U.S. PROPAGANDA DURING WORLD WAR II: ITS IMPEMENTATION, PORTRAYAL, AND IMPACT ON WOMEN IN THE INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL SECTOR WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE OREGON FARMFRONT

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World War II presented many changes in the work place for U.S. citizens on the homefront, especially women. As American men were drafted in mass numbers beginning in October of 1940, government officials called on civilians to mobilize and maintain the homefront and wartime production. Women answered the call and found numerous jobs in the industrial sector. As industrial jobs were filled, the farmfront became desperate for farm hands. The Women's Land Army (WLA) was created as a supplementary organization to provide workers. President Franklin D. Roosevelt established government recruitment agencies that used propaganda to encourage women throughout the United States to participate in war jobs. War jobs consisted of employment occupied predominantly by men before the United States joined WWII, and then held by women for the duration of the war. The call for women to fill vacated jobs that were previously held by men was a request that had never before been heard in such strength by the American people. The United States used the labor of women in previous wars, but not to the extent of that in WWII. Though their role in the work force was seen as temporary, women experienced a newfound mobility in the labor market for the duration of the conflict.

The contribution of women on the farmfront is an area of history that has been much overlooked.[1] History has recorded and heavily publicized the transformation that took place in the industrial realm, but the call to maintain the farmfront has not been thoroughly explored. Women, men, children, prisoners of war, and Americans of color were recruited to help in farm production. The propaganda that was used to recruit farm laborers was similar to industrial propaganda because both represented female labor as being acceptable to the public by glamorizing the labor that women were engaging in for

the duration. Propaganda also insinuated that the patriarchy remained intact on the homefront by dramatizing war work as temporary and necessary for U.S. victory. Farm labor propaganda differed from industrial propaganda because it focused more on the use of family labor while industrial propaganda targeted the recruitment of adult workers.

The WLA developed in response to the farm labor shortage and need for increased production. Gender prescriptions in other areas of the nation prohibited women from entering the agricultural sector, which in turn led some regions to endure substantial financial and agricultural losses. Gender prescriptions derived from the differences in agricultural production. In the Midwest, it was less common for women to work in the fields because of the use of technology and difference in agricultural production. It therefore took awhile for the WLA to become widely accepted in this region of the United States because manpower controlled the technology and heavy machinery that was used to harvest corn, wheat, and livestock.[2] It was difficult for the farm men of the Midwest to let women assume a role that had always been dominated by men due to their roles in creating and working machinery. With the implementation of technology in the twentieth century, "women left the fields for the house and barn and farm men planted, cultivated, and harvested their crops with new machinery."[3] The gender prescriptions that were affiliated with technology and heavy machinery in the Midwest made it difficult for people to accept women as farm workers. This is an interesting fact since women were partaking in other war jobs involving machinery all over the United States. As the war continued however, the farmers of the Midwest realized that women were very necessary in maintaining farm production. This is because Midwestern farmers

needed as many farm hands as possible and women had proved themselves as steady workers.

The East and West coast had fewer gender prescriptions to overcome because both did not rely on technology or heavy machinery in farm production. In these areas fruit and vegetable crops were often handpicked. Women were therefore a part of farm labor before the war began, and so women's participation in the WLA was more easily accepted on the East and West coast.

Propaganda was used as persuasion on the homefront during World War II to gain society's approval of women working war jobs. Propaganda misrepresented the typical woman that worked the war jobs by portraying her as young, inexperienced, white, and of a middle-class background. The majority of the women that worked during World War II did not fit this description. Of the eighteen million women that worked outside the home during the war, about six million of these women worked for the first time.[4] In other words, women that had previous experience in the workforce comprised two-thirds of the wartime labor force. Three out of the four new women workers were married.[5] The war mobilized women for the labor market, allowing women to more freely move from job to job with opportunities in defense industries and support services, which also opened up the farmfront. Though women were misrepresented in wartime propaganda, the combined efforts of the government and media during WWII did heavily influence the participation of women in war jobs. Propaganda made women feel that it was not only okay for them to work war jobs, it was necessary to ensure U.S. victory.

