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WAR PERIOD

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q: integrate pgs 1-2? or into to chapter

War Period: Introduction

The labour market conditions in British Columbia during the

beginning years of World War II began to stimulate a strong workforce identity despite amongst working women, ~~the~~ ^{public} ~~temporary~~ vision of women's role in the, wartime economy and the short duration of their newfound employment.

~~The overwhelming demand for labour in all sectors of the economy,~~

~~By 1941 there was an overwhelming demand for workers in all sectors of the economy. Women faced the novel possibilities of working in male-dominated industrial jobs as well as openings in the mushrooming service and public sectors. Depression competition between working women decreased, maximizing their ability to bargain for improved workplace conditions. While wage controls inhibited massive wage gains in service occupations, women were able to institute shorter work weeks and greater control over conditions. Women could now move between sectors of the labour market as well as within them, providing an apparent escape from a previously peripheral and transitory relationship to employment in domestic or seasonal work.~~

Initial male hostility to women's entry into their traditional domain of production work abated as a high level of labour force participation continued and as women proved their skills in industrial positions. There was little direct competition between women and men for jobs: in plants where similar work was performed there were enough jobs for both sexes; and in many industries women were limited to skilled and semiskilled job categories and denied training and apprenticeship. Day to day contact and union ties ruptured some aspects of traditional male prejudice against women.

~~Government wartime propaganda promoted the use of women workers and lauded their flexibility and skill. Working women were a wartime fact of life, but their presence was qualified with a reminder to women and a reassurance to men and employers that they would likely return home~~

Women were temporary workers motivated by patriotism. (good snappy sentence)

employment at the end of hostilities.

~~The total change in attitudes and conditions, which would be such as~~
 if
 childcare, necessary for women to were to retain their jobs was never
 However Government eulogies and
 realized. ~~The and hazy promises of~~
 post-war work for women combined with women's new-found self-respect and an
 autonomy gained by conquering new skills, earning their own way and
 social and union participation. Many women did in fact develop a belief
 that post-war employment was legitimate in society's eyes and that
 they should be guaranteed a position.

Strong labour market conditions, the realization by women that ongoing
 employment was imperative for their family's well-being, positive new work experiences
 improved workplace conditions and a higher level of union organization combined
 to create a layer of trade union militants in both traditional and non-traditional
 work situations. This is indicated, for example, by
 the personal and organized resistance of women to leaving their wartime jobs, their decision to locate on
 other workplaces after lay off and the intensification of union activity
 in the traditionally female hotel and restaurant industries during 1944-1946.

~~Other evidence~~

~~Women had traditionally~~ B.C. employers had traditionally drawn on women ~~and permanent~~ and cyclical as floating reserve to fuel the province's seasonal economy. ^{women worked}

could omit, although it's nicely written

~~During the tourist season, in fish canneries during herring and salmon runs, in fields and processing plants during the harvest, and in isolated domestic services~~ in hotels and restaurants during the tourist season, in fish canneries during herring and salmon runs, in fields and processing plants during the harvest, and in isolated domestic services on the periphery of the money economy, when leisure class employers could afford to support servants or ^{home} farmers needed extra hands. Their numbers depended on the relative health of the economy.

← Women were also drawn into the economy when there was a sudden demand for labour power. World War II was such an ~~episode~~ ^{as industry expanded + men joined the services or were conscripted.} episode. The seasonal peripheral mobilization of women was intensified: ~~War~~ war labour demand grew not only in primary and secondary industry but in all of the services needed for the maintenance of industrial production: the ~~circulation~~ circulation of products, the sustenance of workers, and the Canadian Armed Forces. While ~~the production of consumer goods~~ the production of consumer goods diminished, food harvesting and processing remained a necessary part of the war effort.

B.C. Department of Labour statistics provide an overview of ~~the~~ the employment available to women during the war years. At the outset of the war women were concentrated in laundries, garment factories, food manufacture, mercantile establishments, offices, telephone and agricultural jobs as well as (in 1939) undocumented domestic and culinary positions. ¹ Some 54.56 per cent of women worked in office, telephone, fruit and vegetable and mercantile jobs as opposed to 42 per cent in manufacturing. By 1942 women were ~~entering~~ entering industries such as manufacturing, home furnishings, lumber and metal trades. There was a 42 per cent increase in the number of women employed in industrial jobs during the years 1939-1945. ²¹³ *despite a numerical growth in office employment.* This was one of the most significant percentiles amongst Canada's provinces.

