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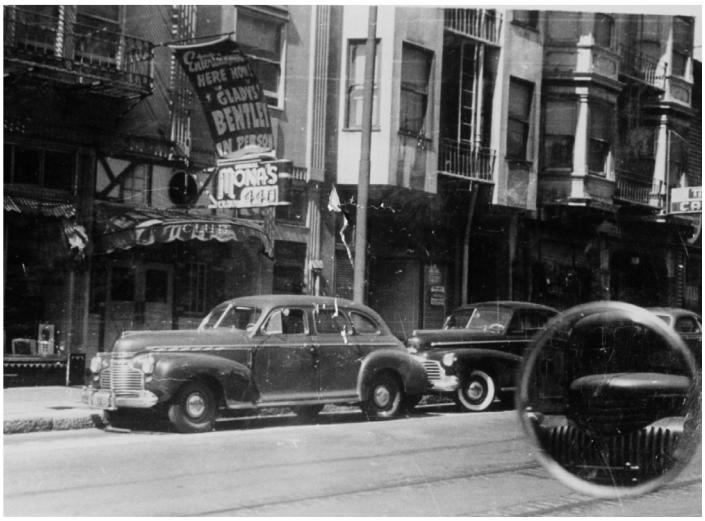

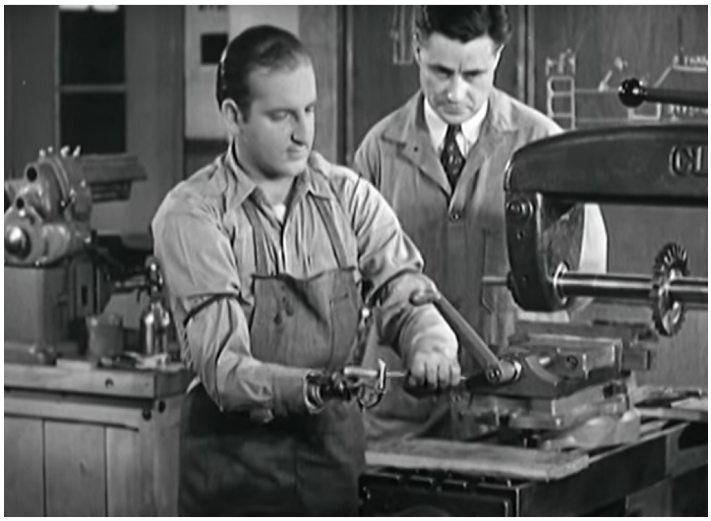

A National Historic Landmarks Theme Study

Cover: Upper Left: Soldiers of the 65th Infantry training in Salinas, Puerto Rico. August 1941. Courtesy United States Army. Upper Right: Native Hawaiian Women Dyeing Fabric at Camouflage Factory, Honolulu. HR1185, Courtesy of University of Hawaii at Manoa Digital Image Collection. Lower Left: Mona's 440 Broadway, San Francisco. Photo courtesy of (Wide Open Town History Project Records 2003-05), Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society. Lower Right: Still of Worker With Prosthetic Receiving Training, from film "Employing Disabled Workers in Industry" Courtesy National Archives, NAID:35938.

WORLD WAR II & THE AMERICAN HOME FRONT

VOLUME 2
A National Historic Landmarks Theme Study

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Foreword

In May 2020 the National Park Service (NPS) entered into an agreement with the National Council on Public History to update the *World War II and the American Home Front* Theme Study published in October 2007. The initial agreement called for a 6,000-word bibliographic essay that expanded the scope of subjects treated by the original theme study. It also required a survey of properties associated with home front history and an assessment of which properties had potential national significance and, therefore, should be considered for National Historic Landmark status.

In conversation with the author, Dr. Matthew Basso, a group of leading home front scholars and National Park Service historians helped identify five areas—Native American and Indigenous, Latino, LGBTQ, Disability, and Environmental history—ideal for expanded analysis. Research completed since the beginning of the new millennium has underscored the importance of these subjects to an evolving understanding of the era. The richness of this scholarship subsequently prompted the decision to write stand-alone chapters on each topic, rather than one article-length essay that attempted to discuss all five. Time constraints driven by this expansion have meant that these chapters offer an interpretive synthesis but do not delve deeply into primary sources.[1]

This volume is designed to work in conjunction with the 2007 study, also referred to here as Volume 1. Those using this theme study to prepare National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmark nominations on World War II home front properties are urged to read both the chapters in the original theme study and the relevant chapter(s) in this update. The original theme study offers critical background for the history covered in detail in this volume and in-depth and comparative information for nominations related to its themes. Paying careful attention to these contexts is essential for, as the original theme study notes, "the task of identifying places that can tell the home front story is a challenging one."[2] Volume 1 authors particularly highlighted the difficulty of discerning among the large number of potentially significant home front properties. Their narrative list of properties serves as a useful reminder of the expansiveness of the home front's built environment:

> Thousands of factories, government office buildings, research laboratories, housing projects, military bases, United Service Organization (USO) canteens, day care centers, and schools were built or expanded during the war. Theaters in hundreds of communities across the nation sponsored War Bond drives and showed both terrifying news reels and uplifting and entertaining movies. Railroad and bus stations in large

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[1] Given the charge to expand the thematic scope, this update also does not describe in any detail new interpretive work completed over the last two decades on the original theme study's areas of focus, unless related to this volume's five focal areas. Likewise, it does not delve into research on Japanese and Japanese American home front incarceration produced since the publication of the *Japanese Americans in World War II* Theme Study in 2012. http://www.npshistory.com/publications/nhl/theme-studies/japanese-americans-ww2.pdf

[2] Marilyn M. Harper, John W. Jeffries, William M. Tuttle, Nelson Lichtenstein, and Harvard Sitkoff, *World War II & the American Home Front: A National Historic Landmarks Theme Study* [Volume 1] (Washington D.C.: The National Park Service, 2007), 1. https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/DownloadFile/638007

> cities and small towns could barely contain the millions of men and women passing through them on their way to military service or new defense jobs. Other places represented less positive wartime stories: segregated housing and military bases, war relocation centers for persons of Japanese descent, prisons where conscientious objectors were held, and sites of racial conflict or labor/management confrontation.[3]

For some of the topics covered in this volume, a similarly extensive list of surviving properties emerges, but for others, structural factors discussed in the following pages result in fewer possibilities. That problem is magnified by differences in attention and funding for properties associated with marginalized communities. Thus, along with the passage of time and its effect on the property integrity that is necessary for historic designation, the preservation choices at various scales have impacted the list of possibilities. This reality makes the work required to identify and evaluate properties related to these five subject areas all the more urgent.

The six broad types of historic home front properties and the registration requirements for National Historic Landmark designation outlined in the original theme study (pages 128-29 and 129-131 respectively) align with the history recounted in the following five chapters. The home front history of the environment, Native Americans and Indigenous communities, Latinos, LGBTQ Americans, and disabled Americans, are closely linked to places associated with production, manpower, politics and government, civil rights, morale and propaganda, and home defense.

Instructions for Potential Nominators

Potential nominators studying sites associated with these five new chapters should refer to the property type and registration requirements in Volume 1. They should also carefully read the examples of properties related to each NHL criteria described on pages 128-135. A summary of the six property types identified in Volume 1 is provided in Volume 2, under the updated heading of "Property Categories" and with the addition of a seventh category for places associated with environmental change. Volume 1 should also be consulted for a discussion of NHL criteria exceptions (p. 135) and a definition of how to evaluate home front site or property integrity (pp.135-137).

Readers considering nominating a site for a National Register of Historic Places listing should consult Volume 1, Appendix A. Those interested in World War II Home Front-Related National Park Units should consult Volume 1, Appendix C. Researchers seeking lists of NHLs designated for their association with the World War II home front should consult Volume 1, Appendix D, page 185 in Volume 2, as well as the Japanese Americans in World War II Theme Study (pp. 128-146).

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[3] Harper, et. al., *World War II & the American Home Front*, 1.

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Acknowledgments

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My gratitude to the members of the National Park Service history team who have guided this project with professionalism and good cheer. John Sprinkle, Turkiya Lowe, and Emily Button Kambic each took the lead at different stages. Other NPS historians who contributed their expertise include Jason Ockrassa, Barbara Little, Gretchen Stromberg, Patricia Biggs, Tom Leatherman, Niki Nicholas, Bernadette Johnson, Alisa Lynch, Stephanie Toothman, and Marie Sauter. Kathleen Madigan, Jade Ryerson, Eleanor Mahoney, Perri Meldon, and Megan Springate also kindly shared their knowledge about key subjects considered in the following pages. I am especially indebted to G. Kurt Piehler at Florida State University and Emily Kambic and the historians of the National Historic Landmark Program—Lisa Davidson, Lyn Causey, Astrid Liverman, Sarah Pawlicki, Déanda Johnson, Poppie Gullett, Skylar Bauer, Melia Lane-Kamahele—for peer reviewing this volume and offering detailed critiques and suggestions. They made each chapter much stronger. Similarly, I appreciate their counsel—and that of Erik Johnson—as I and my research team learned the NHL process and assessed the historical significance and integrity of home front properties across the U.S.

I had the good fortune of leading a wonderful research team at the University of Utah. In part, I agreed to take on this deeply rewarding project so I could use it to train my undergraduate and graduate students in public history. Five undergraduates provided research support. I want to express particular appreciation to Jonathan Beeman and Eliana Massey. I appreciate the University of Utah Office of Undergraduate Research and the Pacific Island Studies Program in partnership with the Mellon Foundation providing funds to sustain the work of these students. Nine University of Utah MA and PhD students and three American University MA students have worked with me on NPS home front projects over the last five years. While most of their labor, like that of the undergraduates, was focused on researching and writing state and territory histories in support of the American World War II Heritage Cities initiative, their findings enriched this volume. I offer my sincere appreciation to my Utah crew: Travis Hancock, Julie Huddleston, Eliza McKinney, John Flynn, Nicholas Backman, Alex Milton, Annie Jensen, Scott Morris, and Emory Ogaard. And the same to former American University graduate students Leah Baer, Hannah Haack, and McKenna Crews. They, along with Emory Ogaard, were supported by the National Council for Preservation Education, for which I want to express my gratitude. I also want to thank Selena Moon and Annie Jensen for copy editing assistance, Brooke Yeager for her excellent design work, and the archivists around the U.S. who assisted us with securing illustrations.

Finally, I would like to thank Meghan Hillman and especially Stephanie Rowe from the National Council on Public History for nearly a half-decade of administrative support, collaboration, and friendship. They're the best.

Environmental History of the World War II Home Front

In 1940, after the United States began mobilizing for World War II, Edward B. Reynolds submitted several ethnographic accounts to his employer, the Federal Writers Project (FWP). The subject was the operation of and worker attitudes at the massive copper smelter in Anaconda, Montana. "A Day's Work," like his other accounts, was a short story. It begins with management assigning an unnamed protagonist to a job at the smelter's 585-foot smokestack. "The Stack!," the man exclaims angrily. "Rappin' treaters or dumping flue dust. That was a job for sodbusters and greenhorns. Not for a guy that had been born and raised right here on the ground, here in Anaconda."[1]

Rapping treaters and dumping flue dust to collect arsenic, a by-product, was considered dangerous, unhealthy, and low-status labor. Workers wore masks and protective clothing hoping to keep arsenic out of their lungs and off their bodies. It was the second of these that most worried the protagonist. "When you sweat and the dust touches your skin it turns to arsenious acid that eats into the body and leaves nasty sores. There is something unpleasant and humiliating about these sores—under the arms, between the legs, around the waist. You look at them and treat them in the privacy of your room. You're ashamed of them," the man resignedly concludes before comparing arsenic collection to another job with a reputation for injuring workers. "It's not like the hot metal, where the leaping, roaring flames and the fiery glow of molten metal places danger on a high level."[2]

"Blood and Bread," a second Reynolds account, directly addressed smeltermen's and copper miners' views about mobilization. The protagonist sets the scene: "Butte and Anaconda were booming and we all had jobs. Far down underground in Butte men were digging ore from the veins of the 'richest hill on earth' and over in Anaconda men were boiling that ore down into molten copper that glowed a bloody red." He then compares the press's and working men's perspectives. "'Sinews of war,' the editorial writers call it; 'bread and butter,' say the miners and smeltermen. 'Yes,' they agree, 'war is hell.' But work is hell, too, and starving to death is a damn sight worse."[3] Reynolds's protagonist in his third FWP account, who works in the hot metal part of the smelter, compares soldiering to home front labor. After confirming he is registered for the draft he adds, "anytime Uncle Sam needs me he knows where I am. But I've a hunch he's going to need me a lot more right where I'm at." This protagonist underscores that he is not afraid

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1 Edward B. Reynolds, "Sketch Autobiography," "A Day's Work" [later retitled "Anaconda"], "Blood and Bread," and "Hot Metal," Works Progress Administration Records, MC 77, box 9, folder 7, Montana Historical Society Research Center. Reynolds hoped FWP editors would select at least one of the stories for an anthology on work in America, but "Men at Work" was mothballed because of the looming war. The University of Utah Press published the collection in 2012, with a new introduction and information about each contributor. Many of the accounts speak to the environmental history of wartime mobilization and other periods. Matthew Basso, ed., *Men at Work: Rediscovering Depression-era Stories from the Federal Writers' Project* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2012).

2 Reynolds, "A Day's Work." For an analysis of what Reynolds's stories say about home front masculinity, see Matthew Basso, *Meet Joe Copper: Masculinity and Race on Montana's World War II Home Front* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 98-104, 232-238.

3 Reynolds, "Blood and Bread."

people will think he's "yellow" for not joining the military. "I told you I work in the hot metal, didn't I? People that are yellow just don't work there."[4]

Reynolds's accounts, and the prewar and wartime experiences of Montana miners and smeltermen—including Reynolds—offer a useful entry into the topics of this chapter: the environmental history of the home front and the places that represent that history. Historians Thomas Robertson and Richard P. Tucker have recently argued that "no war transformed natural environments more than World War Two."[5] Developments on the American home front, though less well known than battles that remade "coastlines, fields, and forests," are fundamental to their assessment.[6]

It is difficult to overstate the significance of militarization, which undergirded and in turn was supported by the massive expansion of military-controlled land and the expansion of production and extraction in support of the war effort, on the home front's environmental history. The wellspring of home front militarism was the elevation of soldiers to the center of national life and the establishment of the armed forces as the most critical aspect of national security. Both were changes from the Great Depression, as Reynolds's experiences illustrate.[7] Reynolds was one of many who lost their job to the Great Depression. He found work with the FWP, one of the New Deal work programs that the Roosevelt Administration designed to offer relief to struggling families and individuals. Such programs, as historian Peter Roady has recently shown, were part of Roosevelt's 1930s vision of "National Security," which included Americans' economic well-being as much as protection from outside attack.[8] Roosevelt's words and policies, Americans' isolationist posture, and a look at the state of the military during that decade all support this conclusion.

Things began to change during mobilization, as "Hot Metal" reflects. During the war, conservatives, with Roosevelt's help, winnowed this broader idea of national security down to protection, primarily through the military. As historian Aaron Hiltner writes, once the war began Roosevelt "consistently promoted the idea that civilians ought to serve and support a widespread militarization of American life. With this idea came an expansion of executive authority, government bureaucracy, and military power."[9] After Pearl Harbor, Reynolds and many other working men across the country enlisted or were drafted, powerfully signaling this transition. Historian James T. Sparrow pithily calls this a passage from a welfare to a warfare state, arguing that "big government" emerged not during the Great Depression, but on the home front.[10] An essential part of this

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4 Reynolds, "Hot Metal."

5 Thomas Robertson and Richard P. Tucker, "Introduction: Total War and American Nature," in *Nature at War: American Environments and World War II* (hereafter *NAW*), Thomas Robertson, Richard P. Tucker, Nicolas B. Breyfogle, and Peter Mansoor eds, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 5.

6 Robertson and Tucker, "Introduction," 5.

7 Michael S. Sherry, *In the Shadow of War: The United States since the 1930s* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 15-63.

8 Peter Roady, *The Contest over National Security: FDR, Conservatives, and the Struggle to Claim the Most Powerful Phrase in American Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2024).

9 Aaron Hiltner, *Taking Leave, Taking Liberties: American Troops on the World War II Homefront* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020), 8.

10 James T. Sparrow, *Warfare State: World War II Americans and the Age of Big Government* (New York: Oxford

shift was re-amplifying a business ethos into a government newly focused on supporting military victory through mobilizing natural resources, people, and industry into military might.[11]

Roosevelt repeatedly told home front Americans the nation needed "ever-increasing" production. "The lives of our soldiers and sailors—the whole future of this nation—depend upon the manner in which each and every one of us fulfills his obligation to our country."[12] As military defeats piled up early in the war for instance, he rallied workers and industry by calling for "production—uninterrupted production."[13] Pointedly, he told his radio audience in late February 1942, "We are coming to realize that one extra plane or extra tank or extra gun or extra ship completed tomorrow may, in a few months, turn the tide on some distant battlefield; It may make the difference between life and death for some of our own fighting men."[14] Militarism and the ideology of production provided cover for businesses that took the opportunity to produce—and profit—without fear of polluting and gave almost no room to those who wished to question the environmental consequences. This militarized national defense sensibility, which also came to define the environmental views and practices of most ordinary Americans, would continue into the postwar period.

The impact of the War Department (renamed the Department of Defense in 1949) on the home front environment is the focus of the first section of this chapter. The War Department played a central role in the development of the Manhattan Project and the atomic testing associated with it. These are the best-known parts of home front environmental history, but even the commonly understood ramifications of atomic testing fail to account for the environmental impact of Manhattan Project facilities, which occupied vast spaces across the country, on nearby land and water. The same sort of environmental impact occurred with the army, army air force, and navy bases, as well as other defense facilities the War Department developed during the war. Indeed, the Department, as the environmental historian Jared Farmer has noted, became one of the government's primary "landlords" during the home front era, especially in the West and the South. Military bases, bombing ranges, the Manhattan Project, chemical and biological testing facilities, and ordnance plants are discussed in detail in this chapter.

The second section of the chapter looks at the environmental history of industrial and agricultural production on the home front. The Anaconda stack directly links to the fight over industrial air pollution. In the decades before the war, workers, community members, local farmers, and the progressive era federal government, including its most famous environmentalists Theodore

University Press, 2011).

[11] Further filling in the picture that Roady and Sparrow painted, historian Mark Wilson shows the role of public-private partnership in winning the war, while also illuminating American business's stridently critiquing government regulation and embracing the military-industrial trajectory for the American economy. Mark Wilson, *Destructive Creation: American Business and the Winning of World War II* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016). There was push back from the government and especially from unions and workers who feared the power of business interests. But all these parties got behind what Sparrow calls "the ideology of production." Sparrow, *Warfare State*, 166.

[12] Russell D. Buhite and David W. Levy, eds., *FDR's Fireside Chats* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 198-205. Quoted in Sparrow, *Warfare State*, 167.

[13] Buhite and Levy, *Fireside Chats*, 207-18. Quoted in Sparrow, *Warfare State*, 168.

[14] Sparrow, *Warfare State*, 167-68.

Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot, fought against pollution. The company that owned the smelter opposed these efforts and other environmental regulations. Echoing the argument they made in the late nineteenth century, "no smoke, no wages for workingmen," companies claimed regulations would prevent them from adequately paying workers. That pattern continued during the war, with one major alteration. Corporate bosses now said addressing pollution would styme war production. Air and water pollution increased dramatically at U.S. factories. The arsenic collected at the stack reinforced worker health problems. It also alludes to the complicated relationship between home front ecology, agriculture, and social and political forces. In the mid-1920s, Anaconda began selling arsenic dust to cotton farmers to combat boll weevils and increase yields. The importance of insecticides, including new chemical applications, grew after Pearl Harbor, in tandem with the rapid loss of farm labor—the "sodbusters" referenced in "A Day's Work"—to higher paying war production jobs and to the military.

The third and final section of this chapter discusses the broader story of mineral and metal extraction and production, as well as timber, coal, and oil extraction, and lumber and energy (coal, petroleum, and hydroelectric) production. The Butte mines and Anaconda smelter represent this. In 1942, the Anaconda smelter, and its partner facility, the Black Eagle copper mill and refinery, turned ore mined in Butte by more than nine thousand miners into 250 million pounds of copper, 144 million pounds of manganese, and 47 million pounds of zinc.[15] They were part of the effort to extract an unprecedented amount of natural resources from the home front landscape and produce the raw materials essential to war industries.

Military Operations and Installations

Environmental factors ranging from climate to terrain, to disease, shaped pre-industrial warfare, but had limited—mostly localized—environmental effects. The American Civil War marked a transition, demonstrating the ways mechanized violence could shape nature.[16] World War I more fully revealed this, with immense mobilization of resources, personnel, and equipment, a new scale and level of state planning, and, especially in Europe, of environmental destruction on battlefields.[17] The mode and geography of battle would change again between World War I and World War II. While World War I was fought through relatively static, geographically limited engagements, World War II was mobile and global. Communication and transportation advances effectively shrank the distances within the home front, and between it and the frontlines, North America's bounty of natural resources, and the Roosevelt administration's management of wartime mobilization a safe distance from the frontlines gave the Allies an extraordinary advantage.[18]

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[15] Basso, *Meet Joe Copper*, 130.

[16] Mark Fiege, *The Republic of Nature: An Environmental History of the United States* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012), 199-227. Megan Kate Nelson, *Ruin Nation: Destruction in the American Civil War*, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012). Brian Allen Drake, ed, *The Blue, The Gray, and The Green: Toward an Environmental History of the Civil War* (Athens: University of Georgia press, 2015).

[17] Tate Keller, "Mobilizing Nature for the First World War: An Introduction," in *Environmental Histories of the First World War*, Richard P. Tucker, Tate Keller, J.R. McNeil, and Martin Schmid, eds., (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 1-16.

[18] Robertson and Tucker, "Introduction," *NAW*, 2.

The way Germany and Japan fought the early battles of the war, and the geographically dispersed nature of those battles illustrated the profound difference between the mode of warfare in World War I and World War II. The U.S. military realized it would require a different approach both in combat and home front training. The combined arms and inter-service operations that came to characterize the American World War II military featured an assortment of new weapons. Those weapons—which were also sometimes supplied to American allies—required a retooled and highly complex nationwide production infrastructure that involved a vast number of communities. The mobility, speed, firepower, and range of these weapons also necessitated far more space for training.

Unlike World War I, where much training was done close to the European frontlines, during World War II, U.S. forces largely trained at home in newly constructed or expanded bases.[19] The military added more than fifty million acres, an area larger than Kansas, to the lands it managed. Development of military bases, resource extraction, and/or war production impacted the land and water of virtually every Native nation.[20]

Most new or enlarged bases were in the South and the West, where the dramatically expanded military presence would change economies and social relations while shaping attitudes and politics for decades. To give a sense of scale, from 1790 to 1940 the military added 2.6 million acres

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[19] For the statistics on the military's accumulation of land, see Alvin T. M. Lee, "Getting and Using Land in Time of War," in *Land: USDA Yearbook of Agriculture* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1958), 87; Alvin T. M. Lee, *Acquisition and Use of Land for Military and War Production Purposes, World War II* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1947), 4–5, 106–109; Wesley Frank Craven and James Lee Cate, eds., *The Army Air Forces in World War II, Volume 6* (Washington, D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1983), 120–168. See also U.S. Senate, S. Rep. 347, "Acquisition of Additional Land for Military Purposes," 76th Cong, 1st Sess., May 1939, 1–2; U.S. Senate, Hearings, "Investigation of the National Defense Program," 77th Cong., 1st Sess., April 1941, Part 1, 5–7, 193–194; U.S. Senate, Special Committee Investigating the National Defense Program, "Investigation of the National Defense Program," 77th Cong, 1st Sess., October 1941, Part 8, 2493; As cited in Jean Mansavage, "For Land's Sake: World War II Military Land Acquisition and Alteration," in *NAW*, 55-61.

[20] Claudio Saunt's "Invasion of America" interactive map is an especially good resource for viewing land seizure between 1776 and 1887: https://usg.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=eb6ca76e008543a89349ff2517db47e6
Megan Black, *The Global Interior: Mineral Frontiers and American Power* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), 20-31. Hana Maruyama, "What Remains: Japanese American World War II Incarceration in Relation to American Indian Dispossession," (University of Minnesota, PhD diss. 2021), Retrieved from the University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy, https://hdl.handle.net/11299/259771. Maruyama focuses on Native lands used to incarcerate Japanese American incarceration during the war. She notes that Heart Mountain was placed on land dispossessed from Apsáalooke (Crow) people. "Tule Lake was built on the site of the Modoc War. In 1863, the U.S. military forcibly removed the Nüümü (Paiute) from the Owens Valley, which in 1942 would be converted into Manzanar… Leupp, a site where the WRA would send 'troublemakers' for a brief period in 1943, had been a boarding school in Navajo Nation land up until 1942. 'Amache,' a popular nickname for Granada in Colorado, was named after Amache Ochinee Prowers, the daughter of Cheyenne leader Ochinee who married a white settler-rancher in the area" (2). This chapter and the Native American and Indigenous History chapter highlight tribal nations in an attempt to denaturalize colonialism. On this approach see Manu Karuka, *Empire's Tracks: Indigenous Nations, Chinese Workers, and the Transcontinental Railroad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019), xii. The Latino home front history chapter in this volume and the "Mobilization" and "Labor" sections of Volume 1 complement this chapter by offering further discussion of several sub themes considered in the following pages.

to its holdings, or one-twentieth of what it added during World War II.[21] The military purchased 6.7 million acres from private owners, displacing approximately sixty thousand families from approximately thirty thousand farms.[22] Grazing districts became bombing ranges, cornfields turned into ordnance works, apple orchards were replaced by plutonium reactors.[23] Roughly 43.3 million acres were leased from other federal agencies, states, or municipalities. The military preferred government leasing because it had little to no cost, was easy, and fast. So-called unimproved lands were especially attractive because the law required improved lands leased by the federal government to be restored to their previous condition.[24]

The military acquired a large amount of ecologically sensitive land from other government agencies that were compelled to drop their conservation efforts due to wartime necessity. Robert Wilson found that the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) decreased game bird decline by establishing dozens of avian refuges along migratory routes. However, "World War II put an end to most of these programs."[25] The War Department took 4.6 million acres from thirty-three wildlife refuges. Marshlands became docking facilities, and desert tortoise habitats were taken over by airfields.