Historians Maria Diedrich and Dorothea Fischer-Hornung edited an anthology entitled Women and War to revise and emphasize the role of women in wartime history.[6]

They believe that HERstory has been misinterpreted through HIStory. The two historians point out that official representations of history show that life on the homefront was victorious for women. Women experienced victory on the homefront because they were able to prove themselves as being just as capable and equally fit for the labor force as men were. This fact alone can be considered as a victory for women. Diedrich and Fischer-Hornung assert that propaganda in newspapers supposedly portrayed pictures of women of all ages, classes, and races transformed in their new roles doing men's work. After making the claim that a variety of women were well represented, the two historians suggest that Rosie the Riveter was a common tool for propaganda. Rosie the Riveter represented a mythological human being, rather than the majority of women that worked as riveters. She portrayed the industrious female worker as glamorous, efficient, and sexually attractive. Diedrich and Fischer-Hornung indicate that the everyday reality of women's lives on the homefront lacked this acclaimed glamour.[7]

Diedrich and Fischer-Hornung do not deny that the war brought objective changes to the lives of women. The two historians believe that while the situation of women changed on the homefront, female subordination was retained through war efforts. Female subordination was emphasized through propaganda and its emphasis on war labor being temporary. Propaganda insinuated that the rightful place for women was in the domestic sphere and that their role in war jobs was simply for the duration. The two historians demonstrate that most women were assigned to low labor categories earning only sixty-five percent of their male colleagues pay. It appears that this fact was reiterated even in times of extreme labor shortages. Diedrich and Fischer-Hornung

conceptualize that women's work at home enabled the man at the front to do the "real" work.[8]

As demonstrated in her book, American Women and World War II, historian Doris Weatherford maintains the belief that World War II contained many ironies, among them is the liberating effect it had on women.[9] Weatherford points out that state laws were passed during the 1930's that banished women from jobs, asserting that a woman's place was in the home. Once the United States joined WWII though, Weatherford claims that women were coaxed out of the home and into the workforce. President Roosevelt called women the last "labor reserve." Weatherford claims that during WWII, women worked better jobs than they had previously engaged in. Historians Nikki Lockhart and Jenna Pergande add in their work entitled "Women Who Answered the Call: World War II as a Turning Point for Women in the Workforce" that the introduction of women to men's work created a newfound independence.[10] The two historians assess that women initially joined the labor force to support their men abroad, but in the process of doing so, women discovered that their roles were not as limited as they had previously conceived.

Amy Kesselman in Fleeting Opportunities: Women Shipyard Workers in Portland and Vancouver During World War II and Reconversion, explores the experiences of women who worked in Portland and Vancouver shipyards. Kesselman believes that the "meaning of war work for the thousands of women who worked in war industries—women who brought with them a variety of expectations and experiences—has been obscured for decades by the prevailing image of Rosie the Riveter reluctantly discarding her apron and, thinking tearfully of her menfolk in the service, joining the industrial workforce to do her bit."[11] This statement indicates that the Rosie the Riveter image used

in propaganda was not an accurate representation of the women in the labor force. Kesselman explains that most women took war jobs because of higher wages and new opportunities. Kesselman indicates that war propaganda communicated a double message to the public. Women engaged in new challenges for the war effort, but they were not to forget their true identity as wives, girlfriends, and mothers.[12] She also explains that after the war ended, Rosie the Riveter became a nostalgic image. Kesselman further elaborates by explaining that the double message also retained sex segregation in war jobs through allocating only certain jobs to women.

Stephanie A. Carpenter explores an area of history that she perceives to be neglected, the role of women on the agricultural front during World War II. Carpenter believes that the existing scholarship of women during World War II "ignores their presence in the fields although their presence in the workplace, defense industries, and society and the changes this brought to American life in the 1940s has been studied extensively."[13] Carpenter maintains that women's work in the Women's Land Army contributed in important ways to the nation's defense during World War II. Production levels would have been impossible to maintain, had not women helped out on the farm fields. Carpenter claims that through examining the many different interpretations of women's place on the homefront, scholars have not addressed the importance of agricultural labor. Carpenter states that recently the amount of scholarship devoted to the contribution of agriculture on the homefront during World War II has increased, but women are still neglected due to historians focusing on the labor of "convicts, interned Japanese Americans, Mexican nationals, and prisoners of war."[14]

Carpenter indicates that a shortage of farm labor existed during World War II, due to the need for workers in other job areas. How did the Oregon agriculture sector respond to the shortage of farm labor? Oregon's farmfront successfully met production demands during World War II with the help of propaganda that was implemented throughout the United States; this propaganda encouraged women to show their patriotism by working in the agricultural sector which was desperately in need of labor due to the successful recruitment of women to the industrial sector. Propaganda was therefore used throughout the United States to recruit workers to fill all vacated jobs.

