young is an Assistant Professor at the University of Delaware who specializes in normative and cognitive connotations of unconventional sources of political information. In her paper, Young argues the significance of propaganda and advertisements during World War II in the conveyance of messages regarding American sacrifice and consumption. Using content analysis of advertisements and public service announcements, along with analysis of trade publications within the advertising industry, Young describes the objectives of advertising and domestic propaganda throughout the United States. Within the field of women's studies, Young provides scholars insight into the messages communicated by advertisements and propaganda to the public. I will use this paper for its intensive discussion on the necessity and origins of the Office of War Information and the government propaganda campaign in general.

Weatherford, Doris. *American Women and World War II*. New York: Facts on File, 1990. Print.

Doris Weatherford, Adjunct Professor at the University of South Florida, has won many awards and is the executive editor of an encyclopedia about women. In this book, Weatherford argues that World War II had a liberating effect on women that would not have been possible during peacetime. Weatherford provides evidence for her arguments through articles from World War II along with current published sources. Weatherford is a renowned author and a well-known expert in the field of women's history. In this book, intended for scholars, Weatherford tells the experiences of American women during World War II and their battles on both the home front and the front lines. I will use this book to aid my explanation of why the propaganda campaign was needed and for examples of the various emotional appeals used within the campaign.