The military received almost two thousand permits from the National Park Service (NPS) for short-term maneuvers. It operated on longer-term agreements in virtually every national park along the Pacific, Atlantic, and Gulf coasts, often establishing aircraft warning sites and other defense installations.[26] Prioritizing defense activities also interrupted Civilian Conservation

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[21] Lee, "Getting and Using Land in Time of War," 87; Lee, *Acquisition and Use of Land*, 4–5, 106–109; Craven and Cate, *Army Air Forces in World War II*, Volume 6, 120–168; U.S. Department of Defense, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense, Installations and Environment, "Base Structure Report: Fiscal Year 2015 Baseline, A Summary of the Department of Defense's Real Property Inventory," 14–15, www.acq.osd.mil/eie/Downloads/BSI/Base%20Structure%20Report%20FY15.pdf. As cited in Mansavage, "For Land's Sake," *NAW*, 55-56. When the war ended, military land holdings dropped to 25.1 million acres (Mansavage, 75).

[22] U.S. Department of Justice, Lands Division, *Acquisition of Property for War Purposes* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1944), 50–51; Lee, *Acquisition and Use of Land*, 23–26, 33–34; Lee, "Land Acquisition Program of the War and Navy Departments," 898, 904–905.

[23] Mansavage, "For Land's Sake," *NAW*, 71-74.

[24] Janet A. McDonnell, "'Far-Reaching Effects:' The United States Military and the National Parks during World War II," *George Wright Forum* 32, no. 1 (2015): 89–110; McDonnell, "World War II: Defending Park Values and Resources," *Public Historian* 29, no. 4 (Fall 2007): 15–33. For statistics on increased timber cut on public lands, grazing declining marginally, and big game populations up 16%, L.A. Reuss and O.O. McCracken, *Federal Rural Lands* (Washington, D.C. : U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, (1947), 14, 21–25; quotation in Richard P. Tucker, "The World Wars and the Globalization of Timber Cutting," in *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally: Toward an Environmental History of Warfare*, Edmund Russell and Richard P. Tucker eds., (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2004), 127. As cited in Mansavage, "For Land's Sake," *NAW*, 71-74.

[25] Increased rice harvesting during the war, in places like the Sacramento River marshes, also threatened migratory waterfowl. Officials attempted to shift waterfowl away from what was now farmland to a patchwork of refuges using planes, flares, and other methods. Robert Wilson, "Birds on the Home Front: Wildlife Conservation in the Western United States during WWII," in *War and the Environment: Military Destruction in the Modern Age*, Charles Closmann ed., (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), 133, 137. Citing Correspondence between Harold L. Ickes, Secretary of Interior, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt in Edgar B. Nixon, *Franklin D. Roosevelt & Conservation*, 1911–1945 (Hyde Park, NY: General Services Administration, 1957), 540–541; Mansavage, "For Land's Sake," *NAW*, 71-74.

[26] McDonnell, "'Far-Reaching Effects," 89–110; McDonnell, "World War II," 15–33.

Corps (CCC) and other New Deal initiatives in national parks.[27] Historian Jean Mansavage writes that Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes and NPS director Newton Drury were staunch conservationists who sought to protect national parks from unnecessary military use. Ickes and Drury fought to limit grazing and logging at parks like Sequoia and Olympic, which they were told were necessary to support the warfighting machine.[28] As soon as the war ended, the NPS terminated as many military permits as it could and restored the parks to their former condition wherever practical. However, the NPS also permanently transferred six land parcels—almost ten thousand acres—to the military.[29] The military left some parks dramatically impacted, including Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park on the seized sovereign territory of Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians). Motorized maneuvers and arms practice caused widespread damage and widely scattered unexploded ordnance.[30]

Land availability, climate, landscape type, population centers, transportation infrastructure, and hydrological and other resources helped determine where home front defense facilities were placed.[31] Different types of training, testing, and production required specific environmental characteristics. Some places—especially those that came to be associated with uranium mining; atomic, biological, and chemical weapon testing; and bombing ranges—evidence the government's propensity for what historian Traci Brynne Voyles calls "wastelanding." Voyles shows that environmental racism was a cornerstone of this approach to land and ecology. The government saw Native lands and those associated with communities of color as "unimportantly inhabited" and without value, lacking "material and ideological worth."[32]

Military Bases

The expansion of older military bases and creation of new ones profoundly reshaped the landscape and the built environment through massive construction projects.[33] Army leaders selected

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[27] McDonnell, "'Far Reaching Effects,'" 89-110.

[28] Wilson, "Birds on the Home Front," 133. Mansavage, "For Land's Sake," *NAW*, 71-74. NPS, "National Parks' Homefront Battle: Protecting Parks During WWII," https://www.nps.gov/articles/npshomefrontbattle.htm, accessed November 12, 2023.

[29] McDonnell, "Far-Reaching Effects," 90, 102, 105-106.

[30] Mansavage, "For Land's Sake," *NAW*, 71-74.

[31] Hiltner, *Taking Leave*, 21.

[32] Traci Brynne Voyles, *Wastelanding: Legacies of Uranium Mining in Navajo Country* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 10-11. For more on wastelanding on the World War II home front, see the Native American and Indigenous history theme study chapter in this volume.

[33] Militarizing the built environment also occurred in cities and the areas around them. Offices to manage military operations were typically in or near cities—the Pentagon, rushed to completion in 1941 across the river from Washington, DC is the best-known example. So too were key nodes in the vast web of military logistics and recruiting stations. The home front saw prominent use of old armory buildings, urban defense installations, and military and Veterans Administration hospitals. New versions of these building types also emerged in and around cities. Cities and suburbs also were home to movie theaters, concert halls, and wartime cultural venues, and, of course, to a vast array of war production facilities, further discussed below. Each of these parts of the built environment militarized urban America including, in some instances, initiating new land use patterns. The Pentagon is a National Historic Landmark. For more information, see "The Pentagon: National Historic Landmark Nomination,"
https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/78b603e7-43ac-4bc9-b86d-7de4f2f487a8

Fort Benning (now Fort Moore), Georgia, a World War I basic training camp later famous for being home to the United States Army Airborne School, as the primary infantry training site. More than ninety thousand personnel came to call Benning home, and its footprint expanded to over three hundred square miles. Fort Bragg (now Fort Liberty), North Carolina, the current home of the 82nd Airborne and Special Forces Command, played a major role in artillery training. Other camps—Jackson, Hood (now Cavazos), and Knox, for example –also grew exponentially to house and train thousands of soldiers. In their recollections, those soldiers remember base facilities as hastily constructed, with dirt everywhere. One soldier commented that bases seemed to be "in a constant state of erosion."[34] This was a result of the massive amount of earthmoving required to construct the bases and the ways military equipment constantly tore up the landscape, indicating one type of substantial environmental damage connected to these facilities.

For new bases, the army targeted sites that were ill-suited for agriculture, moderately flat, had a mild climate for year-round training, and were located near sizable cities with leisure facilities and railroad access.[35] Meeting all these requirements was not always possible. Camp Stewart, which later became Fort Stewart, opened in August 1940 as five thousand leased acres near Hinesville, Georgia. Later land purchases expanded the base to more than 437 square miles, displacing approximately 1,500 Black and White farm families and tenants. The area's ideal topography and its proximity to Savannah and the Army Air Forces' (AAF) Hunter Airfield made it attractive as a major anti-aircraft artillery training center, which overrode concerns about the impact on local families. Camp Stewart also served as a prisoner of war camp.[36]

The Army Air Forces sought extensive space and especially coveted well-drained, level land without significant tree density to support the expansion of military aviation.[37] In September 1939, the U.S. military had 3,470 aircraft and 17 air bases, but only its 23 B-17 bombers were considered "modern." By July 1944, the AAF had nearly 80,000 aircraft. They flew out of 345

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[34] Hiltner, *Taking Leave*, 35.

[35] Bases in California, New Jersey, and Washington also handled enormous numbers of army draftees. Hiltner, *Taking Leave*, 23.

[36] U.S. Senate Hearings, "National Defense Migration," 77th Cong., 1st Sess., March 1941, Part 11, 4743; Fort Stewart Museum, "Fort Stewart Fact Sheet," www.stewart.army.mil/info/?id=417; Craig S. Pascoe and John Rieken, "Fort Stewart," in New Georgia Encyclopedia, www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/government-politics/fort-stewart; City of Hinesville, GA, "Short History of Liberty County," www.cityofhinesville.org/DocumentView.aspx?DID=313; Liberty County Historical Society, "Agricultural and Cattle Raising (1934)," https://libertyhistory.org/history/timelines/timelines-1930-1940/agriculture-and-cattle-raising-1934. As cited in Mansavage, "For Land's Sake," *NAW*, 64.

[37] Mansavage, "For Land's Sake," *NAW*, 55-56. Eglin Field Forestry Section, "Forest Section History," August 21, 1951, 1-2; M. L. Grant, "Camp Report [Fla F-3]," Emergency Conservation work, Office of the Director, September 25, 1939; Robert G. Pasquill Jr., "Civilian Corps Company 1402: Company History, Camp F-3, Niceville, Florida," n.d., all Box 1, Jackson Guard Environmental Records, Eglin AFB [Air Force Base] Natural Resources Division Archives; Historical Branch, Army Air Forces Proving Ground Command, "History of the Army Air Forces Proving Ground Command," 1, 8-9, 61, 80, 93-98; Douglas G. Brinkley, *The Wilderness Warrior: Theodore Roosevelt and the Crusade for America* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 737. The U.S. Forest Service provided permits for military use of 2.8 million acres. The USFS did lose substantial leased land and saw the significant harvest of Forest Service timber, which increased 89% from 1940 to 1944. Because of manpower shortages and funding problems tree planting decreased 96% during the same period.

main bases, 116 subbases, and 322 auxiliary fields. The twenty-thousand military personnel assigned prior to the war grew to nearly two million by 1945.[38] Bases totaled 19.7 million acres by 1945.[39]

Eglin Airfield in the Florida Panhandle, built on Muscogee ancestral homelands, is only one of the many sites that exemplifies the astonishing expansion of home front military land holdings for aerial operations and the manipulation of that environment.[40] Prior to the war, much of the land was part of the Choctawhatchee National Forest. In 1908, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) began restoring the land so it could better support cutover longleaf pine stands. In 1933, the CCC established a camp in the forest from which they built fire lookout towers, improved timber stands, and added roads and recreational facilities. When it came to the attention of U.S. military planners, Eglin was a 1500-acre landing strip within the forest. It shared characteristics with much of the land the War Department acquired: cheap or free, flat, and near a town and/or railway. In October 1940, the USFS ceded almost 400,000 acres to the War Department. Significant deforestation and land manipulation followed. Suggestive of the long term militarization of land and waterscapes during the war, Eglin remains among the largest U.S. Air Force installations in the world, comprising 725 square miles of land and 125,000 square miles of water.[41]

[38] For the statistics about numbers of aircraft and air bases, comparing pre- and post-war, and for the growth in personnel numbers: David T. Courtwright, *Sky as Frontier: Adventure, Aviation, and Empire* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2005), 118. For the quip about the 23 B-17s as the only truly modern aircraft in 1939: D'ann Campbell and Richard Jensen, "Domestic Life, War Effort, and Economy," in *The Oxford Companion to World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 1180-1182. See also John Bell Rae, *Climb to Greatness: The American Aircraft Industry*, 1920–1960 (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1968). As cited in Thomas Robertson and Christopher W Wells, "A War of Mobility: Transportation, American Productive Power, and the Environment during World War II," in *NAW*, 24-25.

[39] Rae, *Climb to Greatness*, 16.

[40] Ladd Field and Sitka Naval Operating Base and U.S. Army Coastal Defenses in Alaska are sites that represent World War II military expansion recognized by National Historic Landmark (NHL) designation. They also show the military's history of environmental manipulation.

[41] Eglin Field Forestry Section, 1-2; Grant, "Camp Report [Fla F-3],"; Pasquill Jr., "Civilian Corps Company 1402, 1, 8-9, 61, 80, 93-98; Brinkley, *The Wilderness Warrior*, 737. As cited in Mansavage, "For Land's Sake," *NAW*, 55-56.

Figure 1.1: Aerial View of Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. Courtesy National Archives, NAID: 176246632

The home front bombing ranges created by the War Department had dramatic and rapid environmental impacts. Aircraft flying out of Eglin used bombing ranges that the War Department created in the Gulf of Mexico. These operations were deadly to marine life.[42] In the western United States, the military established its largest land-based gunnery and bombing ranges. One of these was originally a group of installations including McCarran Field, Las Vegas Army Air Field, and Tonopah Bombing Range, and is now the Nellis Air Force Base Complex. Acquiring land for bombing and strafing ranges associated with Nellis included vast swaths of federally controlled territory in the Great Basin. Military need was prioritized over conservation, including a large portion of the Desert National Wildlife Refuge, home to one of the most important bighorn sheep ranges. In more recent times, numerous artists, from writers Terry Tempest Williams and Rebecca Solnit to photographer Richard Misrach have alerted the public to the environmental devastation that the military wrought in the region by dropping bombs on wildlife habitat and distinctive vegetation. Much of this attention focuses on Cold War bombing exercises, especially related to atomic weapons.[43] World War II militarization of the landscape was the catalyst for this process and also did substantial damage.

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[42] Mansavage, "For Land's Sake," *NAW*, 56-57. "Underwater Timebombs: World War II Bombs and Munitions Laying Dorment on the Sea Floor," Oceania, September 13, 2010, https://europe.oceana.org/blog/underwater-timebombs-world-war-ii-bombs-and-munitions-laying-dormant-sea-floor/, accessed October 16, 2024.

[43] Rebecca Solnit, *Savage Dreams: A Journey Into the Hidden Wars of the American West 20th Anniversary Edition* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000); Mike Davis, "The Dead West; Ecocide in Marlboro Country," *New Left Review* (July-Aug 1993); Chip Ward, *Canaries on the Rim: Living Downwind in the West* (New York: Verso, 2000); Terry Tempest Williams, *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place* (New York: Pantheon, 1991); and Richard Misrach, *Bravo 20: The Bombing of the American West* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990).

The navy sought sites on the coast with deep water access, terrain appropriate for docking facilities and warehouses, and plentiful land for command and control, barracks, and logistics buildings.[44] They preferred locales that could accommodate both marine and navy training exercises and bombing ranges. Like army and air force bases, these facilities affected the land and air. Unsurprisingly, the most distinctive impact of naval operations was on aquatic environments. During the mobilization period, German U-boats sank numerous ships in the Atlantic Theater, spilling oil and other pollutants into the ocean. This increased with the start of the war. In July 1942, for instance, U-166 sank three ships in the Caribbean and the *SS Robert E. Lee*, a five-thousand-ton steamship, in the Gulf of Mexico, off the Louisiana coast. Soon after one of its torpedoes hit and sunk the *Robert E. Lee*, U-166 was likewise hit by a depth charge and sunk. Both vessels dumped oil and gasoline into the ocean. This aspect of naval operations had an even greater impact on the Eastern U.S. seaboard.[45]

The 1,600-mile-long coastline from Key West, Florida to the mouth of the Rio Grande River in Texas offers a powerful case study on how World War II military bases, and militarization more broadly, impacted aquatic environments. World War II, Christopher Rein argues, was a "pivot point" for the Gulf of Mexico, its coastal communities, and their natural world.[46] Home to environmentally sensitive areas with shallow water tables, Gulf communities grew dramatically during the war. The initial source of growth was the military, which coveted the sparsely populated countryside near the coast for bases. The navy relocated its Mine Warfare Center to Panama City, Florida, but, like Eglin, most large military bases constructed within or adjacent to coastal ecosystems generally supported navy and army aviation.[47] The petrochemical industry, discussed more below, was the second major driver of population expansion and construction along the Gulf Coast. Oil and gas refineries caused substantial water quality problems and ecosystem damage throughout the war and beyond. Shipbuilding facilities that churned out Liberty Ships, LVTs (Landing Vehicle, Tracked), Higgins Boats, and small warships for the navy, marines, and Merchant Marine in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas damaged coastal and littoral environments through ground and water pollution and by impeding animal and bird habitat.[48] The development of military facilities in coastal areas also affected fragile Atlantic, Pacific, and Great Lakes ecosystems.

Roosevelt Roads Naval Station on the northeast corner of the Puerto Rican mainland and the Naval and Marine bases on the fifty-two-square-mile island of Vieques, eight miles off the coast of the main island, exemplify the effects of coastal naval bases on the environment and local populations. The facilities were developed in tandem. Roosevelt Roads was built to be able to house

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[44] The navy's major basic training facilities were in Virginia, Massachusetts, California, and Illinois. Hiltner, *Taking Leave*, 23.

[45] Christopher M. Rein, "A Watery Grave? World War II and the Environment on the American Gulf Coast," in *NAW*, 227, 238.

[46] Rein, "A Watery Grave?," *NAW*, 230.

[47] Frederick J. Shaw, ed., *Locating Air Force Base Sites: History's Legacy* (Washington DC: Air Force History and Museums Program, 2004), 5-8, 24-40. https://www.amc.af.mil/Portals/12/documents/AFD-131018-055.pdf

[48] Rein, "A Watery Grave?," *NAW*, 231, 234-251.

the entire British Navy, following attacks on Great Britain. It primarily served as a linchpin to the U.S. military's "Antilles Screen" strategy, which protected the greater Caribbean Basin and especially the approaches to the Panama Canal. Roosevelt Roads covered 32,000 acres and included three harbors, one of the essential features the navy looked for when siting bases.[49]

Over sixty percent of Vieques was transferred to the navy without consulting its inhabitants who relied on subsistence agriculture to feed their families while also working for the sugar industry, which controlled most of the arable land. When the military acquired the land, sugar industry jobs disappeared. The military relocated Vieques residents to the center of the island where they lived crowded together in difficult conditions. The navy allotted them plots of land that were far too small to continue their agricultural practices, prompting virtually all to work in the wage economy that supported constructing and maintaining new military facilities. A marine base, ammunition depot, and navy support buildings occupied a considerable part of the remainder of the island. The navy turned the largest swath—the eastern sector—into a massive bombing range used for target practice from the air, ground, and sea and for large-scale maneuvers. When the U.S. was not using the bombing range, the government allowed other countries to rent it. The ecological damage to Vieques' caused by exploded and unexploded munitions and to surrounding waters, represented by the death of whales and dolphins, was profound.[50]

Figure 1.2: This explosion on Vieques Bombing Range, photographed in 1988, reflects the continuing environmental impacts of the site. Courtesy National Archives, NAID: 6438247.

[49] Roberta J. Park, "'Forget about that pile of papers': Second World War Sport, Recreation, and the Military on the Island of Puerto Rico," *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, Vol. 20 No. 1, 2003: 53. Cesar Ayala, "From Sugar Plantations to Military Bases: The U.S. Navy's Expropriations in Vieques, Puerto Rico, 1940-1945," *Centro Journal* Vol 13, No 1 (Spring 2001): 23. Jorge Rodriguez Beruff and Jose L Bolivar Fresneda, *Island at War: Puerto Rico in the Crucible of the Second World War* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2015), 171-172, 175, 177-78.

[50] Park, "'Forget about that pile of papers,'" 53. Ayala, "From Sugar Plantations to Military Bases," 23. Beruff and Fresneda, *Island at War*, 171-172, 175, 177-78.

The military also took and often irreparably damaged Indigenous land and ocean holdings in the territories of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Hawai'i, American Samoa, and Guåhan. Along with wartime employment trends, land appropriation dramatically impacted social relations.[51] Guåhan, generally known to Americans as the unincorporated territory of Guam, is the largest (210 sq. mi.) and southernmost of Micronesia's Mariana Islands. Guåhan became part of the American home front after the U.S. colonized it during the Spanish-American War. The U.S. lost Guåhan to the Japanese during the same attack phase as the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The Japanese imprisoned CHamorus, the indigenous people of Guåhan, in the Manenggon Concentration Camp, committed atrocities, and damaged the environment. The U.S. liberated Guåhan in August 1944.[52] Subsequently, the U.S. developed the island into a fortified base for Pacific military operations, rarely taking into account what was best for the CHamoru people. Naval Operating Base Guam, the navy's largest advance base, was built to serve upward of one thousand ships and supply the majority of the Pacific fleet. The U.S. also built four major landing areas at Tiyan, Orote Point, Depot Field, and Yigo.[53]

As with other wartime projects across Oceania, the U.S. destroyed vital CHamoru landscapes, like the Machananao jungles and låncho sites (farming/gathering places). Even those areas that survived the bulldozer were profoundly impacted. Native bird populations were devastated by the invasive brown tree snake that arrived on a cargo vessel. The coastline, so critical to Pacific Islander communities' ways of life, was dramatically altered. A massive dredging effort in Guåhan removed 7.5 million cubic feet of coastal habitat so the U.S. could install six enormous piers. The marine habitat was further degraded when five concrete barges were sunk to create a larger breakwater, a pattern replicated in other parts of the Pacific.[54]

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[51] Karen Eccles and Debbie McCollin, *World War II and the Caribbean* (Kingston: The University of the West Indies Press, 2017), 4. Isaac Dookhan, "The Labor Situation in the Virgin Islands during World War II," in *Environment and Labor in the Caribbean*, Joseph Lisowski, ed. (New York: Routledge, 1992), 112-114. For details on environmental impact see: "Part III: The Advance Bases. Chapter XVIII Bases in South America and the Caribbean Area, Including Bermuda," from *Building the Navy's Bases in World War II*, Naval History and Heritage Command. https://www.history.navy.mil/research/library/online-reading-room/title-list-alphabetically/b/building-the-navys-bases/building-the-navys-bases-vol-2.html.

[52] In May 2024, the Manenggon Concentration Camp on Guam was being vetted for NHL status. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/spring-2024-nhl-committee-meeting.htm. See too https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2302961

[53] R.D.K. Herman, "Inscribing empire: Guam and the War in the Pacific National Historical Park," *Political Geography* 27 (2008): 637-640. Alfred Peredo Flores, "'No Walk in the Park': U.S. Empire and the Racialization of Civilian Military Labor in Guam, 1944-1962," *American Quarterly* 67, No. 3, (September 2015): 813-816. *Building the Navy's Bases in World War II*, 350.
https://pacificwrecks.com/airfields/marianas/harmon/index.html and https://www.andersen.af.mil/History/ both accessed July 18, 2023.

[54] Department of Defense, "Installations in Guam During the Cold War: Department of Defense Legacy Resource Management Program," pp. 1-4, https://www.denix.osd.mil/cr/historic/cold-war/installations-in-guam-and-the-northern-mariana-islands/fact-sheet/37_Installations%20in%20Guam%20During%20the%20Cold%20War%20%28Legacy%2009-454%29.pdf. Christine Taitano Delisle, "A History of Chamorro Nurse-Midwives in Guam and a 'Placental Politics' for Indigenous Feminism," *Intersections: Gender and Sexuality in Asia and the Pacific* Issue 37 (March 2015): 30-31. See also: https://www.guampedia.com/lancho-ranch/. Quimby, "Fortress Guahan," JPH, 374, n38. *Building the Navy's Bases in World War II*, 349-350.

Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Warfare Facilities

The Manhattan Project, the government's top-secret effort to build an atomic weapon, required a vast physical infrastructure linked to over 800 square miles of secretive land acquisitions in New Mexico, Tennessee, and Washington. It was among the most environmentally damaging of home front activities—and certainly, now, among its most famous and studied. All told, the Manhattan Project encompassed thirty sites in the U.S., Canada, and the United Kingdom and employed 130,000 individuals.[55] This does not include the uranium mining sites. The U.S. government became formally involved in February 1940 when it invested in a group of Columbia University scientists investigating nuclear technology.[56] In December 1942, Enrico Fermi and his team at the University of Chicago's Metallurgical Laboratory developed the first artificial nuclear reactor. That breakthrough led to the building of the X-10 Graphite reactor at Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and subsequently the large reactor in Hanford, Washington. It was at Hanford, on the homelands of Wanapum, Yakama, Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla peoples, that scientists irradiated uranium and turned it into plutonium. The $2 billion spent on the Manhattan Project was largely related to plutonium production.[57]

Historian Kate Brown notes that "Of all the stops on the nuclear weapons assembly line, plutonium production is the dirtiest. Each kilogram of final product generates hundreds of thousands of gallons of radioactive waste. In four decades of operation, the Hanford plutonium plant near Richland…issued at least 200 million curies of radioactivity—twice what Chernobyl emitted—into the surrounding environment."[58] Hanford's eight "single pass" reactors used water from the Columbia River for cooling. After going through the reactors, the water was cooled in retention ponds and then returned to the Columbia. Later testing found radioactivity and "Sodium dichromate, a key corrosion inhibitor that had been added to reactor water since WWII." The latter "was known to have detrimental effects on the fish of the Columbia River…[yet] site scientists decided to continue using it," noted Michelle Gerber, a historian who extensively studied the plant.[59]

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[55] For sites, see U.S. Department of Energy, Office of History and Heritage Resources, "The Manhattan Project," https://www.osti.gov/opennet/manhattan-project-history/Places/Other/other-places.html. Accessed 15 Jan 2024. For stat on 130,000 employed, see U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Legacy Management, "Manhattan Project Background Information and Preservation Work," https://www.energy.gov/lm/manhattan-project-background-information-and-preservation-work. Accessed 15 Jan 2024.

[56] Richard Hewlett and Oscar Anderson, *The New World*, 1939-1946, (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1962), 21. https://www.governmentattic.org/5docs/TheNewWorld1939-1946.pdf. Accessed 15 Jan 2024.

[57] Argonne National Laboratory, Nuclear Engineering Division, "Reactors Designed by Argonne National Laboratory, Early Exploration," https://www.ne.anl.gov/About/reactors/early-reactors.shtml#:~:text=Chicago%20Pile%201%20was%20the,Chicago's%20Stagg%20Field%20football%20stadium.. Accessed 15 Jan 2024.

[58] Kate Brown, *Plutopia: Nuclear Families, Atomic Cities, and the Great Soviet and American Plutonium Disasters* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3.