The labor shortages that existed on the farmfront in 1941 and 1942 led states to search for labor relief for their farmers.[15] In August of 1941, a subcommittee of the Department of Agriculture's Labor Committee suggested that "to ensure a successful harvest and adequate food supply for 1942, women would need to be recruited to work in the fields, planting, cultivating, and harvesting fruit and vegetable crop."[16] In July of 1942, it was acknowledged in Oregon that women would have to be employed to satisfy the agriculture demand due to the decrease in farm labor. Training classes for wartime farm production were established and held around the state to introduce nonfarm women and other workers to the skills of farm labor. The aim of the war production training classes was to provide "an additional supply of year-round and seasonal agricultural workers as well as help farmers increase the efficiency of their own equipment and the efficiency of their sometimes inexperienced workers."[17]

Between the years of 1940 and 1943, "the number of farm workers in the United States noticeably decreased because of armed forces manpower requirements and competition with higher paying jobs in the defense industries."[18] By 1943, the nation's

farm labor had become extremely problematic due to people leaving farms to seek other war work that paid better. The U.S. government therefore founded the Women's Land Army in April of 1943, which was an extension of the Emergency Farm Labor Program. The Emergency Farm Labor Program was established as a means to provide agricultural labor to the nation's farmers.[19] The primary goal of the national WLA was to recruit as many women as possible to the fields. The WLA was composed of farm and nonfarm women who were called to fill jobs that had been vacated by those who went to fill jobs in other support areas. At different rates across the country, the contribution of the WLA was regarded as highly valuable by the public. The WLA recruitment program strove to secure seasonal workers. Recruitment strategies and implementation of the Women's Land Army in the United States during World War II led Oregon to be one of the strongest agriculture forces in the nation.

After the United States entered the war, "propagandists labored to convince farm women that increased participation in field work, were major components of the American war strategy."[20] At first, many of the farm hands belonged to women of rural origins due to the Women's Bureau advocating that "women should be recruited only in those areas that desperately needed additional labor, and only women capable of doing hard physical labor should be considered."[21] The Women's Bureau was a United States federal agency that was established in 1920 to promote the rights and welfare of working women. Rural farm women gave the greatest contribution to wartime farm work. Almost every farm woman did additional work by taking on the majority of tasks found on a farm. This fact separates farm women from the rest of women war workers. Farm

women were bestowed with more responsibilities because they had worked on the farms before the war, therefore they possessed the necessary knowledge and experience.

The coastal regions of the United States proved able to recruit more workers than the Middle West. This is due to the variation of production in each region. The Middle West was dependent upon "technology and machinery; therefore, Midwestern farm women were viewed as 'reserve labor' for the field and primarily performed household and related work."[22] The farms of the East and the West coasts were comprised of truck and fruit farms while the Middle West was more technology oriented due to its grain agriculture. As the war continued though, the Midwestern farmers began to realize that they had no choice but to open up their fields to the women, including the Women's Land Army.[23] The farmlands on the West coast had been traditionally worked by women before World War II. It therefore did not take much effort to persuade Oregon producers that "women made ideal agricultural laborers."[24] Extensive recruitment was therefore not needed to entice Oregon producers to let women continue in their traditional role of female farm labor.

Each state had an extension service that administered the WLA. After the passage of Public Law 45, Oregon state responsibility for the WLA was given to the Oregon State College Extension Service's nutrition specialist, Mabel Mack.[25] Public Law 45, also known as the Farm Labor Supply Appropriation Act, was approved on April 29, 1943 by the 78th U.S. Congress to "assist farmers in producing vital food by making labor available at the time and place it was most needed."[26] Later, the U.S. Congress extended the effective period of the measure to remain intact until June 30, 1947. An article released October 26, 1942 in the Oregonian stated that Oregon agriculture was being hard

hit for both skilled and seasonal labor "because other work and the call to arms have drained agricultural manpower and seasonal help."[27] Oregon was "well above the national average for rapidly advancing farm labor pay rates."[28] This fact contributed to Oregon's success in recruiting women farm workers.

The Bracero Program was also created under the approval of Public Law 45. This program allowed the importation of male agricultural workers from Mexico. The majority of these workers found labor in the Northwest. The program was created by the federal government to guarantee "a cheap and organized labor supply during wartime."[29] The braceros lived under poor conditions and insufficient food. Between the years 1943 and 1947, "the United States government contracted with approximately 47,000 bracero agricultural laborers in Mexico to work in the northwestern states of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington."[30] The amount of women that worked on Oregon farms far exceeded the amount of braceros that worked the land. This is because when braceros complained of poor working conditions and low wages, "northwestern farmers searched for another source of cheap labor."[31] Women oftentimes comprised the other 'source of cheap labor'.

The motives of braceros and women working on the farmfront differed. Mexican men came to work on the farm fields to "earn sufficient money to take back to Mexico" while women worked on the farm out of patriotic obligations.[32] Carpenter states that the experiences of the women involved in the WLA "were about patriotism and success, not about wages, prestige, or popularity.[33] The contribution of braceros was vital to farm production, but braceros were perceived by their employers as easily replaceable if they chose to speak out against working conditions. Women worked primarily in the fields to help with the war effort, not to support entire families.

