

Rejection, Reception, and Rejection Again

Women in Oregon's World War II Shipyards

REFLECTION ESSAY

by Diane Simmons

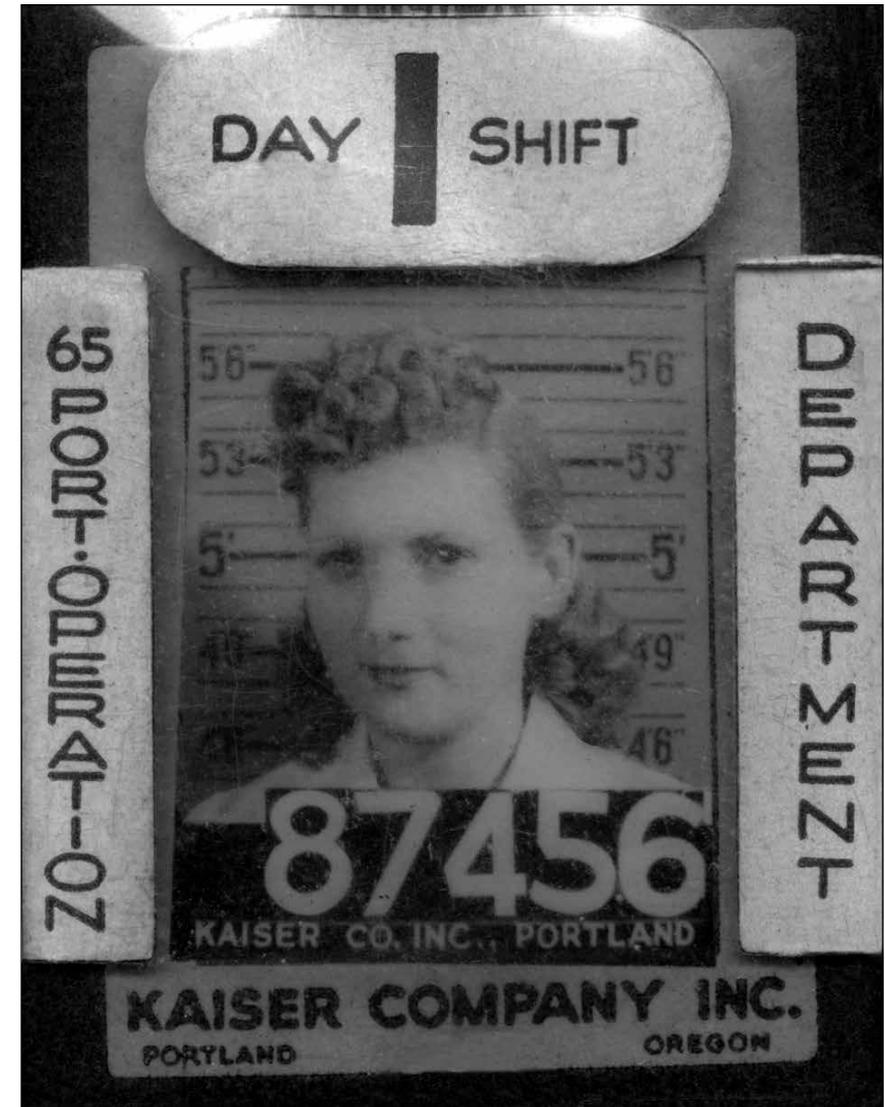
AS I HELPED to wrap up the affairs of a deceased family friend in eastern Oregon, I was surprised to find a trove of some eight hundred letters carefully bundled and tied with string, all documenting Eva Eldridge's life from 1939 to the mid 1960s. Looking into the letters, I was even more surprised to see that they detailed her experiences in the World War II Swan Island shipyard in Portland, Oregon, and the immense impact of her wartime work on her later life.¹

I was surprised because as a child in that small hamlet, I had known Eva and her family well. Given that World War II and the adventures of those who served had always been a prime topic of conversation as I was growing up, I was faced with a mystery: Why had I never heard of Eva's war? Why had it, apparently, been erased from family and community history?

It seemed a question worthy of research, and my efforts ultimately led me to write *The Courtship of Eva Eldridge*. But before investigating

Eva's story, I realized I needed a better understanding of women's experiences during the war and of attitudes toward their war work. I began my research by trying to see what I could learn about that famous World War II creation, Rosie the Riveter. If I could understand her, perhaps I would have insight into Eva's experience.

My first, rather shocking discovery, found in a 2011 article by Gwen Sharp and Lisa Wade, was that the Rosie known to me and most people — the sleek, attractive woman who stared fiercely from the "We Can Do It" poster — was never intended as a general representation of women in war work. The poster, an in-house Westinghouse promotion, was probably not even aimed specifically at women but was designed to discourage labor unrest. Displayed for a few weeks at Westinghouse, it was not seen by the public during the war. The poster became well known only after it was revived by the second wave women's movement. As I would come to learn, its unambigu-



Courtesy of Diane Simmons

EVA ELDRIDGE is pictured here on her Kaiser Company work badge. Eldridge began working in 1944 as a cafeteria cashier at the Kaiser Swan Island yard. Although the job was unskilled — like many jobs offered to women during the war — she earned a great deal more money than had been possible during the Great Depression.

ous appreciation of women's strength, self-confidence, and determination was far more representative of the 1960s and 1970s than the war years.²

In New York City's Stephen A. Schwarzman research library, I sought other representations of wartime women and came upon Norman

Rockwell's Rosie on the cover of the May 1943 *Saturday Evening Post*. This drawing for a popular national magazine depicted a very different woman from the one on the "We Can Do It" poster. Here Rosie — as she was labeled — was as big and muscular as any stevedore, with powerful forearms and immense thighs. Dressed in men's overalls, she was snub-nosed and ruddy. Her head was a bit too small for her body and her carrot-colored hair was messily pinned back. Her face and arms were smudged with dirt or grease. Apparently on her lunch break, a ham sandwich grasped in one fist, she did not bother to make eye contact with the viewer. Rather she looked aside, apparently lost in her thoughts. Upon her lap rested a riveters gun, and under her feet in flat clumsy shoes and red socks, a rumpled copy of *Mein Kampf*.

Rockwell's Rosie, with her riveting gun and her smudgy face, reflected the harsh necessity of women working in even the dirtiest jobs. It also depicted the sense of profound urgency felt early in the war: winning was going to be a tough, all-out job. As Rosie grabbed lunch, she didn't think about washing up or even putting down her riveting gun. Unlike the "We Can Do It" woman, she had not bothered to apply mascara or rouge, and saw no need to project a fierce demeanor. At the same time, she did not mind carelessly trampling upon the doctrine of the world's most notorious man.

As I learned more about the controversies that surrounded the recruitment of millions of women — particularly White women — for war work, I

understood that it was the gritty and complicated Rockwell drawing, not the pretty, simpler "We Can Do It" poster, that would help me understand Eva's war experience and its implications.

Under attack since 1940, Great Britain had begun drafting women into non-combat roles in the services, civil defense, and industry in the spring of 1941. Although America was not yet at war, the government had instituted a draft in September 1940 and begun a buildup of war supplies; a manpower crisis therefore loomed here as well. The American government rejected the idea of drafting American women into military service, but government officials believed that women would need to be "employed in a scale hitherto unknown."³ President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration soon began an immense propaganda effort to encourage, flatter, and even shame women into war work.