[59] Michelle Stenehjem Gerber, *On the Home Front: The Cold War Legacy of the Hanford Nuclear Site* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 4.

Figure 1.3: Aerial view of the 100-B Area of the Hanford Site under construction in January 1944, Richland, Washington. Courtesy Library of Congress

The isolation of the site and secrecy of the project meant managers at Hanford could sequester workers. This created what Brown calls "a zone of immunity," allowing a virtually unlimited ability to pollute.[60] She summarizes the results in communities in the U.S. and Soviet Union that paralleled Hanford: "The plants left behind hundreds of square miles of uninhabitable territory, contaminated rivers, soiled fields and forests, and thousands of people claiming to be sick from the plants' radioactive effluence."[61]

Hanford plutonium was used on July 16, 1945, for the Trinity test, run by the Los Alamos lab at the Alamogordo Bombing and Gunnery Range in South Central New Mexico. In this high desert environment, the team detonated the world's first nuclear bomb.[62] The Trinity tests, like the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the nuclear testing after the war in the Pacific, caused vast environmental damage. The land at the Trinity site was irradiated, just as it was at other land-based test sites around the world. The humans, and animals who witnessed the test also received doses of radiation, as did those often called "downwinders," who either directly or indirectly absorbed radiation from the fallout caused by over two thousand atomic bomb tests worldwide since Trinity.[63] The story of downwinders offers yet more evidence of the ways home front militarism redefined attitudes towards the environment well into the postwar.

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[60] Brown, *Plutopia*, 6.
[61] Brown, *Plutopia*, 3.
[62] Argonne National Laboratory, "Reactors Designed by Argonne National Laboratory, Early Exploration."
[63] For more on human irradiation see Brown, *Plutopia*, 52, 182-83.

In 1942, the U.S. government chose another site in the Utah desert, which they saw as a "wasteland," to test and evaluate the effectiveness of chemical and biological weapons.[64] The Dugway Proving Grounds, as the base would be called, was part of a larger network of research and fabrication sites across the U.S. and remained a secret during the war. Dugway was on the ancestral lands of the Goshute tribe near the Skull Valley Reservation, the largest community near the base. Officials who chose the location cited its remoteness, aridity, and alkaline soil to support their argument that it was an ideal place to bomb, release poisonous gas, and use incendiary devices. At Dugway, scientists and the military tested some of what would become the most controversial and deadly weapons in the U.S. arsenal, experimenting with napalm, hydrogen cyanide, phosphine, and mustard gas.[65] None of these is more powerfully associated with the chemical warfare undertaken by the U.S. Army during and after the war than napalm.

The Chemical Warfare Service (CWS) refined napalm's use at the model Japanese and German villages the military built at Dugway. Architects affiliated with the Gropius Group at Harvard designed the villages. Following these tests, napalm was deployed with ruinous effect in the firebombing of Dresden and Tokyo. CWS researchers found that the AN-M50 incendiary bomb would be most effective against German architecture, while the M-69 napalm bomb was an ideal weapon against Japanese structures.[66] The military also developed flamethrowers used in the Pacific Theater, tested bat bombs (which contained bats laden with incendiary devices,) and developed a 4.2-inch chemical mortar at the Proving Grounds. They used mines, including on nearby private property that the military leased during the war, to test biological agents developed at Dugway as part of the army's "Project Sphinx." Such biological weapons were meant to be deployed against the Japanese occupying fortified caves in the Pacific Islands.[67] The environmental effects of Dugway testing on the West Desert included the destruction of fragile desert habitat. The effects on sites and people around the globe were far more devastating.

Because atomic and chemical weapons' association with destruction and death, Americans tended to have negative views of them. Industry and government leaders began pushing to rehabilitate both atomic and chemical home front weapons programs during the war and accelerated that effort dramatically in the early postwar. With atomic technology, it was energy and medicine that took the spotlight. Drawing on their wartime chemical research, manufacturers promoted "miracle chemicals" that could help control disease and increase crop yields.

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[64] David Armitage, "Letter from Colonel David Armitage Detailing Dugway's History," Letter, September 14, 1963, 3. UUS_LJAHA COLL 001, Special Collections & Archives, Merrill-Cazier Library, Utah State University; Leonard J Arrington and Thomas G. Alexander, "Sentinels on the Desert: The Dugway Proving Ground (1942-1963) and Deseret Chemical Depot (1942-1955)," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (1964): 32–43; Lincoln Thomson, "Ssh! Dugway Plant Swarms With Germs," *Deseret News*, January 5, 1946.

[65] Chemical Warfare Service, Army Dugway Proving Ground, "A Study of Short Interval Exposures of Goats to CG, CK, and AC," November 28, 1945; Arrington and Alexander, "Sentinels on the Desert," 34.

[66] National Park Service, "Dugway Proving Ground, German-Japanese Village, German Village," Historic American Engineering Record (Dugway, Tooele County: Historic American Engineering Record, 1984). "Tokyo Calling Cards," *Collier's Magazine*, April 1945, 44, 58.

[67] Theresa Sauer, "DANGER - Bombs May Be Present - Cannon v. Gates: A Jammed Cannon Preempts Citizen Suit Indefinitely," *Denver University Law Review* 86 (n.d.): 1215.

DDT, which a Swiss chemist developed as an insecticide in 1939, was used to protect agriculture and combat disease. The U.S. military began using it in 1943, and it was at the forefront of their efforts to promote a positive view of chemicals. Although DDT was deployed on the Gulf Coast, it was most closely associated with saving soldiers from disease first in Naples and then in the Pacific Theater. General James Simmons called it the "war's greatest contribution to the future health of the world."[68] By 1945, it was being sold to farmers. It was soon widely used and credited with eradicating malaria in the U.S. Herbicides and chemical fertilizers, developed or made more widely available during the war, were also part of this effort. They are discussed in detail in the agricultural section of this chapter.

By the early 1960s, experts like Rachel Carson began warning about the negative effects that DDT had on humans and other animals, especially birds. In *Silent Spring*, Carson wrote that the synthetic chemicals produced during the war were "a chemical barrage . . . hurled against the fabric of life."[69] Carson was among a cohort that included ordinary people and thinkers like David Brower, Aldo Leopold, and William Vogt who took from the war a "deep skepticism of technology" linked to "ecological views of environmental degradation and resource limits."[70] However at the end of World War II, they were in the minority. Even with concerns stoked by the destruction at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, other scientists, backed by public relations campaigns, succeeded in making most Americans believe these technologies would help humans master nature and the environment.[71]

War Department Ordnance Plants

Other than bases and training areas, most of the land that the Department of War acquired was for production facilities, especially related to ordnance manufacture, that the department owned or supervised. Plants were built in record time and covered vast acreage while requiring a massive workforce. The Joliet Army Ammunition Plant in Will County, Illinois (homelands of the Kaskaskia, Myaamia, Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, Bodwéwadmi (Potawatomi), Kiikaapoi (Kickapoo), and Peoria Peoples), for example, had over fourteen square miles of manufacturing space where workers produced explosives, propellants, and ammunition. Nearby, the even more massive twenty-two square mile loading, assembly, and packaging area prepared the resulting ordnance for distribution to soldiers on the front lines.[72]

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[68] Rein, "A Watery Grave?," *NAW*, 230. Edmund Russell, *War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War I to "Silent Spring"* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 2, 125-28. Quoted in Martha N. Gardner, "American Chemical and Pharmaceutical Expansion," *NAW*, 277.

[69] Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2002), 297, cited in Gardner, "American Chemical and Pharmaceutical Expansion," *NAW*, 276.

[70] Thomas B. Robertson, "The Nature of World War II," in *Origins: Current Events in Historical Perspective*, https://origins.osu.edu/connecting-history/nature-world-war-ii-operation-husky-environmentalism-defense-industry?language_content_entity=en, accessed January 23, 2024.

[71] Russell, *War and Nature*, 125-28. On the shift in attitudes about the bomb see Paul Boyer, *By the Bombs Early Light: American Thought and Culture at the Dawn of the Atomic Age* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

[72] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District Website, "Joliet Army Ammunition Plant," Accessed 21 October 2022. https://www.lrl.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/Joliet-Army-Ammunition-Plant/ . https://

Arkansas's six ordnance plants are illustrative. They conform to the government's practice of placing such facilities well away from the coasts and population centers, in places with ready access to energy resources. Once the government identified a site where they wanted to place a plant, they removed all inhabitants. The displaced individuals were often poor and from marginalized communities. Like wartime agriculture, ordnance plants sought workers who were less attractive to the military or higher paying war industries. In Arkansas, that meant White and Black school age children, women, disabled workers, older people, and Black men. Ordinance plant supervisors segregated Black workers, replicating the discriminatory practices of the military and many industries. Because of housing shortages near these rapidly constructed plants, workers often commuted great distances or lived in substandard housing. The Arkansas Ordnance Plant near Jacksonville, a $33 million facility, is representative. Initially, some workers lived out of their cars. At its peak, the plant employed just over fourteen thousand workers; approximately 75 percent were women and nearly 25 percent were Black. The facility turned out over one billion detonators and relays, over one hundred million primers, over three hundred million percussion elements, nearly two hundred million fuses, and nearly six million boosters. Within six months of the war's end, the plant had closed.[73]

Chemical production, including sulfuric acid and nitrates, and chemical use were at the heart of most ordnance plant operations. This connection was particularly strong at the Ozark Ordnance Works, near El Dorado, Arkansas, run by the Lion Chemical Corporation. The plant used natural gas to produce ammonia in a building the size of two football fields. The core work at Pine Bluff Arsenal, also in Arkansas, was chemical processes. It specialized in magnesium and thermite incendiary bombs. The government-owned and operated facility, with large numbers of White women and Black workers, produced its first incendiary bomb in July 1942. Postwar, it became the only site in the U.S. to produce biological munitions. For decades, it was also one of two primary chemical stockpile storage sites.[74]

Ground and water contamination occurred at virtually every U.S. home front ordnance facility.[75] Home front War Department facilities were as prone, if not more so, to air, water, and soil pollution as civilian production sites. When the Department of Defense, spurred by 1960s and 1970s environmental activism, finally completed a full evaluation, they found 1,700 active military facilities, the vast majority operational during World War II, had contaminated 19,000 discrete sites.[76]

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wfpl.org/unequal-how-west-louisville-residents-cleaned-up-the-air/#:~:text=Even%20as%20late%20as%20 2005,the%20Air%20Pollution%20Control%20District.

[73] "World War II Ordnance Plants," *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*, https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/world-war-ii-ordnance-plants-373/#, accessed February 18, 2024.

[74] "World War II Ordnance Plants," *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*.

[75] U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District Website, "Joliet Army Ammunition Plant," Accessed 21 October 2022. https://www.lrl.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/Joliet-Army-Ammunition-Plant/ . https://wfpl.org/unequal-how-west-louisville-residents-cleaned-up-the-air/#:~:text=Even%20as%20late%20as%20 2005,the%20Air%20Pollution%20Control%20District.

[76] John McNeill and David Painter, "America's Military Footprint: Environmental Implications of the U.S. Army since 1789," in *War and the Environment*, 23. As cited in Robertson and Tucker, "Introduction," *NAW*, 12.

War Production Sites

Industrial

Wartime production facilities, discussed extensively in Volume 1, are the best-known example of the home front serving as "the arsenal of democracy." A core part of the environmental legacy of these plants was emphasizing production over worker health. While unions gained some leverage during the war, the demand for increased production meant safety and health concerns were more often sidelined, as the disability history chapter in this volume elaborates. Workers constructing maritime vessels, including the U.S.military cargo ships like Liberty and Victory ships, were among the army of people who breathed in lead and other metal dust, asbestos, and welding gas fumes, which deleteriously affected their health, especially later in life.[77] These factories were also the origin of a legacy of postwar pollution.

Some war production sites were co-located with military facilities. For instance, the Douglas Cargo Aircraft Plant at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma, including the massive Building 3001, three-quarters of a mile wide, churned out more than five thousand C-47 cargo planes during and after the war, polluting the surrounding countryside. Environmental Protection Agency investigators found that solvents and chemicals were used without appropriate care. Such materials contaminated ground and water not just at Tinker but across the country for decades. Pollution from Building 3001 was so extensive that it became a Superfund site, indelibly marring Osage, Kickapoo, Kiowa, and Wichita homelands.[78] Most plants, however, were not on military-controlled property but rather were part of cities and their surrounding environs.

Water and air pollution intensified in cities with war production facilities. During the 1930s, concerned citizens called on the Roosevelt Administration to institute regulations to end industrial water pollution. Unfortunately, the beginning of the war halted this effort, as Americans focused on maximizing production for victory.[79] The effect spanned the country. In Los Angeles, air pollution from the vast expansion of wartime industry in Southern California and the cars driven by the area's rapidly expanding population commuting to war production jobs worsened air quality. On July 26, 1943, the *Los Angeles Times*—urging readers to see the environment through a militarized lens—compared the pollution to a "gas attack." Residents told the paper that the city's air produced stinging eyes and sore throats and nearly blocked the sun. They called the conditions nearly unbearable. The regional air quality control district would later describe the changes

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[77] Alistair W. Fortson, "Victory Abroad, Disaster at Home, *California History*, Vol. 94, No. 3 (Fall 2017): 20–36.

[78] Oklahoma Historical Society, *The Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History and Culture*, "World War II." Oklahoma Senate, "Tinker Field." https://oksenate.gov/education/senate-artwork/tinker-field. Accessed 5 March 2023. *Environmental Assessment Building 3001*, (Englewood: CH2M Hill, 2008), 27-8. Department of Defense, Department of the Air Force, *Fourth Five-Year Review Report for the Soldier Creek/Building 3001 NPL Site Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma*, (Tinker Air Force Base: Department of the Air Force, 2012), 3-2. On Superfund sites see: https://www.epa.gov/superfund/what-superfund

[79] William L Andreen, "The Evolution of Water Pollution Control in the United States—State, Local, and Federal Efforts, 1789-1972: Part II," *Stanford Environmental Law Journal* 22 (2003): 215, cited in Gardner, "American Chemical and Pharmaceutical Expansion," *NAW*, 279.

wrought by home front war production as the source of not only dramatically worse pollution but also of Angelenos launching "an epic war on smog."[80]

In Eastern urban areas, historian Roger Lotchkin writes, "the war poured tons of pollutants into the atmosphere and into the waterways. By 1945, places like Pittsburgh and the other Ohio and Mississippi River cities had so much smoke in the air that they had to turn the street lights on at noon, Dust Bowl style."[81] In the South, residents of West Louisville, Kentucky, faced similar conditions. One of the primary sites for vital rubber product manufacturing, West Louisville was proud of its wartime nickname, "Rubbertown." Rubber plants, however, were responsible for nearly half of the city's air pollution, which was found to be carcinogenic.[82] In West Louisville, toxic dumping and spills near the plants also impacted the ground and water, and residents' health. Residents contend that officials ignored these incidents and the health aftereffects because the neighborhood's population was predominantly Black, a pattern replicated in other communities of color which scholars and others call environmental racism.[83]

Soil pollution from byproducts, fuel, waste, and chemical leaks and dumping at factories across the country, occurred at a truly astonishing pace. The U.S.'s massive airplane production effort tells the story well. Aviation industry researchers have found that during the war, "these factories all contaminated local ecosystems with new chemicals and byproducts." They point to Seattle's Boeing Plant 2, as an example of the downstream—physically and historically—results of this type of pollution. "Located along the Duwamish river in Seattle," the plant "later became a Superfund site because of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and a range of other hazardous materials in its soil and groundwater, including chromium, copper, and cadmium, cyanide, petroleum products, and chlorinated solvents such as trichloroethylene."[84] Polluting occurred at various scales at the massive factories supporting the aviation industry in New York City, Chicago, Detroit, Wichita—which self-styled itself the air capital of America—and several sunbelt cities including Los Angeles and Marietta, Georgia. It is worth underscoring that together, they represent the ways the military helped stimulate a shift of industry from the Northeast and Midwest to the Sunbelt.

Increased pollution was a near constant byproduct of every level of the defense production system that emerged during World War II, and it was connected to the Cold War military industrial complex. One of the most famous cases of postwar industrial pollution began during World War

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[80] "The Southland's War on Smog," https://www.aqmd.gov/home/research/publications/50-years-of-progress, accessed March 18, 2024. Roger Lotchin, "Review Essay: Turning the Good War Bad," *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 32 No. 2 (2006): 327.

[81] Lotchin, "Review Essay," 327.

[82] Ryan Van Velzer, "Unequal: How West Louisville Residents Cleaned up the Air," Louisville Public Media, https://wfpl.org/unequal-how-west-louisville-residents-cleaned-up-the-air/#:~:text=Even%20as%20late%20as%202005,the%20Air%20Pollution%20Control%20District. This area is the ancestral homelands of the Kaskaskia, Myaamia, Osage, Shawnee, Hopewell Culture, and Adena Culture peoples.

[83] Van Velzer, "Unequal."

[84] Environmental Protection Agency, "Hazardous Waste Cleanup: Boeing Plant 2, Tukwila, Washington," www.epa.gov/hwcorrectiveactionsites/hazardous-waste-cleanup-boeing-plant-2-tukwila-washington (accessed July 25, 2019). As cited in Robertson and Wells, "A War of Mobility," *NAW*, 28-30.

II, at a less well-known plant.[85] Beginning in 1941, the Hooker Chemical Company of Niagara, New York dumped toxic waste into a nearby waterway known as Love Canal, built atop homelands of the Wenrohronon, Attiwonderonk (Neutral), and Ho-de-no-sau-nee-ga (Haudenosaunee) peoples. Hooker continued to the practice until the company sealed it in 1953. It then sold the area where the canal had been to a residential developer who built homes and an elementary school on it. By the late 1970s, a pattern of debilitating illnesses and other health problems prompted an investigation that made Love Canal the symbol of America's cavalier attitude toward environmental stewardship. The home front years, with production trumping environmental considerations, served as a key moment in developing that attitude, setting a critical precedent for Cold War industry.[86]

The large number of workers who moved into wartime housing for production jobs often faced health risks associated with their homes. Vanport, a housing project for forty-two thousand shipyard workers and their families in Portland, Oregon, was quickly and shoddily built near the Columbia Slough, a narrow eighteen-mile-long watercourse that ran parallel to the Columbia River. Even before the war, the waterway was contaminated with high levels of PCBs and other pollutants. This stretch of the Columbia's banks had supported the Multnomah, Stl'pulmsh (Cowlitz), Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla peoples since time immemorial. Historian Ellen Stroud argues that, while pollution in the slough predated the war, "when the area became identified with minority residents during World War II, the assault on the local environment intensified. For industrial developers, city planners and later, environmental activists, the association of the peninsula with African American residents contributed to a perception of the area as degraded, and therefore as an appropriate place for further degradation."[87] A flood destroyed Vanport in 1948 with the entire city's worth of debris going into the Columbia River, but not before its residents came into contact with the area's high pollution levels.[88] The Slough and Vanport is another example of environmental racism linked to the home front.

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[85] In 1938, the U.S. produced 3600 military and civilian aircraft. By 1944, the U.S. could produce 110,000 planes a year. In all, the U.S. produced 300,000 planes during the war. Willow Run, the massive Ford Motor Company plant that symbolized wartime production, built a new B24 bomber every hour by the end of the war. The plant was 67 acres under one roof as the Washington Post put it "all 16 Major League Baseball teams could play simultaneous games before crowds of 30,000 each and there would still be room enough left over for a full-sized football game for an additional 30,000 spectators." 2331 people were employed at Willow run in spring 1943. A B-24 was 110 feet from wingtip to wingtip and weighed 35,000 pounds. It was comprised of aluminum, rubber, plastic, steel, and several other metals, nearly five miles of wire and 4000 feet of rubber metal tubing snaked within the plane. Roger E. Bilstein, *Flight in America: From the Wrights to the Astronauts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 159–160. Also see Donald M. Pattillo, *Pushing the Envelope: The American Aircraft Industry* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 135-136, 259, for the material about the conversion of the American auto sector. For the stats on the B-24 bomber, see A.J. Baime, *The Arsenal of Democracy: FDR, Detroit, and the Epic Quest to Arm an America at War* (Mariner, 2014), 90, 96, 164. For the stat re 110,000 planes a year, 300,000 total, see Bilstein, *Flight in America*, 159–160. As cited in Robertson and Wells, "A War of Mobility," *NAW,* 24-28.

[86] Robertson and Tucker, "Introduction," *NAW*, 2.

[87] Ellen Stroud, "Troubled Waters in Ecotopia: Environmental Racism in Portland, Oregon," *Radical History Review* 1999, no. 74 (1999): 65-66, 69.

[88] Stroud, "Troubled Waters in Ecotopia," 65-71.

Figures 1.4 and 1.5: Aerial images of Vanport, Oregon housing project before (above) and after (below) flooding in 1948. Courtesy City of Portland (OR) Archives, AP/378, AP/800.

While housing segregation, especially "redlining" and "racial covenants," is strongly associated with postwar suburbs, the crowded and substandard home front residential areas around war

plants saw patterns of racism and related negative environmental dynamics.[89] Richmond, California, the site of the massive Henry J. Kaiser Todd-California Shipbuilding Company, discussed in more detail in Volume 1, finally received better federally funded housing after 1943. At that point, the city had grown from 23,000 to 120,000 and was defined by overcrowding and municipal sewer failure. This new housing went only to White families, a decision in keeping with Kaiser's original vision for the community and the segregated work practices in the shipyards. People of color were assigned to the least healthy jobs, and White workers moved into nicer housing that left Black, Chinese American, and Native American families in "polluted districts" while "removing vital tax revenues" needed to improve matters, as Alistair W. Fortson's research has shown. This would prove a common trend and presage the postwar period.[90]

Agriculture

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) historian Wayne Rasmussen contends that World War II marked one of two revolutions in U.S. farming practices.[91] The shift to animal power from human power catalyzed by the Civil War was the first. The circumstances that defined the World War II home front prompted the much broader adoption of mechanical power to replace animal and human labor, wider use of chemical fertilizers, chemicals for insect and weed control, pharmaceuticals—especially antibiotics—for livestock health, and the further consolidation of farming into a corporate enterprise. However, while the war laid the groundwork for these changes, they were not fully realized until afterward. Nonetheless, the United States' reputation as the breadbasket of the world, built prior to World War II, solidified during the war. The U.S. agricultural sector, besides providing for the home front, played a large part in feeding the citizens of all its major World War II allies and enemies.[92]

Officials viewed agricultural goods as so critical during the war that they described farming "as an act of national security."[93] Farmers were spurred not just by demand but also by economic opportunity. While costs increased by 16 percent, prices for farm goods went up by 42 percent.[94] But finding the labor to maximize production was challenging. As farmers lost workers to the military and higher paying war production jobs, family members, students, community members,

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[89] On the relationship between race, work, and suburbs from the home front to postwar period, see Arnold Hirsch, "Containment on the Home Front: Race and Federal Housing Policy from the New Deal to the Cold War," *Journal of Urban History*, Vol. 26 No. 2 (2000): 158-189, and Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis* (Princeton University Press, 2014), 17-32. On the history of racial covenants, including World War II, see https://mappingprejudice.umn.edu. For a deeper dive into the New Deal roots of redlining see https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/ And for more on postwar changes: David. M.P Freund, *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

[90] Alistair W. Fortson, "Victory Abroad, Disaster at Home," *California History*, Vol. 94, No. 3 (Fall 2017), 20–36.

[91] Wayne Rasmussen, "25 Years of Change in Farm Productivity," *Agricultural History* 49 NO. 1 (January 1975), 84-86. Cited in Kendra Smith-Howard, "Soldiers of the Soil: Labor, Nature, and American Agriculture During World War," *NAW*, 151.

[92] Lizzie Collingham, *Taste of War: World War II and the Battle for Food* (New York: Penguin, 2012). Fertilizer use did increase dramatically during the war. Smith-Howard, "Soldiers of the Soil," *NAW*, 159.

[93] Smith-Howard, "Soldiers of the Soil," *NAW*, 149.

[94] Smith-Howard, "Soldiers of the Soil," *NAW*, 154-55.

especially women, Japanese American incarcerees, braceros, and POWs filled in.[95] These new workers helped, but rationing gas, rubber, and other essentials and the lack of new farm equipment continued to make meeting production goals difficult.[96] Small and mid-sized farms, whose ability to compete with large farms had already been undercut by New Deal agricultural policies, faced the greatest difficulties. Still, many succeeded. They also avoided the ecological mistakes associated with World War I and the Great Depression. World War II farmers did not expand cultivation nor replace crops with wheat and cotton. Initially this was mostly because U.S. warehouses had a sizable amount of these staples at the beginning of the war.[97] State and federal government soil conservation services had to continuously remind farmers about the problems the sector faced, including an agricultural economic depression, following World War I, because of the temptation for increasing profit through expanding cultivation. Ultimately, as Kendra Smith Howard writes "more efficient farming, not more acreage, helped supply Uncle Sam."[98]

One solution that USDA workers promoted was the installation of a variety of pasture grasses that could be used to feed livestock and improve depleted soils. Some of these restorative plants like kudzu and lespedeza, though invasive species, had the added benefit of boosting nitrogen in the soil. This also allowed farmers to cut back on artificial nitrogen which could go to munitions production. American farms increased pork production by 63 percent, beef production by 37 percent, and grain production by 15 percent. They also added new crops. Some of these, like rubber and hemp, were meant to replace those the war made difficult to access because they had previously come from outside the U.S. Soybeans had an especially long-term impact on American farming. They proved to be good livestock feed. Farmers devoted extensive acreage to it, which led to an exponential increase in excess nitrogen, the chief fertilizer, entering river systems. The result was far more algae and other environmentally problematic plants. Soybeans also increased the ability to feed confined livestock through feedlot systems which also had powerful environmental impacts.[99]

Japanese Americans shifting from agriculturalists in California, Oregon, and Washington, to incarcerated agriculturalists at camps around the arid West was, according to Smith-Howard, one of the other critical home front farming developments. The government acquired land in the region to incarcerate Japanese Americans early in 1942. The Alien Property Custodian seized the fertile land that many Japanese Americans owned and farmed. Others were forced to sell their property at greatly reduced prices. All were key parts of the food systems in their home regions. In contrast, the government paid market rates to private landowners with holdings on the relocation and incarceration camp sites. The Granada Relocation Center, in Colorado, often known as Amache, housed over seven thousand Japanese Americans at its peak.[100] It was built on land pur-

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[95] This story is told more fully in the Latino home front history chapter in this volume.