This sectoral movement was part of a general growth in women's labour force participation. From 1940 to 1944, ~~the~~ the peak employment year, doubled the ~~unemployment~~ province's working women ~~jumped~~ from 30,538 to 60,410. These women participated in a cross-Canada employment trend: ~~female~~ female industrial workers ~~numbered~~ numbered 144,000 in 1939 and rose to 510,715, ~~in~~ in 1944, a 64% jump from the outset of hostilities. Over half of the women employed by Canadian industry were setting the highest record of female employment in Canadian history. in war industry jobs. ~~For~~ For example, 255,000 of 419,000 industrial workers were in such occupations in 1943 with a demand for an additional 250,000 anticipated for the next six months. ²⁰³

~~This growth in~~ This growth in the industrial sector was paralleled by a growth in traditional ~~service~~ service sector work and a leap in government occupations available to women. In fact, only a small percentage of women who entered the wartime labour force ~~took~~ the ~~found~~ found jobs in ~~the~~ historically male primary sector. Women moved into service jobs abandoned by men attracted to higher wages in industry. The Province provides this example: "Because of better wages offered in war industries, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find men to work in service stations."²⁴⁷ The statement accompanies a picture of "girls" tending cars at a ~~gas~~ gas station ^{which} in pre-war times had apparently hosted a "steady stream" ~~of~~ of male applicants.

appears contradictory

~~The~~ The headlong rush of women into wartime jobs was facilitated and encouraged by ~~the~~ both federal and provincial governments. Federal and provincial jurisdiction over ~~the~~ ^{the} labour relations ~~was~~ was divided according to each industry's relative importance in war production. ^{FTNOTE??} The federal

government played ~~the~~ the critical role in mobilizing female labour for this "struggle between whole peoples". By 1941 ^{it described} the major sources of labour power as youth and some 200,000 women. ¹⁹⁵ Relatively unskilled labour would be used in industrial production through dilution (breaking down skilled jobs into their component parts), redistributing skilled workers and introducing

(NSS)

new technologies.¹⁹⁶ The national Selective Service, begun on March 23, 1942, immediately began to register women, "Canada's most important reserve", estimate labour requirements in each industry and make job referrals, Women were encouraged to enter industry rather than a career in the armed forces.¹⁹⁷ To encourage mobility, The N.S.S. also provided transportation advances, training and temporary housing,²⁰¹ Desperate to guarantee labour power for industry, the government manipulated the job market in additional ways: it introduced compulsory registration of all employable Canadians in 1942, and required all workers seeking or accepting a job to hold a permit and screened all advertisements for employment.

~~The fact that the government's wartime regulation of the labour force was its production of propaganda directed towards potential and currently working women, reluctant employers, and male co-workers and society as a whole. Government articles sought to achieve two ends: the recruitment of women from middle class backgrounds, who unlike their working class sisters, needed to be convinced to eschew their leisure time and join the war effort and secondly, the creation of a concept of the heroic temporary female war worker who the populace believed would be willingly displaced at the end of the war. Later propaganda focused on instilling work discipline into the existing war labour force.~~

Theme for sub-head here

A major dimension of the government's wartime regulation of the labour force was its production of propaganda directed towards potential and currently working women, reluctant employers, and male co-workers and society as a whole. Government ~~articles~~ **advertisements** sought to achieve two ends: the recruitment of women from middle class backgrounds, who unlike their working class sisters, needed to be convinced to eschew their leisure time and join the war effort and secondly, the creation of a concept of the heroic temporary female war worker who the populace believed would be willingly displaced at the end of the war. Later propaganda focused on instilling work discipline into the existing war labour force.

The mainstream press worked hand in hand with government in achieving these goals. A regular column "Women at Work" appeared in The Province. Between 1940 and 1943 newspapers featured articles highlighting female shoemakers, truckdrivers, welders, radio announcers, conductresses, roofers, parachutists, plant matrons, messengers, and lifeguards, first as anomalies and later as symbols of women's ability to perform all types of work. ~~A picture~~ *in 1944*

female welding trainees are depicted
Masked ~~as~~ as "normal women". ~~One women~~ One women
states:

I think the time will come when welding companies aill be forced
to hire women. I want to be ready, "The sparks frightened me at
first", she admitted, "But now I never botice them."252

A Saturday Night article from OCTOBER, 1942 states that women are physically
able to perform 566 out of 623 ~~xxxxxx~~ operations required in industry. 250

As ~~xxxx~~ growing numbers of women entered non-traditional work the
government was quick to emphasize their ~~adaptable~~ contribution
to ~~industry~~ industry. In 1941, ~~xxxx~~ the B.C. Department of Labour reported that
Employers who were skeptical at first were now pleased as the "girls are more
adaptable and suited to the work than men and boys."223 "Plant after plant
has testifed to women's efficiency on jobs new to them."224 ~~xxxx~~

(Women's adaptability, dexterity, ^{acute} powers of concentration, and ability to
master (7) repretitive work ~~xxxx~~ cited again and again.)

