

ALBUM WOMEN IN THE MILITARY RECRUITMENT POSTERS: “FOUR CORNERS” ACTIVITY.

Album Description

Did you know that every branch of the military employed women during World War II?

Over 150,000 women served in the Women’s Army Corps during World War II. The Navy created the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) in 1942. Women in the Coast Guard served in the SPARS (an acronym for the Coast Guard’s motto, *Semper Paratus*, or “Always Ready”), and in the Marines as the Women Marines. Nurses were also an essential element of the war effort, with about 59,000 women serving in the Army Nurse Corps and many more serving as nurses in the Navy.

Each branch of the military used different tactics to persuade new recruits to join, but many used recruitment posters. These posters and advertisements are interesting because they illustrate the social expectations for women in this period even while promoting an experience that would give women new opportunities outside of these expectations. In addition, they also show some of the devices used to persuade women to join.

In this activity, students would be able to explore different women’s auxiliary recruitment posters posted in different areas around the classroom. When prompted, students would go and stand next to the poster they think is *most persuasive*. Then, students could get a few minutes to work together to come up with what they think the poster is trying to communicate.

Some questions to prompt discussion might be:

- What is the main message this poster is trying to communicate?
- What element of the poster catches your eye first?
- Are there any “hidden messages” in this poster? For example, do these posters show anything about expectations for women in this period?
- If the poster is in color, do the chosen colors have any specific meaning?
- If there is any text on the poster, how does it add to the persuasive elements of the imagery?
- Why would this poster be persuasive to a woman during World War II?
- Does this poster contain any messages for men as well? What messages might women’s auxiliaries want to send to men during this period?
- What types of people are being represented in this poster (ethnicity, body types, appearance, etc.)? What does this say about who the military is for, and who it is not?

After students work in their groups, they can share out with the rest of the class. Students can be invited to change their vote of “most persuasive” after a group makes their case. When all groups have shared, explore the winning poster as a whole class. What makes this poster more persuasive than the others? Does this poster tell you the whole story about what it is like to be a woman in the military? If you were a woman living in this time period, would this poster persuade you to join the military?

Have you ever done an activity like this with your learners? How does involving a more active approach (such as getting up and moving around the classroom) help students to engage with primary sources?

SPEED THEM BACK--JOIN THE WAAC--WOMEN'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS. U.S. ARMY



Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/item/90712741/>

Summary

- Half-length portrait of member of Women's Army Auxiliary Corps, facing left, holding whistle, in front of marching soldiers.

Created / Published

- [1943]

Genre

- War posters--American--1940-1950
- Prints--American--Color--1940-1950

Notes

- - Promotional goal: U.S. J22. 1943 and U.S. F34.J22 1943.

Repository

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- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

Digital Id

- cph 3g01652 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3g01652

DON'T MISS YOUR GREAT OPPORTUNITY--THE NAVY NEEDS YOU IN THE WAVES



Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/item/90714999/>

Summary

- Two WAVES walking on shore by military boats, with skyscrapers in background.

Created / Published

- 1944.

Genre

- War posters--American--1940-1950
- Prints--Color--1940-1950

Notes

- - Promotional goal: U.S. F34.J26. 1944.
- - Order no. 79.

Repository

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- Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 USA

Digital Id

- cph 3g01680 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3g01680

I'VE FOUND MY PLACE IN OUR COUNTRY'S FIGHT: THE SPARS! DAILY MONITOR LEADER, AUGUST 27, 1943.



**I'VE FOUND MY PLACE
IN OUR COUNTRY'S FIGHT**

THE SPARS

**CAN OFFER A CAREER
TO EVERY WOMAN
BETWEEN 20 and 36**

Perhaps you feel the way I used to... just an insignificant woman in a nation at war. Perhaps you too, want to do something important to help win... something that really backs up our boys in uniform. You're probably working long hard hours... you're buying bonds... paying taxes... maybe you're even a hospital or canteen volunteer. But you know that there are bigger jobs to be done... bigger jobs for American women to do. Maybe you want to feel that you're in this war right beside our boys... helping them on to final victory.

