



1. Explain the purpose of the message at the top of the poster. Who is the intended audience?  
What does the message mean?
2. What can you infer about the poster's depiction of women?
3. Why is Rosie drawn like this?
4. In your opinion, is this poster effective in its message? Why or Why not?
5. What terms would you use to research the jobs held by women during WWII?

★ *Uncle Sam* ★

They were begging for workers. They didn't care whether you were black, white, young, old. They didn't really care if you could work. It got even worse in '43. I worked two jobs for a long time. I had so much work offered to me and I was not even qualified—I just had the capability of learning very fast. . . .

Actually what attracted me—it was not even the money and it was not the job because I didn't even know how much money I was going to make. But the ads—they had to be bombardments: "Do Your Part," "Uncle Sam Needs You," "V for Victory." I got caught up in that patriotic "win the war," "help the boys." The patriotism that was so strong in everyone then. . . .

It was very dull, very boring. The first day I thought, "Oh, this is ridiculous. I have to set here for three weeks on this bench?" What we did was we learned . . . to rivet. I set there for three or four hours that first day and I picked up the rivet gun: "You show me once and I'll do it for you." . . . "What's to learn? Look at my hands. I've been working as a grease monkey. . . . I don't have to set here and train." I learned very fast.

. . . I was working with real seasoned workable men and it was so easy. We did strip by strip, the whole hull. We used strips of like cheesecloth and paste that had to go on the inside and across the seam. . . .

. . . One by one, day by day, new faces. I would say within six months there were maybe twenty or thirty men left in Department 16 where maybe there had been fifteen hundred.

. . . Even a lot of the young women working would disappear, going into the service. I made friends with four or five girls that became WACS or WAVES

and nurses. It was more difficult to keep friends, because they came and they went so fast. . . .

I had so much work sometimes, I wouldn't even go back for my money. Sometimes they'd just mail me a check and I'd think, "Gee, now where was this?" At one period of time I had six or eight checks laying in my dresser drawer that I hadn't even cashed. I simply didn't know how to handle money. . . . The first paycheck I got in aircraft was more money than I'd ever seen in my life.

But we'd hang out in drive-ins or the bowling alley. Or we went to places like the Tropics, Garden of Allah. . . . When Nat King Cole sat at the piano and sang, he wasn't even known. . . .

We found places like the beach, the pier. . . . We hung out, we read poetry, we discussed books that were current and popular. . . . And movies, mainly movies.

Young people got together in harmless, easy companion ways. Dancing was great. You got rid of your energy by dancing. You'd get a little radio and put it out on the back porch or the lawn . . . and had everybody come around. . . .

Then I began to see boys coming back. One fellow I'd gone with in 1942. . . . He came back blind. . . . When I began to see them coming back like this, it really did something to me. . . .

This is touchy. I don't know how to bring this up. The morale was not that strong at the end. . . . You heard stories of people buying up the Japanese stores. . . . And you saw these people making a lot of money and not doing anything for the war effort, even bragging, "I kept my son out of it." You thought, here are some special privileged types of people and here I am working and sweating and eating our hearts out for the casualty lists that are coming in.

. . . I don't think if most women would really be truthful with you, they enjoyed working or would have stayed in it if they hadn't really been motivated by patriotism or actually having a member of the family in the war. Some used it as an excuse to break out into the world. And it was the first decent opportunity Negro women had to get away from domestic work.

1. What does this reading have to do with the poster?
2. What reasons does the writer give for the declining of morale at home? Or Highlight the sentences.
3. Which statement best defines what the writer experienced?
  - A. Life was hard and the work was dull and boring.
  - B. She wanted to disappear like others and become a WAC or WAVE
  - C. Her experience is mixed, the work is tedious, but she was contributing to the war effort
  - D. She was very happy to be making a lot of money.