If Rockwell's portrait reflected the intense need for women workers to join a life-and-death struggle, it simultaneously recognized a deep anxiety that women would be changed beyond recognition through war work. Rockwell's drawing was of course a caricature; nobody expected ordinary women to develop such mighty musculature after a few months or even years with a riveting gun. Still, the portrait reflected a widespread concern that women would become masculinized, losing what many saw as their true feminine nature. Would they, for example, become like men in that they would wish to exert control and gain power out in the world? As historian William Henry Chafe wrote,

the question was being asked: Would working women change to the extent that they constituted a "threat to the cohesion and sanity of social life"?⁴

Here at the desperate beginning of the war, at a time when no one knew how long it would last, some feared that women might simply take over at home. In *The New York Times Magazine*, for example, I came across an opinion piece that solemnly envisioned a scenario wherein America's men were shipped off to fight an endless war, and women got in the habit of running things, a habit they would not necessarily want to give up.⁵ In another magazine, *Independent Women*, I found a lighter take on the same subject. A male essayist ruefully questioned whether men would be able to count on receiving the feminine admiration they used to enjoy: "I miss the girl who used to cuddle up in the protecting curve of my tweedy sleeve while I drove masterfully with one hand amid the mazes of traffic." He added, "I don't see her any more because she's driving a tractor on a farm in Pennsylvania."⁶

And there were still other fears about the changes that could occur in women. Rockwell's tough Rosie was shown to be a pretty independent sort, emboldened, perhaps, by her prowess with a riveting gun. If she had broken through one kind of barrier, what would keep her from going on to break others? What, for example, would become of her feminine virtue? Was it possible she would start treating her sexuality as a man treated his, something that was his alone, something to be used for his own pleasure, not a sacred jewel to be saved for marriage?

This sensitive subject was seldom addressed directly in the popular press. But searching for professional views, I located the 1948 work of Dartmouth sociology professor Francis Merrill, who confirmed fears that young women, "dissociated from the stabilizing forces of family" and church, could, for a variety of reasons — from loneliness to thrill-seeking to the patriotic wish to gratify soldiers — find themselves in illicit sexual relationships.⁷ I questioned whether this deep ambivalence about what would become of women in war work had something to do with the silence on Eva's experience.

In the earliest letters, Eva's identity was clear. She was an earnest, dutiful girl, raised in a hard-working, highly religious, tee-totaling farm family. Photographs I found among the letters showed a demure youngster who lowered her head slightly in the gaze of the camera, clasping her hands behind her back. Often she was pictured with farm animals, nestled amid a flock of sheep, cuddling rabbits, resting one hand on the back of a large, tranquil cow. After giving Eva such an innocent and protected upbringing, her mother, Grace, certainly would have been concerned about the moral atmosphere of a war factory. And I am sure that both would have been horrified to think of dainty young Eva turning into a burly, man-like character such as Rockwell's Rosie.

Eva and Grace were not alone; many women were unsure whether women should enter the gritty environment of a war plant. But government planners worked hard to sell a different image, and the nation's publications joined in the effort. To see what Eva

and her mother may have been reading about women's war work, I consulted microfilm copies of the *Ladies' Home Journal*, a magazine Grace had relied on her entire life. In an article from late 1942 entitled "Hats Off to The Girls in the Factories," readers were assured that the new working women were not at all burly, tough, and man-like.⁸

Rather, the article showed these young women to be healthy and clean-cut, more like college girls than factory workers. And management was busy improving conditions for their comfort and safety. Work places were brighter, and rest rooms were being revamped; it was understood that young ladies required surroundings that were clean and pleasant. They appreciated, for example, good, well-lighted mirrors so that they could inspect their hair and touch up their makeup.⁹

In addition, Grace and Eva may have encountered some of the books recently published that sought to explain what women could expect from war work. One example, *Punch in Susie! A Woman's War Factory Diary*, said to be written by a woman reporter who went into a factory undercover, reinforced the point that factory workers remained demure and feminine, and now had money to spend on pretty things: "A factory girl in real life . . . buys many of her clothes in the better Boston stores, pays as much for her permanents as you do, wears leg make-up and play shoes as glamorous as any you'll see in *Harper's Bazaar*."¹⁰

Another book, *Wartime Jobs for Girls*, described all the "fascinating" and important jobs that "girls" could

do to aid the war effort. Women were needed almost everywhere, as telegraph operators, train attendants, office workers, and department store clerks. These publications expressed no concern over whether young women would lose their femininity or moral compass. Nor did they suggest that their services would be needed only for the duration of the war. Rather, the women, most of whom had known Depression-era privation, were told that their war work could be "the beginning of a highly successful and satisfying career in the field that in post-war days is certain to expand."¹¹

To find out how Oregonians were viewing these questions, I travelled to the Oregon Historical Society in Portland and requested microfilms of the daily *Oregonian*. From the newspaper's war coverage, I learned that while the Portland-Vancouver location was well suited in many respects for the three "emergency" shipyards that industrialist Henry Kaiser was constructing, it had one drawback: the area had little industry and thus few industrial workers.

In response to this need, and to Roosevelt's call for the massive recruitment of women, the *Oregonian* reported that Portland clubwomen were organizing a first-in-the-nation effort to register the ability and willingness of females to do war work. Here, too, it appeared that the subject of women working in non-traditional jobs was a sensitive one, as the *Oregonian* put this article in the women's section, not in the news pages. And the newspaper emphasized that women's participation would be purely voluntary. By reporting on the survey,

however, the newspaper showed that it did not necessarily disapprove of the concept of women in war work.¹² The registrars spread out all over the state, some reportedly travelling on horseback and by chartered plane. When they returned, they reported on their findings: 302,013 women had indicated that they were willing and able to step up to war work.¹³

From Amy Kesselman's 1990 study, *Fleeting Opportunities: Women Shipyard Workers In Portland and Vancouver During World War II and Reconversion*, I learned that the Kaiser shipyards in Oregon were served by a weekly, company newsletter, *The Bo's'n's Whistle* (bo's'n's is an abbreviation for boatswain, a Naval rank), which began in 1941. I turned to microfilm copies of the *Whistle*, archived by the Oregon Historical Society, to see how it portrayed the recruitment of women.