[96] "The Great Plains During World War II: Agriculture," http://plainshumanities.unl.edu/homefront/agriculture.html, accessed July 7, 2023. Shew and Kamp-Whittaker, "Perseverance and Prejudice," 304. Shew, "Feminine identity confined," 30.

[97] Smith-Howard, "Soldiers of the Soil," *NAW*, 154-55.

[98] Smith-Howard, "Soldiers of the Soil," *NAW*, 154-55.

[99] Smith-Howard, "Soldiers of the Soil," *NAW*, 156-58.

[100] The U.S. government designated the Amache National Historic Site in 2022. https://www.nps.gov/places/granada-relocation-center.htm

chased from eighteen local ranchers, on the omelands of the Kiowa, Osage, Pawnee, Comanche, Arapaho, Ute, and Lipan Apache peoples.[101]

Two camps were placed on Native reservation land in Arizona, despite tribal members' protests. The Pima and Maricopa tribes lived on the Gila River Indian Reservation Community. The Office of Indian Affairs, today called the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), supported their objections but the War Relocation Authority (WRA) ignored those entreaties and began constructing the Gila River Relocation Center in 1942. The facilities stayed open until November 1945 and had a peak population of more than thirteen thousand. The government placed the Colorado River Relocation Center (also known as Poston) on the land of the Colorado River Tribes Reservation, home to members of the Mojave, Hopi, Chemehuevi, and Navajo nations.[102] The Office of Indian Affairs helped manage Poston, which tribal members described as a "reservation within a reservation," where more than eighteen thousand Japanese Americans were confined.[103]

Although Japanese Americans had a reputation as adept agriculturalists before and after the war, historian Connie Chiang notes that these camps were intentionally located in water-scarce areas as WRA officials were set on using "nature as an instrument for social control."[104] Despite this, Japanese American incarcerees more than persevered. Purposefully isolated and under an agency that planned to "procure their labor in the name of assimilation and patriotism," they planted what Kenneth Helphand has called "defiant gardens."[105] At Amache, they produced 2.7 million pounds of vegetables in 1943 and 3.3 million pounds in 1944. Even elementary school children pitched in, tending a Victory Garden.[106]

Heart Mountain, Wyoming was constructed on Bureau of Reclamation property and Eastern Shoshone, Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla, Apsáalooke (Crow), Tsistsistas (Cheyenne), and Očhéthi Šakówiŋ homelands. Incarcerees cultivated vast acreages, planting watermelon, cantaloupe, carrots, cabbage, beans, peas, and other produce while also tending to chickens, hogs,

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[101] Dana Ogo Shew and April Elizabeth Kamp-Whittaker, "Perseverance and Prejudice: Maintaining Community in Amache, Colorado's World War II Japanese Internment Camp," in *Prisoners of War Archaeology, Memory, and Heritage of 19th- and 20th-Century Mass Internment*, Harold Mytum and Gilly Carr, eds. (New York: Springer, 2013), 304. Dana Ogo Shew, "Feminine identity confined: The archaeology of Japanese women at Amache, a WWII internment camp," M.S. thesis, University of Denver (2010), https://www.proquest.com/docview/635924005?pq-origsite=gscholar&fromopenview=true, 30.

[102] Thomas Fujita-Rony, "Arizona and Japanese American History: The World War II Colorado River Relocation Center," *Journal of the Southwest* 47, no.2 (Summer 2005): 214. For Poston National Historic Landmark information see https://www.nps.gov/places/colorado-river-relocation-center.htm.

[103] Don Estes, "The Road to Poston," Poston Preservation, https://www.postonpreservation.org/poston-internment, accessed June 12, 2023.

[104] "The World War II Politics of Farm and Labor," Oct 12, 2018, https://densho.org/catalyst/the-wwii-politics-of-farms-and-labor/ and "Agriculture: Densho Digital Repository," https://ddr.densho.org/browse/topics/6/?page=10. Connie Chiang, "Imprisoned Nature: Toward an Environmental History of the WWII Japanese American Incarceration," *Environmental History* Vol 15 No 2 (Apr 2010): 237.

[105] Chiang, "Imprisoned Nature," 237, 239. For more on the story of coercion and Japanese American labor during the war see, Stephanie Hinnershitz, *Japanese American Incarceration: The Camps and Coerced Labor during World War II* (University of North Carolina Press, 2021).

[106] Shew and Kamp-Whittaker, "Perseverance and Prejudice," 304. Shew, "Feminine identity confined," 30.

and cattle.[107] Even though the landscape was challenging and the growing season short (typically one hundred days), they produced over one thousand tons of food in the first year. This was not their only interaction with the distinctive mountain west and southwest environments. Chiang notes the importance of outdoor recreation to escape their penal surroundings and achieve a brief "semblance of freedom."[108] After the war, the well-tended fields and irrigation infrastructure were handed over to White settlers. Incarcerees also helped build the Heart Mountain Canal, which provided water for farms and ranches in the area.[109]

Victory Gardens provide yet another key development by intimating the wider potential impact of the home front on agricultural practices and environmental attitudes. Though most often referenced as a ready example of American home front patriotism, Victory Gardens—along with rationing and cooking fat and scrap drives—helped make World War II a period when the government most promoted sustainability.[110] These mostly small cultivations that individuals and families created, changed the relationship to food and the environment for some middle-class people during the war. For the working class, immigrants, and communities of color, growing one's own food and sharing surplus with the broader community had been common, as had rationing. Besides maintaining gardens, Black families throughout West Virginia for instance, collected cooking fat and scrap metal, rubber, paper, rags, and milkweed pods. Although constrained by segregation and structural inequalities, by 1944, 475 Black communities in West Virginia Black communities, led by 861 predominantly women neighborhood leaders, were participating in an organized collection program supported by the state's Black colleges.[111]

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[107] Kirsten Arnold, "The War at Home: Women in the Workforce and World War II in Wyoming," Buffalo Bill Center of the West, December 14, 2018, https://centerofthewest.org/2018/12/14/the-war-at-home-women-in-the-workforce-and-world-war-ii-in-wyoming/. National Historic Landmark Nominations for all internment sites are available on the National Archives NextGen Catalog.

[108] Connie Y. Chiang, *Nature behind Barbed Wire: An Environmental History of the Japanese American Incarceration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 148.

[109] Eric Sandeen, "The Japanese American Relocation Center at Heart Mountain and the Construction of the Post-World War II Landscape," in *Politics and Cultures of Liberation*, Hans Bak, Frank Mehring, and Mathilde Roza, eds., (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 293.

[110] Memoirs, oral histories, and other first-person accounts of the World War II Homefront are replete with references to the cultivation of Victory Gardens. see for example: Kevin O'Connor, Liora Engel-Smith, Kathryn Field, Jack Lyons, Ethan Weinstein, and Jenna Peterson, "Think the Pandemic Is Long? Try 4 Years on Vermont's World War II Home Front." VTDigger, December 31, 2021, https://vtdigger.org/2021/12/31/think-the-pandemic-is-long-try-4-years-on-vermonts-world-war-ii-home-front/.

[111] Pamela Edwards, "West Virginia Women in World War II: The Role of Gender, Class, and Race in Shaping Wartime Volunteer Efforts," *West Virginia History* 2, no. 1 (2008): 47-48.

Figure 1.6: Propaganda poster "PLANT A VICTORY GARDEN. OUR FOOD IS FIGHTING," 1941-1945. Courtesy National Archives, NAID: 513818

In many states, agricultural organizations played a key role in catalyzing home agricultural production. Oregon forage clubs, the state federation of garden clubs, the state Grange, and horticulture society partnered in 1942 to form the Oregon Victory Garden Advisory Committee. Sixteen counties organized Victory Garden conferences. Urban committees offered free neighborhood gardening classes and workshops in yet another effort to stimulate the practice.[112] In Wyoming, Victory Gardens were widely popular. The Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Railroads granted access to the right-of-way sections of their land holdings, allowing Wyoming residents without available real estate to lease land for gardens. Thanks to Victory Gardens, Wyoming doubled its produce volume.[113] Some Oklahoma farmers accepted the challenge to make at least 75 percent of their families' food at home. The state's Extension Service created pamphlets and

[112] Oregon Secretary of State, *Life on the Home Front: Oregon Responds to World War II*, "Cultivating for the Cause: Victory Gardens Till New Ground," https://sos.oregon.gov/archives/exhibits/ww2/Pages/services-gardens.aspx

[113] Tom Mast. "Wyoming and World War II," February 4, 2020, https://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/wyoming-and-world-war-ii

offered tips, arguing that Victory Gardens led to healthier eating. The young people who participated in the Future Farmers of America led the effort to plant Victory Gardens in well-traveled places to stimulate interest. They also had canning displays, encouraging gardeners to preserve the food for the winter.[114]

Ultimately, however, it was expanding the industrialized food system that had the longest-lasting nationwide impact on food ways. By increasing the availability of processed consumables—especially dehydrated, canned, and frozen foods—it severed the ties to seasonal eating patterns. These changes, as Kellen Backer charts, had long term health and environmental consequences.[115]

Rationing and collecting scrap metal, cooking fat, and other materials that could be used for the war effort, were more controversial. The same Oklahomans who planted successful Victory Gardens felt excoriated by officials who claimed that residents were not taking their rationing responsibilities seriously. Some countered that rationing, especially tire and gasoline, hurt rural people much more than urban. Rural residents needed tires and gasoline to produce food for city people, who could use public transportation to get to their jobs. But even local officials questioned the commitment of Oklahoma residents after a scrap drive resulted in so few volunteers that county officials had to ask the army and state highway patrol to carry the assembled materials. Douglas Hurt argues that as early as the fall of 1942, Americans had grown weary of the demand to sacrifice and take collective action to ensure military victory.[116] While that assessment may be accurate, in places like Medicine Bow, Wyoming, scrap drives remained widely popular. Residents scrawled messages on scrap metal including "special delivery to Hitler" and "this one is for you, Tojo."[117] Those sentiments suggest patriotism and vengeance were stronger motivations than sustainability in home front environmentalism.

Resource Extraction

Taking natural resources from the earth and turning them into the raw materials or energy necessary for the vast array of goods produced on the home front is a core part of the environmental

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[114] Hurt, *The Great Plains During World War II*, 99.

[115] Porges, The Subsistence Research Laboratory; Backer, "World War II and the Triumph of Industrialized Food"; and Thatcher, *The Development of Special Rations for the Army*. For a more transnational look at food as a weapon in World War II, see Collingham, *The Taste of War*. For more on the history of canned foods in the 1920s and 1930s see Anna Zeide, *Canned: The Rise and Fall of Consumer Confidence in the American Food Industry* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018). For an older history of canned foods, see C. Anne Wilson, ed., *Waste Not, Want Not: Food Preservation from Early Times to the Present Day* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991). For frozen foods, see Oscar Edward Anderson, *Refrigeration in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953); and Jonathan Reese, *Refrigeration Nation: A History of Ice, Appliances, and Enterprise in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013). See also Gabriella M. Petrick, "The Arbiters of Taste: Producers, Consumers, and the Industrialization of Taste in America, 1900–1960" (PhD diss., University of Delaware, 2006). As cited in Kellen Backer, "When Meals Became Weapons: American Food in World War II," *NAW*, 177, 180.

[116] Hurt, *The Great Plains During World War II*, 145, 94.

[117] Mast, "Wyoming and World War II."

history of the era. To do this work required a vast population of laborers both in and outside the U.S. Wartime sites of resource extraction and labor—mines, forests, fields, rivers, smelters, mills, derricks, refineries, and more—often resulted in the exploitation and destruction of landscapes and hampered conservation efforts. These sites are critical to recognizing the fuller story of World War II's impact.

Mining

Both ferrous (coal)—discussed in the energy section of this chapter—and nonferrous (mineral or hardrock) mining, smelting, and refining were essential to the war and had significant environmental ramifications. Minerals extracted from the ore produced by hardrock mining played a critical role in supporting the U.S. military during the war. During mobilization, war production used less than 300,000 tons of aluminum per year. By 1943, it was using more than 9 million tons.[118] These materials produced 500,000 aircraft, 2.5 million motorized trucks, 200,000 tanks, and 100,000 ships. To build its war machine, from 1941 to 1945, the U.S. military required literally tons of minerals: 827 million of iron, 22 million of copper, 9 million of lead, 9 million of manganese, 8 million of chromite, 300,000 of antimony, and 70 of tungsten. World War II also accelerated aluminum production. On average, a soldier carried twenty pounds of metal comprising ammunition (42 trillion rounds produced on the home front during the war), a rifle, carbine, or machine gun (6.5 million, 6 million, and 2.7 million respectively), a steel helmet (22 million), possibly a bazooka rocket launcher (a half million), and bazooka rockets (15 million). This was only some of what the American "Arsenal of Democracy" produced from the metals mined on the home front and overseas.[119]

Even more than many other aspects of home front war production, metal procurement reached outside of American borders. The United States Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines, empowered by the 1939 Strategic Minerals Act, identified mineral resources in other countries and supported resource extraction in Bolivia, Brazil, Mexico, and elsewhere. Chilean copper was one of the essential metals. By 1939, one third of the copper smelted at U.S. home front facilities came from Chile. That number would increase during the war.[120]

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[118] For these totals, *NAW* is citing summaries of production data in Morgan, *The Domestic Mining Industry of the United States in World War II*, 47, 61, 67, 81, 83, 87, 88, and 115. According to the planning department, most of the steel was used in high-explosive shells. Kent Curtis, "'Tanks are Born Underground': Mining and World War II," *NAW*, 91 to 92.

[119] John Davis Morgan, "The Domestic Mining Industry of the United States in World War II: A Critical Study of the Economic Mobilization of the Mineral Base of National Power" (PhD diss., Pennsylvania State College, 1948), 36–40. The output of the U.S. War Production Program from July 1940 to July 1945 is summarized in R. Elberton Smith, *The Army and Economic Mobilization* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1959), 203. A cited in Curtis, "Tanks," *NAW*, 89 to 90.

[120] Matthew Evenden, "Aluminum's Permanent Revolution," in *The Long Shadows: A Global Environmental History of the Second World War*, Timo Vuorisalo, Richard Tucker, and Simo Laakkonen, eds., (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2017), 196-206, 209. For more on the relationship between hydropower and aluminum production see; Julie Cohn, Matthew Evenden, and Marc Landry, "Water Powers: The Second World War and the Mobilization of Hydroelectricity in Canada, the United States, and Germany," *Journal of Global History* 15, no. 1 (2020): 136-38.

Every wartime metal mine caused damage to the land and water around it. The Yellow Pine Mine in the Stibnite district in Idaho (ancestral homelands of the Nimiipuu (Nez Perce), Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla peoples), opened in April 1941, offers an example. It was a major source of tungsten and antimony, critical alloys that the U.S. government placed on the essential minerals list soon after Germany invaded Poland in 1939. Antimony was combined with lead and tin to improve their rigidity, creating better bullets, bearings, and other products. Tungsten, with the highest melting point of all known metals, produced exceptional penetrating projectiles and shielding when included in alloys. At a congressional hearing after the war, one Idaho senator trumpeted the success of the mine expansion program by arguing it shortened the war by a year and saved countless lives.[121] Though hyperbole, there was no question of the importance of the district—and others like it in the mountain west and southwest—to the war effort.

The Yellow Pine Mine's most apparent environmental impact came with the shift during the war from shaft to open pit mining to expedite ore removal.

Figure 1.8: Aerial view of Stibnite mining district, Idaho, opened April 1941. Courtesy P1980-57-11. Idaho State Archives.

[121] "Stibnite Historic District," NRHP nomination, July 19, 1987. https://history.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Stibnite_Historic_District_87001186.pdf

To assist with increasing extraction, water from the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River was diverted via a major four-thousand-foot tunnel. By 1944, the 24-hour operation yielded over 800 tons of tungsten a day, almost double that of 1941.[122] Mining and waterway diversion dramatically altered—and polluted—the landscape. Equally destructive, wartime tailings piles, waste rock dumps, and spent ore piles,—some placed near waterways that are important fish habitats—resulted in a legacy of metal concentrates, including arsenic, in the water and soil. The combined environmental impact on the Stibnite/Yellow Pine Mining Area led to the Environmental Protection Agency naming it a Superfund Site.[123]

Uranium mining, which would not be used for nuclear energy until after the war, had an even more profound environmental effect. During the war, it was earmarked for atomic weapons. While most uranium and vanadium, another important mineral mined with it, came from overseas, Roosevelt instructed the Army Corps of Engineers to seek a steady supply domestically to ensure the secret weapons program could continue under any circumstances. It found that supply on the Colorado Plateau. In 1942, Luke Yazzie, a member of the Navajo (Diné) Nation from Cane Valley, brought samples of uranium bearing rock to Harry Goulding. Goulding owned the Monument Valley Trading Post and the Vanadium Corporation of America (VCA) had asked him to look for this type of ore.[124] Both vanadium and uranium were byproducts of carnotite rock, found in Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico. Vanadium, which strengthened steel alloys, was a key component of several weapons. It had been the chief reason for mining carnotite before the war—and remained that publicly. By 1945, 489 tons of the uranium ore had emerged from Monument Valley mines.[125]

The cost of that uranium mining to the Diné was profound. The government contractor, VCA, did not begin to pay the Navajo Nation for uranium or vanadium until 1944.[126] More harmfully, radioactive tailings polluted the air, water, and land. For Navajo veterans, the paradox was painful. Albert Smith, a code talker, echoed others when he explained why he went to war: "My main reason for going to war was to protect my land and my people because the elderly people said that the earth was our mother… the Navajo people get their blessings from the four sacred mountains, our mother earth, father the sun and the air we breathe."[127] Because of economic precarity fostered by colonialism, a substantial number of residents lived in or near the 800 structures partially constructed of rock blasted during uranium mining.[128] They, along with miners and oth-

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[122] "Stibnite Historic District."

[123] Environmental Protection Agency, "Superfund Area: Yellow Pine Stibnite Mining Area, Stibnite, ID," https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/csitinfo.cfm?id=1000236, accessed July 7, 2024.

[124] For information on Yazzie, see Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 2-3, 92-93.

[125] Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 2-3, 92-93. Yazzie is not well known, unlike his compatriot Paddy Martinez, who became associated with increased postwar uranium mining. As historian Tracy Voyles points out, Yazzie could have been credited for one of the most important wartime discoveries in the United States, if not for the secrecy around the Manhattan Project.

[126] Peter H. Eichstaedt, *If You Poison Us: Uranium and Native Americans*, 1st ed. (Santa Fe, NM: Red Crane Books, 1994), 26.

[127] Kenneth William Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000), 77.

[128] Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 3.

ers on the reservation, faced—and continue to suffer and die from—an epidemic of lung cancer, kidney failure, and other illnesses associated with uranium mining.[129] Rather than acknowledging the health risks, White officials and corporations portrayed uranium mining on reservation lands as a romantic story that featured technological modernity emerging from an ancient landscape that was home to an ancient people. Voyles argues that the Diné deaths associated with uranium mining were depicted as necessary for the U.S. to become a modern technological and militarized nation prepared for the Cold War.[130] The government saw Diné Bikéyah, the Navajo homeland, as a wasteland they could use to support the atomic program without worrying about the impact on health or environment.[131] It became what Indigenous scholars call a national sacrifice zone, destroyed to protect and enrich settlers.[132]

Forestry

While home front metal production captured media headlines—in 1942, National Geographic magazine said the war would be thought of as the age of alloys—by 1943, the War Manpower Commission was describing timber as the Allies' most critical strategic asset. Home front industries required billions of board feet to build factories and employee housing, and the military needed an equal amount to construct thousands of defense facilities. Even the high-tech weapons most associated with the global campaigns had wood as a core component. Every Waco C-62 cargo plane needed 40,000 board feet of timber framing. Aircraft carrier flight decks had 140,000 board feet. Rifle ammunition was transported in crates built from 9 million board feet per year.[133]

[129] Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 100.
[130] Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 90-91, 95-96.
[131] Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 10.
[132] Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 10.
[133] Stephen Beda, *Strong Winds and Widow Makers: Workers, Nature, and Environmental Conflict in Pacific Northwest Timber Country*, (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2022), 124.

Figure 1.7: Posters like this —titled "'... PASS THE AMMUNITION.' THE ARMY NEEDS MORE LUMBER"— reflected the ongoing need for resource extraction on the home front as part of the war effort. Courtesy National Archives, NAID: 515166

Given this demand, conservation efforts largely fell by the wayside. The military pushed the USFS to allow an enormous number of acres, including previously untouched areas, to be clear cut. Suggestive of this, almost 2.5 billion board feet were cut from National Forests in 1943, an 83 percent increase from 1939. Companies, seeking to maximize profits and serve the nation's needs, cut new logging roads and found other ways to access public and private timber reserves, often with the assistance of the Forest Service personnel. Forest Service Chief Lyle F. Watts worried this increased demand for production had resulted in unwise choices that harmed the nation's forests. Richard Tucker concludes "the war expanded productive capacity exponentially; this new capacity would alter landscapes for decades to come."[134]

Home front timber workers were among the few who expressed concern about the damage of

[134] Richard Tucker, "The World Wars and the Globalization of Timber Cutting," in *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally*, 110-41. "Chapter IX: The War Years," in *The Land We Cared For . . .: A History of the Forest Service's Eastern Region*, https://npshistory.com/publications/usfs/region/9/history/chap9.htm

timber extraction. They were particularly worried about overcutting old growth forests and clear-cutting newer stands. But forest protection was seen as unpatriotic. The lumbermen's union and the International Woodworkers of America (IWA), joined others in signing a wartime no-strike pledge, which historian Stephen Beda notes, "sidelined its conservation efforts."[135] It did not, however, stop the union's campaign to organize timber workers. By the end of the war, union membership had grown considerably, and the workers it represented were optimistic about their future and the forests. They believed that the postwar period would be characterized by decent wages and strong employment and that they had positioned themselves to have a major role in forest management through the greater power their larger union wielded. Beda calls this vision "labor environmentalism." The IWA pushing for "sustained yield" forestry encapsulates the home front moment and even more so "labor environmentalism" long term.[136] Strikingly, Beda's research shows that it was not just timber workers who were interested in this form of environmentalism. By 1946, the United Auto Workers, responding to its membership's desire to spend more time outdoors, especially hunting and fishing, teamed with the IWA to pass a resolution to support legislation that "would protect and preserve selected areas of forest wilderness and virgin timber for public enjoyment and recreation."[137]

Even as they facilitated resource extraction at environmentally costly levels during the war, the government also continued, albeit only in a small way, the tree-focused conservation work that characterized the CCC and other agencies in the 1930s. Interior Department employees performed some of this work, but much of their time was devoted to other tasks, including working with the military and handling normal operations with greatly reduced staffing.[138] The CCC continued limited operations until mid-1942. In Oklahoma, Corps members worked on the shelterbelt program of the Prairie States Forestry Project. To halt windborne erosion, they planted trees on Pawnee, Cheyenne-Arapaho, and Kiowa lands in western Oklahoma. These measures, which changed the environment and remain controversial, were seen as especially important because of the heirship land leasing program that allowed White farmers to lease Native lands and seek maximum agricultural production without worrying about proper soil conservation techniques.[139]

Among the few new wartime conservation efforts were those undertaken by conscientious objectors (COs) who chose to work on the land for their Civilian Public Service (CPS) assignment. Unlike soldiers, COs did not draw a salary. Instead, they had to pay thirty-five dollars a month for their upkeep. A group of conscientious objectors sent to Camp Magnolia in Arkansas performed both conservation and agricultural work by clearing land, planting crops and trees, sodding gullies, clearing meadows, constructing irrigation channels, and assisting with contour

[135] Beda, *Strong Winds*, 124.
[136] Beda, *Strong Winds*, 116-126.
[137] Beda, *Strong Winds*, 138.
[138] National parks like Yellowstone and Grand Teton had great difficulty protecting the natural resources that made them famous. The Morning Glory Pool in Yellowstone National Park was reported to have exploded in June 1944. The normal operations that stipulated Rangers clean the pool regularly had been put on hold, and all the trash visitors had thrown in the pool had clogged it. NPS, "National Parks' Homefront Battle." See also Leighton Quarles, "Sandstone Sanctuary: An Administrative History of Zion National Park," (PhD diss. University of Utah, 2021).
[139] Hurt, *The Great Plains During World War II*, 350.

cultivation.[140] In many instances, they picked up projects closed when CCC operations ceased and lived in former CCC camps. In the West, they built trails and did other forestry projects. The COs assigned to Camp 56 in Waldport, Oregon, replanted an enormous tract of forest that had been clear-cut during World War I to manufacture planes. CPS COs also served as some of the nation's first smokejumpers, firefighters who parachuted into remote areas to put out blazes before they spread. CPS Camp 103 at Huson, Montana, served as a major training site for CO smokejumpers. They joined the 555th Parachute Infantry Battalion, "the Triple Nickels," an all-Black army unit stationed at Pendleton field in Oregon and in Chico, California who served a smokejumpers and as lookouts for Japanese incendiary balloon attacks.[141]

Energy

Accessing large amounts of energy was the cornerstone to the successful military-industrial reorientation that defined the home front. It increased war production, shrank distances through high-speed transportation, and increased the lethality of highly mobile weapon systems. New networks and facilities were created to enable vastly greater electrical generation and petroleum production and use. These energy sources were still underpinned by a reliance on coal. The Depression-era Roosevelt administration economic development projects built around creating massive hydroelectric resources in the Pacific Northwest and Tennessee Valley also played a leading role in wartime electricity production. Increased electrical output facilitated the continued startling growth of sunbelt cities after the war by among other things, supporting air conditioning for workplaces, many of which were linked to production efforts that began on the home front. In addition tapping into cheap oil in Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and in other places on the home front like the Wind River and Blackfoot Reservations in Wyoming and Montana, was essential to a vast array of wartime products that relied on petroleum and to high-speed transportation and weapon systems. Expanding industrial refining activity along the Gulf Coast, including in Mobile, New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Beaumont, and Houston was critical to this.[142]

Coal

Coal was a leading energy source in the United States before World War II, but its role in powering the nation increased during the war. Scholars have described it as the war's "key energy source," a role that shifted to petroleum postwar.[143] By 1944, coal was contributing 5 percent more to national energy supplies then in 1938. In 1942 and 1943, both critical production years, coal "supplied more energy, on a B.T.U. basis, then all the other mineral fuels and water power

[140] Cynthia Hastas Morris, "Arkansas's Reaction to the Men Who Said 'No' to World War II," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 43, no. 2 (1984): 165-170.