~~As Ruth Pierson suggests, the government's treatment of women war workers was
Generations of household work had prepared women well for~~

~~in~~ As Ruth Person suggests, government treatment of women
~~xxxx~~war workers emphasized their matronly and patriotic response to their
country ~~is~~ in its hour of need. War work was ~~xxxx~~ service, not labour,
Women were adaptable to industry precisely because of, not despit
war worekrs were heroines. Feminie qualities, once required in the home. ~~xxxx~~ Thus,

~~xxxx~~ Women's touch ~~is~~ was lighter than men's and ~~xxxx~~
ideal for the much needed trade of welding:

My life will be ruined if I can't be a welder, AND I'm sure that
I'll be good at it too, because welding is like baking a cake -
you need a feeling for the temperature and consistency of the
ingredients. 253

Generatéons of household work had prepared women well for industrial ~~xxx~~ monotony,
and developed skills in production, planning and inspection.

While everyone agreed that women were "banging away ~~xxxx~~ with assurance",
they
~~xxxx~~ also placed equal stress on thier imminent return to ~~xxx~~ the home.

~~xxxx~~ The same article ^{continues} "Their future husbands will have trouble explaining why
they can't fix a drain."267 Wartime heroines of fiction and profile stories in

women's magazines held jobs, but always with potential husbands lurking in the background.²⁶⁸ N.S.S. advertisements encouraged women to work for their men at the front: "Every hour I work gives Jim that much more ammo to finish the job quickly."²⁵¹ Glamour and adventure were added as inevitable components of war work.²⁶⁶ The real eagerness with which women entered the wartime workforce and their dedication and interest in their jobs reinforced the image of the self-sacrificing ~~heroic~~ warworker: "Women voluntarily ~~came~~ forward to accept all kinds of work at a rate and with a spirit that is nothing short of spectacular,"²²⁹ A variety of sources voiced their opinions on women's reliability in production. Charles Stewart of the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council summed it up: "You can depend on them ten times more than men."²⁴⁹ *The fact that the vast majority of women needed these jobs for their economic survival was blatantly ignored.* Nonetheless, women were not accorded true adult ~~and~~ rational status. They were still women, as ~~this quote demonstrates~~ *somewhat gruesome*:

One thing that may concern the former (women's employers) is women's attitudes about dressing for work. They must not let their desire for personal adornment or style lead them to accidents that may permanently mar their beauty... There is no telling when a floppy sleeve may be caught in a ~~lathe~~ lathe (if her hair does not get caught first). 231

While concerns for safety and health were legitimate, the government saw responsibility lying more with women workers and less ~~with~~ with employers. Women had apparently experienced an "alarming number" of serious scalp injuries and "attractive caps" were believed to be ~~the~~ the solution, as well as the elimination of high heels and jewelry in plants or yards.²⁰⁹ The possibility of employer negligence in areas such as open machinery was not considered. The legislation which effected employers required that they provide separate washing ~~and~~ bathroom facilities ~~and~~ drinking water ~~for~~ for women. A concern with the protection of female workers to insure their ultimate return, in good condition, to their reproductive and domestic roles dominated.

Such an approach is revealed in the discussion of weight limits for ~~women~~ women workers. A 1942 discussion outlined the "need to protect women in regards to weights,"²⁰⁷ International standards ~~are~~ are examined

including British findings that women could carry more than young men ^(50-65 lbs. without straining) because they were ^{far more} careful in the ways that they lifted objects. ~~and used different lifting methods~~

~~XXXXXX federal government~~ The federal government did not introduce regulations, B.C. brought in ~~a~~ ^a statute limiting women to lifting ~~XXXX~~ women were needed as labourers. ~~XXXX~~ protective ^{cover} was lifted to reveal a means of forcing women out of industrial jobs. ²⁰⁸ It was not ~~XXXX~~ enforced until the post-war period when its ^{Marge Storm}

Despite the temporary quality of women's wartime work image and government paternalism, the focus on women's entry into the central economic sectors meant that they received a growing, ~~but~~ ^{if} distorted recognition of their contribution to society. The B.C. Department of Labour bubbles with enthusiasm:

Practically all equipment produced in this province for this purpose (CAF) has at least, in some degree, known the touch of a women's hand in its processing... Around the clock, shoulder to shoulder with men on the production line, women have performed their part in the processing of metals ~~is~~ so vital to the war effort, 226

The agency concluded that "women are central to the B.C. economy."²²⁶ This validation would eventually lead women to question their imminent return to the home. A change in overall social attitudes seemed to accompany this new economic status. About half ^{of} ~~the~~ women interviewed believed that most ~~XXXX~~ people accepted women working during the war. They saw a shift from Depression attitudes:

Women began to flock into munitions factories and war materials factories and we were well paid for wartime conditions. If anything, the war made the start on putting women in a place ~~XXXX~~ where they were valued because they took the place of ~~XXXX~~ men and they did a good job. 137 (Josephine Hallock...check quote.)

B.C.

