WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP IN AMERICAN HISTORY

WOMEN AND WORLD WAR II

PART 1: How World War II Changed the Role of the American Woman
PART 2: The All American Girl

NEW YORK STATE SOCIAL STUDIES CORE CURRICULUM, GRADE 11:
UNITED STATES HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

UNIT SIX: The United States in an Age of Global Crisis: Responsibility and Cooperation
Peace and Peril 1933-1950

OBJECTIVES
• students will review traditional roles of women and the impact of the events of the 1920’s and 1930’s
• student will learn the roles that women filled during World War II
• student will graph statistics
• students will use analysis of documents in order to understand how women’s lives changed as a result of World War II
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WOMEN AND WORLD WAR II — PART I
How World War II Changed the Role of the American Woman

ACTIVITIES

I. Opening activity – Reviewing History
   Ask the following questions:

   A. What are the traditional roles of women?
      Possible answers: house cleaning, child rearing, creating a warm and loving home environment, supporting husband’s activities and pursuits

   B. How did some women’s lives change during the 1920’s?
      Possible answers: earned the right to vote, flapper, liberated dress, continuation of status quo for most women, new technology – washers, electric appliances - made life “easier”

   C. Were those changes permanent? In what ways did the Great Depression affect women’s lives?
      Possible answers: for most women the flapper made little difference, with the Depression many men deserted their families, with 25% unemployment - fewer women were working – jobs mostly went to men

II. Pairing – brainstorming
   Have students work with a partner and answer the following questions:
   A. What items were needed for American to pursue the enemy in World War II?
      Possible answers: clothing, food, guns, tanks, ships, planes, ammunition

   B. What jobs were needed to supply war needs?
      Possible answers: munitions, farming, war equipment construction

III. Graphing statistics
   Direct students to make a bar graph of the data in the Student Handout on Women’s Employment by Industry.
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Example of correctly graphed statistics from 
Student Handout on Women’s Employment by Industry:

IV. Document analysis – drawing conclusions

Have students analyze and interpret the documents. How did women’s lives change as a result of World War II?

A. What do these images tell us about the role of women in World War II?
   • What is the significance of the objects “Rosie” is holding?
   • Why is “Rosie” dressed the way she is?
   • What does the expression on her face tell you?

B. How did women’s lives change as a result of World War II?

Possible answers: doing jobs that were previously held only by men; the idea that women can be anything they want to be; the myth that women can do it all; the impact of African-American women and the coming Civil Rights movement.

V. Extension activities

1. Have students create a poster encouraging women to work in the war industry during World War II.
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DISCOVERING HISTORY IN TODAY’S NEW YORK TIMES

1. Go through The New York Times and cut out all of the graphs that you find. As you find them, paste them onto a sheet of poster board. To the side of each, write the name of the article it accompanied, the section in which it was found, and two or three sentences about how the graph helps readers better understand the statistics and the story behind them.

2. Find an article in The New York Times that has a lot of statistics in it. Then, create three different types of graphs that explore statistics in the article. Some types of graphs that you often see in The Times are pie charts, bar graphs, line graphs, pictographs and flow charts. For each graph, write a paragraph that discusses how it helps better explain the statistics, and why you chose that particular type of graph.

3. Choose an article in The New York Times about employment. Write a summary of the article that includes: who is/are the focus of the article (such as people within a certain profession, people over age 40, or a C.E.O.), what the main topic of the article is (such as finding jobs on the Internet or early retirement), and advice that the article might offer. Then, draw an editorial cartoon or illustration that could go along with the article to explain its content visually.
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WOMEN AND WORLD WAR II — PART I
How World War II Changed the Role of the American Woman

Make a bar graph of the following statistics:

Total number of women employed in selected industrial groups, excluding domestic service in 1940 and 1944-1945 by employment area for selected cities: Springfield, Baltimore, Buffalo, Dayton, Detroit, Wichita, Mobile, Seattle and San Francisco

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Group</th>
<th>Number of Women Employed in 1940</th>
<th>Number of Women Employed in 1944-45</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All industries</td>
<td>626,600</td>
<td>1,266,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>141,900</td>
<td>565,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>21,600</td>
<td>138,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade, Service and Other (includes transportation, communication, public utilities, finance, insurance, real estate, and other)</td>
<td>463,100</td>
<td>562,900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistics are a compilation from page 36 of “Women Workers in Ten War Production Areas and Their Postwar Employment Plans,” United States Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau, Bulletin No. 209