[141] https://civilianpublicservice.org/camps/103/1, accessed July 9, 2023. "Montana's Participation in World War II," September 14, 2020, https://montanamilitarymuseum.org/?p=2837.

[142] Robertson and Tucker, "Introduction," *NAW*, 12.

[143] David Edgerton, "Controlling Resources: Coal, Iron and Oil in the Second World War," in *Cambridge History of the Second World War, Vol. 3: Total War: Economy, Society and Culture at War,* Michael Geyer and Adam Tooze, eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 135. Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London: Verso, 2011).

combined."[144] This was due to greatly expanded production, as workers put in more hours, even as the industry lost 10 percent of its workforce between 1938 and 1944.[145] Wartime conditions were often more dangerous than peacetime. Mines had to break in new men and the additional hours contributed to accidents. Companies did not conform to safety standards as they sought to maximize output and profit. The Smith Mine disaster, which occurred near Red Lodge, Montana, on February 27, 1943, killed seventy-five workers. Built-up methane gas exploded, knocking a locomotive off its tracks a quarter mile away, but the mine was so deep underground that it was not heard at the mouth.[146]

Underground mining remained the largest source of coal, but wartime demand prompted surface mining on a heretofore unknown scale in West Virginia and other states. The effects on the environment were catastrophic. Coal companies stripped nearly seventy thousand acres of land, producing spoil banks that caused landslides and stream pollution. West Virginia's political leaders passed legislation in 1945 requiring the damage be mitigated through replanting vegetation, but by the 1960s, it was clear the companies had not invested appropriate resources and spoil banking continued to the detriment of local communities and the state.[147]

Hydroelectric

Thanks to major New Deal projects, the U.S. was a world leader in generating hydroelectricity during the war. The Tennessee River Valley, the Columbia River Valley, and major damming projects in California or serving California, like the Hoover Dam, are the best examples.[148] By the early 1940s, the United States netted 31 percent of its electricity from hydropower.[149] Julie Cohn, Matthew Evenden, and Marc Landry argue that while numerous scholars of hydroelectric power see the war as anomalous and the Great Depression as far more impactful, the war was in fact "a crucial phase in the restructuring of state policies and regulations and the design and implementation of networks and dams."[150] Federal control, interconnecting the electrical system across vast distances, and employing new technical innovations were critical to increased power production. Foremost in these categories were constructing new transmission lines, using larger

[144] B.T.U. stands for British Thermal Unit, an energy unit of measure. Leo Fishman and Betty G. Fishman, "Bituminous Coal Production during World War II," *Southern Economic Journal* 18, no. 3 (1952): 391-396, quote from 391.

[145] Fishman and Fishman, "Bituminous Coal Production during World War II," 391-396.

[146] Fay Kuhlman and Gary Robson. *The Darkest Hour: A Comprehensive Account of the Smith Mine Disaster of 1943* (Red Lodge, MT: Red Lodge Books, 2003). Megan Wagner, Northern Arizona University, "Smith Mine Disaster," *Intermountain Histories*, accessed August 10, 2023, https://www.intermountainhistories.org/items/show/536.

[147] James H. Brown, "Success of Tree Planting on Strip-Mined Areas in West Virginia," *West Virginia University Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin* (1962).

[148] David P. Billington, Donald C. Jackson, Martin V. Melosi, *The History of Large Federal Dams: Planning, Design, and Construction in the Era of Big Dams* (Denver: U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Reclamation, 2005), https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/nnps/large_dams.pdf

[149] National Park Service, "Hoover and Davis Dams," https://www.nps.gov/lake/learn/historyculture/hoover-and-davis-dams.htm. Cohn, et. al., "Water Powers," 130.

[150] Cohn, et. al., "Water Powers," 123.

power pools, and new operating techniques that maximized reliability.[151]

The government built nearly forty new dams during the war. The majority were in the Tennessee River Valley and included the Fontana Dam, the highest in the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) system, and finished in record time at the request of the National Defense Council. The Fontana Dam impounded waters atop the homelands of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee, Yuchi, and Miccosukee peoples. Along with the rest of the TVA hydroelectric system, it supplied power to aluminum and other essential plants and the Manhattan Project's Oak Ridge Laboratory.[152] Perhaps the best-known dam completed during the war was the Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River. Along with other generating plants on the Columbia River, it provided much of the power for Portland factories.[153] Hydroelectric power was a significant energy source for many western war plants.[154] The Bureau of Reclamation's Parker Dam supplied a substantial portion of Phoenix's energy, allowing the city to enter a new age by powering war production plants that turned out flight decks, nose cones, and other key components.[155] Hydro projects provided an additional 3.4 million kilowatts of capacity. Nearly all the gains in power generation were tapped for war production. Before the war, the U.S. had 26 percent in reserve. By the end of the war, that figure was less than 5 percent.[156]

There were also major hydroelectric projects outside the mainland that had begun during the 1930s and were completed, with the war as a catalyst, in the early 1940s. Seven hydroelectric plants were constructed in Puerto Rico between 1935 and 1943, doubling the amount of hydroelectric generation on the island. These projects brought electricity to the rural hinterland, which waited more than a generation longer than the residents in major cities and sugar plantation areas.[157] The projects were part of a broader vision of environmental engineering that included constructing irrigation canals and modifying wetlands and coastlines. These changes were in part meant to help eradicate malaria but also served to shift the economy from sugar to manufacturing and tourism and to support militarization.

While vital to home front production, dams often forced residents to relocate and significantly impacted the rivers where they were placed and the broader ecosystems those rivers served. Canaling and flow interruption from dammed rivers reduced fish habitat. Steel and concrete became more common, adding yet another modification to the natural environment. Dams interrupted the seasonal nature of these ecosystems, often replacing them with "economic rhythms

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[151] National Park Service "X-10 Graphite Reactor," https://www.nps.gov/places/000/x-10-graphite-reactor.htm

[152] NPS, "X-10 Graphite Reactor."

[153] "Bonneville Dam Historic District," NRHP nomination, https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/GetAsset/NHLS/86000727_text

[154] Hydropower was important to most of the major combatants. In Canada hydropower filled more than 90% of electrical needs during the war. Cohn, et. al., "Water Powers," 123.

[155] Andrew Needham, *Power Lines: Phoenix and the Making of the Modern Southwest* (Princeton University Press, 2014), 79, 96-97.

[156] Cohn, et. al., "Water Powers," 138-139.

[157] Geoff Burrows, "Rural Hydro-Electrification and the Colonial New Deal: Modernization, Experts, and Rural Life in Puerto Rico, 1935–1942," *Agricultural History* Vol. 91 No. 3 (2017): 297, 299-301, 304-05.

of demand."[158] Thus, while hydropower was enormously important to the U.S. war production machine, it altered, and not for the better, America's riparian environments.

Petroleum

The high energy usage that defines American life today and that is associated with petroleum began in earnest in the 1920s, slowed during the Great Depression, and accelerated during mobilization. As historian Brian Black writes, "the definitive shift, however, occurred during World War II, when combatant nations committed substantial resources to securing fuel supplies sufficient to fight an industrial conflict."[159] Black suggests that there has been a tendency to focus on U.S. domestic consumption as the catalyst for the nation's petroleum addiction. He argues, however, that it was new modes of combat and strategic national security that played an instrumental role. To cite just one example, each of America's sixteen armored divisions used around sixty thousand gallons of gasoline per day for its 269 tanks and 1,141 vehicles.[160] The international competition to acquire oil reinforces his assessment of the strategic importance that nations placed on this relatively new resource. Historian Keith Miller contends that the U.S. having access to oil on the home front determined the outcome of World War II.[161] Or as Stalin put it while toasting the U.S.'s contributions to the war at the Tehran Conference in late 1943, "this is a war of engines and octanes. I drink to the American auto industry and the American oil industry."[162]

Oil was also refined into indispensable material for aircraft runways, to make toluene (the chief component of TNT), to manufacture synthetic rubber, and as a lubricant for guns and other machinery.[163] Ultimately, the military utilized oil to produce five hundred products, including specialty gasoline.[164] 100-octane gasoline gave British Spitfires a major advantage over German Messerschmitt fighters, which burned 87-octane gas. Shipments of 100-octane gasoline were treated like gold as they worked their way through U-boat infested waters. The key to 100-octane gas lies with the U.S.'s advanced refining capabilities.[165] The drilling and refining industry was based in what would become new sunbelt areas in Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Texas, and New Mexico. From there, the Petroleum Administration for War (PAW) managed a massive new network of pipelines to Gulf and East Coast ports and to production sites around the country.[166]

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[158] Cohn, et. al., "Water Powers," 146.

[159] Brian Black, "Fueling the 'American Century': Establishing the U.S. Petroleum Imperative," *NAW*, 120.

[160] *The Army Almanac: A Book of Facts Concerning the Army of the United States* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950), 510-592. McNeill and Painter, "America's Military Footprint: Environmental Implications of the U.S. Army since 1789," 23. As cited in Robertson and Tucker, "Introduction," *NAW*, 17.

[161] Keith Miller, "How Important was Oil in World War Two?," *History News Network*, http:// historynewsnetwork.org/article/339, cited in Black, "Fueling the 'American Century,'" *NAW*, 122.

[162] Yergin, *The Prize*, 364. As cited in Black, "Fueling the 'American Century'," *NAW*, 120-21, 128.

[163] Black, "Fueling the 'American Century,'" *NAW*, 120-22.

[164] Black, "Fueling the 'American Century,'" *NAW*, 122.

[165] Yergin, The Prize, 387. As cited in Black, "Fueling the 'American Century,'" *NAW*, 127.

[166] John W. Frey and H. Chandler Ide, eds., *A History of the Petroleum Administration for War, 1941–1945* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1946), 170. Clark, *The Political Economy*, 317-324. Harold Ickles, *Fightin' Oil*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1943). Dudley J. Hughes, *Oil in the Deep South: A History of the Oil Business in Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, 1859–1945* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1981), 188. Frey and Ide, *A History of the Petroleum Administration*, 176. Carl Coke Rister, *Oil! Titan of the Southwest* (Nor-

The environmental impact of increased petroleum production along the Gulf Coast, discussed briefly earlier, is hard to overemphasize. Oil and natural gas pipelines crisscrossed a coastal region that held forty percent of U.S. wetlands. Eighty percent of the country's total wetland losses would occur here, largely due to energy production.[167] The synthetic rubber industry which blossomed across the American Gulf likewise produced toxic by-products, which impacted the landscape of nearby towns and cities and the health of their residents. Experts call the corridor between Baton Rouge and New Orleans that holds major industrial facilities, including petrochemical plants, "cancer alley" because the dangerous chemicals those facilities "released into the air and water have created some of the highest cancer rates in the nation."[168] Yet, even as they fouled the air, land, and water, these industries attracted more workers who sought housing nearby. The expansion of places like Baton Rouge into areas with poor drainage and most impacted by industrial pollution was a direct result of needing more worker housing.[169] Just as in other parts of the home front, the least well-off residents, often Black families, disproportionately lived in these areas and faced the most negative health ramifications, offering yet another example of environmental racism.

Conclusion

Increased crude oil use was only one of the ways that World War II led to what environmental historians describe as an "age of acceleration." Its hallmark was faster resource extraction, with attendant environmental impacts, an increasing movement of goods and individuals, and technological innovation. The latter developments also had lasting implications on science, health, and ecology, and further connected people and places across the home front and the globe. Each element in these networks significantly affected the environment. While the focus of this chapter has been on the home front, the war impacted the ecology and environment of all oceans and continents. For most places, the effect was far-reaching. The U.S. often had a direct role, either through the military or industrial might, in shaping international environments during and after the war. These connections echo some of the global environmental ramifications of the U.S.'s energy-intensive postwar consumer society.[170]

The militarization of U.S. society deeply shaped attitudes toward the environment. In becoming a "warfare state", the U.S. centered defense instead of economic well being, though the two could seem one and the same during the booming wartime economy, to achieve "national security." Importantly, this produced a new relationship to the environment for government, business, and the American people. Increased resource extraction was justified by ever greater production demands to support the American and Allied war machine—and the soldiers, sailors, and Ma-

man: University of Oklahoma Press, 1949), 359-362. As cited in Black, "Fueling the 'American Century,'" *NAW*, 128-36.

[167] Jason Theriot, *American Energy, Imperiled Coast: Oil and Gas Development in Louisiana's Wetlands* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2014), 41-51.

[168] Rein, "A Watery Grave," *NAW*, 246.

[169] Rein, "A Watery Grave," *NAW*, 244-246.

[170] Robertson and Tucker, "Introduction," *NAW*, 19.

rines who fought in the war. The dramatic increase in the number and size of military bases and other defense facilities profoundly affected the environment, while also demonstrating this new mindset. As such, they are a group of home front sites and properties that are associated with a nationally significant trend. Similar claims for association with nationally significant trends can be made for war production facilities, which through pollution and other factors, powerfully affected the environment. U.S. farms and fields provide another set of home front sites associated with the nationally significant environmental history of World War II. In many ways, the agricultural practices common in the U.S. leading up to the war did not shift appreciably. The effect on food production and the environment would be most evident postwar, when livestock and poultry medicines, herbicides, chemical fertilizers, and expanded mechanization changed American agriculture.[171] Nonetheless, there were several nationally significant developments related to agriculture that further research may show are tied to specific properties or sites associated with the home front.

Ultimately, the history recounted in this chapter and others in Volume 2, especially the Native American and Indigenous history chapter, backs Robertson and Tucker's conclusion that World War II produced contradictory environmental ideologies. Americans embraced a new scale of natural resource use that, thanks to emerging technologies and the nation's productive power, provided increased levels of comfort and affluence for many. Likewise, largely thanks to the atomic bomb, Americans began to pay more attention to ecological sciences and questioned whether technology would always produce positive results. A growing awareness of pollution and concern about militarism also characterized the postwar. All of these developments had links to the home front, and all of them still shape the American relationship to the environment today.[172]

[171] For the notion that agriculture did not change much during World War II, but the impact of the war rippled across the postwar period, see *NAW*, 151, and Paul Conkin, *A Revolution Down on the Farm: The Transformation of American Agriculture since 1929* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 78. Kendra Smith Howard, "Soldiers of the Soil: Labor, Nature, and American Agriculture During World War," *NAW,* 149-175.

[172] Robertson and Tucker, "Introduction," *NAW*, 19.

Native American and Indigenous History of the World War II Home Front

In 1942, Tom St. Germain Whitecloud, an Ojibwe (Chippewa) from Lac du Flambeau Reservation in Wisconsin, sent a letter to *Indians at Work*, a Department of the Interior (DOI) publication. As a Native person, Whitecloud offered a rare perspective in a publication dominated by White experts and bureaucrats. His letter urged the Indian Service—Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) after 1947—to see itself, and for other government officials to see it, as able to make a distinctive contribution to postwar relations because of its history of working with Native people. In making his case, however, he offered something even more useful: a sense of how Native people viewed themselves and their relationship with the U.S. government at the beginning of the war. He began by noting "The Indian is unique. First, because though conquered, he was not annihilated, nor colonized, and only partly absorbed. He is further unique in that he has been shelved with very little effort until recent years to make him economically independent and self-supporting."[1]

Whitecloud's assertion that Native people had suffered military defeat, but had not been exterminated, "nor colonized," and only assimilated to a certain degree, reminded his readers of the agency and vitality of Indigenous people. But he found it equally important to underscore the role of the economy in determining their lives. Whitecloud's assessment came from personal experience. A student at Tulane School of Medicine and member of the Army Medical Corps Reserves, he had survived three boarding schools, the government's most powerful and one of its most traumatic and violent assimilationist tools. He had also been a farm worker, mechanic, and truck driver, before finally making it through college and then into medical school.[2]

Whitecloud described how the Indian Service evolved from seeing itself as "a governing, then a protecting, and finally a rehabilitating organization," the last a reference to changes made as part of the Roosevelt Administration's "Indian New Deal."[3] In 1941, government and nonprofit officials and educators assessed that shift and its results at a conference on "The Future of the American Indian," headlined by John Collier, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1933 to 1945. Collier was an opponent, at least in theory, of assimilation, and a proponent of the 1934 Wheeler-Howard Act (also known as the Indian Reorganization Act or IRA). The IRA, designed to end allotment on reservation lands and return some control over land, minerals, and affairs to Tribal nations, was the cornerstone of Collier's vision for a new relationship between the govern-

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1 Tom St. Germain (Whitecloud), "In Post-War Planning Let Us Benefit by Indian Service Past, Writes Chippewa Youth," *Indians at Work*, Vol X, Nos. 2-6, 1942, 38-39, available at: https://library.si.edu/digital-library/book/indiansatwork1026unit. *Indians at Work* was published by the Department of the Interior, which described it as "A News Sheet for INDIANS and the INDIAN SERVICE."

2 Daniel F. Littlefield, Jr., "Thomas S. Whitecloud (Chippewa) (1914-1972)," in Paul Lauter, ed., *The Heath Anthology of American Literature*, 5th edition textbook, https://college.cengage.com/english/lauter/heath/4e/students/author_pages/modern/whitecloudchippewa_th.html.

3 On the Indian Reorganization Act, see: William Bauer, *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here: Work, Community, and Memory on California's Round Valley Reservation, 1850 to 1941* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 199-200.

ment and Native people.[4] The premise of the conference was that due in part to the Indian New Deal, White reformers could no longer assume Native people were vanishing. "To many Indians and Whites," writes historian Alison Bernstein, "this theme would have been unthinkable even a decade before. In 1940, the Native American population in the United States stood at 345,252, dramatically up from 237,196 in 1900, the year the Native American population had reached its nadir. During the 1930s, Native Americans had ironically begun to make a comeback."[5] Although conference attendees met amid mobilization, they had little idea how powerfully the war would impact Native American and Indigenous communities and their relationship with the government.

We do not know where Whitecloud stood on the question, but for Bernstein, while 1930s developments powerfully shaped Indian Country, World War II would prove to be an even more critical turning point. The quest for economic independence, which Whitecloud explicitly mentions, was fundamental, as were questions about sovereignty which he more subtly alluded to. The Indian Service was at the center of both issues. In early 1942, in making his case that the Indian Service could be a template for postwar social management, Whitecloud argued that its most important quality was its ability to admit it had made "mistakes" and its "attempt to correct" them.[6] He stated, "Suffice it to say that the US Indian Service has pioneered in unique human and racial relationships. It had the opportunity to be a laboratory for the working out of problems of the conqueror and the conquered, and, as it would rather believe, the protector and the protected."[7] Using this framing, even as Whitecloud acknowledged recent progress, reminded readers of the ongoing paternalism in the Roosevelt Administration's approach.

World War II offered new opportunities for many Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians), and Pacific Islanders to chart their own path, much as Whitecloud did. For others, like those in U.S. territories that were as much frontlines as home fronts, the war often constrained possibilities. For all Native and Indigenous people, paternalism continued and demands—implicit and explicit—for assimilation increased, especially as they interacted more

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4 Echoing other assessments, Voyles says of Collier, the architect of the Indian New Deal, that he said "he stood in opposition to prior federal Indian policies of forced assimilation into White language and culture, but the policies during his tenure merely translated into new forms of the old assimilationist ideology." See Traci Brynne Voyles, *Wastelanding: Legacies of Uranium Mining in Navajo Country* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 51. The day-to-day paternalism from Whites that came with this form of assimilation was a constant for many Native home front workers. Douglas Miller, *Indians on the Move: Native American Mobility and Urbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 67.

5 Allison R. Bernstein, *American Indians and World War II: Toward a New Era in Indian Affairs* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 3. Townsend writes of this period, "When Indians surveyed the years between Collier's appointment as commissioner and the advent of World War II, visible progress was certainly evident. Individual and tribal incomes had attained record levels by 1941. Job opportunities for Indians expanded both on and off reservations as a product of vocational training, practical education programs, and work experience gained through the Civilian Conservation Corps-Indian Division. Health care showed marked improvements, tribal land holdings increased, and stock values and agricultural productivity netted substantial profits." Kenneth William Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000), 74.

6 St. Germain (Whitecloud), "In Post-War Planning."

7 St. Germain (Whitecloud), "In Post-War Planning."

with White people in the military or war production. Likewise, what scholar Mishuana Goeman (Tonawanda Band of Seneca) calls "economies of dispossession," which characterized Native nations' history under settler colonialism, re-emerged powerfully during the war.[8]

At least twenty-five thousand Native Americans, Kānaka Maoli, and Native Alaskans joined the military, and more than forty thousand others migrated to urban areas to work as riveters, chemists, truck drivers, sheet-metal cutters, and in myriad other war production jobs. Others, especially women, stayed on or near their home reservations and did critical agricultural work to feed U.S. civilians, soldiers, and America's allies.[9] Native nations were asked to give up 840,000 acres of tribal lands for military use—the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation was hit especially hard, losing 300,000 acres—and individual landowners, the Indian Service, and tribal governments approved 3,500 oil and gas leases. Individuals from an impressive number of tribes bought some $50 million in war bonds. Many planted Victory Gardens and participated in scrap drives.[10]

Figure 2.1: Buy War Bonds! - More Tomahawks for our United Warriors - Buy War Bonds Now! Ben Quintana, Eva Mirabel, Charles Presbetonequa, 1942, Courtesy of Hennepin County Library

[8] Mishuana R. Goeman, "Electric Lights, Tourist Sights: Gendering Dispossession and Colonial Infrastructure at Niagara Falls," in *Indian Cities: Histories of Indigenous Urbanization* Kent Blansett, Cathleen D. Cahill, and Andrew Needham, eds., (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2022), 110.

[9] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 188-191; Jere Franco, "Going the Distance: World War II and the Wind River Reservation," *The Wyoming History Journal* 68 (Spring 1996): 16. See Douglas Miller on wartime movement to cities as a Native initiative, *Indians on the Move*, 44, 45-48.

[10] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 188-191; Franco, "Going the Distance," 16. Miller, *Indians on the Move*, 44, 45-48.

Others cited principles of sovereignty and the history of colonialism in resisting the government's demand that they support the war effort. Whether they supported the war effort or not, Native and Indigenous people referenced the principles the U.S. said were at the heart of the war when fighting for equal treatment in a racist society. These actions shaped the Native sense of self in ways that would influence postwar politics.

For these reasons, and because of the distinctive possibilities born of the war, World War II scholars have backed Bernstein's assessment: the war was indeed a "crossroads" for Native people and one of the most important periods in twentieth-century Native American and Indigenous history.[11] In discussing key themes, this chapter references the experiences of many individuals and tribal nations. Though representative, they are far from the only stories in need of highlighting. The war affected every Native community. Each has home front sites associated with it that are significant to local, tribal, and/or national history. This chapter begins by discussing the distinctive position of Native people within the U.S. polity. Native people moving away from their home communities to either enter the military or take part in war production comprises the second part of the chapter. The last section discusses wartime developments in Native American, Native Alaskan, Kānaka Maoli, and Pacific Islander homelands.

Race or Nation

Native Americans and other Indigenous people face a unique form of racialization. Federally recognized tribes function as sovereign nations. Their formal relationship with the U.S. government is based on individual legal agreements, called treaties, between the government and each tribal nation. Sovereignty and treaties make Native people distinctive as Americans—distinctive by tribal identity and in relation to other groups of citizens without treaty relations to the U.S. government. Among other things, this historically has meant, according to the courts, that Native people could not call on the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution in their quest for citizenship. It was not until the 1924 Indian Citizenship Act that the government confirmed all Native Americans were citizens. Only a little over 60 percent had already secured citizenship by that point.[12]

The quest for citizenship was, in part, a strategy to counter romantic, erroneous, and racist stereotypes that depicted Natives as uncivilized people trapped in the past. Interwar Native leaders like Chicago-based Office of Indian Affairs Placement Officer Scott Henry Peters (Ojibwe) believed educating non-Native people about "who Indians were, and how and where Indians fit into the modern American landscape" was critical to improving their treatment.[13] Advertising the World War I service of Native Americans was central to their campaign. Peters reminded Chicago's

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[11] In *World War II and the American Indian*, Kenneth Townsend puts forward an argument like that of the other major monograph on Native Americans during World War II, asserting that it shaped Native Americans' lives even more than the acclaimed Indian New Deal. See Bernstein, *American Indians and World War II*.

[12] Daniel McCool, Susan Olsen, Jennifer L. Robinson, *Native Vote: American Indians, the Voting Rights Act, and the Right to Vote* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1-20.

[13] Rosalyn R. LaPier and David R. M. Beck, *City Indian: Native American Activism in Chicago, 1893-1934* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), xxiv.

elite about the tendency Whites had to describe Native Americans who were defending their land and families as murderers while hailing soldiers who were also settlers and who attacked Natives as virtuous warriors. The term "patriot" is reserved for White men, Native Americans are "savages." He told White leaders to correct these accounts: "Put in your history books the Indians part in the World War. Tell how the Indian fought for a country of which he was not a citizen, for a flag to which he had no claim, and for a people that have treated him unjustly." Peters wanted the next generation of Whites to have a different perspective. "Let your White children see that the Indian was a man—that he is capable of thoughts and feelings." Besides ending the day-to-day racism Native people faced, Peters believed this shift would finally allow Native people to manage their own lives and communities.[14]

Nonetheless, Native people continued to be discriminated against and disenfranchised during the interwar period, especially at the local and state level—a dynamic similar to that experienced by Black Americans. While both similarities and differences appear between the histories of Native Americans and Blacks, a racist framework has often lumped them together and subjected them to the hierarchies that emerged out of U.S. settler colonialism.[15] The Black-White binary framed that hierarchy nationally, but, particularly in the western part of the country and in the territories, matters were more complex.[16] Nationally, Native people were sometimes abstractly afforded more respect and status than Blacks, Latinos, or Asian Americans.[17] However the reality of communities with significant Native and White interactions was that Indigenous peoples were often subjected to racist denigration or dismissed as nearing extinction.

