TITLE:
Women at Work: 1940’s Compared to Today

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Thesis:
Up until the beginning of World War II, women in America were hardly members of the workforce. War created job opportunities for women, many of who took advantage of this newfound happenstance. However, these opportunities were shortlived until the end of the war. How have women in the workforce changed from World War II to the present?

Core Concepts/Keywords:
women, work, workforce, 1940's, World War II, employment

Primary Source:

Citation:

Annotation:
Letter by Charles Folsom detailing his belief about women working during World War II. Folsom believed that women should be encouraged to join the workforce. Folsom claimed this would allow women to become more independent, and that women workers would relieve men a bit during the stressful time of war.

Print Reference Source:

Citation:
Analyzes the changing gender roles of women. Today, women are more involved within the workforce, and like men earn wages. Explains how having both men and women earn wages creates economic security and greater family benefits.

**Electronic Reference Source:**

_Citation:_

_Annotation:_
Details life on the home-front in America during World War II. Women worked in the factories, while men fought in the war. Details one woman’s personal experience as a worker in a munitions factory. Details her personal experience with general experience of women at work during World War II.

**Web Sites:**

_Citation:_

_Annotation:_
Website. Details life on the homefront during World War II. Explores social aspects experienced by American women during this time. Includes new job opportunities, domestic life, and post–war life.

_Citation:_

_Annotation:_
Website that presents an essay from the Women’s Bureau in 1946. Discusses the issue of women wanting to continue being a part of the workforce after World War II. When the men returned from war women were fired from their jobs and were expected to stay at home to raise children. This essay opposes that belief by arguing that gender should not be a reason for employee discrimination.

**Books:**

_Citation:_

_Annotation:_
Explains social status of women during World War II. From women as dependent workers during the war to women as dependent stay-at-home mothers after the war. Critically analyzes gender relations and how gender affected social agendas.

_Citation:_

_Annotation:_
Feminist beliefs relating to the workforce, particularly the economic aspects. Highlights importance of female participation in the workforce, mainly stimulation of economy due to women’s newfound ability to earn wages. Ties feminism and economics into one idealistic point of view.

Annotation:
Discusses how women transformed the American workforce. Starts with women’s roles during World War II. Women significantly impacted the economy, helped to produce materials and supplies needed for the men during World War II, and helped keep the homefront together. Also discusses worklife and opportunities for women after the war.

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles:

Citation:

Annotation:
Explores the issue of gender on work relations. When men are at war, women stay home and take over important factory jobs. Briefly touches on the subject of women wanting to remain in the workforce after the war. Highlights certain gender inequalities.

Citation:

Annotation:
Describes the impact of women’s work during World War II. Discusses type of work that a lot of women participated in to help with the war effort. Also details what life was like for American women when the men returned home from World War II. Explains shift of women working during the war to women becoming stay-at-home mothers once again.

Newspaper Article:

Citation:

Annotation:
Based on research conducted, article predicts that women will make up the majority of the workforce by November 2009. Describes how men had lost approximately 74 percent of the jobs erased by the 2007 recession. Since World War II, women have been finding more and more job opportunities. For the first time ever, women are expected to make up the majority of the American workforce.

Additional Sources:

Citation:

Annotation:
Explores into technological advances during World War II, and its impact on gender roles. New technology presented women new job opportunities. Newer technology also helped making house chores easier, creating leisure time for women to spend however they deemed fit. Also briefly explores into technology’s impact on market pricing.
**Citation:**

**Annotation:**
Details the changing of gender roles in America during World War II. During the war, women took over factory jobs and became active in the workforce. Women earned wages and kept the economy alive as workers and consumers. Describes kinds of work performed by women, and arguments proving women’s worth as dependable employees.

**Citation:**

**Annotation:**
Norman Rockwell’s piece of art titled, *Rosie the Riveter.* This image was circulated by numerous productions during World War II. Features a woman who is taking a lunch break from her riveting job. She appears as a strong and independent figure. This picture inspired women to work and participate in the war effort.

**Citation:**

**Annotation:**
One of the more famous adaptations of Norman Rockwell’s, “Rosie the Riveter.” Features a more feminine, but equally strong-willed female factory worker. The caption, “We Can Do It!” sparked a tide of emotion and confidence from the female audience during World War II.