Not surprisingly, many women who either entered the labour force for the first time during the war, or who sought a better position looked to ~~the~~ the much-publicized and better-paid industrial sector for work. Women in urban centres in B.C. approached Boeings Aircraft, Burrard or ~~the~~ other drydocks, ^{and} wood operations. ~~In~~ In the early years they went directly to the personnel departments of companies; ~~later~~ later, they ^{craft} sought N.S.S. referrals. Some few unions screened applicants for wartime jobs in their jurisdictions.

Early company hiring procedures sought to ensure a female labour force which would leave at the war's end, while providing the maximum benefit to employers while engaged. ~~Theories~~ Theories of exactly which women would most meet such requirements seem to differ ~~from~~, but ^{and} procedures did restrict employment to women of limited age groups, marital status; distinct job categories were created and part-time and short-term hiring encouraged. The federal government initially stressed the mobilization of single women believing that they would be most geographically movable and able to meet the hours and shift requirements in industry, but some employers feared that single women would wish to retain wartime employment. ^{c.l.g.}

Others believed that ~~very~~ very young single women would ~~not~~ eventually marry. ^{its} ~~refused~~ refused ~~to~~ to employ

In ~~the~~ first hiring, ~~the~~ Boeings in the Vancouver area, veteran female industrial workers from W.W.I ~~were~~ believing that their skills did not apply to new techniques. ²⁵⁸ Management described the ideal aircraft worker:

~~she~~ she must be unmarried, average of 25 years old, able to be trained on the job. The "frilly type" were "out": "We find that the pretty but dumb idea still holds good." ²⁵⁹ ~~A~~ A male employee provided the justification for this last policy:

We prefer the tomboy type. If we have too many pretty women around we lose manhours in labour. 259

B.C. Electric's policies were in line with many other companies. They preferred women who were twenty-five and whose husbands were overseas.²⁶

Such policies soon broke down because "the work force was small because of so many men and women overseas."²⁶ At Hydro there were "many women who didn't have husbands overseas and were younger."²⁶ Women ~~first entered~~ ^{began to} enter Boeings in 1940. By February, 1942 three hundred women had placed themselves on the company's waiting list and one hundred worked in the assembly plants.²⁵⁷ By July ~~of the same year,~~ ~~through the N.S.S.~~ Boeings had hired seven hundred women and another four hundred were being inducted.²⁵⁷

Women first entered the province's shipyards in May of 1942. Despite initial resistance ~~from~~ from some unions [the companies] Burrard Drydocks (?) insisted on hiring skilled workers regardless of gender.²⁶² The unions ~~reversed~~ reversed its attitude and on August 12, 1942 women began to enter the Boilermakers Union,²⁶² ~~By June 1942~~

~~Previous demand for women workers in the shipbuilding industry was met by the entry of women into the electrical and steamfitters trades.~~

In mid-1942 there were 720 women worked in the yards, representing only .2% of all working women in the province.²¹⁵ Employment in the ~~shipbuilding~~ industry peaked that year:

30,000 worked in the industry throughout the province, with 25,000 of them located in the Lower Mainland. ~~At the height of female employment~~ Women comprised 1500 of these, At the ~~height~~ height of female employment women represented only ~~3%~~ 3% of ~~the~~ the total labour force in the shipbuilding industry, some 3.8% of all working women in the province. The majority worked in the North and South Vancouver docks. ~~Women seeking work in the wood industry~~ Women seeking work in the wood industry sought N.S.S. referrals, heard of jobs through family and friends or applied directly to mills. There were 30,000 wartime ~~woodworkers~~ woodworkers in B.C., of these) _____ or _____ % were women.

Handwritten notes in a box:
110
111

~~XX~~
 Women entered industry at a time of intensive expansion. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
 Employable, unscripted men also poured into the province's
 new job openings. Women entered industries which were undergoing tremendous
 reorganization in their labour processes, but where men had traditionally
 assumed skilled positions. ~~XX~~ Even when they
 came into an industry in large numbers, they inevitably formed a numerical
 minority inside the industry, although not always within their immediate
 worksite. At the same time as the traditional male monopoly on industrial
 jobs eroded, a sexual division of labour was to some extent sustained.

~~XX~~
~~XX~~

Women comprised 7-10 per cent of the workforce in some shipyards;
 outnumbered men tw-to-one in Boeing's sub-assembly plant. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

~~XX~~ Plywood and
 box factories employed a majority of women (B.C. Plywoods and White Pine),
 (350-400 workers)
 while women made up ten per cent of the employees of smaller mills and
 up to forty per cent in some larger plants (1000 workers).

~~XX~~

in the (12/00)
~~XX~~ ly

 when men, journeymen, foremen or
.