Context remained crucial to Native people's experiences during World War II.[18] In communities around the western United States where Native people were the predominant non-White population, segregation, dramatic inequality of opportunity, and violence were common. Around Bismarck, North Dakota, historical accounts show White citizens treating German and Italian POWs better than Native Americans. Companies in the area were unwilling to hire Native employees, forcing tribes like the Turtle Mountain Ojibwe to attempt to sustain themselves on meager land holdings, the product of settler colonial marginalization. The example of Bismarck was not an outlier. In Williston, a wheat town in northwestern North Dakota, most farmers refused to employ Native people despite severe labor shortages and especially profitable harvests.[19] A few White employers did respond to the government's anti-racism wartime messaging which appeared on posters and in multiple types of media. The Will Seed Company in Bismarck employed twenty to twenty-five Native women, according to Mary Ketterling (Cheyenne River Lakota). Ketterling added that the company welcomed Native American customers and treated

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[14] LaPier and Beck, *City Indian*, 86, 111, 125-126 (quoted section), 129.

[15] McCool, et. al., *Native Vote*, 1-20.

[16] Maile Arvin, *Possessing Polynesians: The Science of Settler Colonial Whiteness in Hawaii and Oceania* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2019).

[17] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 79.

[18] See Thomas A. Guglielmo, *Divisions: A New History of Racism and Resistance in America's World War II Military* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 3-7 and, for experiences in uniform, 141-46.

[19] R. Douglas Hurt, *The Great Plains during World War II* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), 195, 357.

them well. She knew this from her family's experience buying seeds which, paradoxically, they used to plant Victory Gardens.[20]

In other parts of the country, government officials' racialization of Native people was more convoluted but equally troubling. In Virginia, the Registrar for Vital Statistics, who, like many White Americans, saw race in terms of the dominant binary, would not allow Native Americans to be classified as anything other than Black.[21] That meant, according to state policies, that Native Americans would serve in segregated units. Concomitant with anti-Black racism, some government officials believed having Native people serve in a segregated unit would allow them leadership possibilities and give their wartime contributions a higher profile. The Indian Service successfully fought this line of reasoning and the Virginia ruling, contending that Native soldiers should serve in integrated units. They noted that in places like the Southwest, Jim Crow was as much a de facto reality to Native people as it was to Blacks in the South. Though the Virginia registrar's stance was extreme, other White officials and agencies sometimes also formally categorized Native people as Black.[22]

Native soldiers were racialized in the media, their integrated units, and on the front lines as "Indians."[23] White soldiers often called Native soldiers stereotypical names while also being intrigued by generalizations about their spirituality. Many bought into the stereotypes circulated by dime novels, radio serials, and movies that Native Americans had a special "warrior spirit." White officers assigned Native soldiers tasks such as rock climbing that supposedly conformed to their "natural" capabilities. Native soldiers even received special attention from Nazis who, basing their views of Native Americans on romantic ideas of the "Indian warrior," identified Native people as Aryan and encouraged them to resist their American exploiters.[24]

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[20] Fred Schneider, "'Corn in the Crib is Like Money in the Bank': George F. Will and the Oscar H. Will & Company, 1917-1955," *North Dakota History* 76 (2011): 14.

[21] Paul T. Murray, "Who is an Indian? Who Is a Negro? Virginia Indians in the World War II Draft," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 95, no. 2, (1987): 215-231, and Laura J. Feller, *Being Indigenous in Jim Crow Virginia: Powhatan People and the Color Line* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2022), 158-193. For the deeper history of this entanglement, see: Arica Coleman, *That the Blood Stay Pure: African Americans, Native Americans, and the Predicament of Race and Identity in Virginia* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2013).

[22] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 90, 70.

[23] On the racialized stereotype of the "Indian" see Brian Klopotek, "I Guess Your Warrior Look Doesn't Work Every Time: Challenging Indian Masculinity in the Cinema," in *Across the Great Divide: Cultures of Manhood in the US West*, Matthew Basso, Dee Garceau, and Laura McCall, eds., (New York: Routledge, 2001), 251-273. Townsend writes of media coverage: "Descriptions of Indian war dances and purification rituals dotted the pages of major newspapers from coast to coast. Reports of Indians carrying their rifles to draft registration and enlistment centers drew the curiosity of a national audience. When Kitus Tecumseh laid plans to form an Indian 'scouting force' for combat, the New York Times published the story to demonstrate both the wartime cooperation of Native Americans and the prevalence of the warrior tradition. Newspapers printed photographs of Indians with General Douglas MacArthur, stories of the Sioux Sun Dance ceremony, and the marriages of Indian servicemen to White women, but consistently larger space was devoted to the Indians' combat exploits." Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 79.

[24] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 36. Townsend concludes about "warrior" stereotyping: "The emphasis on the Indians' warrior tradition served the interests of the press and Washington agencies and was well received by the general public. But the warrior spirit more importantly served Native Americans. For those who

Native people who went to major home front cities for war production work often blended into wartime migrant communities relatively easily. They did, however, face aggressive racism, especially from Whites relocating from the rural West. Because of the unequal education they received and the lack of resources available to them, they were far less likely to easily qualify for higher paying production or professional jobs. Although, without question, they experienced what we would today describe as "microaggressions" from fellow workers once they were identified as "Indians," they did not face the level of hiring restrictions that Black Americans experienced.

Some Native Americans in and out of uniform responded to racism and stereotypes on the home front by arguing they were "uniquely American," a narrative that Native leaders, especially in cities, had used in the decades before the war. Historian Paul Rosier's research shows that this rhetoric allowed them to both claim racial and civic nationalism and to use patriotism "to mediate" between these positions.[25] Both the military and urban experience of building community among individuals with ties to several Native nations prompted Native people to more often describe themselves as "Indian." This term, used even more often in White popular culture, erased Native people's distinct identities as members of sovereign nations. As a result, it reinforced the non-Native tendency to view Native people in "racial" terms. That pattern continued postwar, as did the growing importance of cities to Native life.

The Wartime Move Away From Home Communities

Migration from reservation communities proved to be an especially influential home front development given the scale. Urban experience was central to this trend. Native people in uniform passed through, recreated in, or were based near cities.[26] Native civilians moved to cities for well-paid war production work. They not only survived in wartime cities but, in some instances, thrived, retaining the ways and beliefs of their nations and bolstering an emerging pan-Indian identity. Wartime urbanization also foreshadowed—and gave Native people strategies to survive—the government's postwar termination policies, which used cities as tools of assimilation and cultural genocide.[27] More broadly, the war meant adapting while fighting against the various

invoked cultural tradition, a renewed Indian identity commanded precedence over the more prevalent, widely held assumption that Indians favored racial assimilation. It represented a conscious decision for Indians at the crossroads to follow the path toward cultural revitalization and an identity apart from whites" (80).

[25] Paul C. Rosier, *Serving Their Country: American Indian Politics and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 7-8.

[26] Rosenthal writes, "Practically all Native people involved in the war effort experienced life in an urban area, whether laboring in a factory, training for the military, serving out a military base in the United States, or deployed overseas." Nicolas G. Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country: Native American Migration & Identity in Twentieth Century Los Angeles* (University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 26.

[27] Collier would stay in office through 1945. During the war, White leaders believed his methods gave Native people too much agency and began to reverse his policies to "finish assimilating Indians into American mainstream society. The new reformers' program had many parallels to programs which had existed before Collier, but there were also differences. Reformers of the post-1945 era did not talk about 'civilizing' the Indians, but spoke instead of 'freeing' and 'emancipating' Indians from federal control…Post-1945 Indian reformers saw the trust

forms of racism they faced in cities, home front military facilities, and throughout their homelands. Native lands and home communities often bore the brunt of the war effort in a way far too often unrecognized. The war significantly damaged Native land in the name of progress and national defense, undermining Native sovereignty and Native people's health.

Military Service

The contributions of the approximately 25,000 men and women who entered the U.S. Armed Services are the best-known part of World War II-era Native American history. Their story is dominated by a tiny percentage of Native soldiers: the Navajo code talkers. The limited comprehension of even this aspect of Native wartime experience represents the larger silences around military and, for that matter, civilian contributions. Not just the Diné, but Ojibwe, *Absaroka* (Crow), and soldiers from at least twelve other Native nations used their tribal language to defeat Axis code-breaking efforts and communicate in a language the enemy could not understand.[28]

Figure 2.2: Comanche Code Talkers at Fort Benning, Georgia, 1941. Courtesy National Archives, NAID: 10031032.

relationship between the federal government and tribes not as something that protected Indians, but rather as a manipulative obstacle to personal and economic freedom." These reformers supported terminating the federal government's trust relationship with tribes. National Archives, "Bureau of Indian Affairs Records: Termination," https://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/bia/termination, accessed August 10, 2024. Milwaukee Public Museum, "Menominee Termination and Restoration," https://www.mpm.edu/content/wirp/ICW-97#, accessed March 15, 2024.

[28] Barney and Henry Old Coyote used the Crow language during bombing missions in Europe and North Africa. Krys Holmes and Sue Dailey, "World War II in Montana," in *Montana: Stories of the Land* (Helena: Montana Historical Society, 2008), 379.

Moreover, virtually every Native nation contributed people to the military and made sacrifices not expected of White communities. The Oceti Sakowin Oyate (Sioux) community at Little Eagle, South Dakota, numbered only 300, but by the beginning of 1942, 22 men had enlisted. Of those, only two had been drafted.[29] Of the combined 960 members of Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute Tribes (458 and 502 respectively), 94 joined the armed forces.[30] In addition to losing a large percentage of their community during the war and sadly, in some cases, permanently, Southern Ute who stayed home had to travel many miles to access medical and educational resources due to the war impacting the Indian Service's labor and financial resources.

The oft-cited willingness of Native American men to fight for the United States flattens the complexities of Native military service. Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians volunteered and were drafted.[31] A significant number of men who wanted to serve were blocked by evaluators because of their supposed inability to meet health and education standards. As historian Robert Townsend notes, "While only twelve percent of Arizona's White males and twenty-three percent of African Americans fell below the armed forces' minimal standard, almost forty-nine percent of the native population failed to pass the mandated exam."[32] Some of these rejections were directly related to the long history of colonialism and government disinvestment in reservation communities. Many, however, were based on racism. In Oklahoma, where more than 20 percent of the nation's Native American population resided, assessors rejected more than 40 percent of Native men based on psychological screenings. Nationally, draft boards turned away only approximately 6 percent of White draftees for that reason.[33] Settler stereotypes played a powerful role, as the case of Malcolm Jay Harrison shows.

Harrison's psychological examiner claimed he was "unstable, has wanderlust," wouldn't stay on the job, drank to excess, and had a "psychopathic personality."[34] Harrison appealed to the head of the Selective Service System and the Secretary of War. He noted only a month earlier that two draft board psychologists had ruled he was psychologically fit, that his work patterns were the same as other oil field workers, and that "in his whole life, he hasn't drunk as much as one gallon of liquor and in the last few years has not taken a drink."[35] He said the examiner's questions were insulting regarding Native men's intelligence and showed no knowledge of Native culture or even the local economy. Harrison's appeal prompted the army and Selective Service to review

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[29] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 61-62.

[30] Richard K. Young, *The Ute Indians of Colorado in the Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 129-132. The Ute Indian Tribe (Uintah & Ouray Reservation) and Arapaho and Cheyenne bands that historically lived on the Colorado Front Range prior to removal to reservations in Utah, Wyoming, Montana, and Oklahoma, also lost hundreds of individuals in service to the military. Loretta Fowler, *Tribal Sovereignty and the Historical Imagination Cheyenne-Arapaho Politics* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 94.

[31] "Honoring Native American, Alaska Native heritage," *U.S. Army*, November 22, 2010, https://www.army.mil/article/48472/honoring_native_american_alaska_native_heritage, accessed May 17, 2024. Kevin Knodell, "The Complicated Pride of Native Hawaiians in the Military," *Honolulu Civil Beat*, February 17, 2021, https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/02/the-complicated-pride-of-native-hawaiians-in-the-military/

[32] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 65-66.

[33] Rebecca Schwartz Greene, *Breaking Point: The Ironic Evolution of Psychiatry in World War II* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2023), 66-67.

[34] Greene, *Breaking Point*, 66.

[35] Greene, *Breaking Point*, 66.

Native American screening protocols. One psychiatrist involved concluded "that Native Americans' mental health was actually superior" because "the vast majority are much more stoical than the average White person and less inclined to develop symptoms of psychoneuroses or psychopathic personalities."[36] Although federal officials seemed to also be deploying stereotypes regarding Native character, they concluded bias was indeed at work, a claim Oklahoma officials rebutted. All agreed that more education was needed regarding Native American culture and ways. Historian Rebecca Schwartz Greene concludes that "throughout the war, issues of racial and ethnic bias and psychiatric selection would continue to occur against Native Americans, Blacks, and other minorities."[37]

Likewise, while story after story rightfully recounts the patriotism of men from numerous tribes who desired to enlist, it is important to remember that for some, if not many, the financial incentives also were an important motivation. White draftees were frustrated by military pay, but the vast economic inequalities that defined reservation life meant that military pay could be an improvement for Native men. Like many Native people, the one hundred men from the Fort Polk reservation who joined the Montana National Guard in 1940 did so for patriotic and economic reasons.[38] On the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota, the average Native American family farm brought in $58 annually just before the war. The average annual income for nearby White farmers was between $837 and $1063.[39]

Just as in Fort Peck, numerous men and women from the Pine Ridge Reservation volunteered for military service, particularly after the war began.[40] Nearly 1,500 "reportedly 'jammed' the recruiting office in Rapid City" shortly after Pearl Harbor.[41] No doubt some did so for the same reason as Barney Old Coyote, Jr., a seventeen-year-old member of the *Apsáalooke* nation: "Filled with rage over the unprovoked assault [at Pearl Harbor] and determined to avenge the lives of sailors and soldiers killed in Hawaii, he borrowed money from his older brother and traveled to Billings, seventy-five miles away, to enlist in the army."[42] In Alaska, even though Alaska Natives continued to face a racist system so deeply rooted that historian Terrence Cole pointedly termed it "Jim Crow in Alaska," large numbers enlisted in the Territorial Guard, a reserve army force organized after Japan occupied parts of the Aleutian Islands.[43] Protecting their tribal lands was also the motivation noted by many Navajo (Diné) men. Cozy Stanley Brown said his "main reason

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[36] Greene, *Breaking Point*, 67.

[37] Greene, *Breaking Point*, 68.

[38] Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux tribal members comprised 93% of Company B, the 163rd regiment, and soon after Pearl Harbor were mobilized to fight in the South Pacific. Elise Boxer, "Citizen Soldiers: Fort Peck Indian Reservation's Company B, 1940-1945," master's thesis (Utah State University, 2008). Pay for a Private just beginning active duty service on the home front was roughly $600 a year.

[39] Hurt, *The Great Plains During World War II*, 365.

[40] "Why We Serve," National Museum of the American Indian, https://americanindian.si.edu/why-we-serve/, accessed March 3, 2024.

[41] Hurt, *The Great Plains During World War II*, 365.

[42] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 78.

[43] Terrence M. Coles, "Jim Crow in Alaska: The Passage of the Alaska Equal Rights Act of 1945," *Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Nov., 1992): 429-430. Ernest Gruening, *Men of the Tundra: Alaska Eskimos at War* (October House, 1969), 2-7.

for going to war was to protect my land and my people because the elderly people said that the earth was our mother… the Navajo people get their blessings from the four sacred mountains, our mother earth, father the sun and the air we breathe." He added, "There are Anglos and different Indian tribes living on the earth who have pride in it. That was my main reason for fighting in the war; also, I wanted to live on the earth in the future…The Anglos say 'Democracy,' which means they have pride in the American flag. We Navajos respect things the same way they do."[44]

Sent to bases around the U.S., it was challenging for Native Americans to keep their ties to their tribes and culture. Neither the navy nor the army recognized Indigenous religious practices, reflecting the assimilationist paradigm still held by many in the government. Like Asian and Black American soldiers, "pervasive institutional racism" prevented them from gaining spiritual sustenance while in uniform.[45] For instance, the army chief of chaplains initially refused to commission a Native American chaplain based on his sense that they would be unable to meet the needs of White soldiers.[46] Rev. James Ottipoby, a Comanche and one of the small number of Native men who did receive a chaplain's commission, only did so based on being married to "a college woman of full Caucasian blood."[47]

In addition to overt racism, the reasoning given for initially rejecting Ottipoby—"there were not a sufficient number of communicants of your ancestry"—suggests the cultural isolation that many Native Americans faced in uniform.[48] Unlike Black and Japanese Americans, Native Americans, except for some code talkers, were not placed in segregated units. Ottipoby's supporters countered by noting that one unit, the 79th Coast Artillery Regiment, was fifty percent Native. This and other arguments helped him get his commission, but further checking of the 79th revealed that there were only seven Native men and that a large number were actually Mexican American. Native soldiers and sailors, like other people of color in the military, consistently dealt with the racism suggested by this misidentification. Even when they made progress based on merit, as Captain Ottipoby did, it often required White advocates to intercede using paternalistic and racist arguments.[49]

White soldiers and sailors by and large welcomed their Native comrades at home front bases and overseas, though they often faced stereotypical treatment based on their background. Those same stereotypes dominated press coverage which often focused on Native "warrior" traditions.[50] Some accounts were more nuanced, especially near the end of the war. In one of his final columns before being killed in action, famed war correspondent Ernie Pyle wrote about two Navajo brothers in the Marines who helped their unit covertly communicate, a veiled reference to the code talkers who would become celebrated much later. Pyle noted that just before the invasion

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[44] Quoted in Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 77.
[45] G. Kurt Piehler, *A Religious History of the American GI in World War II* (Lincoln: Nebraska, 2021), 5, 23, 160, 189.
[46] Piehler, *A Religious History*, 162.
[47] Piehler, *A Religious History*, 167.
[48] Piehler, *A Religious History*, 167.
[49] Piehler, *A Religious History*, 167.
[50] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 79.

of Okinawa, they and other Navajo men offered chants and dances meant to protect their fellow Marines to the appreciation of an audience of "several thousand."[51] Malcolm Jay Harrison, who joined the army, was among the many Native military members who fellow soldiers also appreciated. Harrison proved the psychiatrist who tried to block his entry into the military wrong by earning two Bronze Stars for his service in Europe.[52] The sites and properties related to these stories of recruitment, enlistment, and home front training hold rich potential for developing Native military experience as a significant aspect of home front history.

Resistance to Military Service

Alongside examples of American patriotism, the Native nations that resisted conscription and sometimes broader participation in the war reveal the continuing claims to sovereignty that also defined this era.[53] Some tribes did so because of their spiritual beliefs. Zuni and Hopi peoples saw defensive warfare as justified, but rarely supported conflicts that they deemed offensive in nature. In early 1941, a Zuni leader refused his military induction notice because, sensing no direct threat to either the U.S. or the Pueblo of Zuni, he viewed any potential U.S. participation as not driven by a defensive rationale. Selective Service granted his petition for conscientious objector (CO) status based on religious beliefs. Other Zuni leaders also received CO status, but 213 Zunis, around 10 percent of eligible men, did join the military. Hopi men who refused their draft notices were threatened with incarceration, further fueling opposition. The Justice Department tracked and apprehended six Hopi men who had fled into the surrounding countryside. To the anger of tribal members and even the White reservation superintendent, each was sentenced to one year in prison. Indicating the links that many tribal members saw between the war and settler colonial values, Zuni who did not participate in the war were suspicious of those who did, fearing they now ascribed to a non-Zuni worldview. Many Hopi agreed.[54]

For other Native nations, the demand that they follow the dictates of Selective Service and agree to be conscripted was seen as directly challenging their sovereignty. Pia Machita, chief of the Tohono O'odham, showed the importance he placed in tribal sovereignty when he refused the Arizona livestock sanitation board entry to Tohono O'odham lands and urged tribal members not to answer questions posed by federal census takers. When federal officials arrived to enforce draft registration and the penalties associated with evasion, Pia Machita again resisted. He and another tribal leader were arrested, tried, convicted, and imprisoned for resisting the Selective Service Act.[55] The Seminole Indians of Florida also objected to Selective Service as many saw themselves as citizens of their nation, not the U.S.[56]

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[51] Piehler, *A Religious History*, 190.

[52] "Malcolm Jay Harrison," *The Oklahoman*, June 23, 1987, https://www.oklahoman.com/story/news/1987/06/23/malcolm-jay-harrison/62685947007/, accessed May 16, 2024.

[53] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*.

[54] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 83-84.

[55] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 104-05.

[56] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 110.

The Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Yakama Nation made similar stances, citing the treaties they had signed with the U.S. The Yakama pointed out that their 1859 treaty with the U.S. government guaranteed tribal sovereignty, and they had not forfeited it since that point. The Yakama case, however, also reinforced the asymmetrical power relations that ultimately structured these engagements. Yakama filed suit in the U.S. Federal District Court to stop the application of Selective Service against tribal members but lost. Assuming U.S. settler law would return a similar decision on appeal, the Yakama agreed to serve in the military. The Haudenosaunee, who had been fighting the law for longer, mounted a more concerted fight. Holding that the Citizenship Act of 1924 had not passed through the treaty process that governed relationships between Native American nations and the U.S., one Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) Council suggested Haudenosaunee were not subject to conscription. Delegates of the Six Nations met in June 1942 to draft a declaration of war against the Axis, asserting their sovereignty. U.S. Government representatives saw the gesture as supporting the war, but in fact, it signaled that the tribes would continue to assert a separate political and cultural identity.[57]

Townsend's analysis of the unintended effects of stereotyping Native military men as warriors offers an intriguing connection to those who refused to serve. He argues that for those who chose to embody a warrior identity and "invoked cultural tradition, a renewed Indian identity commanded precedence over the more prevalent, widely held assumption that Native Americans favored racial assimilation. It represented a conscious decision for Native Americans at the crossroads to follow the path toward cultural revitalization and an identity apart from Whites."[58] The postwar decision to embrace Indigenous nationalism would connect Native people in the military and those who supported participation to those who resisted, especially when made mandatory by a government that had often treated them as second-class citizens if not enemies of the state. These shared views would provide some of the seeds for what became a fertile movement two decades after the war.

Urban War Production Work

World War II was a profoundly urban experience for Native people, with a large percentage of members of most tribes leaving reservation lands to help build the "Arsenal of Democracy."[59] Leading up to the war, White Americans assumed that Native Americans would not come to urban spaces because of discomfort. That view came from racialized assumptions rather than historical records. Historian Coll Thrush contends for Whites "Indians and cities coexist at opposite ends of the American imaginary; One represents the past, while the other represents the future."[60] Native people have been a constant presence in urban spaces and founded such places prior to

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[57] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 112-113, 123.

[58] Townsend, *World War II and the American Indian*, 80.

[59] It is difficult to establish an accurate number of Native people who went to work in war production, but around 40,000 labored in armament plants alone. Attempting to convey the scale of Native American migration during these years, a history of the Umatilla reservation in Oregon noted "so many reservation men [were] part of the war effort that when they return[ed] home deer and elk [were] crossing the reservation roads in their plentifulness." See Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 25.

[60] Coll Thrush, *Native Seattle: Histories from the Crossing-Over Place* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007); LaPier and Beck, *City Indian*, 21-22, xxi.

European contact.[61] Opportunity, interest, and the structuring effects of settler colonialism drove twentieth century migrants to settler cities. Historian Nicholas Rosenthal writes of this last factor, "the movement of Indians back to the growing cities and towns of North America is explained by the harshness of reservation life and the dispossession of Native land and resources," a point reinforced by Native people who moved to Chicago, Minneapolis, Denver, and other cities in the early 1900s.[62]

Native people who migrated to cities between 1900 and 1940—a phenomenon similar, though at a smaller scale, to the Great Migration of Black Americans from the South—were critical to the success of the larger number who came during World War II. Like wartime migrants, these earlier travelers had been driven by economic opportunities. Backing Rosenthal's argument, Winnie Jourdain, who, out of necessity moved to Minneapolis from the White Earth Reservation in 1926, said: "Everyone told me I would starve to death down there but what could I do? There was no work on the reservation."[63] In Minneapolis, when not working or caring for her family, she bonded with the small but vibrant Native American community. She also kept her ties to White Earth. Sasha Maria Suarez, a scholar of this history and a member of the community, finds that "there's little evidence that [Jourdain] wavered in her Ojibwe identity" after she moved to the city.[64] The same would be true for the Diné and countless others.[65]

Wartime changes created circumstances that, for some tribes, pushed members toward cities. Long before the war, Northern California's Round Valley Indians and many other tribes became migrant agricultural workers trying to stay near their reservation lands. When Mendocino County's hops production decreased and farmers shifted to planting pears, prunes, and grapes, Native

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[61] The remarkable ancient city of Cahokia offers one example of early urban Native history. The majority of the research on this migration focuses on the post-World War II and the federal policies, including termination and relocation, that pushed Native people toward cities, and their experiences there. See Jack Forbes, "The Urban Tradition Among Native Americans," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 22 (Winter 1998): 15-27. LaPier and Beck, *City Indian*; Thrush, *Native Seattle*; Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 11.

[62] Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 14.

[63] Sasha Maria Suarez, "Indigenizing Minneapolis: Building American Indian Community Infrastructure in the Mid-Twentieth Century" in *Indian Cities*, 204.

[64] Suarez, "Indigenizing Minneapolis," 204. For scholarship on economic necessity see Bauer, *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here*, 204-206.