From 1943-1947, close to 135,000 women were placed to work on Oregon farmland. The WLA "accounted for the largest group of wartime agricultural workers" within the Emergency Farm Labor Program.[34] The supervisors of the extension services were in charge of planning recruitment campaigns, organizing worker camps, providing training courses, opening child care centers, and making the WLA friendly and acceptable to all workers.[35] The WLA endeavored to create cohesiveness among the rural and urban work forces through "placing urban women on rural farms."[36] Urban women were referred to as nonfarm women while women that worked or lived on farms before the war were referred to as farm women. A prejudice against nonfarm women existed across the country. This prejudice was based upon farmers worrying that nonfarm "women would be more concerned with appearances than with working."[37] The WLA helped eliminate previous stereotypes that insinuated urban women were useless, due to the lack of large machinery during the war.[38] Farmers began to acknowledge that female labor was necessary in order to meet the wartime demand for agricultural products. Carpenter states that "farmers abandoned traditional labor and stereotypical social practices to conform to legislated wartime measures."[39]

The Oregon WLA was able to create and enforce county programs during its first year of administration in 1943. The United States Department of Agriculture and the Women's Land Army recruited university students and faculty, working women, and homemakers to assist in agricultural production. Farm and nonfarm women readily volunteered to work in Oregon's WLA. Between 1943 and 1945, the WLA placed more than seventy-eight thousand women on farms in Oregon.[40] Some of these women

worked full-time, some part-time, and some would just work one to two weeks out of the year.

Although Oregon producers were easily swayed to take on workers from the Women's Land Army, the state retained the mentality that if a man was available for the same work, he would be hired over a woman. Housewives constituted a large portion of Oregon's Land Army, specifically in Marion County. They worked under a service entitled 'Housewife Special' and were transported by bus from their homes to the fields, returning at the end of the workday back to the home.[41] After the establishment of the WLA, Marion County called for over ten thousand women to work on numerous fruit, vegetable, and hop farms between the months of June and October. An article in the Oregon City Courier declared that "women from 18 to 25 years are the best pickers, doing a better job than men of any age."[42]

Figure 1: "Women Board a "Housewife Special" Bus to Go Help Save Marion County's Bean Crop, 1944" Oregon State Archives, Oregon State University Online Exhibit, http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/osu/osuwla.html

Many of the women that worked on the farm front worked part-time in the fields while maintaining their homes. Figure 1 portrays a group of women from Marion County

that worked the "Housewife Special." These women generally worked from 8:30AM to 3:00PM, "which enabled the busy housewife to do her home work."[43]

The propaganda that was used to recruit women to the farmfront utilized patriotism as a means to motivate women to help whenever they had time. Urban women would commonly work their primary war job and then go and help on the farm fields, especially during high peak harvest seasons. The majority of "urban nonfarm participants worked during their one or two-week vacations from their full-time jobs and did not possess the means or the inclination to spend a summer on a farm."[44] Although these women did not work on the fields that much, their contributions still qualified them as members of the WLA.

The federal government used propaganda to influence the way that people thought about the war. The U.S. realized that in order to win, it had to produce the resources that were needed to maintain stability. Propaganda was therefore published in many forms throughout the nation. Propaganda is defined as the "expression of opinions or actions carried out deliberately by individuals or groups with a view to influencing the opinions or actions of other individuals or groups for the predetermined ends and through psychological manipulations."[45] It "contains truth as well as half-truths, exaggerations, and outright lies."[46] Workers for the WLA were recruited through "state conferences, informational programs, letters, and a national propaganda campaign."[47]

War affiliated propaganda that was implemented throughout the nation suggested that the United States could not obtain victory without women doing their part on the homefront. This suggestion is justifiable and most likely true. To recruit women war workers, the government issued propaganda through movies, billboards, posters,

magazines, newspapers, window displays, and the radio with hopes of getting women out of the home and into war jobs. Not everyone felt that women should leave the home for the workforce but propaganda convinced many that it was suitable for women to engage in war jobs, on a temporary basis, "for the duration." Women's war jobs included work in defense and support services such as on farms, in steel mills, ship yards, foundries, lumber mills, aircraft factories, offices, hospitals, and daycare centers.[48] By working these jobs during the war "for the first time in their lives, many women performed jobs that were viewed by the public as necessary and valuable."[49] Although these jobs were deemed as necessary and valuable by the public, the work that women did was not taken seriously because it was only temporary. Many of these job categories after the war, most of the workers were once again male.