Answer the following questions based on your graph:

A. What was the overall increase in women’s employment?

B. In which industries did employment increase the most? The least?

C. How do you think these changes affected women’s lives?
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How World War II Changed the Role of the American Woman

“Rosie the Riveter”
Saturday Evening Post cover, May 29, 1943

And then, in my spare time…” cartoon, by Bob Barnes for the Office of War Information (O.W.I.)

I have enjoyed working with my hands when for so long my hands have been something to manicure and to punch a typewriter. I want to be a more essential women after this. I want to learn how to mend an ironing cord and repair a leaking faucet and make bread. I want to do less fluffy thinking and more work with my hands. — Nell Giles Ahern

I shall never for a moment forget that thirteen million Negroes believe in me and depend on me… I am a soldier on the Home Front and I shall keep the faith. — Excerpt from the National Council of Negro Women’s War Workers Pledge
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WOMEN AND WORLD WAR II — PART 2
The All American Girl

NEW YORK STATE SOCIAL STUDIES CORE CURRICULUM, GRADE 11:
UNITED STATES HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

UNIT SIX The United States in an Age of Global Crisis: Responsibility and Cooperation
Peace and Peril 1933-1950

OBJECTIVES
• students will review the changing role of women during World War II
• students will learn about the All American Girls Baseball League
• students will compare the traditional roles of women
• students will use document analysis in order to understand how deep-rooted the traditional
role of women is in American society

ACTIVITIES
I. Opening activity – Reading and History
Have students read the excerpt from “A Guide For All American Girls – How to Look
Better, Feel Better, Be More Popular.”

Do not let students know what they are reading. When they have completed the reading
discuss what this Guide says about the role of women. Why would someone write a guide
like this? Which women in American society would be interested in a Guide like this? Is this
Guide more important to men or women?

Let students know that they have read an excerpt from “A Guide For All American Girls –
How to Look Better, Feel Better, Be More Popular,” which was produced by the All American
Girls Baseball League for its players. Ask students what they think about what they read.

II. Movie activity. View Scenes from “A League of Their Own,” a film directed by Penny
Marshall, starring Geena Davis and Tom Hanks, made in 1992

Suggested Scenes

• A good scout: “your country needs you”
• A social commentary: tryouts
• Charm and beauty school

III. Discussion of scenes
1. Why was this league formed?
2. What do the scenes you viewed tell you about the role of women in American society
back then?
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3. Given the changing role of women during World War II, are you surprised by what you saw?

IV. Document analysis – drawing conclusions
Students work with a partner and answer the following questions:
1. What do you see in the images presented?
2. According to the sources, what should women be doing while their men are off at war?
3. What is your reaction to these images?

V. Summary/Conclusion
1. How do the All American Girls Baseball League and posters of the World War II era reflect traditional images of women?
2. To what extent do they challenge these images?

DISCOVERING HISTORY IN TODAY’S NEW YORK TIMES

1. What do you think today’s women sports figures would feel about the advice in “A Guide for All American Girls”? Find a photograph of a woman athlete in The New York Times, and write a letter to her from the author of “A Guide for All American Girls” analyzing how well she is performing according to the rules of the guide. Write a letter in response from the modern athlete.

2. Write a journal entry about your definition of today’s “All American girl.” What does an “All American girl” value in her life, and how does she go about meeting her goals? Create a collage of words and images from The New York Times that represents your definition.

3. “A Guide for All American Girls” and Rosie the Riveter present two very different perceptions of women’s roles during World War II. What do you think the author of the beauty guide and Rosie would think of women in print advertisements today? Turn a sheet of poster board lengthwise, and create three columns and three rows. Cut out photographs of three women found in ads in The New York Times, and paste them along the top row of the poster so that each is heading a column. Beneath each ad, write a response from the beauty guide’s author, and in the bottom row, write a response from Rosie’s perspective. What would each believe these women’s values and roles to be? Would they agree or disagree with them, and why?
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WOMEN AND WORLD WAR II — PART 3
The All American Girl


Your Beauty kit should always contain the following:

- Cleansing cream
- Lipstick
- Rouge – Medium
- Cream Deodorant
- Mild Astringent
- Face Powder for Brunette
- Hand Lotion
- Hair Remover

Extra precaution [should be taken] to assure all the niceties of toilette and personality. Take time to observe the necessary beauty ritual, to protect both health and appearance.