[65] The scholars who have tracked this transformation collectively argue that as Native Americans engaged with the capitalist economy, they maintained their Indigenous value systems and sustained community. Bauer, *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here*, 130-155, 204; Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 14-17; Colleen O'Neill, *Working the Navajo Way: Labor and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2005). For the Diné government intervention in the 1930s and before drove many to migrant farm work (O'Neill, 54). The difficulties of being a migrant wage worker and the ongoing marginalization that reservation communities faced, catalyzed the move to cities. This pattern would intensify during World War II. Diné families adapted the best they could while maintaining their Indigenous values. Those values, the scholar Jennifer Nez Dennetdale shows, "are grounded in the creation narratives" of the Diné. Jennifer Nez Dennetdale, *Reclaiming Diné History: The Legacies of Navajo Chief Manuelito and Juanita* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007), 7-8. Those narratives reinforced the importance of clans forming a network of kin, tied together by language and ceremonial practices, across the extensive lands of Diné Bikeyah, marked by the Diné's four sacred mountains. Corn agriculture, sheep, and mobility were also essential to this value system. Marsha Weisiger, *Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011), 64, 71-72, 77-78.

families adjusted. However, World War II allowed farmers to hire Mexican immigrant workers through the Bracero Program, an agreement between the United States and Mexican governments that helped fill labor shortages in agriculture, railroad, and a few other critical industries. Farmers could pay braceros less than Native people, which historian William Bauer notes: "Squeez[ed] Indians out of jobs that they had occupied for nearly a century."[66] This forced Native Americans to move to find war production jobs. Like so many others, Round Valley community members saw urban wartime work as another adaptation to survive. Norma Knight summarized what many Native people thought going into the war: "[we] wanted more money and education and [to] be able to fend for ourselves."[67]

Native workers sought employment in cities nearest to their homes following a pattern established by earlier generations. Most of the men who left the Bad River Chippewa Reservation headed to the Walter Butler Shipyard in nearby Superior, Wisconsin.[68] Far more Native workers from Minnesota and surrounding states went to Minneapolis and St. Paul. Approximately half of Minnesota's Native people made the Twin Cities home. Men found war production jobs, but women often had to take "female" jobs as waitresses, salesclerks, typists, or telephone operators.[69] Other Native people went further afield. Members of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy, for instance, went to work in defense plants in Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and New York City, but also in Chicago, Milwaukee, Detroit, and even Oklahoma City. The out-migration was highest from 1940 through 1942 but continued throughout the war, as evidenced by the experience of Montana's Fort Belknap Agency and Katishtya (San Felipe Pueblo) in New Mexico. Only eight months before the end of the war more than two dozen members of the latter group went to work at the Navy's Clearfield Depot near Ogden in Northern Utah.[70]

In some instances, especially at sites on the periphery of urban areas, Native workers were a large part of the workforce. Hopi and Diné people were among the eight thousand workers who, beginning in 1941, helped construct the Navajo Ordnance Depot, a $30 million project in Bellemont, Arizona, near Flagstaff.[71] The government named the depot "in honor of the thousands of Native American workers it was calling on to help build and operate the Bellemont facility."[72] Sitting at 7,100 feet in elevation, the facility, with its 200 miles of road, 38 miles of rail, 800

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[66] Bauer, *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here*, 205. For more on the Bracero program see the Latino history chapter in this volume.

[67] Bauer, *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here*, 205.

[68] Miller, *Indians on the Move*, 45.

[69] Miller, *Indians on the Move*, 45-46.

[70] L. Gordon McLester III and Laurence Hauptman, eds., *A Nation within a Nation: Voices of the Oneidas of Wisconsin* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2010), 2. Miller, *Indians on the Move*, 49. Leonard J. Arrington and Archer L. Durham, "Anchors Aweigh in Utah: The U.S. Naval Supply Depot at Clearfield, 1942-1962," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 31 (Spring 1963): 31.

[71] A full history of the Navajo Ordnance Depot including its impact on Flagstaff, Arizona, the experience of Navajo and Hopi at the "Indian Village" and in the workplace at the Depot, can be found in John S. Westerlund, *Arizona's War Town: Flagstaff, Navajo Ordnance Depot, and World War II* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004). Westerlund also discusses the estimated 2,500 Diné who helped construct the Ft. Wingate Ordnance Depot in New Mexico.

[72] John S. Westerlund, "'U.S. Project Men Here': Building Navajo Ordnance Depot at Flagstaff," *The Journal of Arizona History* 42, no. 2 (2001): 209-210.

steel-reinforced concrete munitions bunkers, and 150 additional buildings, was one of the largest of its type—around the same size as Boston. Once the facility became operational, Hopi and Diné also filled many of the two thousand permanent positions required to operate the depot.[73]

Figure 2.3: Native American Women Working on 500 lb. Bombs at Navajo Ordnance Depot, Courtesy National Archives II, RG 156, Navajo Ordnance Depot, Basic History.

The job opportunities in Southern California from the first decade of the twentieth century on and especially during World War II meant that Los Angeles drew Native Americans—and Whites, Blacks, and Latinos—from the surrounding states and New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Arkansas.[74] Suggesting the long-term power of this attraction, between 1910 and 1920, Los Angeles County added 432,000 new residents. Writer Simon J. Ortiz (Acoma Pueblo) remembered his family and other Pueblo residents singing a song called "California! Let's Go!"[75] That trajectory continued as the area became home to expanding aviation, electronics, and chemical industries, and iron, rubber, and steel manufacturing. The 1930 census recorded the county's population at

[73] Westerlund, "'U.S. Project Men Here': Building Navajo Ordnance Depot at Flagstaff," 201, 213, 211, 220-221; Brad Melton and Dean Smith, eds., *Arizona Goes to War: The Home Front and the Front Lines During World War II* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003), 12.

[74] Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 12.

[75] Simon J. Ortiz, "Foreword," in *Urban Voices, The Bay Area American Indian Community*, Susan Lobo, ed., (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2002), xvii.

more than two million.[76] By that point, Native people from across the southwest had started to call the city home. Even more migrated to Southern California during the later years of the Great Depression. Rosenthal, who has carefully studied the migration of Native people to Los Angeles and noted the inaccuracy of census data on the subject, suggests that because "Indian migrations to Los Angeles had always followed the expansion of the city's economy," it is likely far more than the 1,378 Native people the census recorded lived in the county in 1940. He also argues that this number grew dramatically during the war.[77]

Urban Native American Organizations

Like Chicago, Minneapolis, and several other cities, Los Angeles was home to several Native American organizations before the war, such as the American Indian Progressive Association begun in 1924 to provide information and community to new migrants.[78] They would become even more important during the war.[79] Among the most prominent in Los Angeles was the Lowansa Tipi that Mira Frye Bartlett, a Kiikaapoa (Kickapoo) from Oklahoma founded in 1935. Bartlett soon changed the name to the Los Angeles Indian Center (LAIC). LAIC was housed in a building on the west side of downtown and remained a significant institution for decades. One of the first generation of Native migrants to LA recalled that, in the 1920s, after they began to get together to keep their Indian identity and ways of being intact, their numbers grew, and they decided they needed a place to gather: "Slowly, an Indian nucleus took shape, headed by a few Indian hopefuls whose vision and determination created the...[Los Angeles] American Indian Center."[80] What started as a place to socialize became much more, as thousands of Native workers came to wartime Los Angeles for well-paying jobs and found them in shipbuilding, aircraft manufacturing, machining, ordinance, aluminum, rubber, and at military facilities.[81]

With larger constituencies and a national discourse that promoted civil rights, World War II further empowered urban Native organizations to overtly address political issues. They often did so during events, like Indian Day, that prior to the war had been more celebratory. Earl Warren, then the state Attorney General and later U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice, offered a keynote speech about land claims and political rights at a 1942 California Indian Rights Association event.[82] Rosenthal, who discusses many of these organizations across the country, argues: "These groups formally established the presence of Indians in early-twentieth-century American cities

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[76] Although census figures are notoriously inaccurate regarding Native Americans, a special census found 704 California tribal members in Los Angeles in 1928. Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 18-19.

[77] Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 23-28.

[78] Interwar urban Native American organizations included the "First Daughters of America" and the "Grant Council Fire of American Indians." They provided limited social services and a network for relocated Native individuals. LaPier and Beck, *City Indian*, 107-115, 123-26; Nancy Shoemaker, *American Indian Population Recovery in the Twentieth Century* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000); Suarez, "Indigenizing Minneapolis," 205-206.

[79] Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 105.

[80] Quoted in Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 90.

[81] See Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 24, 69-70 for very useful details about LAIC in the 1970s and 80s, especially its positions.

[82] Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 110.

and provided Indian migrants with ways of 'being Indian' in what on a day-to-day basis was an overwhelmingly non-Indian and sometimes racially hostile environment. In other words, early-twentieth-century urban Indian organizations contributed to the earliest efforts at reimagining Indian Country."[83]

Through formal organizations and other means, tribal members in cities found myriad ways to assert Native identity and solidarity. In Seattle, the Duwamish, the original Indigenous community of the city, welcomed newcomers, many from around Seattle. The inter-tribal community that emerged was adaptable. One western anthropologist was so surprised by this that she began to question the fundamental assumptions about Native people that dominated universities of the time.[84] Between 1940 and 1943, the number of manufacturing workers in Seattle more than tripled to 115,000. This included a significant number of Native migrants, including many who "had never been off the reservation before."[85] Like the Duwamish, more recent arrivals found that Native people still faced legal codes that treated them differently, including a prohibition on liquor sales and racism in housing, employment, and education. They persevered as did the descendants of the first communities who, in an act that Indigenous theorists like scholar Gerald Vizenor (White Earth Ojibwe) would describe as survivance—not just survival but resistance that reflects the dynamism of contemporary Native peoples, continued to call Seattle by its Whulshootseed name, sdZéédZul7aleecH, which translated to "the little crossing over place."[86]

A few reservation-based organizations also played a part in facilitating wartime work in cities. In Montana, the Blackfeet Tribal Council Defense Committee worked hard to find off-reservation positions for members. The council assisted with transportation, lodging, and meal costs, and

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[83] Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 105. World War II would prove a key moment in solidifying the claim to social space that would provide the basis to re-indigenize the city. Characteristic of urban Native American communities that emerged before and during the war, the Ojibwe people who came to Minneapolis had survived being dispossession of their homelands and migrants to ancestral lands of another tribe, the Dakota, who see the area as "the center of the world and the location of their birth as a people." For Ojibwe "indigenizing space is primarily about claiming space physically and socially for the continuity of Ojibwe identity and community." Like Peters, their goal was self-determination. Postwar Minneapolis, the site of one of the nation's most famous urban Native American communities, is known for creating Indigenous designed infrastructure, like the Little Earth of All Tribes housing development and the Minneapolis American Indian Center and being the birthplace of the American Indian Movement. The groundwork for these achievements was laid "before the Second World War, with the transportation of White Earth Ojibwe community practices, relationships, and adaptive organizing methods," according to Ojibwe scholar Sasha Maria Suarez. Suarez, "Indigenizing Minneapolis," 200-201.

[84] Thrush, *Native Seattle*, 150-151, 160.

[85] Thrush, *Native Seattle*, 151, 160, 175.

[86] Thrush, *Native Seattle*, 229-230, 162-63. Columbia University anthropologist Marion Wesley Smith, who did field research around Puget Sound during the Great Depression, contended that "no other Indians on the whole continent had been similarly engulfed by the sudden growth of city populations or have been exposed to the full impact of 20th century urban society" than those around Seattle. Coll Thrush notes that, before 1880 there was a very strong Indigenous presence around Seattle, but dispossession followed along with creating "a regional Indian hinterland." Settlers used Seattle's Native identity to claim the city was distinctive. World War II would usher in another period of dramatic change for Seattle's Native community, though many in Seattle non-Native community would not recognize this until the American Indian movement in the 1970s. On survivance see, among others, Gerald Vizenor, ed., *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008).

even union dues. But such actions were rare. In most other places, Native individuals took the initiative to seek out employment leads. They relied on their own network, approached state and city employment bureaus, talked to local unions, and landed positions after moving to attend defense industry training programs.[87]

Boarding Schools and War Production

Contrasting this Native-driven model, boarding schools were among the most important agents in bringing Native people to cities and ultimately into wartime production jobs.[88] Boarding schools, designed to isolate Native youth from their parents, communities, and cultures, had a long and tragic history. As the *Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report* shows in painful detail, the violence and trauma they inflicted was also widespread.[89] Boarding school methodology favored assimilation at an early age to White culture. The goal was to "kill the Indian in him, and save the man," as military leader Richard H. Pratt, founder of the Carlisle Indian School in 1879, infamously put it.[90] One of the ways most boarding schools sought to assimilate Native children into White society and culture was to teach them skills, especially domestic and industrial, considered critical to a docile working class. In some cases this tradition of vocational training transitioned into direct support of the war effort. Douglas Miller's research found that "Six of the nation's leading Indian vocational schools introduced war-industry training programs that by 1942 had already placed twenty-five hundred graduates in national aircraft, tank, and shipbuilding factories."[91]

The boarding school closest to Los Angeles was the Sherman Institute, established in 1902 by the Office of Indian Affairs in Riverside, California. Sherman, like many boarding schools, taught young men industrial arts. In 1940, local aircraft manufacturing companies began recruiting Sherman students. Less than a year later, some of their fellow students began to enter the armed forces while others continued to fill an emerging pipeline to the aircraft industry. Douglas Aircraft was impressed with the Native workers they hired. They featured four former Sherman students in their November 1941 magazine. The students' tribal affiliations—Comanche, Puebloan, Klamath—suggest the large net that boarding schools deployed and the diversity of Native

87 Miller, *Indians on the Move*, 47-48.

88 Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 20-21.

89 Bryan Newland, Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs, *Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative Investigative Report*, May 2022, accessed January 7, 2024, https://www.bia.gov/sites/default/files/dup/inline-files/bsi_investigative_report_may_2022_508.pdf

90 Richard H. Pratt, "The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites [1892]," Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center, https://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/teach/kill-indian-him-and-save-man-r-h-pratt-education-native-americans, accessed July 1, 2024.

91 Miller, *Indians on the Move*, 51. See too 52-53.

people who would work in Los Angeles.[92] Douglas was not alone in advertising their willingness to hire Native workers. Solar Aircraft Company also featured their partnership with Sherman.[93]

Sherman's success in placing students was such that school officials began recruiting at reservations and schools throughout California, Nevada, New Mexico, and Arizona. After noting the massive demand for the type of skilled workers Sherman produced, they said their students were "being snapped up...because they are considered superior to the average applicant."[94] Eager to expand their training program, Sherman began advertising for older students.[95] By the end of the war, their graduates ranged from eighteen to forty years old.

Aircraft production companies urged the school to recruit young Native American women and train them in industrial skills. This was not a novel position. Women from tribal communities across the U.S. comprised a significant portion of Native war workers. One source holds that the Richmond, California, rail yards employed 3,500 Native women including in a variety of skilled positions.[96] However, national statistics are not available to ascertain how many Native women worked in war industries. That 46 percent of the Southern California tribal citizens who did war work in Riverside, Los Angeles, San Diego, Escondido, and Palm Springs were women suggests overall participation was above 36 percent, the highest overall percentage women, regardless of race, reached in the workforce during the war years.[97] The aircraft companies knew that as young men were drafted, they would need women to fill their positions. By 1943, the institute was accepting women as young as sixteen into their welding program, and ten of the thirteen new students in the March 1943 class were women. This did not stop employers like Douglas from hiring all of the Native men Sherman could train. Even with their intensive recruiting, however, Sherman enrolled fewer students during the war than in peacetime.[98]

Further north in Oregon, a vocational school in Eugene worked with the Chemawa Indian School in Salem to train young Native people as welders, foundry workers, electricians, and radio technicians. Only six months into the war, forty students had found jobs in Portland, the majority employed by the Kaiser Corporation. There they worked next to Indigenous people from Oklahoma, New Mexico, and other parts of the U.S. Early arrivals recommended that other family and community members relocate, spurring a chain migration. They joined tens of thousands working in one of the nation's largest shipbuilding facilities. More than 260,000 people moved to the area to work in war industries. Native people sought well- paid defense work also in Seattle,

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92 Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 27. Even as they sought students from a wide variety of tribes, boarding schools' goal remained to break down those individual tribal identities, often aggressively mixing youth from different tribes to foster greater homogeneity. Kevin Whalen, *Native Students at Work: American Indian labor and Sherman Institute's Outing Program, 1900 to 1945* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2016).

93 Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 27-28.

94 Quoted in Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 27.

95 Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 13, 26-27.

96 Miller, *Indians on the Move*, 47.

97 Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 25, 28-29. Allan M. Winkler, *Home Front U.S.A.: America During World War II* (Wheeling, IL: Harlan and Davidson, Inc., 2000), 56.

98 Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 28.

San Francisco, and, as previously noted, Los Angeles, Detroit, Chicago, and Oklahoma City. Smaller numbers of Native people worked in other war production centers across the U.S.[99]

Native Americans worked in war production in truly remarkable numbers, especially given the challenges they faced. Indeed, even more would have done so but for the structural issues that characterized much of reservation life. For instance, the Sicangu Oyate, the Sicangu band of the *Lakȟóta* people, who reside on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota, were eager for construction jobs at the Black Hills ordnance depot and later permanent work staffing the depot. The lack of viable transportation, however, made that impossible for most. Notably, a small number overcame these and other obstacles and found employment as "skilled painters, carpenters, plumbers, mechanics, and heavy equipment operators" at the site.[100] Similarly, some Native women from other remote parts of South Dakota figured out a way to take sheet metal training courses and subsequently contributed to the all-important military aviation sector.[101]

The End of the War . . . and of Many Urban Wartime Jobs

In cities at the end of the war, Native workers, along with White women and other people of color, were among the first fired. For many Native women in particular, this felt like more of the same. The wartime experience of Round Valley Native people had shown that getting well-paying defense jobs was not always easy, even in places like Los Angeles and San Francisco, given racism, competition, and other factors. Round Valley women had been forced to take paid domestic work during the war. As bracero labor became more difficult to secure, farmers in Mendocino County once again sought them for agricultural labor. Native women adapted by creating a seasonal circuit to clean and cook in cities during the winter and return to the fields for higher wages—equal to "ten months of dreary housework"—in the summer.[102]

Winnie Jourdain's work to help sustain a "supportive social infrastructure" for Native migrants in Minneapolis reinforces the sense that, especially in cities with sizable reservation communities nearby, anti-Native racism and sexism continued during and after the war. This made urban Native networks even more important. Because of her own history, Jourdain had a special affinity for assisting young women. She remembered, "The city was full of prejudice. I think it still is. I helped Indian people get jobs. It was hard for them, they were the last ones hired and the first to be fired."[103] Anti-Native racism meant that even veterans were rarely among those hired again when city factories re-emerged from the postwar doldrums. Thrush writes, "The result was that many Indian men and women who came to Seattle ended up on Skid Row, the area that included Pioneer Square and much of First Ave. stretching all the way north to Belltown."[104]

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[99] Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 26.

[100] Robert F. Karolevitz, "Life on the Home Front: South Dakota in World War II," *South Dakota History* 19 (Fall 1989): 403; Richmond L. Clow, "Tribal Populations in Transition: Sioux Reservations and Federal Policy, 1934-1965," *South Dakota History* 19 (Summer 1990): 378; Hurt, *The Great Plains During World War II*, 360.

[101] Karolevitz, "Life on the Home Front," 403; Clow, "Tribal Populations in Transition," 378; Hurt, *The Great Plains During World War II*, 360.

[102] Bauer, *We Were All Like Migrant Workers Here*, 206.

[103] Suarez, "Indigenizing Minneapolis," 207.

[104] Thrush, *Native Seattle*, 165.

Native Lands During the War

Reservation Agriculture and Resource Extraction

Concerns about wartime defense and production, as well as preparing for the postwar economy, dominated home front developments in Native nations. Agriculture, already a significant industry for some tribes, remained a cornerstone of the land-based economy during the war. Many new opportunities opened for Native women. At the Eastern Band of Cherokee reservation in North Carolina, seventy-nine young women took over in the fields from more than one hundred young men who left for military service. They drove tractors and repaired equipment. Another hundred women sewed for the Red Cross. Besides farm produce and sewing, the Eastern Band sent its considerable timber production to war industries and the military and used tribal funds to purchase $150,000 in war bonds.[105] Numerous Native people from across the country worked as seasonal labor on farms and played a critical role in bringing in crops during a period of very sizable agricultural manpower shortages. Approximately seven hundred members of the Turtle Mountain Agency in North Dakota traveled in groups to regional farms to perform this vital work.[106]

As in other periods of U.S. history, the federal government often did not inquire about or ignored the views of Native people regarding what was best for them, their reservation holdings, and ancestral territory. Patriotism led some tribal members to support using their lands for defense and war production, but others did not. In all cases, fundamentally asymmetrical power relations structured the relationship between federal and state governments and the tribes.

The Indian Service assisting in securing 3,500 oil and gas leases on Native lands exemplifies the differences in perspective between Native communities. For some tribal people, drilling into the earth and the destruction that came with oil and gas fields, as well as other resource extractive enterprises, was deeply problematic. For many tribal governments stewarding reservation lands purposefully placed on some of the most inhospitable and infertile portions of North America, the presence of oil, gas, and mineral resources under their lands provided one of the few resources that could support the financial needs of the community.[107] Thus, for instance, the four new oil fields brought into production on the Wind River Reservation could be justified as patriotic contributions and as critical to Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho survival. Wind River oil exports went from 615,000 barrels in 1941 to 2.5 million barrels in 1945. This increase was second only to the Blackfeet Nation.[108]

The Navajo reservation offers another important resource extraction case study. Officials from the Atomic Energy Commission and the Indian Service contended uranium mining, combined with off-reservation wage work, would guarantee a more comfortable postwar future for the Diné. The view that Native people should be happy to leave their homelands to make money was

[105] Miller, *Indians on the Move*, 46.
[106] Miller, *Indians on the Move*, 48.
[107] Southern Ute and Ute Mountain Ute began leasing their mineral rights in the 1920s. Revenue grew during the war years. Young, *Ute Indians of Colorado*, 128.
[108] Franco, "Going the Distance," 17.

not shared by the Diné. Combined with earlier initiatives, like the 1930s stock reduction program promoted by the Soil Conservation Service (yet another agency that involved itself in Native affairs), this development reinforced for the Diné the sense that federal officials always thought they knew what was best for Native people and their land. In contrast, according to White experts, government efforts to modernize Diné life had been well thought out. They acknowledged that ultimately the government's stock and soil conservation efforts failed, but suggested Diné lands were to blame.[109] The home front period had proven the wisdom of settler ways, they suggested—offering statistics that showed that the 1944 average family income was twice that of 1940.[110] Government experts saw extractive industrialism—mining and drilling—no matter what it did to the land as the best possible future for Diné and the next phase in solving "the Navajo problem."[111]

However, the end of the war saw Diné employment drastically decrease for a variety of reasons. Nationally, businesses fired workers as they transitioned to postwar consumer production. Diné were typically among the first to be let go. Rather than being reemployed after converting to the civilian economy, their positions were given to White male veterans reintegrating into the national labor pool. Certainly, some Native workers retained their jobs, and others found new employment in cities. A significant percentage of Native people returned to their tribal lands and reservation communities to see their families and hoped to find employment at home.[112]

The war had not, in fact, dramatically improved reservation life or employment opportunities. The sheep the Diné had relied on to sustain them during hard times were no longer available because of the government's culling program. It was in this immediate postwar moment that the stock reduction program most affected the tribe. The economic and social dynamics wrought by settler colonialism left them few choices. Experts asserted that the Diné were in the most precarious situation of any tribe. The tide would not begin to turn until the early 1950s, when Hollywood-associated tourism and new uranium discoveries provided the wage work, both also representative of ongoing settler colonialism, that the Diné had come to rely on.[113] Even as it helped more families put food on the table, the health impacts of uranium mining would be horrific as more fully discussed in the chapter on World War II Home Front Environmental History in this volume.

Land Loss

The economies of dispossession that had long characterized Native life continued during the war, as government facilities constructed on Native land illustrate.[114] The government built two Japanese American incarceration sites (Canal and Butte), collectively known as the Gila River War Relocation Center, on the Gila River Indian Reservation, home to the Pima and Maricopa

[109] Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 52.
[110] Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 52-53.
[111] Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 52-53.
[112] Franco, "Going the Distance," 18-19.
[113] Voyles, *Wastelanding*, 82, 88-90.
[114] Goeman, "Electric Lights, Tourist Sights," 110.

nations.[115] Neither tribe wanted the camp, which operated from May 1942 through November 1945 and housed thirteen thousand Japanese Americans at its peak. Defense and War Relocation Authority officials ignored objections from the tribes and the Indian Service.

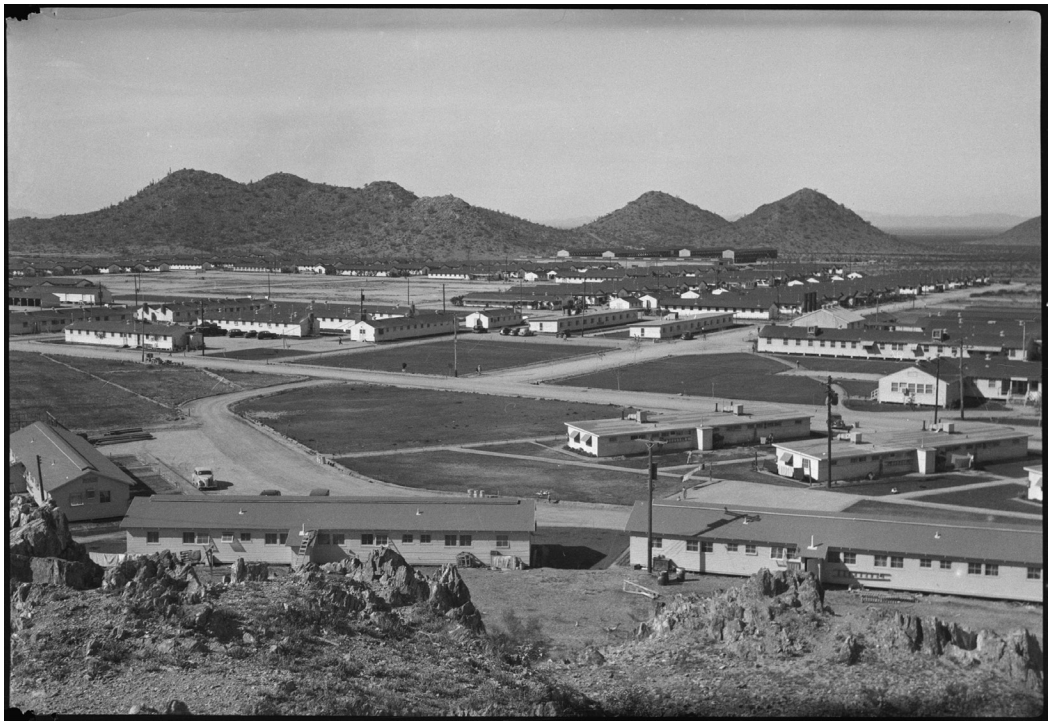

Figure 2.4: Gila River Relocation Center, Rivers, Arizona. Butte Camp View. Courtesy National Archives NAID: 539550.