The War Manpower Commission (WMC) and the Office of War Information (OWI) were powerful U.S. government agencies aimed towards the recruitment of women war workers. The WMC was founded in April of 1942 by President Roosevelt "to assure the most effective mobilization and maximum utilization of the nation's manpower in the prosecution of the war."[50] FDR appointed Paul V. McNutt as the head of the commission. The WMC developed its program on the basis of setting standards for war workers. Married women with young children were not heavily recruited for the majority of war jobs because of the standards that existed in mid-20th century American society. It was one thing for single or married women to partake in manpower jobs, but for mothers with young children, the only suitable place for them was in the home nurturing their young ones. The Census Bureau made a detailed analysis and concluded, "married women without children under ten would be the best source of workers for the

duration of the war."[51] The WMC recognized the fact that it had to overcome long-standing social principles to "sell war jobs to women who had never worked outside the home before, and to their husbands, bosses, and coworkers."[52] The commission made it their policy to "employ young mothers as a last resort, and child care facilities were kept to a minimum throughout the war."[53] The WMC did its best to establish the image of war workers as emergency stand-ins.[54]

In June 1942, Franklin D. Roosevelt created the OWI two months after the birth of the WMC. The OWI gave strong support to the established WMC. Roosevelt appointed Elmer H. Davis to head the coordination of disseminating war information by setting guidelines for consumer advertisement, feature films and newsreels, posters and billboards, and articles in newspapers and magazines.[55] The OWI therefore became in charge of implementing propaganda based upon the standards set by the WMC. The OWI was responsible for "selling the idea that women were able and obligated to engage in war work."[56]

The recruitment approach of the agricultural sector differed from the rest of the workforce propaganda. Farm labor propaganda did not exclude the recruitment of Americans of color, the aged, or children. However, children could only be utilized for farm labor with parental consent. Organizations such as the American Farm Bureau Federation, the Grange, and other agricultural organizations disagreed with the use of white women for farm work and were more willing to "use men and black women for farm labor, but not urban, middle-class, white women without agriculture expertise."[57] This fact contradicts the propaganda that represented the typical women that worked other war jobs. In Oregon, farm labor eventually came to consist of "urban youth and

women, soldiers, white collar professionals, displaced Japanese-Americans, returning war veterans, workers from other states, migrant workers from Mexico and Jamaica, and even German prisoners-of-war."[58]

Although propaganda falsely portrayed the social characteristics of the average war worker, it awakened opportunity and need for action in women from all backgrounds. The increase in female labor supply during the war caused both female and male wages to decrease.[59] The advance in female labor participation led to a greater inequality of earnings "between male college and high school graduates but reduced earnings inequality between male graduates of high school versus eighth-grade graduates."[60] The labor of women therefore raised the bar for male workers. Education was prized by society because it set men apart from women; this is because women were less prone to seeking a higher education during this time.

Propaganda implemented by the OWI suggested strongly that though the labor of women was needed, war jobs were simply temporary. Since most women that entered the workforce had been in it before the war, this was a devastating reality. It was also disconcerting to the new workers that enjoyed their jobs. New and experienced war workers during the duration experienced a newfound independence. Women began to realize their full potential and capabilities. The famous Rosie the Riveter poster with the declaration, "We Can Do It!" summed up the war mentalities of women doing men's work. In terms of farm labor, the employment of women "in agriculture did not end with World War II."[61] This is because women were already a part of the agriculture sector before the war. The pay of most war jobs was better than the majority of farm wages. Across the board though women were still paid less than men were for doing the same

work. Farm labor became depleted due to the higher wages offered in other war jobs, which is why organizations such as the Women's Land Army were created.

The following five figures represent some of the different types of propaganda that were implemented in newspapers and magazines to recruit women to the industrial and agricultural sectors. All figures retain the patriarchy and family structure by insinuating that the labor of women is temporary and simply for the war effort. Figures 4 and 5 suggest that the participation of labor on the farmfront can be done as a family effort. Figures 2 and 6 promote women to work their preference of labor, including farm work as an option. Figure 3 portrays the various tasks of farm labor that were desired of women to perform. All of the figures use patriotism as a motive for women working war jobs.

Figure 2: "The More Women at Work, the Sooner We Win!" World War II Poster Collection, Northwestern University Library Online Exhibit, http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/img/ww1645-38.jpg

Figure 2 is an example of the World War II propaganda that was implemented by the Office of War Information in 1943. It utilizes patriotism as a means to motivate women to join the labor force in various areas of work. The poster can also be perceived as an attempt to appease the fears of society because it emphasized the fact that the war cannot be won without the labor of women on the homefront. Women's war work was necessary and patriotic, but not revolutionary. The woman used in the poster is also attractive, physically fit, white, and appears to be of middle-class background.