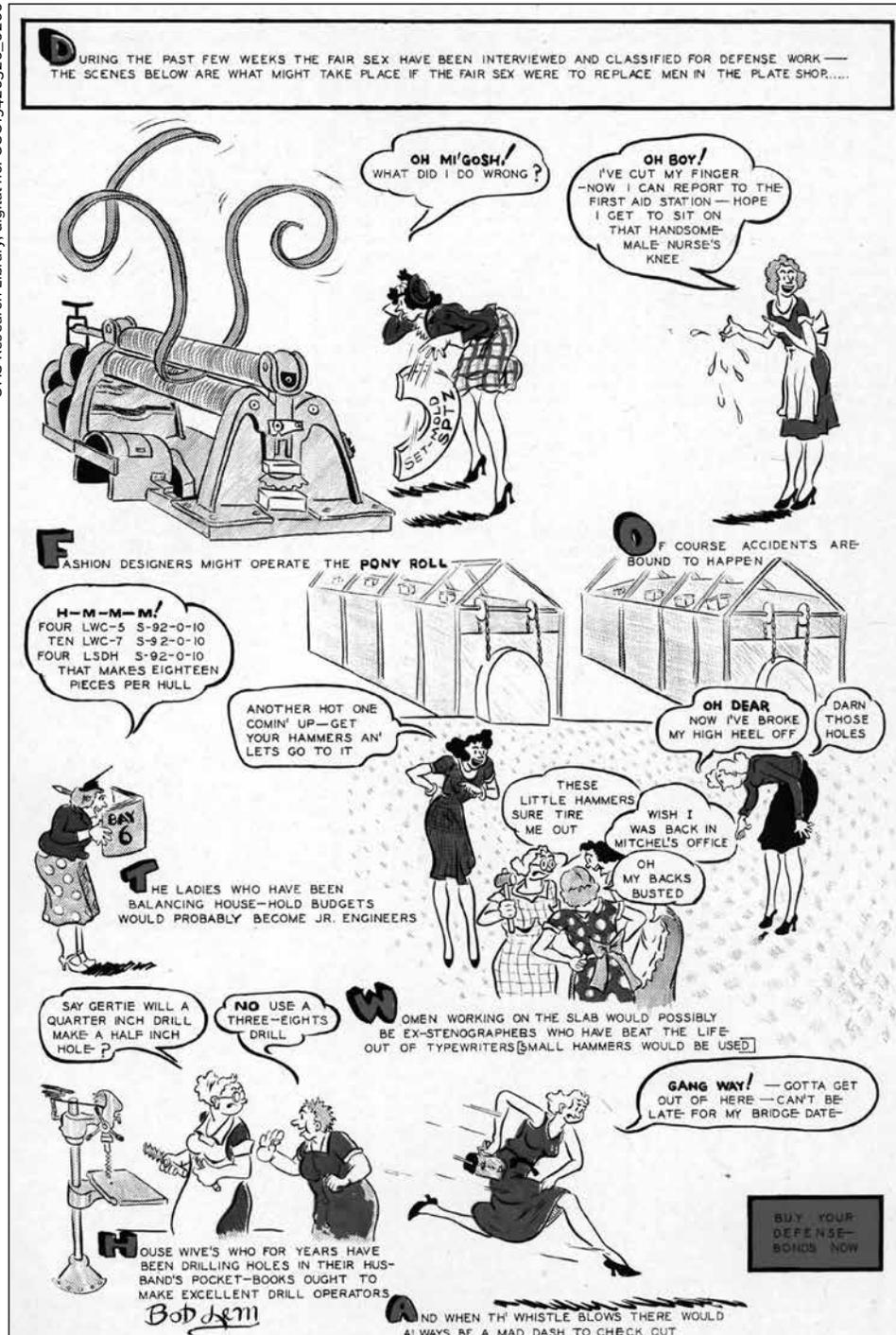
As I read through the early issues, I saw the shipyard depicted as a proudly all-male world. The amateurish, black-and-white newsletter made dull reading, devoted primarily to canned articles about shipyard safety. There was, however, one livelier feature called "In the Yard," which included brief items on individual workers, often recognizing those who had won one of the shipyards' many competitions. The notices were accompanied by a half-column, black-and-white headshot. All, of course, were men.

But when the clubwomen's survey was published, the *Whistle* came up with something new: a page of cartoon drawings devoted to mocking the very idea of women shipbuilders.

Here, there was no concern about how war work could negatively affect women. Rather, the newsletter confidently demonstrated that women would never do such work because they were laughably ill-equipped. The page was headlined: "During the last few weeks the fair sex have been interviewed and classified for defense work — the scenes below are what might take place if the fair sex were to replace men in the plate shop." In the six sketches, women — either young and curvaceous or old and sagging — were shown confronting a variety of shipyard problems such as broken high heels, cut fingers, and hammers that were just too heavy. Furthermore, the women could not seem to grasp how anything worked. "Say Gertie," one woman asked in one of the cartoons, "will a quarter inch drill make a half inch hole?" "No," Gertie responded. "Use a three-eighths inch drill." Under the cartoon was the commentary: "Housewives who for years have been drilling holes in their husbands pocket-books ought to make excellent drill operators."¹⁴

The shipyards remained comfortable with their all-male status in the days leading up to America's entry into the war. If any "girls" showed up, it was cause for jocularly in the *Whistle*: "Well, we finally managed to get a girl in No Man's Land," the newsletter reported in August 1941. "She sure is a sight for sore eyes down here, in the field office. . . . (We mean our nurse! — Both of 'em!)"¹⁵

And that was pretty much it for women, except for those few wives of dignitaries who were brought in long



THIS CARTOON, depicting women as inferior shipyard workers, appeared in the March 26, 1942, edition of the *Bos'n's Whistle* newsletter.

enough to swing a champagne bottle against the hull of a finished ship. But there is evidence that the men's views went deeper than the notions that women couldn't figure out how to use a drill or were valuable only for their looks. For many men, as Forrest Rieke, Kaiser's chief medical officer, remembered, the presence of women violated "traditional, deep convictions."¹⁶

In an oral history housed at the Oregon Historical Society, Rieke reported that many of the shipyard workers came from Kaiser dams and pipelines in the Southwest, where they had developed "strong opinions about what women's work was and what men's work was and what male and female relationships were, and responsibilities were."¹⁷ It should be remembered, Rieke said, that these men had worked in "hard, isolated areas, where the woman really was busy helping the family survive."¹⁸ In accordance with their belief that this should be women's role, the career construction men had announced: "the minute a woman came in, they were leaving."¹⁹

With the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, however, men rushed to enlist, and the magnitude of the labor crisis was suddenly there for all to see. And, as I learned from historians of the period, the government now made it clear that there was only one solution: the country must, absolutely must, "employ women on a scale hitherto unknown."²⁰ One million women were to be added to the workforce by the end of 1942. And that was just the beginning: the expansion of war production was expected to bring in four million more women in 1943.²¹

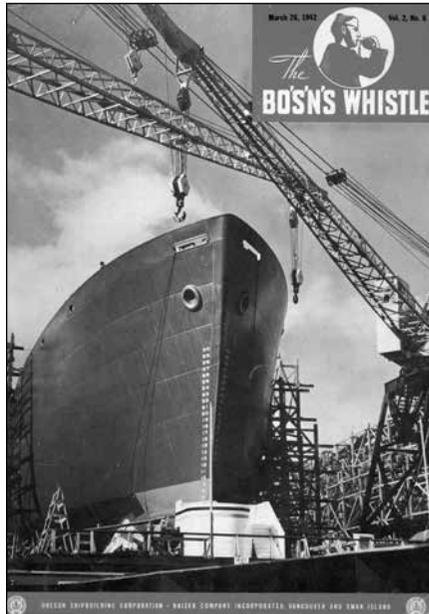
Predictably, many men did not like the idea of their wives working in a war plant. What may have come as more of a surprise than the hesitation of men, however, was the fact that women themselves were not at all certain about venturing into previously all-male settings. Having lived through the Great Depression, when it was considered particularly unseemly for women to take jobs from male breadwinners, many women found it difficult to believe that they were really wanted.²² As the government acknowledged, "getting these women into industry is a tremendous sales proposition."²³ The women who were the focus of the sales pitch were an especially difficult group to persuade. They were not women who already worked; the government wanted those to stay where they were. Rather, the campaign sought to recruit women who had not worked outside the home before, who probably had never even considered it — women like Eva.

And if some male workers could not imagine working alongside women, some employers (male of course) were also reluctant. But the Office of War Information had launched a massive public relations campaign, making it clear that employers *would* change their minds because it was their patriotic duty to do so. The title of one War Department publication stated the situation as unambiguously as possible: "You're Going to Employ Women."²⁴ And, to demonstrate the feasibility of this demand, the government released results of a survey showing "that women could fill 80 percent of war jobs with only brief training."²⁵



IN 1942, editors of the *Bos'n's Whistle* revamped the newsletter to resemble a contemporary magazine that featured women in the columns. On the left is the old newspaper format from August 1941, and on the right is the updated magazine from March 1942.