BEAUTY ROUTINE – morning and night

In the morning, when you have more time to attend to your beauty needs, you will undoubtedly be enabled to perform a more thorough job. Use your cleansing cream around your neck as well as over the face. Remove it completely and apply a second time to be sure that you remove all dust, grease and grime. Wipe off thoroughly with cleansing tissue. Apply hand lotion to keep your hands as lovely as possible. Use your manicure set to preserve your nails in a presentable condition.

Teeth – There are many good tooth cleansing preparations on the market and they should be used regularly to keep the teeth and gums clean and healthy.

Body – Unwanted or superfluous hair is often quite common. There are a number of methods by which it can be easily removed.

Deodorants – The most important feature of some of these products is the fact that the fragrance stays perspiration-proof all day. Deodorants keep you fresh and gives you assurance and confidence in your social contacts.

Eyes – The eyes are the windows of the soul. They bespeak your innermost thoughts. Perhaps no other feature of your face has more to do with the impression of beauty, sparkle and personality which you portray. A simple little exercise for the eyes can do much to strengthen your eyes and add sparkle and allure.
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Hair – Hair is a woman’s crowning glory. Brushing the hair will help a great deal more than is realized. It helps to stimulate the scalp which is the source of healthful hair growth. It develops the natural beauty and luster of the hair. And it will not spoil the hair-do. When brushing, bend over and let your head hang down. Then brush your hair downward until the scalp tingles. Just a few minutes of this treatment each day will tend to keep your scalp in fine condition and enhance the beauty of your “crowning glory.”

Mouth – Every woman want to have an attractive and pleasing mouth. As you speak, people watch your mouth and you can do much, with a few of the very simplest tools, to make your mouth invitingly bespeak your personality. Your beauty aids should, of course, include the appropriate type of lipstick and brush. Caution – be sure that the lipstick has not smeared your teeth. Your mirror will tell the tale – and it is those little final touches that really count.

Hands – Cleanliness and neatness again come to the fore. Your hands should be thoroughly cleaned and washed as frequently as seems desirable or necessary. Soap and water and pumice will do this job to perfection. Then a protective cream should be applied to keep hands soft and pliable and to avoid crack and over-dryness. Your nails should be gone over lightly each day, filing to prevent cracks and splits, oiling for the cuticle.
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Advertisement for Palmolive Soap, c. 1943

For him... and him... and him...

“[I] pledge myself to guard every bit of Beauty that he cherishes in me

To help you in keeping this pledge, trust the one leading beauty soap that's made with Olive and Palm Oils!

Today, those moments with him are fleeting, rare, and ... infinitely precious. For his sake, and yours, be at your lovely best, whenever you're together.

Turn now, as so many charming women are doing, to Palmolive for your beauty care. For, since the dawn of history, Olive and Palm Oils have been treasured as Nature's finest aids to feminine loveliness. And Palmolive alone, among all leading soaps, is made with Olive and Palm Oils!

No wonder Palmolive is the largest selling beauty soap in all the world! You can truly feel the difference in its silk-and-cream lather. You can truly trust its gentle help in keeping your skin soft and fresh and radiant as the dawn.

Palmolive costs so little! Why not let it do the nice things for your body that it does for your face? Keep your pledge of beauty with Palmolive. Guard your loveliness... 'til he comes marching home!

REMEMBER PALMOLIVE’S BEAUTY OILS...
WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP IN AMERICAN HISTORY

WOMEN AND WORLD WAR II — PART 3
The All American Girl

Published by the War Production Board, c. 1943
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WOMEN AND WORLD WAR II — PART 3
The All American Girl

“Their Real Pin-Up Girl”,
by Cyrus C. Hungerford for the Office of War Information (O.W.I.), 1944

http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/126_rosi.html