- Women occupied a variety of skilled and semi-skilled positions in
 all major industries. By June, (18, 1943), The Province described women shipyard
 workers who, "drive jitmey, pass rivets, assist electricians, and steamfitters,
 ream weld, ..and perform a score of other essential tasks formerly performed
 by men and boys." ²⁶⁴ Women also worked as helpers, improvers, ravelheters, or in
 the bolt, plate, steel and carpenter shops. The organization of work

varied: women worked in subdepartments supervised by male foremen, in mixed teams, ~~or~~ or in gangs, performing the same tasks as men. ³⁸ One woman describes her work repairing, ~~flat~~ flatdecks for the bombers, later, burning out deep tanks inside the ships, bucking up rivets inside the cowpens and as a passergirl. ⁴⁰⁻⁴¹ Working in confined, dirty and waterlogged spaces she received extra wages known as "dirty money." ftmt. ~~XXXX~~

Women in Beings worked in the same plants ~~and~~ ^{and} in both the same and different categories as men, receiving equal benefits, wages ~~and~~ and seniority but ~~not~~ not equal promotion. Again, women worked in specifically female subdepartments or as part of a mixed team as welders and helpers, at times in partnership with their husbands. ftnote Kennedy Women worked ~~as~~ as storesclerks, as riveters ~~in the paintshop and in sub-assembly.~~ in the paintshop and in sub-assembly. There they worked on sections of PBV's and B29's, moving down the body of the ~~plane~~ plane putting rivets in with ~~two foot~~ two foot aluminium rivetting drum ~~attached to an air hose,~~ attached to an air hose, Riveting was not physically difficult, but required ~~precision and~~ precision and ~~team work.~~ team work. One riveter worked under the plane, the ~~mother~~ mother on top; signals were exchanged to ~~coordinate~~ coordinate their progress down the line. Women ^{occasionally} entered skilled trades, earning their papers as painters for example. McLeod.

In the wood mills women again ~~worked~~ worked in subdepartments and in ~~mixed teams.~~ mixed teams. Person etc. Women tied siding, piled lumber, set up trucks, worked in the testing lab and on some instances operated saws. One woman describes the reman section in her mill as being all women, ~~older, men and~~ older, men and "young guys too young for the army" or "physically unable to fight" in the war. ³⁹ Women were one quarter ~~the~~ the population in this section, the "dry end", making "plugs for rail blocks." Another woman "shovelled snow and piled lumber" taking ~~heavy 2 x 12 planks off~~ heavy 2 x 12 planks off the rollers on the sizer, flipping them and trimming them on the saw. Later, as a stacker, she learned the different lengths and proper balances of different cuts of wood. She developed poisoning from handling the boards and

Women cite exclusion [redacted] from certain jobs in all of the war industries.

[redacted]

The shipyards took women in as [redacted] as labourers and "not brought to the level of trades", that is, denied apprenticeships. [redacted] Boeings [redacted] women the kept out of machine shops, "hot" areas and electrical assembly. [redacted]

There were few women in the woods, and women seldom worked on saws, or other machines, in the green-end or as sorters or on planers. The industry used safety as a rationalization, as one woman stated: "We did the safer job, there were no guards on the saws and [redacted] subsequently many accidents... one could easily lose a hand or an arm."³⁷ According to another, The heavy physical labour necessary in wood operations stopped women without a developed musculature from performing some jobs.

The real barriers to women entering trades were structural. The War Labour Board permitted the hiring of women as "trainees" at reduced rates. The B.C. government described the training period as "of use to women in obtaining training at a lower rate than for a qualified employee."²⁰⁶ In fact the the shipyards, learning opportunities for women were limited. Women entering Boeings [redacted] and the wood industry [redacted] learned on the job for the most part. [redacted] and Boeings [redacted] In the yards there was a six week welders course, [redacted] most [redacted] In all industries women were excluded [redacted] from long-term apprenticeships.

One woman in the shipyards attempted to become a [redacted], but was told that there was little point in her acquiring skills, her employment would terminate at the end of the war. KRUZIC That men entering industry were also unskilled and required training did not seem to elicit special measures, a traditional apprenticeship process was in place for them. Reg Bullock, training foreman [redacted] for the steel trades in the Prince Rupert shipyards had no women assigned to his [redacted] crew, although newly hired men were often added and brought up to the level of the skilled trades.—

Theme

~~Heavy supervision, dilution of skills, and the fact that~~
~~Pre-war male industrial~~
workers had laboured ~~in~~ in fairly autonomous teams. Women workers experienced heavy supervision, often because their jobs were diluted ~~by~~ ^{competents.} of more complex pre-war skilled trades. ~~Senior male workers~~ Senior male workers oversaw shipyard women. The traditional craft hierarchy was reinforced by authority vested along sex lines. A woman's ability to remain on the job required that her journeyman accept her performance; if he was resistant to women working in these jobs there could be ~~the~~ stormy times ahead. In some yards journeymen chose their assistants on a daily basis, Beyond this, the foreman ~~was~~ had the responsibility to allocate labour of the hierarchically organized teams to specific jobs: women were thus vulnerable to the discriminatory attitudes of lower-level management as well. Male unskilled workers, numbering about 4,000 in the Burrard docks, competed to learn skills, in the hopes of ~~the~~ post-war employment. An almost parental bonding was the key to success. Older craftsmen would "take young people at that ~~time~~ time and bring them along if they thought they had any potential at all". Women were pushed to the side in the struggle for an adoptive parent, as they were considered temporary, unskilled and here historically outside of these craft traditions.