By May 1942, Kaiser had complied with this imperative and the first women welders entered Oregon Ship, one of Kaiser's three yards on the Columbia River. Back in the Oregon Historical Society library, I turned again to the *Whistle* to see how the incursion was covered. It was a momentous event for the shipyards and for America's ability to turn out desperately needed vessels. Too, it was a big step for Henry Kaiser who, if he was to fulfill his government contracts and help win the war, clearly had to welcome women into the workforce. The *Whistle* was, of course, a Kaiser publication. In addition to the articles on shipyard safety and items on individual workers, it now increasingly delivered a propaganda message, tell-



ing workers what they needed to do, think, and feel to win the war.

Still, the *Whistle* was at this point only an amateurish, mimeographed newsletter, run by the same men who earlier put up the page of cartoons mocking the idea of women in the yard. Although the *Whistle* covered the entry of the first women, this fact was mentioned as briefly as possible. The "In The Yard" section still mostly printed mug shots of men, but in May 7, 1942, women made their first appearance, the two of them sharing one half-column photo. Small and rather anxious-looking, they were photographed coming through the turnstiles, their IDs held up for inspection. Both women had graduated from welding school, the

item reported. As if to put this shocking event into a more acceptable context, the caption went on to note that one of the women "has a son on Bataan and considers this her way to of doing her part for him and his buddies."²⁶

Although some men had said they would walk out if women were hired, there are no reports that any actually did. And by August 1942, Kaiser, and a revamped *Whistle*, appeared to be fully on board with the new reality. Under new editorial direction, the *Whistle* was completely made over, now looking more like a contemporary magazine than the simple newsletter of a year earlier. The *Whistle* took another look at those same pioneering women welders. One of them, Mary Carroll, a fiftyish woman in a boxy black welder's helmet, was profiled in a photo layout that showed her reaching out to turn off her alarm clock at 5:45 a.m., packing her lunch pail, eating breakfast at a lunch counter as quizzical male workers looked on, and then hitchhiking the three miles to the bus that would take her the remaining seventeen miles to the plant.²⁷

By September, it seemed that the dam had broken, as women were now all over the *Whistle*. And whatever men may have been thinking, one idea they could no longer hold was that women simply could not do shipyard work. The reality was that they were doing it. While the welders were the most ballyhooed, women were doing all kinds of jobs previously thought to be suitable only for men, and the *Whistle* ran features on many of them: a woman fingerprint expert, a motorcycle messenger, clerks,

secretaries, workers in blueprint departments and electrical shops.²⁸ As the drive to employ women came into full force, the *Whistle*, ever competitive, even began to boast about its women, claiming that Kaiser had hired "the first women ship workers in America's Maritime yards."²⁹ There was truth to the *Whistle's* claims that Oregon was a leader in hiring shipyard women: the Portland area would lead the nation in percentage of women working in the yards. At the wartime peak, 40,000 women were employed, approximately one quarter of all workers.³⁰

It should be noted that while Black women also took on shipyard jobs, they were often relegated to unskilled positions such as "shipyard workers" and "helpers." Kaiser's coordinator of women's services testified to the Fair Employment Practice Commission that Black women were concentrated in these jobs because they were "unqualified and unsuited for skilled work."³¹ Nationwide, Black women endured unfair conditions, with problems such as segregated bathrooms blocking their progress.³² Black women's participation in war work, furthermore, was unacknowledged and almost invisible on the national stage, as "advertising, recruitment posters, and newsreels" nearly always portrayed the patriotic women helping in the war effort as White.³³

Despite discrimination, it was also true, according to Henry Chafe, that Black women benefitted from opportunities for jobs that would previously have been denied them. Before the war, over 70 percent of Black women had worked as domestics, and 20

percent in agricultural fields. During the war, however, only 48 percent worked as domestics, and the number of farm workers declined to 7 percent. Meanwhile, Black women working in factories went from 7.3 percent to 18.9 percent.³⁴ One woman remembered the experience positively: “My sister always said that Hitler was the one that got us out of the white folks’ kitchen.”³⁵

In the Oregon yards, if there were concerns about the masculinization of women, the dangers to their morals, or their competence, they did not appear in the pages of the of the *Whistle*. As the yards repeatedly set production records, the newspaper seemed to be cheerfully on board with the new state of affairs. In numerous articles, the *Whistle* appeared to smooth the way, helpfully rolling out a new list of slang that shipbuilders should know. “Nifties” were “girls who [were] replacing the men in warehouses,” and inevitably “welderettes” were the new female welders.³⁶

Only a few months earlier, the problem of women’s attire had been offered as one reason why they could never do shipyard work, but the *Whistle*’s cartoonist now undertook the task of depicting the right and wrong way for women to dress when taking on “men’s jobs.” Drawings of two young women demonstrated the point. The first was dressed in such a way as to jeopardize safety: loose hair, exposed arms, long fingernails, high-heeled, open-toed shoes. The other woman was dressed correctly. She wore a leather jacket, blue jeans, low-heeled work shoes, and her hair up in a scarf. The caption

admonished: “glamour . . . is out for the duration.”³⁷

The *Whistle* enthusiastically promoted Kaiser’s efforts to make the yards more agreeable to the women it continued to recruit. In another set of photos, the newspaper showed the new dorms for women — modern-looking, two-story facilities in the Swan Island Yard that could house 512 “girls.” For a weekly rate of \$4.90, and under the eye of a matron, the women shared rooms that contained twin beds, two small closets, and two dressers, each with a mirror. Each floor had a large bathroom with communal sinks and showers. In addition, the *Whistle* boasted, there was “maid service . . . just as any first class hotel,” a feature that must have thrilled the young women who had come of age in the grueling years of the Great Depression.³⁸

The yard instituted a counseling program for “feminine shipbuilders,” as the *Whistle* now began to style them. The counselors — such a novelty that they would be featured in *Made-moiselle* magazine — gave suggestions on clothing and head covering, yard polices, and safety on the job.³⁹ Advised that female absenteeism — which was higher than that of men — often resulted from difficulties in finding reliable child care, Kaiser in mid 1943 did something that astonished men and women alike: the company began construction of “ultra modern child care centers,” where youngsters would play, nap, enjoy story time, and be served nutritious meals while their mothers were building ships.⁴⁰ At first, as the *Whistle* reported, women



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TWO BURNERS, Blanche Reheard and Hazel Bolen, take a break from operating a flame planer at the Kaiser Swan Island shipyard in 1944. During World War II, many women were doing jobs at shipyards that had previously been thought suitable only for men, such as welding, delivering messages by motorcycle, becoming fingerprint experts, and working as electricians.

were skeptical. But the mothers were won over by the pleasant facilities and trained staff, and, perhaps, the adorable pictures of happy toddlers appearing in the *Whistle*.⁴¹ Before the war ended, 4,000 children would be entrusted to the centers’ care.⁴²

The government had decreed that women would be hired, and Kaiser’s *Whistle* kept up a cheery tone on the progress of women in the yards. All the same, as Jane Marcellus wrote in her study of the *Whistle*’s portrayal of women, the newcomers were always “framed as peculiarities in the previously all-male environment. No matter

how much they were needed or how well they did their jobs, they remained, for the duration, out of the ordinary in the *Bo’s’n’s Whistle*’s representation. This was true even in articles that praised their work. Sexuality was emphasized, with “frequent references to their looks and supposed frailty.”⁴³