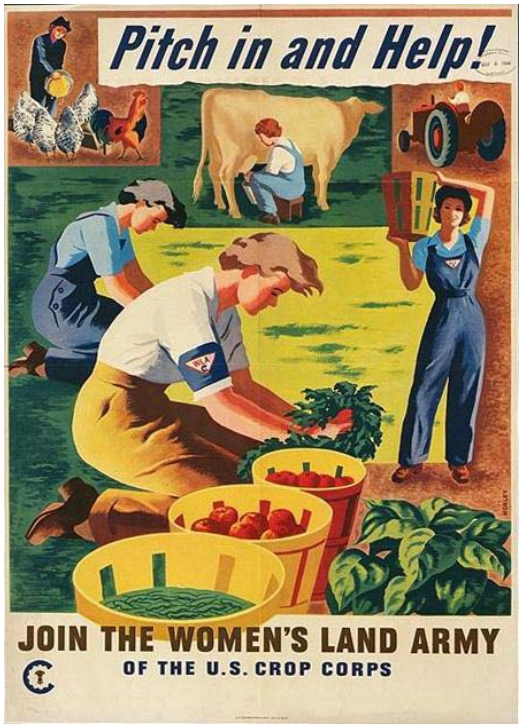

Figure 3: "Pitch in and Help: Join the Women's Land Army of the U.S. Crop Corps" World War II Poster Collection, Northwestern University Library Online Exhibit, http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/img/ww0870-02.jpg

Figure 3 is a classic example of the propaganda that was used to recruit women to be a part of the WLA. It was displayed in the Extension Service's monthly catalog in 1944. The poster portrays six women doing various farm tasks that needed to be done

due to the lack of male labor. The women are dressed in different versions of the WLA uniforms. Carpenter states that the "WLA's administration set wages, designed a uniform, prescribed safety precautions, and procured housing for the women workers."[62] Most women did not wear the uniforms because they had to pay for them with their own money. The uniforms represent the cohesiveness that the government was trying to create among women farm workers. The uniforms also have patriotic meaning because they portray women as being a part of an actual army that is fighting for a collective cause. Although the women are in uniform, they are still wearing shoes with heals. The shoes represent the preservation of feminism on the farmfront. Like the propaganda that was used for industrial labor, the women are white, physically fit, and appear to be of middle-class background.

Figure 4: "Plant a Victory Garden" World War II Poster Collection, Northwestern University Library Online Exhibit, http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/img/ww1645-38.jpg

Figure 4 is an advertisement that was distributed by the Office of War Information through its monthly catalog in 1943. This poster exhibits how the farmfront

not only recruited women to work in the fields, but also men and children. The woman is working with a skirt and seamed stockings, which proves that it was important to the public that women still retain their prescribed clothing attire while doing men's work. The man and boy are dressed in overalls and the boy is showing his patriotism by wearing a military cap. This poster exhibits the preservation of the patriarchy and the importance of the family working as a unit for the war cause. The garden promotes victory because the soldiers can not successfully fight without food, as spoken through the statement in the poster 'our food is fighting'.

Figure 5: "Town Folks", Oregon State Archives, Oregon State University Online Exhibit, http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/osu/osuothwork.html

Figure 5 is an example of the propaganda that was used to recruit retired citizens to the farm fields. The retired citizens that worked on the farmfront usually had field

experience but were oftentimes from urbanized areas. The poster emphasizes that the United States Crop Corps desired "Town Folks with Farm Experience" to work in the fields. Figure 5 represents an actual recruitment poster that was used in Oregon in 1945 to gather more farm hands on the farmfront. This poster is especially important because it portrays how women from all age groups worked on the farmfront. The poster can also be described as retaining the patriarchy because the wife is holding on to her husband's arm with a pleasant grin while he is taking off his retirement jacket getting ready to work.

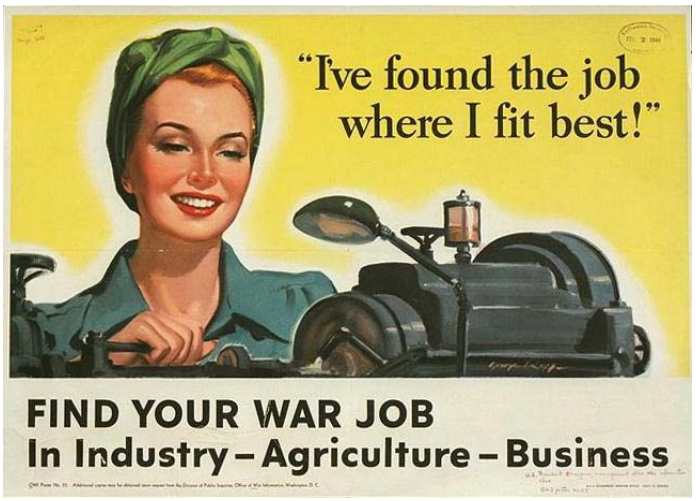

Figure 6: I've Found the Job Where I Fit Best!" World War II Poster Collection, Northwestern University Library Online Exhibit, http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/wwii-posters/img/ww1646-40.jpg

Figure 6 portrays the alleged freedom that women had on the homefront during WWII through emphasizing the various opportunities that women had in industry, agriculture, and business. It was distributed by the Office of War Information in 1943. The woman in the figure appears to be a riveter. She is attractive, white and most likely of a middle class background. The statement 'I've found the job where I fit best!' shows how propaganda tried to make women and society feel like what women were doing was okay. The poster portrays the supposed liberation that women had on the homefront by finding her perfect war job.