All of the women who worked in Boeings describe heavy supervision. Each shop had a foreman and an assistant foreman, often airforce personnel. They enforced safety ~~standards~~ standards, checking air hoses and drills ~~and~~ and ensured that ~~workers~~ workers met quotas. (WHITE) Some foremen were clearly incompetent. ~~One~~ One, a former shoe salesman, "only ~~knew~~ knew about hiking boots."⁵⁰ Workers expected their supervisors to be "knowledgeable", but some could not read English and relied on the women ~~who~~ they supervised for assistance.⁵¹ Boeings hired some matrons, but women too often encountered foremen with less skills than they had whose central qualification was their gender.

~~showed~~ This ghettoization of women meant that their wage levels in traditionally male sectors remained well below those of the men they worked with, despite surpassing those available to women in traditional employment. Government ~~is~~ apologetically recognized this ~~discrepancy~~, while employers rationalized it on the ~~basis~~ basis that women ~~earned~~ earned a second income.²³⁰ Employers also used women's temporary status ~~in other manipulative ways:~~ ~~in other manipulative ways:~~

~~At B.C. Plywoods,~~ At B.C. Plywoods, for example, management laid off women who had "taken over men's jobs" when they tried to organize, ~~justifying~~ justifying their actions to the public on the basis that women were "temporary".⁷⁴ Co-workers also tended to accept ~~lower~~ lower wages for women, until they were convinced by unions and women themselves that unequal pay for equal work drove down all wages in industry. The process of women questioning ~~gender~~ wage inequities gained momentum through the war although many women ~~accepted~~ accepted a fundamental division of labour:

We were raised ~~that~~ that certain jobs were men's and women's. You never expected boys to wash dishes—you were raised that way, but if the boys needed help with heavy stuff you helped them. Yet you believed in fairness. 146

Most women in industry ^{who were interviewed} came into direct contact with men in their daily work. Men were their journeymen, foremen or fellow team workers. (See appendix One)

Male attitudes towards working with women had an important impact on women's adjustment and integration into their new jobs, and these attitudes were contradictory at best. Soem on the job situations in which women were participants in mixed production teams eroded male prejudice against women. Similar work performed by men and women together raised the question of equal pay for equal work. When women were grouped into specific segregated jobs skilled men were, on one hand, less threatened, by direct female competition. On the other hand, the possibilities of women receiving ^{more} than token acceptance was slight under these latter conditions. Really young men and older men seemed most threatened by women's presence, the former because they were in direct competition as unskilled workers, the latter because they most clearly recalled and defended traditional work patterns. Male attitudes contributed to women's subjective ability to adjust to their jobs, whether they believed they had a legitimate place in their industry, their sense of permanency and limitations in their workplace. Male attitudes were realized in the objective possibilities of the workforce defending women's demands and future place in industry.

Over half the women interviewed experienced initial rejection by male co-workers. Changes in attitudes towards women apparently occurred over time as women established their ability to perform the work and as social and union ties grew between the sexes. Men moved from initial hostility to tolerance and even enthusiasm, others remained negative and "suffered" women's presence and a minority were consistently supportive.

The proof of competence was performed not for male acceptance but as an outcome of women's actual adjustment to their new work environment. Its byproduct was an easing off of hostilities, which in turn enhanced the development of women's comfortability and identification with their jobs. For women, two to three years in conditions of mass production could completely change their view of themselves, their own potential and their

~~EXPERIENCES~~ aspirations for the future. For many men it was merely an interlude. They remembered the safe, masculine work culture of pre-war days and anticipated a return to normality. ~~Perhaps in the shipyards, the memories of a slower pace of craft production and organization were inseparable from the suspicion that it was the intrusion of women which had changed the comfortability of work in the yards.~~

Women entering the shipyards were at first made to feel unwelcome. A skepticism about women's suitability for the work, fear of eventual job loss or falling wages and a confusion as to how to behave with women all combined. Perhaps in the shipyards, the memories of a slower pace of craft production and organization were inseparable from the suspicion that it was the intrusion of women which had changed the comfortability of work in the yards,