Still, as Kesselman reported, most women who had been in the yards and whose experiences were captured in oral histories did not describe the male workers as a “monolithic bloc of opposition.” Often the women reported that attitudes toward them were dismissive, even hostile at first, but improved over



A LARGE CROWD of workers eat a meal at one of the mess halls in the Kaiser Swan Island shipyard barracks. This photo appeared in the *Oregon Journal* on September 26, 1943, with a description that the mess halls served a million meals a month and was intended to “give a man all he can eat at a reasonable price.”

time, after men had actually worked with women.⁴⁴ An example of this was one male general manager who admitted to the *Whistle* that earlier in the war, he had viewed the prospect of managing “a shipbuilding unit this size, with nearly a third of the help being women” as “crazy.” But that’s what he did, and by late 1944, he reported: “I’m still here and the women are doing a splendid job.”⁴⁵

By the time Eva arrived in early 1944, the yards had come a long way from the autumn of 1941, when the “girls” in “no man’s land” were generally nurses or beauty queens. The men who remembered the proudly all-male life in the shipyards had seen the verities they lived by undergo rapid and immense change. But a young woman like Eva, fresh off the farm and unaware of early tensions in the

yards, probably did not fully grasp the seismic shift in gender roles she was part of. What she saw in the shipyards was women everywhere doing just about everything. She accepted it with virtually no comment as part of her new normal. Nothing in her letters home suggested that women were discriminated against, or that she personally had faced the slightest difficulty because she was female. What *did* come as a shock to Eva was the sudden, astonishing wartime ability to make money, good money, better money than many Depression-era families had ever seen. As if unsettled by her new riches, Eva, since she first arrived in Portland, had been sending most of her pay home in the form of war bonds. She wrote that she wanted to repay her folks “for all they’ve done.”

Naturally, they immediately replied that she did not owe them a thing. Still, with her next check, Eva sent ten dollars for her father to buy a new hat. Her mother, always frugal, wrote back that ten dollars was enough for a hat *and* a belt.

Like most women war workers, Eva was not a welder or a riveter. Rather, they were put into a variety of unskilled positions now vacated by men. Eva quickly was hired at the giant Swan Island cafeteria as a cashier, a job in which people were getting used to seeing a woman:

Increasingly, the *Whistle* showed the yards as a fun place, in large part due to women’s presence. In January 1944, for example, the *Whistle* reported on the first all-woman launch of a massive oil tanker. Female guards were positioned to keep men away from the festivities and “the only man to get a ‘look in,’” according to the *Whistle*, was Master Shipwright Robert Sweitzer “who almost stole the show in his feminine costume, which was complete with curls, ostrich plumes and long lace dress.”⁴⁶ In another report, the *Whistle* revealed its discovery that the female chauffeurs maintained a bulletin board of “pinup boys.”⁴⁷

For Eva, the amazement of making her own, good money, was coupled with the remarkable independence that was suddenly hers. In a city buzzing with wartime adrenalin and full of sailors, Eva did not have to ask anyone where she could go, with whom, or when she had to be back. Although her letters home were somewhat cautious on this point, it was clear that Eva was very busy, probably out every evening. “Hey you kid in the other bed,” a room-

mate jotted on one of the envelopes I found among the letters: “Don’t you ever come home?”

Eva was not the only young woman having such a fabulous time that she couldn’t come home at night. Another woman war worker, interviewed by Elaine Tyler May, remembered: “There was never, never a shortage of young healthy bucks . . . We never thought of getting tired. Two, three hours of sleep was normal. . . . I’d go down to the office every morning half dead, but with a smile on my face, and report for work. There was another girl there who was having a ball too, and we took turns going into the back room and taking a nap on the floor behind a desk.”⁴⁸

Despite initial concerns, firsthand reports suggested that for most young women, traditional sexual mores held. For one thing, as Rieke told his interviewer, birth control methods were not widely accepted or well understood. They inspired little confidence that pregnancy could be avoided.⁴⁹ A woman named Dellie Hahne told Studs Terkel there “was very little sleeping around.” “We’d go out in herds and stay up all night. . . . We were still at the tail-end of a moral generation. Openly living together was not condoned. An illegitimate child was a horrendous handicap. It was almost a ruination of your life.”⁵⁰

As I continued to read through the *Whistle*, I saw that now every issue contained photos showing women doing a good job in some aspect of shipyard work. But in mid January 1944, I came across something new: the front page of the *Whistle* was devoted to a photograph of a young and pretty

shipyard woman in a bathing suit, striking a pose that would have to be called cheesecake. Nor was this to be an anomaly; such photographs would grace the magazine's cover until the war's abrupt end. The *Whistle* now also reported on frequent beauty contests as the many state associations within the yards selected their own favorite "Miss." The *Whistle*, apparently forgetting its earlier dictum that glamor was out for the "duration," featured one woman who won a welding contest in many revealing photos — one photo showed her in the shower behind the curtain — and emphasized that she could "work all day in the shipyard and still be glamorous."⁵¹ Undoubtedly, some women disliked the new emphasis on "glamour." One woman selected as a beauty queen told Kesselman that she felt uncomfortable at being asked to "prance" on stage. She did it, she said, because her co-workers were so excited that she had been chosen.⁵²

Surely, as Jane Marcellus has suggested, there were men who wanted to demean and control women workers by reducing them to sex objects. But, as I thought back to the early concerns about women working, I wondered whether something else could have also been happening. I had seen that one of the main fears as the war began was that women would be "masculinized," would turn into Rockwell's big, messy, muscular riveter. In the early days, it seemed that people — men and women alike — were wondering whether doing so-called man's work would actually make women mannish. But in the real world of the shipyard,

that did not happen. And I wondered whether, on some level, the *Whistle* wanted to reassure men and women alike. Women were still women, as conventionally understood, and, once they got the grease out of their hair and the grime from under their fingernails, they could still be attractive in that conventional manner. In a world turned upside down, I suspect there was some comfort in the perception that this was one thing that had not fundamentally changed.

The practice of complimenting the looks of female workers extended far beyond the shipyards. Remarks on women's appearance seemed to have been required in articles reporting on their entry into the workforce. Early in the war, for example, the *Oregonian* ran an article under the headline "Comely and Petite Woman Becomes a Taxi Driver Here." The article noted: "She's comely. She's petite. She's vivacious. And, incidentally, she can handle a car."⁵³ Sometime later, when the *Oregonian* reported that women were being recruited to Northwest sawmills and lumber camps — "And Now the Gals Are Invading the Woods" — a "105-pound, 19-year-old blonde" timber grader "turned on the dimples" as she described how much she liked her work.⁵⁴

The focus on women's appearance extended beyond pinup-type comeliness to the seriousness of marriage. The yards had a reputation as such hotbeds of romance and marriage that *Bride* magazine sent a reporter to cover the story. Under the headline "Cupid Lurks Here Bride Survey Shows," the *Whistle* shared the findings of the *Bride*

reporter: "The love bud nips through man-styled work clothes and behind metal helmets as easily as it pierces the smartest of costume or the smoothest of makeup." And according to *Bride*, it wasn't just the youthful women workers who were being courted and married: "the marriage age has extended in two directions, covering the field from 16 to 60," and "more women past 40 years old are getting married than ever before in history."⁵⁵