Successful propaganda creates a strong emotional appeal that is based on the tension between truth and falsehood. The propaganda that was used and has been remembered by society did not accurately portray the realities of life for the majority of the women that worked war jobs. Two female myths during World War II are remembered through the majority of history texts. The first myth has already been mentioned which is the predominant suggestion that women workers were white, inexperienced, young, and from the middle-class. Government "posters, films, and advertising showed white middle-class housewives laying aside their card games in order to help out for the duration."[63] This indeed was not reality. Though some women did join the work force to help the war effort, most of the women that worked during World War II were former service and domestic workers. The second myth concludes that women "entered the workforce out of patriotic motives and eagerly left to start families and resume full-time homemaking" at the end of the war.[64] The majority of histories on WWII and work focus on the industrial sector and the changes that took place while the activities of those that worked "in agricultural labor," according to Carpenter, "have been largely ignored."[65] The contributions of women on the farmfront were different from the industrial sector because the initial women that joined the WLA already had experience on the fields and continued in their roles on the fields after the war ended.

All war work was heavily glamorized and feminized; this was to make the labor of women not their own. Society was uncomfortable with women doing what was traditionally men's work, so advertising portrayed war work in a feminized manner. Propaganda demonstrated this by portraying supposed connections between war jobs and housework. Advertising reassured its viewers that women war workers were

participating in work that had domestic relations. Skilled factory work was distorted as being comparable to housework.[66] A few examples used in advertising schemes include: a woman cutting the pattern of aircraft parts rather than cutting the lines of a dress, a woman cooking gears to reduce the tension after use instead of baking a cake, and a woman operating a drill press, as easily as she operated a juice extractor in her own kitchen.[67] Farm propaganda did not compare the work that women were doing to domestic tasks. It rather declared that farm labor was an expansion of what women were previously doing before the war began.

Some World War II industrial propaganda discouraged mothers from working, suggesting that participating in the workforce caused unhappiness in family life because their children were not being properly nurtured. An Oakland newspaper used an add with a baby's face on it and the slogan "Your Baby *or* Your Job" to emphasize the importance of women staying at home with their children.[68] In addition, propaganda suggested that women working jobs that had been designated for males by society did not upset the patriarchy. The WMC ensured the public that soldiers were proud of their working wives. Images such as a WMC poster picturing a soldier with his hands on his hard-working wife's shoulders as she declares, "I'm Proud… my husband <u>wants</u> me to do my part," encouraged society that it was all right for women to work because they supposedly had the support of their fighting husbands.[69]

The gender hierarchy of the United States was highly challenged during World War II. Propaganda reassured the public that women's labor was a part of the war effort. Propaganda stressed that the war could not be won without women doing their part on the homefront. Women were very rarely given supervisory responsibilities or placed in

executive positions. The patriarchy was retained on the homefront, minorities remained inferior, and the rightful place of the women remained in the home. Though women took on jobs that had always been designated to males, they usually did not receive equal pay.

For the most part, economic and social equality was not achieved on the homefront during the war. Women generally received less pay for doing the same labor as men did. In 1942, the National War Labor Board announced a policy of "equal pay for equal work."[70] Employers found ways around this policy by setting up "women's jobs."[71] Through re-labeling work, women's wages were kept lower than men's were. An example of the re-labeling of work is an instance that took place in the automotive industry, General Motors.[72] Categories were substituted as "heavy" for "male" work and "light" for "female" work. In other plants, women "were placed in separate job classifications such as "helper trainee" instead of "mechanic learner."[73] The government ruled that labor, which was historically designated to women, was admissible to unequal treatment. A survey taken in 1942 by the Women's Bureau of the Labor Department discovered that "of 18 major ammunition plants, only three paid the sexes equally."[74] In 1944, the average woman's salary was $31.21 a week and the average salary for men was $54.65 a week.[75] After the war the WMC and OWI recognized the possibility of women not wanting to give up war jobs so they used propaganda to convince them that it was best and to re-emphasize that the woman's rightful place was in the home.