Women first had to prove ~~themselves~~ ^{shoulder full} themselves able to ~~take~~ physical responsibility ~~for~~ ^{for} their paycheques. ~~Bill~~ Bill White of the Prince Rupert yards describes women daring heights and "stringing their own hoses". ~~The~~ The men warmed to women working with them, seeing it as "kind of novel". After ~~work~~ work the afternoon shift would go to the Savoy Hotel to drink. Beer was rationed and the bar was closed but the waiters would save a brew for the "steel ~~gang~~ gang" which included women. At ~~first~~ first men bought beer, but ~~soon~~ "soon women bought rounds—they were so well accepted."⁶² ~~A~~ A woman shipbuilder in the Lower Mainland yards described a range of testing processes by men. She first worked with a craftsman who accepted women; ~~he~~ he was mercilessly teased by his ~~less~~ gregarious buddies. She was then moved to a more hostile fellow who argued with her constantly until he was won over by her humour, practical jokes and work ethic. She was put through a range of practical jokes, some clearly designed to show women's ignorance and physical weakness, and one instance of a physical assault while ~~high~~ high up the shell of a ship. Fortunately, she was ~~able~~ able to read her adversaries correctly, coming

back with the right comment at the right moment and defending herself physically when necessary. She describes ~~the tolerance~~ tolerance ~~which operated~~ which operated on a social level not from an acceptance of women as equal tradespeople. This context of social approval was far from clear: several women recall daily propositions, requests for dates and outright sexual harassment. Reg Bullock concurs with this notion of acceptance: "there would have been talk" if women had been elevated to trades positions, that is, equal work. "Male chauvinism was very strong". Further, the assumption that women were temporary workers was "not expressed or written down" but was pivotal to how men viewed women's wartime employment. "Women were there on sufferance."⁷⁰ The idea that women were acceptable in the yards only if they kept their place was expressed by a male steward for women working in the bolt shop, an appropriate location for women because it was repetitive, boring work.

Women were placed in a double bind. On one hand there was pressure to meet production quotas and to demonstrate their capacity to do this work, on the other there were counter pressures from union men seeking to safeguard against speed-ups, piecework and wartime erosion of conditions. As outsiders in a male environment the "long line" of women in the bolt shop and other areas were sometimes denied information crucial for their protection, such as who was their shop steward or their eligibility for "dirty money" and their right to resist dangerous work.⁷¹

In industries where there was less of an established history of male workers, such as the aircraft industry or newly opened mills, women experienced less overt hostility, although nonetheless viewed as temporary workers. Male millworkers treated women "fairly, good—they didn't resent you if you did your job but didn't want to do it for you".⁷² Still, "some guys felt that women didn't do equal work, that it takes two to do what one man could do." They supported equal pay but not equal work. In some cases, Island mill workers...

However,

In Chemainus, a town where the wood mill had long been established and where women had traditionally been homemakers, not wage workers, men unionized in order to bar women from entering mill production jobs. J.A.

This seems to be a bit out of place here

Most union activists ^{theme} in both primary and secondary labour market jobs

developed strong work identities which in turn motivated their interest in trade unionism. Women in B.C.'s industry had more leverage to improve their working conditions than in the past. They orientated towards workplace solutions to a far greater extent than in Depression times. Women stayed on the job longer, joined unions to a greater extent and fought to retain their jobs at the conclusion of the war.

Improved labour market conditions afforded greater opportunities for women to move into better work when women chose to change jobs. Women did so when their skills were devalued, if there was little chance for promotion or they experienced harassment from fellow workers or employers, either for union activities or as women. Canadian ~~Labour Gazette~~ Labour Gazette statistics confirm that more women entered employment and higher percentages remained in ~~one~~ one work place (3-4 years) than in previous years. 219 Thus there ~~was~~ were two groups of female wartime

employees: those with longterm work experience in an industry and those who ~~in~~ in large numbers had recently entered. This ~~may~~ correspond to a trend the activists describe: ~~while~~ while they tended to have longterm work identities and aspirations, their less active sisters were more accepting of the notion that they were in industry for the duration alone. Contributing to the relative stability of women's wartime employment was the freeze on job mobility. While women were ~~not~~ not included in the two orders in council which froze wartime labour in prioritized industries, they were ideologically effected by the freeze and could lose eligibility to unemployment benefits if they eschewed

the availability of work, however, women could

leave employment and quickly find other work, the fact that they stayed attests to ~~_____~~ a level of satisfaction with their employment. As well, within industry, women could move from job to job, change foremen and take ~~brief~~ leaves of absence for health and other reasons and then return. Women, when they did leave work, ~~she~~ ^{at times} did so ~~for family reasons~~ because of changes in family circumstances such as the relocation of their husbands or pregnancy,

In industry, pride and pleasure in their work, the successful struggle to adjust to a new male environment, heightened status, an ~~_____~~ identification with union and social ~~_____~~ activity at work, relatively high wages and fair conditions, ^{and} a newfound sense of autonomy and economic stability led to the emergence of a layer of work-identified union women. Union activists seldom expressed a deep sense of alienation in these new jobs although women were certainly conscious of long hours, swinging shifts, the exploitation of their labour ~~and~~ and the burdens of the double day. The consciousness of the "purposefulness" of wartime production appears to have been a factor in strengthening a positive identity on one hand, although at times rationalizing women's future disappearance from the labour force.