It even appeared that, in some cases, the camaraderie in the shipyards was producing a new kind of marriage. When an inquiring reporter for the *Whistle* asked whether men and women should share housework when both were working, most men said yes. A male assistant superintendent asserted: "I don't think much of a guy who would not be willing to lend a hand to his wife at home after she has worked hard for eight hours on a job. A wife who holds down a war job deserves special consideration." A male machinist agreed, adding: "I'm a darn good dishwasher."⁵⁶

Reading the *Whistle* though 1943 and into early 1944, I concluded that, overall, the experience of women in war work had been illuminating for men and women alike. Women had proven to themselves and to others that they could do tasks that many — as demonstrated by early *Whistle* coverage — had doubted they could do. They showed that they could make and manage their own money and run their own lives successfully, even when it came to sexual activity. Further, more independent women were still women, and the sky had not fallen on relations

between the sexes. Remembering the war years in oral histories, women reported that they never forgot what they had learned about their own ability to function outside the home. Marie Baker, for example, said: "Yeah, going to work during the war changed me — made me grow up a little and I realized I could do things."⁵⁷

Although the war in Europe would continue for nearly a year after the D-Day invasion, and workers were exhorted regularly to stay on their jobs until the big fight in the Pacific was over, by June 1945, ultimate victory seemed assured. And now I saw yet another shift in *Whistle* coverage: the question of what workers would do after the war. There were frequent articles reporting the findings of shipyard surveys that asked questions such as: "After the war, what do you think you will spend your savings on?" The answers ranged from: "What savings?" to "Buy a bedspring and non-victory furniture" and "I'm going to buy a 100-pound bag of sugar and make it all into fudge and eat every bit of it myself."⁵⁸

In addition to inviting speculation on the pleasures of post-war life, the *Whistle* also tried to answer a serious question that was foremost in the minds of many workers: would there be jobs? In the Portland area, as the *Whistle* reported, approximately 195,000 men, women, and children — two thirds of the area's entire pre-war population — depended on the shipyard for their livelihood.⁵⁹ While the *Whistle* played up various bright prospects for post-war jobs, the magazine also began to offer muted warnings that the Portland area

simply would not be able to absorb all those who came to work in war plants. Although many workers said they hoped to stay in the area, and two thirds said they wanted to continue in industrial work, the *Whistle* cautioned: “city and state officials realize that actual circumstances after the war may alter the thinking of these people.”⁶⁰ The anxiety about post-war employment was informed in large part by the experience of the 1930s. One understandable line of reasoning: just as the coming of war brought jobs, with the end of the war and the return of the servicemen, the terrible unemployment and poverty could also return. It was a fear that was shared by some national prognosticators, who predicted a coming period of dislocation that would “equal the Great Depression.”⁶¹

How could such a catastrophe be averted? In March 1944, the *Whistle* brought into the open what many were thinking or perhaps hoping: the belief that “women would naturally step down and give their jobs back to men folks after the war.” But the *Whistle* warned that this was not necessarily what women intended to do, reporting that more than 53 percent of the women wanted to continue in industrial work.⁶² It was not just women in Portland who wanted to keep their jobs. Nationwide, women wanted to continue working after the war; a U.S. Department of Labor survey reported that “75 to 80 percent of women in war production areas planned to remain in the labor force after victory was won.”⁶³ How were the shipyards and the nation to cope with this contradiction?

To sample attitudes nationwide on the question of women’s future employment, I went to the New York City research library, where I read popular magazines from 1944 and was surprised at the marked shift in attitude. I saw that the fervent “We need you!” of 1942 and then the “Women are doing a great job!” of mid-war was being replaced by a dismissive: “Soon we won’t have to put up with women in the workplace anymore.” A month after D-Day (June 6, 1944), for example, *Time* magazine ran an article entitled “Females in Factories.” While admitting women’s essential contribution to the war effort, the article also suggested that women workers were too much trouble and that no one would want to put up with them under normal conditions. At the time, there were over three and a half million women in war industries, and the article conceded that “in a factory job which does not require strength, a contented woman worker can turn out half again as much work as men.” The problem, though, was that it was nearly impossible to *keep* women contented. They expected, according to Dr. Marion Janet Dakin, “sympathy and special attention” and were “easily up set by troubles at home.” (This statement perhaps referred to the well-known fact that many working women were still responsible for cooking, cleaning, and child care.) At any rate, *Time* reported, the women were “so prone . . . to complain, get sick, ache, stay home, quit, that many a factory supervisor will be glad when his women are paid off for good.”⁶⁴

And an editorial I found in *Life* magazine began laying the theoretical groundwork for what would become a postwar certainty: the only fulfillment for women was to be found through homemaking, not work outside the home. *Life*, to be sure, also congratulated women on having done a good job during the war, although noting they had not done it in quite the hardy spirit of their “pioneer grandmothers.” The article noted that women had even won some parity with men, which the editors did not begrudge; an Army nurse, for example, got paid as much as other officers and “the women earn it.” But equal treatment of women during the war did not mean that women could expect the same afterward for, as the editorial asserted, under normal conditions, equality between the sexes was probably just not meant to be: “scientists and philosophers have argued for generations about how much equality women are equipped for.” While some claimed that women “have no innate handicaps,” others find that “woman’s dependence and man’s chivalry are rooted in nature.”⁶⁵ It came as a shock to me to see how soon the “natural” fact of women’s inferiority and dependence resurfaced among the nation’s most influential journalists. For them, it seemed, the phenomenon of women in industrial jobs was a temporary annoyance, one more thing to put up with for “the duration,” like rationing and red tape.

My study of the *Whistle*’s shipyard coverage revealed a more nuanced picture. For several years, shipyard

men had seen women taking on difficult jobs and acquitting themselves well, a fact that the *Whistle* acknowledged in almost every issue. Furthermore, in the *Whistle*’s writers’ attitudes and those of men they interviewed, I glimpsed signs of respect and sometimes — as evidenced by the man who donned ostrich feathers to crash the all-woman launch — a playful camaraderie. But even in the shipyards, many had begun to think that it was time for women to go back home. As a male outfitting clerk told the *Whistle*, “women are doing a wonderful job.” Still, he believed that after the war they should be supported by husbands since “the best way to avoid a depression is to get women to give up their jobs.” Another man agreed that women should return home, adding: “We’ll sure miss them if they do, though.”⁶⁶ After Victory in Europe Day (V-E Day), May 5, 1945, such views became the norm.

Less than a year earlier, the *Whistle* had reported that the majority of women said they wanted to continue in an industrial job postwar. But the magazine now indicated, without offering evidence, that this was *not* in fact what women wanted. Three days after V-E day, the *Whistle* ran a double-page layout under the headline: “‘The Kitchen’ — Women’s Big Post-war Goal.”⁶⁷ No photos were used to make the point. Rather, as in the *Whistle*’s first days, editors used cartoon drawings, seemingly their way of depicting what they took to be — or believed ought to be — women’s frame of mind.



ALTHOUGH A MAJORITY of women reported in 1944 that they wanted to continue working their industrial jobs after the war, the *Bos'n's Whistle* editors included this headline in the May 11, 1945, edition. The accompanying illustrations show a woman rushing home to resume domestic life.