On the farm fields, sex and age affected the amount of money that people made because wages were based upon the amount pounds that the workers gathered. Younger and stronger muscles were able to pick more fruits and vegetables than weaker and older bodies. After the U.S. federal government began to nationalize the need for farm laborers

in 1943, the wages and production of farm labor increased. The average daily earnings of Oregon strawberry pickers in 1943 were $1.41, $2.00 in 1944, and $2.47 in 1945.[76] This equates to weekly earnings based upon a seven-day work week to be $9.87 in 1943, $14.00 in 1944, and $17.29 in 1945. These wages prove to be drastically less than industrial wages.

The WLA combined the efforts of farm and nonfarm women to meet agricultural demands of the United States. When the war ended, nonfarm women reverted back to their old lives and farm women stayed on the farms. For the majority of women that were forced back into domestic positions at the end of the war, their liberating experiences were retained but remained unspoken. This is recognizable when examining statistics of the number of women that were married workers after the war ended. In 1947, there were 7.5 million married women workers and in 1952, there were 10.4 million married women workers.[77] This indicates that the number of women workers that were married did rise after the war, which further suggests that a significant amount of women were not willing to give up the independence that they had experienced through working war jobs. More than seventy-five percent of women in war jobs indicated that they intended on keeping their jobs when the war ended.[78] This same percentage also represented the rate of which women were laid off in comparison to the rate of men laid off at the end of the war.[79] The bulk of jobs that women worked after the war were unfortunately jobs that had been designated by society as suitable for women. In the agricultural sector, expansion that occurred within during the war, as well as out-migration from, caused the industry to hire more women in postwar years.[80]

At the end of the war, propaganda was used to encourage women in other areas of labor to give their jobs back to veterans. A poster portraying a riveter handing over her drill to a veteran is an example of the propaganda that was used.[81] Women who continued to work after the war were "critically portrayed in the popular culture as selfishly and willingly causing divorce, juvenile delinquency, crime, and other problems facing the post war population."[82] Guilt was used through propaganda as manipulation to get women to work during the war, as well as to not work after the war. Despite the postwar rhetoric that existed, the 1950s witnessed an increasing number of women working farm and field labor.[83] Many women felt ambivalence over U.S. victory because with the return of men, women returned to the home. Their newfound independence became a nostalgic memory. The majority of women that desired to keep working were forced back into domestic based jobs. Farm labor differed from the rest of war labor because it was not new to the rural female sex. This fact most likely contributed to the sentiment that existed after the war, which was lenient to women continuing to work in the fields. Farm women did gain responsibilities through the war that they had never before been subject to. The presence of women on the fields during World War II proved to be unifying and long lasting.

Life on the U.S. homefront was a pivotal experience for American women war workers. These women were enticed through WMC and OWI propaganda to show their patriotism by working war jobs to help the United States win the war. Propaganda inaccurately portrayed the average woman worker, claiming that she was young, inexperienced, white, and middle-class. The majority of war workers were poor whites, Americans of color, and experienced through years of working domestic jobs, including

farm work. These women engaged in war jobs to receive better pay, although they were usually paid less for doing the same work as men did. Propaganda encouraged women at the end of the war to hand their jobs back over to the men. Women were of course overjoyed that their loved ones were returning from war; but they also possessed conflicting feelings over returning to their domestic lives. The patriarchy was upheld during the war, though millions of men were gone overseas. Propaganda feminized the labor of women in order to encourage society that women were capable of working, and to downplay their labors by comparing their work to kitchen tasks. War work performed by women was re-labeled so that employers could get away with paying women less for their labor. Society was condescending to the labor of women as war workers, yet a huge doorway was opened to women through War World II. After the war, many farm women continued to work the fields during peak production while simultaneously doing household, childcare, and farm chores.

Diedrich and Fischer-Hornung are correct in their claim that female subordination was retained through war efforts. By women working jobs that were simply "for the duration" the patriarchy remained intact. The propaganda that was used to recruit women to work war jobs strove to retain the feminine characteristics that women possessed prior to the war. Kesselman accurately indicates that society did not want women to forget their feminine identities through their new experiences that derived from the war effort. Women however discovered a new element of themselves through working on the homefront during World War II. As Nikki Lockhart and Jenna Pergande suggest, the introduction of women to men's work created a newfound independence that was experienced by many women. As Carpenter indicates that propaganda, which was

implemented nationwide to recruit women to work industrial jobs, created a lack of workers on the farmfront. The role that the Women's Land Army played during World War II has indeed been much overlooked due to the presence of women working in other industries. The WLA did however gain recognition and prominence nationwide. With its implementation, Oregon easily recruited women to work in the fields. History has neglected a group of women that had success in the labor force during, as well as after, the war. The Women's Land Army successfully recruited women to do their part on the farmfront, especially in Oregon. Although propaganda portrayed the majority of war labor as temporary, its affect on women has proven to be long lasting in all areas of work.

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