Many union activists had prior work histories from Depression times, often as domestics for restaurant workers, and thus ^{more easily} acknowledged a longterm relationship to the workforce. ~~_____~~

~~_____~~ This previous work history was rarely acknowledged by press and government, ~~_____~~ instead women were consistently presented as new to ~~_____~~ the labour force. ^{new theme, new} The "temporary" image of the female war worker ^{above all were} out of touch with the reality that most working women ~~needed~~ ^{economically dependent on} their jobs, had worked before and would return to the post-war labour force, all out of economic necessity, ~~the primary motivating factor for women~~ ~~_____~~ ~~_____~~ ~~_____~~ National Selective Service figures established that 59% of women worked to supplement their family income. 32% worked for their own personal economic needs and only 9% worked for primarily patriotic reasons. 228 An International Woodworkers of America survey conducted

in 1942 [redacted] interviewed women woodworkers in various plants. 83% of these needed medical and/or dental care for themselves or their families, and spent a high proportion of their income on necessities such as food and clothing.¹⁷⁴ Most women [redacted] interviewed identified economic need as their central reason for taking a job. (Appendix One).

Women who were single supports for their families could use their new found wages to maintain without constant anxiety, [redacted] envisioning [redacted] standard of living beyond simple survival, entire families no longer crammed into one room, and end to outdoor plumbing, domestic labour without appliances, a lack of laundry facilities and so on.⁷⁹⁻⁸⁰ Women saw such improvements not as "frivolous" or unnecessary, as was the view of male co-workers, governments and journalists. Most "grabbed at the thought of a chance [redacted] to work" and the opportunity [redacted] to tuck away a few dollars in the face of whatever insecurity the future might bring.¹³⁵

That holding a job was economically essential did not leave women [redacted] totally without a choice of where they worked. Women entered industrial jobs consciously, both because they were available, but also because of the "attraction" of better wages, conditions, a union and a social life. The choice of industrial employment intersected with the personal aspirations [redacted] of women who became union militants. These women had hoped for careers: in journalism, nursing, academia, [redacted] transit and nursing. (Appendix II) An industrial job provided a parallel challenge to these often unrealizable dreams, especially in the context of active government recruitment and the association of these jobs with "glamour" and status.

Wages were an unquestionable drawing card for industrial work. Shipyard women earned as much as \$44.99 per week, a figure comparable to male wages. While women [redacted] interviewed straddled that a base rate of [redacted] fifty-five cents per hour was not a fantastically high rate it did enable women to [redacted] live at a level unknown for ten years. The shipyard rate rose to 60 ¢/hour by 1944. (compared

to 98¢/hour for men). Women's wages rose in some shipyard departments as the Boilermakers established equal pay for equal work. ⁴² Wages and conditions were far better at Boeings than in previous jobs, such as garment industry jobs, which women had held. ~~One woman interviewed moved~~ from 45¢ to 90¢ an hour as she ~~became~~ became a journeyman painter. Women millworkers began at 35¢/hour and rose to 55 and then 75 cents as unionization spread and agreements were negotiated. In some pay ~~categories~~ categories the differential between men and women was as little as 1-2¢/hour. Alice Person

Women in industry consistently describe a love for their work and an excitement at ~~improved~~ improved conditions, despite ~~some~~ difficulties. The press is filled with quotes from women from all classes who entered industry and were inspired by their jobs. A former confectionary worker stated in the Province: "I like this tho', its alot more interesting" ~~and~~ and a Junior Leaguer states, "This is better than tennis." Peggy Morris a 20 year old swamper,

Peggy has the idea that woman's place is wherever she wants to take it-even at the bottom of a sawdust bin-if the spirit wills. 254

~~"De-glamourized"~~ "De-glamourized" Boeings girls were "all for deglamourization... finding their jobs plenty of fun". ²⁶⁰ While all of these quotes are consciously manipulated ~~wartime~~ wartime propaganda, they do correspond to a reality expressed by the women interviewed: more than fulfilling patriotic aspirations, their new work was challenging and enjoyable. Significantly, forty years later, the women retain proud and detailed memories of the work processes of their jobs.

~~A woman shipyard worker~~ A woman shipyard worker who overcame her fear of heights ~~to learn to catch rivets~~ describes her pride as the "highest egoism I ever had". ¹⁰⁷ Another recalls being emotionally overwhelmed when a ship she had worked on was launched. A Boeings worker took her job ~~because~~ because the woman as the N.S.S. "told me how awful it was and that made it more interesting to myself I suppose". ~~As women~~ As women undertook physical labour their bodies changed, firming up. Several women were proud of their muscles, their ability to perform hard physical labour the fact that clothes would not fit over their new biceps. 110