As I studied the drawings I realized how completely the *Whistle's* coverage had always depicted the shipyard as a world unto itself. Although the women had been widely covered, they had been discussed or shown in the shipyard context. Even bathing beauties were posed against anchors or other large pieces of equipment. But here was another environment: the home, an idealized version of home, filled with flowers and birdsong. And racing toward that home was a woman in overalls and heavy boots, lunch pail in hand. She was running so fast that her tin hat flew off her head and puffs of dust formed at her heels. In the second drawing, the same woman was

shown in a polka dot dress and frilly apron. She was wiping dishes and singing merrily as two toddlers tussled at her feet. The drawings were captioned: "When the war is finally finished most feminine shipyard workers want to put geraniums in the window of a cottage and take care for their 'kids'."⁶⁸

Much, it seemed to me, had changed since 1941. Here, at the end of the war, it would be impossible to imagine women mocked as utter incompetents, as they had been at the beginning. Everyone appeared to acknowledge the fact that women had worked hard and acquitted themselves well. But now the *Whistle* reflected the view that would soon become as

powerful as any wartime propaganda: what women really wanted — what women must now want — was to be homemakers. With GIs returning from the horrors of war, creating a home and a sense of normalcy was women's new patriotic duty.

Even as the war wound down, Eva wrote home of her terrific new job, arranging and overseeing the luncheon and drink service for dignitaries taken out on shakedown cruises of newly launched ships. I realized that in another era, Eva's work might have been seen as a valuable apprenticeship for a career, something in the hospitality industry perhaps. Certainly, where men were concerned, the *Whistle* was busy playing up the ways shipyard work could boost a career. An article addressed to "Mr. Shipyard Worker," for example, reported that those who had worked as riggers could be eligible for "50 types of jobs in forestry."⁶⁹ But future prospects for women workers were not mentioned in the *Whistle*. The idea, sold at the beginning of the war, that war work could prepare women for a "satisfying career" had vanished.

Soon the government contracts for new ships were cancelled, and Eva knew her days on the job were numbered. In letters to her mother, she began to question everything that had happened since she had left home two years earlier: who she had become and what she wanted or, at least, should want. Could this have been the first time she stopped to examine the changes that had taken place in her life? Well, why not? She was barely twenty-three and had been thrown into

a whirlwind that had upended life for people all over the world. Her letters to her mother in late 1945 revealed a sudden — if somewhat contradictory — insight:

It's not that Portland is bad or even Swan Island. The people are the same here as they are all over the world, good and bad. It's just that no girl should live away from home & work. Not that it makes bad girls out of all good ones. I haven't changed a bit that way & never would if I lived here 10 years.

It's just that you live too fast, it's bad for a person, physically and mentally. You become mixed up, restless, unsure & dissatisfied with life, people & the whole world in general. You never can really be happy, because you never know what you want. And if you do, you're afraid to take it because you know it would mean giving up something else you like.

What she was trying to describe sounded a lot like the coming-of-age confusion many young people face as they struggle to understand who they are in the world and what they want in life. But Eva, like everyone else who read magazines or newspapers, was being told with increasing fervor that this type of confusion was not proper for women. That, in fact, there was no confusion: home and marriage was the only correct choice. It was even, as Ferdinand Lunberg and psychiatrist Marynia F. Farnham would soon argue in their 1947 best-seller, *Women: The Lost Sex*, the only sane choice.

Here in 1945, twenty-three-year-old Eva was receiving a powerful message about what women must now want. As a result, she could only understand that she was "selfish" because she did not want to return to a domestic life.

"I'll admit," she wrote, "that Portland, my work, this way of living & this type of reckless, carefree, independent life has me pretty well under its power. I love it & I love Portland and I'd hate to give it up. In fact, I can't seem to do it, even though I know it means so little compared to the real life I've always wanted. Then sometimes I wonder if I even know what or who I want."

In Eva's case, the widely expressed pre-war anxieties had not been borne out. She had not been masculinized, she had not become immoral, and she had not proven incompetent. But something dangerous *had* happened to her. As Eva seemed to vaguely understand, she had had the misfortune of glimpsing what it was to live a life of freedom and independence, what it meant to have choices. As a result, she could not find in herself the obedient and dutiful girl she used to be, the girl who had never imagined any life other than that of wife, homemaker, and mother.

Surely concerns about jobs contributed to the urgency in getting women back into the home. Certainly, there was a great yearning for normalcy, the pleasures of home that had been missed by so many throughout many difficult years. But the passion with which the toothpaste of women's agency was being forced back into the tube suggested that, on some level, society understood that a change, potentially dangerous for the status quo, had taken place. By the mid 1950s, many Americans had accepted that marriage and homemaking was women's only proper occupation.⁷⁰

Still, a sense of unease could sometimes be detected; I was fascinated to come across one acknowledgement of the negative results of the effort to force women back into what was often a remarkably infantilized status. This problem was addressed in a 1956 issue of *Life* magazine entitled "The American Women: Her Achievements and Troubles."⁷¹ Sandwiched in between glitzy ads and fashion layouts were dozens of articles broaching the subject. A British writer asked why American women, who seemed to have everything, were not happier. A panel of psychologists warned anew of the dangers of careers. Even a minister had been brought in to remind readers that matrimony is the one blessing that God did not strip from the sinful first couple. Reading the issue, I noticed that one possible cause for malaise — the stark contrast between women's experiences during the war and the lives most led after it — was nowhere mentioned. For the purposes of considering women's "achievements and troubles," World War II had been erased.

During the war, women were the object of a remarkable, and remarkably contradictory, barrage of social propaganda, powerful enough to make a young farm woman like Eva do the unthinkable: leave home alone, go to the city, and discover what it meant to be independent. As the war wound down, the propaganda went into reverse. The women who had acquitted themselves so admirably out in

the world must now cease doing so and return to their homes. I found little outcry against this turn of events, little to support a woman who did not want to comply.

There were, however, a few exceptions. One was Frieda Miller, chief of the Women's Bureau, who observed that public opinion shifted from "excessive admiration for women's capacity to do anything, over to the idea . . . that women ought to be delighted to give up any job and return to their proper sphere — the kitchen." Some women leaders, she said, were stunned by the "toboggan in public esteem." Women had been fervently courted. But as Margaret Hickey, chairwoman of the Women's Advisory Committee remarked in a 1946 speech, "perhaps intentions were never honorable."⁷²

For Eva, however, the courtship had been all too seductive. She would never forget what she had learned about her own abilities and enjoyments

during the wartime years. Later, when women were being told that their only possible fulfillment was family and home, Eva knew better. She didn't want to be a rebel; she just knew better. As a result, she never returned to the farm and did not marry her pre-war fiancé or raise a family. Although it became clear in the 1950s that conventional domesticity was a woman's one path to security, and although she had plenty of opportunities to take this step, Eva could never bring herself to give up her free-wheeling, "selfish" way of life.

As so often happens to those who break the rules, Eva had it tough. I do not believe she ever regretted her choices. Still, hers was a precarious existence, dangerously outside society's norm. Not surprisingly, those at home in eastern Oregon were grieved, believing that Eva had been ruined by her experiences in the shipyard and that, to some extent, she had been lost. No wonder they never talked about her war.

NOTES

1. Portions of this article are excerpted from *The Courtship of Eva Eldridge*, The University of Iowa Press, 2016. To protect the privacy of Eva and her family, I have changed her name in the book and in this article.

2. Gwen Sharp and Lisa Wade, "Secrets of a Feminist Icon," *Contexts* 10:2 (Spring 2011): 82–83.

3. William Henry Chafe, *The American Woman: Her Changing Social, Economic, and Political Roles, 1920–1970* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1972), 137.