The SPARS of the U. S. Coast Guard offer important positions to American women who really want to do more for their country and more for themselves. The SPARS assign you to vital Coast Guard duties. You'll feel a new thrill when you don a smart blue uniform... you'll know that this is what you wanted... this is your place until victory.

Service with the SPARS can't be considered just a temporary war-time job. The SPARS give you valuable training and experience. You'll be qualified for a better career after victory is won.

The training in Palm Beach, Florida is exciting for every SPAR enlistee. It's like a term at college with study and classes taking most of your time. But there's a salt water pool, tennis courts, and a golf course available for recreation.

Your time at Palm Beach is your opportunity to gain higher pay and a specialized rating. Past experience in any business or industry will help you gain promotions, naturally. But don't worry if you have no specific ability. The Coast Guard considers your aptitude and willingness... then trains you for the job you are best fitted for. You're soon holding down an important job in a large office or shore station.

The SPARS are paid well too! The lowest ranking SPAR averages \$135 a month when subsistence and quarters allowances are figured in. When promotions are earned you make even more! Most SPARS say they are making as much as they ever did when civilians.

The best openings exist now in the SPARS. Hundreds more SPARS are needed... advancements are coming rapidly to those enlisting now. Write to one of the SPAR offices given below... ask all your questions and ask for the free SPAR booklet. It tells of the many opportunities that are yours with the U. S. Coast Guard SPARS.

**Ask for SPAR
Booklet at your
nearest Recruiting
Office**

DETROIT
351 Lafayette Bldg.

PORT HURON
301 Federal Bldg.

**CHIMIDT'S IS THE
BEER YOU'LL
JOY-IT'S SMOOTH
LICIOUS-IT'S RE-
G! WHAT MORE
U ASK FOR?**

Reference Link: <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn96077289/1943-08-27/ed-1/seq-12/>

The daily monitor leader. [volume] (Mount Clemens, Mich.), 27 Aug. 1943. Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress. <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn96077289/1943-08-27/ed-1/seq-12/>>

WANTED MORE NAVY NURSES--BE A COMMISSIONED OFFICER IN THE U.S. NAVY



Reference Link: <https://www.loc.gov/item/92510001/>

Summary

- Wave, half-length, standing in foreground; Red Cross ship in background.

Created / Published

- [19]44.

Genre

- War posters--American--1940-1950
- Prints--Color--1940-1950

Notes

- - Promotional goal: U.S. J26. 1945.

Repository

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Teaching Notes:



Siobhan Miller -Great topic and wonderful “active” activity. Yes, getting up, and moving around is so helpful for increasing engagement. Thanks for the lesson which also is good student practice in media literacy.

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Teaching Notes:

Thank you for an illuminating post that underscores how women used the medium to send the message. This is a topic that deserves more inquiry and you certainly have given us a running start. The time has come (or is it overdue?). Nicely organized for us.

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Teaching Notes:


Thank you,  Cheryl Davis ! Yes, practicing media literacy with historical documents is a really interesting way to bring this topic to students.

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Teaching Notes:

Thank you,




Neme Alperstein ! I'm glad you enjoyed my post. There is more coming on this topic in the next few weeks!

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Teaching Notes:

Hi  Siobhan Miller great album. It takes advantage of all the great public domain content from the era and builds a thoughtful lesson for students to explore. I really like your questions - supports a close reading of the content.

If you have access to Apple devices, you might like two of my free iBooks on women in WWII Recruiting Rosie: The Sales Pitch That Won a War and Workers Win the War: Toil and Sacrifice on the US Homefront . Loads of multimedia content for students to explore as extended document based questions.

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Teaching Notes:

Thanks,



Peter Pappas ! Yes, close reading and analysis is very important to this activity, and it is a good skill to build with sources that are not only reliant on text. I am so excited to explore your books on this subject! Thank you for your suggestions.

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Teaching Notes:



Siobhan Miller I really like your resources and teaching strategies. In the late 1970's I joined the Montana National Guard. There was less than 30 females in Montana at that times. When I retired 24 years later there was over 300 women. I am glad to see women's stories being told. Great job.