4. *Ibid.*, 150.

5. John Erskine, "'The World Will Belong to the Women!,'" *New York Times Magazine*, March 14, 1943, 15.

6. Raymond Knight, "A Lass — But Still a Lack," *Independent Woman*, June 1944.

7. Eliot Ness, "Sex Delinquency as a Social Hazard," *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work, 1944* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), 280, as quoted in Francis E. Merrill, *Social Problems on the Home Front: A Study of Wartime Influences* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), 100, 105.

8. Louise Paine Benjamin, "Hats Off to the Girls in the Factories," *Ladies' Home Journal*, October 1942, 98.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Nell Giles, *Punch in Susie! A Woman's War Factory Diary* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1943) 123.

11. Mary Rebecca Lingenfelter, *Wartime Jobs for Girls* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1943).

12. Freda G. McWrey, "Mobilization 'Wherefores' To Be Told," *Oregonian*, January 23, 1942, sec. 2, p. 1.

13. James Humbird, for the NEA Service, "Oregon Women Already Signed Up for Defense," *Ironwood Daily Globe* (Ironwood, Michigan), May 22, 1942, p. 6.

14. Bob Lem, "During the past few weeks," Cartoon, *Bo's'n's Whistle* (Kaiser Shipyards, Portland), archived at Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland, Oregon [hereafter OHS Research Library], March 26, 1942 as cited in Amy Kesselman, *Fleeting Opportunities: Women Shipyard Workers in Portland and Vancouver During World War II and Reconversion* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 16. Although the idea of women in the yards seemed ridiculous to *Whistle* editors, the newsletter had made an attempt to welcome Black men into the yards following FDR's Executive Order banning discrimination in defense industry hiring on the basis of "race, creed, color or national origin. A few weeks after the order, the *Whistle* dutifully ran an article affirming that "America's defense permits no discrimination on the basis of 'race or color.'" The article, headlined, "I Am the Janitor," included head shots of several black men, reported that "part of our janitorial

service is being done by a corps of colored gentlemen, many of whom are gifted and talented as musicians and athletes."

15. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 1:2, August 1, 1941.

16. Dr. Forrest Rieke, interviewed by Karen Beck Skold, January 9, 1976, SR 1675, transcript p. 5, OHS Research Library.

17. Rieke, SR 1675, transcript p. 5.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.* Although there was a popular impression, Henry Chafe wrote, that the First World War "dramatically transformed the status of the woman worker" and that a "revolution took place in women's economic role[s] after World War 1," the facts did not bear this out as the period from 1920 to 1940 "witnessed very little progress toward the goal of economic equality." During the war years "only 5 per cent of the women war workers joined the labor force for the first time." And whatever "positive impact the war did have was short lived. . . . The assumption that females constituted a separate category, inferior to men, pervaded both the assignment of women personnel and the salaries they were paid." Chafe, *The American Woman*, 51–53.

20. Chafe, *The American Woman*, 137.

21. Gregory, *Women in Defense Work*, 15.

22. *Ibid.*, 33.

23. Paul McNutt, head of War Manpower Commission, quoted in "Woman Power," *Fortune Magazine*, February 1943, 101, as cited in Chafe, *The American Woman*, 147.

24. Chafe, *The American Woman*, 147.

25. *Ibid.*, 137.

26. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 2:9, May 7 1942.

27. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 2:15, August 13, 1942.

28. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 2:17, September 10, 1942 and *Bo's'n's Whistle* 2:18, September 27, 1942.

29. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 2:15, August 13, 1942.

30. Kesselman, *Fleeting Opportunities*, 6.

31. *Ibid.*, 41.

32. Susan H. Hartmann, *The Home Front and Beyond: American Women in the 1940s*, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982), 80–81.

33. Maureen Honey, "Introduction," Maureen Honey, ed., *Bitter Fruit: African*

American Women in World War II (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 2, as quoted in Jane Marcellus, "Bo's'n's Whistle: Representing 'Rosie the Riveter' on the Job," *American Journalism*, 22:2 (Spring 2005), 88.

34. Chafe, *The American Woman*, 142–43.

35. Fanny Christina Hill, transcript of oral interview, from Sherna Berger Gluck, *Rosie the Riveter Revisited: Women, The War, and Social Change* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1987), 23.

36. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 2:17, September 10, 1942.

37. *Ibid.*

38. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 3:17, September 2, 1943.

39. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 3:9, May 6, 1943.

40. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 3:13, July 1, 1943.

41. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 3:22, November 25, 1943.

42. "Child care for Swan Island shipyard workers," *The Oregon History Project*, <https://oregonhistoryproject.org/child-care-for-swan-island-shipyard-workers> (accessed January 30, 2018).

43. Marcellus, *Bo's'n's Whistle: Representing Rosie*, 91.

44. Kesselman, *Fleeting Opportunities*, 49–50.

45. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 4:41 (Vancouver Shipyard), November 17, 1944, as cited in Kesselman, *Fleeting Opportunities*, 51.

46. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 4:2, January 28, 1944.

47. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 4:6 (Swan Island), March 17, 1944.

48. "Young Workingwoman During WWII," in Elaine Tyler May; "Rosie the Riveter Gets Married" in *Pushing the Limits*, in Lewis A. Erenberg and Susan E. Hirsch, eds., *The War in American Culture: Society and Consciousness During World War II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 128.

49. Rieke, SR 1675, transcript, p. 14.

50. Dellie Hahne, transcript of oral interview with Studs Terkel, *The Good War: An Oral History of World War Two* (New York: Pantheon Book, 1984), 117.

51. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 4:34 (Swan Island), September 29, 1944.

52. Kesselman, *Fleeting Opportunities*, 55.

53. *Oregonian*, March 27, 1942, p. 10.

54. Arthur W. Priaulx, *Sunday Oregonian Magazine*, November 2, 1942, p. 2.

55. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 4:10 (Swan Island), April 14, 1944.

56. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 4:5 (Oregon Shipyard), March 10, 1944.

57. Gluck, *Rosie the Riveter Revisited*, 237.

58. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 4:3, February 11, 1944.

59. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 4:7, 1944 (all shipyard issues), March 10, 1944.

60. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 4:5, March 10, 1944.

61. Arthur Herman, *Freedom's Forge: How American Business Produced Victory in World War II* (New York: Random House Trade, 2013), 338.

62. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 4:5, March 17, 1944.

63. Maureen Honey, *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender, and Propaganda during World War II* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 23.

64. "Females in Factories," *TIME Magazine*, July 17, 1944, p. 62.

65. "American Women: Draft Them? Too Bad We Can't Draft Their Grandmothers," *LIFE Magazine*, January 29, 1945, p. 28.

66. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 4:9 (all shipyard issues), April 7, 1944.

67. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 5:19 (all shipyard issues), May 11, 1945.

68. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 5:19 (all shipyard issues), May 11, 1945.

69. *Bo's'n's Whistle* 5:4 (all shipyard issues), May 25, 1945.

70. Harvey, Brett, *The Fifties: A Women's Oral History* (San Jose: ASJA Press, 1993, 2002), 69–70. In 1940, 31 percent of the population was single, but by 1950, that number had dropped to 23 percent. By 1960, only 21 percent were single. And the age at which people married continued to drop. By 1959, almost half of brides were married before the age of nineteen.

71. "The American Woman: Her Achievements and Troubles," *LIFE Magazine*, December 24, 1956.

72. Chafe, *The American Woman*, 178.