Gila River was not an anomaly. Members of the *'Aha Makhav* (Mohave), Chemehuevi, Hopi, and Diné who lived on the Colorado River Indian Tribes Reservation, also opposed the Colorado River Relocation Center, often called Poston.

According to scholar D'Arcy McNickle (Salish Kootenai), to take Indigenous land during the war, the Army Corps of Engineers and its partners often chose to treat tribal nations as private landowners, making them subject to eminent domain, rather than as sovereign nations with treaty relationships to the government. McNickle saw this wartime policy as profoundly consequential. He argued that "the process, in time, can only lead to the extinction of the Indian people."[116] Eminent domain was used to acquire the lands for new or expanded airfields and army and navy bases. These facilities covered large amounts of territory in states across the West, the South, the Midwest, Southwest, and U.S. territories. Native people supported some installations, but not others.

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[115] Hana Maruyama, "What Remains: Japanese American World War II Incarceration in Relation to American Indian Dispossession," PhD Diss., University of Minnesota, 2021, see especially chapter 2. Retrieved from the University of Minnesota Digital Conservancy, https://hdl.handle.net/11299/259771.

[116] Nick Estes, *Our History Is the Future: Standing Rock versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* (London: Verso, 2019), 139.

In 1944, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation took the lead in implementing the Pick-Sloan Plan, a Missouri River (Mni Sose in *Lakȟóta*) water development initiative to provide home front workers and soldiers with housing postwar and, if they desired, new farms in the Missouri River Basin.[117] The Plan called for constructing large earthen rolled dams to stop flooding in the Basin and "make otherwise-arid grasslands bloom."[118] The Missouri River States Committee, founded during wartime mobilization and composed of the Basin states governors, pushed hardest for development. Scholar Nick Estes (Lower Brule Sioux) notes that "At no time did the state committee solicit the attendance or input of a single Indigenous representative from the affected reservations."[119] Achieving the goals of the plan required flooding a vast area behind the dams—roughly six hundred thousand acres in North and South Dakota.[120] More than half the acreage belonged to seven *Lakȟóta* and *Dakȟóta* communities: Cheyenne River, Crow Creek, Lower Brule, Yankton, Standing Rock, Rosebud, and Santee. Much of this land, which joined the countless acres of Native land that had also become what Goeman and others call "national sacrifice zones," was the most fertile available to the communities.[121]

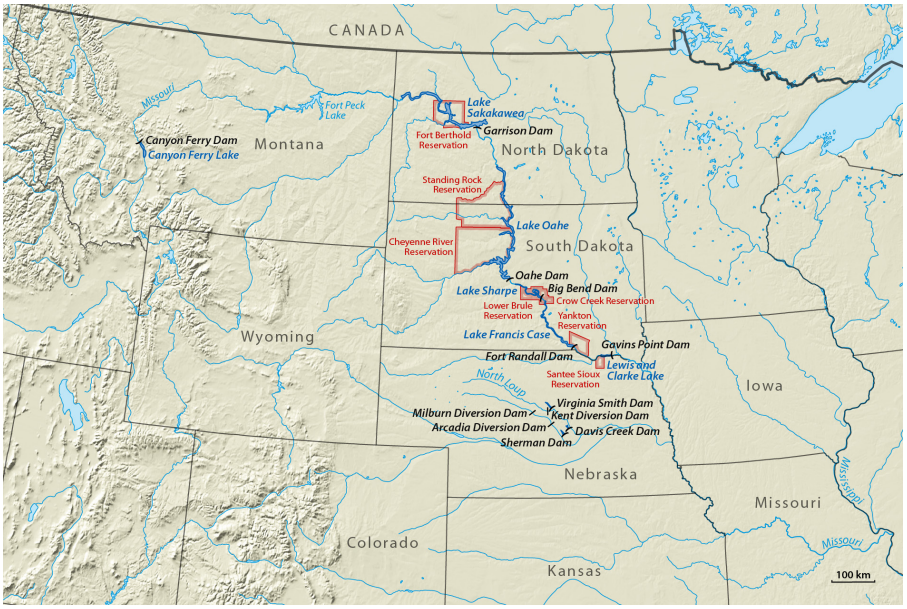

Figure 2.5: Map showing impacts of Pick Sloan Program on Native American Reservations. NordNordWest, Creative Commons by-sa-3.0 de.

[117] Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 133, 149-150.

[118] Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 117.

[119] Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 149-150. See too "Pick-Sloan Plan - Part II - Debate and Compromise," National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/mnrr/learn/historyculture/pick-sloan-plan-part-two-debate-and-compromise.htm, accessed April 10, 2024.

[120] Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 133.

[121] Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 151. Goeman, "Electric Lights, Tourist Sights." See Achille Mbembe, "Necropolitics," trans. Libby Meintjes, *Public Culture* 15 (Winter 2003): 29-30, for scholarship on how settler states claim "the greater good" is served by the continued absorption of Native lands. Mbembe counters that for Native people it is a continuation of terror, of siege, linked to militarization that "does not distinguish between an internal and external enemy."

The precedent for this and other water impoundment projects was Niagara Falls, a hydroelectric project that flooded Haudenosaunee ancestral lands beginning in 1896.[122] Ratified as part of the Flood Control Act of 1944, Estes emphasizes the Pick-Sloan Plan approved constructing dams, not eradicating "Indigenous jurisdiction, treaty rights, or water rights."[123] Nonetheless, that was the result.

As for the Oceti Sakowin Oyate, Estes writes, "generations of Indigenous people who depended on their relations to the land and water for life" paid all of the costs and received none of the benefits of the "cheap" hydroelectric power and irrigation the dams produced.[124] Writer Lanniko Lee (*Lakȟóta*), who lived on the Cheyenne River Reservation, recalled the centrality of the river and its bottomlands to her community in the war years and before: "I see a river shoreline of men and women, young and old, carrying water, picking berries, gathering firewood, fishing from the shore, wading in the sloughs for cattail root, gathering teas of so many kinds, making toys for children from the fallen leaves and branches, telling stories of how we came to be a people, making furniture, women telling river stories to their grandchildren, children learning the gifts of the river. I hear men singing; I hear women singing; I hear women, old and young, singing as they work and live among the trees. I hear children's laughter, too."[125] The Corps went out of their way to shield Williston and Bismarck, North Dakota settler towns. But Estes concludes, "no care was exercised to minimize the damage to Indigenous lands."[126] Indeed, protecting Williston meant flooding 152,360 acres of the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation, including 94 percent of the community's agricultural land.[127]

In the end, a plan begun during the war for White workers and soldiers that used one of the legal tools most often deployed to take Native land, forced "more than 900 Native families" to relocate and "destroyed more Indigenous lands than any other public works project in US history."[128] In the assessment of historian Vine Deloria (Standing Rock Sioux), it "was without a doubt, the single most destructive act ever perpetrated on any tribe by the United States."[129] For Estes, the government's actions around Pick-Sloan both carried forward a long history of negligence toward tribal lands and peoples and, in the specific case of the Army Corps of Engineers, exhibited painful continuity to their approach to the Dakota Access Pipeline. To avoid negatively impacting White communities, seventy years after Pick-Sloan, the pipeline was routed through the lands and sacred waters of the Oceti Sakowin Oyate and other Indigenous nations.[130]

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[122] Goeman, "Electric Lights, Tourist Sights," 111.

[123] Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 144. See D'Arcy McNickle, "Introduction" in Arthur E. Morgan, *Dams and other Disasters: A Century of the Army Corps of Engineers in Civil Works* (Boston: P. Sargent, 1971).

[124] Oceti Sakowin Oyate (the Nation of the Seven Council Fires) is the term the Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota used for themselves when they operated as a unified political entity. Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 69, 133.

[125] Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 146.

[126] Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 153.

[127] This data point comes from Michael L. Lawson, *Dammed Indians Revisited: The Continuing History of the Pick-Sloan Plan and the Missouri River Sioux* (Pierre: South Dakota Historical Society Press, 2009), 52-53. Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 11, 68. Estes takes issue with the name Sioux, which was a settler term for the tribes.

[128] Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 139, 151.

[129] Vine Deloria Jr. quoted in Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 139.

[130] Estes, *Our History Is the Future*, 153.

U.S. Territories and the Militarization of Indigenous Land and Lives

Hawai'i

The treatment of land and Indigenous people in U.S. territories that were both home fronts and frontlines was especially troubling. Hawai'i, the ancestral territory of Kānaka Maoli, was arguably the most militarized site in the U.S. The more than one million soldiers, sailors, marines, and war production workers on the islands, outnumbered the civilian population by four to one.[131] The military's occupation of Hawaiian land increased almost twenty fold between 1940 and 1945, from 35,750 to 648,666 acres.[132] The number and size of military facilities on Maui, Kaua'i, and Hawai'i also grew dramatically.[133] The U.S. government began militarizing Hawai'i in earnest forty years previously when White settlers overthrew Queen Lili'uokalani and the Hawaiian government in 1893 and annexed Hawai'i in 1898.[134] It dredged Pearl Harbor to accommodate navy ships, built bases and gun emplacements including on sacred sites like the crater of Lē'ahi (Diamond Head), and stationed more than five thousand personnel in the islands. In the 1930s, that number increased significantly, and by 1940, grew to forty-eight thousand. The December 7, 1941, attack on Pearl Harbor was the catalyst for exponential growth. Troop levels and military infrastructure reflected Hawai'i's role as the principal staging and training site for Pacific Theater operations.[135]

Kānaka Maoli, like others in Hawai'i, lived under martial law from December 1941 to 1944. Numerous schools closed, at least temporarily, and others, including schools for Native Hawaiian children like Kamehameha School for Girls, became military hospitals until 1945.[136] Most of the thirty thousand civilians who evacuated to the mainland were military dependents and the wives and children of elite Whites. Very few were Kānaka Maoli.[137] The Hawai'i education system provides another glimpse into militarization during the war. Male students were required to perform military training at so many high schools on O'ahu that they comprised seven percent of the U.S. Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC).[138]

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[131] David Farber and Beth Bailey, "The Fighting Man as Tourist: The Politics of Tourist Culture in Hawaii during World War II," *Pacific Historical Review* 65, no. 4 (1996): 641, 646. See also Beth Bailey and David Farber, *The First Strange Place: Race and Sex in World War II Hawaii* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994).

[132] Juliet Nebolon, "Settler-Military Camps: Internment and Prisoner of War Camps across the Pacific Islands during World War II," *Journal of Asian American Studies* 24, no. 2 (2021): 301.

[133] "US Naval Air Station Barbers Point," HABS No. HI-279, pg 2, https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/master/pnp/habshaer/hi/hi0400/hi0407/data/hi0407data.pdf, "Battery Hahuku," HAER HI-122, 4-5, https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/master/pnp/habshaer/hi/hi1000/hi1015/data/hi1015data.pdf

[134] Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 164, 178, 182-187, 199–203.

[135] "Fort Shafter Military Reservation," HALS Report HI-9, 8-9, https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/master/pnp/habshaer/hi/hi0900/hi0923/data/hi0923data.pdf. Farber and Bailey, *Pacific Historical Review* 65, no. 4 (1996): 641, 646.

[136] Carl Kalani Beyer, "Martial Law's Impact on Education in the Territory of Hawaii During WWII," *American Educational History Journal*, Vol. 46, no. 2 (2019): 62.

[137] Farber and Bailey, "The Fighting Man as Tourist," 653.

[138] Beyer, "Martial Law's Impact on Education," 67-68.

Kānaka Maoli entered into the military, war production, and military support workforce in large numbers. The repurposing of the skill used to create leis, an Indigenous Hawaiian symbol central to the practice of aloha, or welcome and love, represents the far-reaching nature of wartime militarization. Immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recruited Native Hawaiian women skilled at lei making to produce camouflage netting. The military feared additional aerial attacks on the islands and sought to hide planes, anti-aircraft weapons, and other critical infrastructure. In Kalihi, the Kamehameha Schools dairy barn became a secret facility where lei makers joined soldiers, artists, and fishnet weavers. The latter wove the netting, while artists dyed burlap strips to match the distinctive colors of Hawaiian foliage and topography, which the lei makers sewed. Agnes Makaiwi, who oversaw the lei makers, ensured the military hired as many Kānaka Maoli women as possible. The women labored in difficult conditions but passed the time by singing Native Hawaiian songs. Military officials tried to stop them, saying it was inappropriate due to the seriousness of the war. But the women continued and their remarkable production record—they made enough camouflage netting not only for the military based in Hawai'i but also other parts of the Pacific—ended the criticism.

Figure 2.6: Native Hawaiian Women Dyeing Fabric at Camouflage Factory, Honolulu. HR1185, Courtesy of University of Hawaii at Manoa Digital Image Collection.

While patriotism motivated the workers, one historian who has studied the wartime camouflage makers notes that "economic necessity" also drove them.[139] Lei makers had turned to the tourist

[139] Denby Fawcett, "How Hawaii's Lei Sellers Helped the War Effort," *Honolulu Civil Beat*, April 18, 2017, https://www.civilbeat.org/2017/04/denby-fawcett-how-hawaiis-lei-sellers-joined-the-war-effort/

industry while fishermen had shifted from subsistence practices to commercial operations after land loss subsequent to annexation and colonialism had restructured Kānaka Maoli ways of being. But these adaptations no longer worked when the war ended tourism and fishing, causing them once again to struggle to support their families.[140]

Citing martial law, the military turned the island of Kaho'olawe into an artillery and bombing range and training ground immediately after Pearl Harbor, offering a particularly poignant example of militarizing Kānaka Maoli land. Kānaka Maoli, who called Kaho'olawe "heaven come down to earth," associated the island with training master navigators, whose abilities represented the links between Hawai'i and the rest of Oceania, and their ties to the ocean ecosystem, including its sacred aspects.[141] The military claimed they would remove all unexploded ordnance and return Kaho'olawe after the war, but they chose not to.[142] Instead, President Eisenhower transferred the island to the military in 1953, which used it for a simulated atomic blast and Vietnam War training. In 1976 the Protect Kaho'olawe 'Ohana movement, citing the Kānaka Maoli concept of aloha 'āina (love of the land) and noting militarization's impact on the community and environment, occupied the island. That began a long chain of events that would see the removal of unexploded ordnance and environmental mitigation begin, listing in the National Register of Historic Places in 1981, and the return of Kaho'olawe to the state of Hawai'i in 1993. The final steps in the navy's process to remove 75 percent of the unexploded ordnance did not conclude until 2004.[143] Environmental mitigation and restoration remain ongoing.

Guam

Guam, called Guåhan in the CHamoru language, offers an example of why Pacific Islanders call World War II the "Big Death" and the "Typhoon of War," and illustrates the power dynamics around using Indigenous land for military bases. The U.S. had colonized Guam in 1898 and, despite maintaining a military presence, failed to protect the CHamoru people when the Japanese invaded in December 1941. On their home front, CHamorus endured forced marches and labor, incarceration, injuries, sexual assault, and approximately one thousand deaths.[144] This history is

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[140] Fawcett, "How Hawaii's Lei Sellers Helped the War Effort."

[141] "Kaho'olawe History," State of Hawai'i, https://kahoolawe.hawaii.gov/history.shtml, accessed May 15, 2024. Doulton-Lee Ho, "Lessons from the World War II Bombings of the Island of Kaho'olawe," Penn Program in Environmental Humanities, https://ppeh.sas.upenn.edu/lessons-world-war-ii-bombings-island-kahoolawe, accessed May 15, 2024.

[142] Military ordnance damaged numerous sites in Hawai'i and sometimes cost lives. An ordnance explosion in West Loch in May 1944, only two months before the Port Chicago disaster, was kept secret for many years. At least 163 soldiers and Marines were killed, nearly 400 injured, several vessels destroyed, and [Amount] of oil was released into the harbor. Kevin Knodell, "Military Plan to Move Munitions to West Lock Worries Public," *Honolulu Civil Beat*, September 16, 2020, https://www.civilbeat.org/2020/09/military-plan-to-move-munitions-to-west-loch-worries-public/

[143] Ho, "Lessons."

[144] Joseph H. Genz, Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, Monica C. LaBriola, Alexander Mawyer, Elicita N. Morei, and John P. Rosa, *Militarism and Nuclear Testing in the Pacific*, Volume 1 of Teaching Oceania Series, Monica C. LaBriola, ed., (Honolulu: Center for Pacific Islands Studies, University of Hawai'i–Mānoa, 2019), 52-61. The Manenggon Concentration Camp was under consideration for NHL status at the time of this Theme Study's writing. Anita Hofschneider, "Guam Residents Compensated for War Atrocities Decades Later," *AP/ABC News*,

represented by the Manenggon Concentration Camp, whose nomination as a National Historic Landmark the NHL Committee recommended for approval in 2024. Roughly half of Guam's CHamoru population was forced to march to Manenggon in the weeks leading up to the liberation of the island. Their treatment there—and their courage, sacrifices, and perseverance—represent the CHamoru home front experience under Japanese wartime occupation.[145] In 2016, the U.S. government agreed to pay each CHamoru survivor between $10,000 and $25,000 in reparations for their failure to protect them, and the atrocities they endured. Only three thousand CHamorus eligible for compensation were living. The sum they received was directly related to the brutality of what they endured.[146] However, U.S. forces liberating the island in August 1944 feature most prominently in accounts of the war years. Afterward, Guam became one of the most militarized places in the world, profoundly impacting CHamoru land and society.[147]

The War Department made Guam a cornerstone of its strategic presence in the Pacific for the remainder of the war and in preparation for postwar geopolitics. That required dramatically increasing military land holdings. More than 1,300 CHamoru families had their land seized. As in the territory that would become American Samoa, military leaders saw CHamorus as simple, uneducated people who did not appropriately utilize the island's resources.[148] The U.S. government increased control of the CHamoru home front and saturated it with troops. Between "Liberation Day" and "V-J Day," U.S. servicemen stationed on the island increased to more than two hundred thousand, compared to the Native population of under forty thousand.[149]

February 27, 2020, https://abcnews.go.com/Lifestyle/wireStory/islanders-suffered-1940s-war-atrocities-guam-paid-69250203.

[145] Jolie Liston and H. David Tuggle, "Maneggon Concentration Camp," National Historic Landmark Nomination [draft], eds. Elaine Jackson-Retondo, Astrid Liverman, and Christopher E. Johnson (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2024), https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/DownloadFile/700838.

[146] Hofschneider, "Guam Residents Compensated for War Atrocities Decades Later."

[147] R.D.K. Herman, "Inscribing Empire: Guam and the War in the Pacific National Historical Park," *Political Geography* 27 (August 2008): 637-638.

[148] Herman, "Inscribing Empire," 637-638. G.K. Brodie, director of the Public Works Department on Tutuila at the beginning of the war, said of the Samoans, "The natives have one great fault; they have little foresight… they do not entirely grasp that when we take most of their men for labor they will have to rely on women, old men, and children for plantation work. We are making every attempt to encourage or force them to keep planting in excess so that there will always be adequate food to supply the men working. If their food supply fails, we will have to take over the task of feeding the island by the importation of rice and by fishing with dynamite." Cited in Robert W. Franco, "Samoans, World War II, and Military Work," in *Remembering the Pacific*, Geoffrey M. White, ed., (Honolulu: Center for Pacific Islands Studies Occasional Paper Series 36, 1991), 174-175.

[149] Christine Taitano DeLisle, "Navy Wives/Native Lives: The Cultural and Historical Relations Between American Naval Wives and Chamorro Women in Guam, 1898-1945," PhD diss. (University of Michigan, 2008), 208. Chamorros had constituted roughly 90 percent of the island's population in 1940, by 1950 it was down to 46 percent, and remains below 50 percent to this day." Jayne Aaron, "Installations in Guam During the Cold War: Department of Defense Legacy Resource Management Program," in *Regional Cold War History for Department of Defense Installations in Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands* (United States Department of Defense (2011), 1-4, https://www.denix.osd.mil/cr/historic/cold-war/installations-in-guam-and-the-northern-mariana-islands/fact-sheet/37_Installations%20in%20Guam%20During%20the%20Cold%20War%20%28Legacy%2009-454%29.pdf

Figure 2.7: Aerial of North Army Field on Guam in the Marianas, August 1st, 1945. Courtesy National Archives, NAID: 100311095.

The presence of a massive military force changed CHamoru life, as it did for Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders whose lands were also militarized, in obvious and sometimes less obvious ways.[150] As a leading scholar of Guåhan, Vicente Diaz, explains, "the return of the Americans, and the sheer largesse of their material possessions and supplies—the cases of SPAM, surplus Jeeps, tents, boots, clothes, and more—activated an Indigenous code of indebtedness, obligation, and reciprocity" among CHamorus. Often, this complex sense of indebtedness to a re-colonizing power is painted purely in terms of gratitude and loyalty, when in fact "hyperloyalty to the United States...was the only political language available to the Chamorros that could be heard and understood by the Americans."[151] However, when CHamoru loyalty has generated local efforts for full citizenship and self-representation, the U.S. routinely reiterates the island's status as a territorial possession.[152]

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[150] Kānaka Maoli, like other indigenous people, have historically been over-represented in relation to population numbers in the U.S. military. The military, which played a part in deposing the Hawaiian monarchy, is also a major employer in Hawai'i and Guam. Kevin Knodell, "The Complicated Pride of Native Hawaiians in the Military," *Honolulu Civil Beat*, February 17, 2021, https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/02/the-complicated-pride-of-native-hawaiians-in-the-military/, accessed May 18, 2024.

[151] Vicente M. Diaz, "Deliberating 'Liberation Day': Identity, History, Memory and War in Guam," in *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*, T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, Lisa Yoneyama eds. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 162, 165.

[152] As recently as 2004, U.S. Maj. Gen. Dennis Larsen said to a reporter, "Guam is a U.S. territory. We can do what we want here, and make huge investments without fear of being thrown out," quoted in: David Vine, "Most coun-

Alaska

The wartime experience of Alaska Native people provides another telling example of the comparative treatment of Indigenous and White residents and their property in a home front defensive zone. The discrimination Alaska Natives had long faced from settlers spiked during the war. The White population reached unprecedented levels, especially in cities, driven by military and war production activity. The officers sent to lead the war effort did not improve matters. The Alaska Defense Command leader was General Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr., son of a Confederate general, whose "racial views in the 1940s were little different from those of any rabid southerner during the Civil War."[153] Under Buckner, the military was hailed for recapturing Kiska and Attu from Japan during the Aleutian Islands campaign of 1942 and 1943, but his command detrimentally impacted Native people.

As part of the Aleutian campaign, the government relocated 881 Unangan (Aleut) residents from nine villages in the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands, ostensibly to protect them from the Japanese, who had bombed Unalaska (Dutch Harbor) in 1942.[154] However if their evacuation was entirely about safety, it does not explain why some White residents were allowed to remain.[155] Unlike many of the supposedly more threatening Japanese Americans and resident POWs, Unangakiˆx̂ were not placed in newly built lodgings, but into repurposed camps, like the vacant Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) work camp at Ward Lake, and dilapidated canneries, like the Killisnoo Herring Plant on Killisnoo Island. A group from Unalaska was housed first at a tent camp at the Wrangell Institute, an Indian Service boarding school, where many of the relocated children remained when their parents were moved to the Burnett Inlet Cannery.[156] The Burnett Inlet Salmon Company, which ran the cannery, closed in 1940 due to fire, but the U.S. government did not renovate it or remove damaged equipment. As if being forcibly separated from their children was not enough, approximately one hundred Unangan died from the inhumane conditions at the camps.[157]

tries have given up their colonies. Why hasn't America?" *Washington Post*, September 28, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/09/28/most-countries-have-given-up-their-colonies-why-hasnt-america/.

[153] Terrence M. Coles, "Jim Crow in Alaska: The Passage of the Alaska Equal Rights Act of 1945," *Western Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (Nov., 1992): 437.

[154] Dutch Harbor Naval Operating Base and Fort Mears, U.S. Army was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1985. See too *World War II in the Pacific Theme Study*, National Park Service, 1984, http://www.npshistory.com/publications/nhl/theme-studies/world-war-ii-pacific.pdf

[155] Coles, "Jim Crow in Alaska," 438.

[156] Charles Mobley, "World War II Aleut Relocation Camps in Southeast Alaska, "Chapter 5: Wrangell Institute" and "Chapter 6: Burnett Inlet Cannery," NPS, https://www.nps.gov/articles/aleu-mobley-ch5.htm; https://www.nps.gov/articles/aleu-mobley-ch-6.htm

[157] National Park Service, "World War II in Alaska," last modified January 20, 2016, https://www.nps.gov/articles/world-war-ii-in-alaska.htm.

Figure 2.8: Aleut (Unangan) children at the Ward Lake relocation camp, 1942. Alaska State Library, Evelyn Butler and George Dale. Photographs, 1934-1982, George Allen Dale, ASL-P306-1044.

Claiming tactical necessity, the military also destroyed Unangakiɣ villages and relocated residents. At Funter Bay, near Juneau, the unwillingness to fund proper sanitation or provisions killed forty of the three hundred Native Alaskan detainees. Ironically, while this Native group of American citizens struggled, seven hundred German POWs enjoyed clean, comfortable, and well-stocked housing at Excursion Inlet less than twenty-five miles away. In 1945, the POWs were compensated for tearing down an unused "secret" barge terminal designed to supply the Aleutian Campaign. The 438-acre barge base had taken some four thousand troops sixteen months to build between 1942 and 1943. While officials could not find the funds to adequately house Alaska Natives, they had spent tens of millions of dollars on the base. As it turned out, the base was too isolated and large to use after the war. It was also too big to conceal from public ridicule; the *New York Times* dubbed it "a giant White elephant."[158]

[158] Dave Kiffer, "German POWs Helped Dismantle SE Alaska's 'White Elephant,'" Sit News, February 17, 2015, http://www.sitnews.us/Kiffer/POWCamp/021715_prisoners_of_war.html, accessed April 5, 2023; Coles, "Jim Crow in Alaska," 439.

While Alaska Natives were being dispossessed and dislocated, they were also challenging the segregation and prejudice they had faced since settler colonialism began. Built on what historian Holly Miowak Guise (enrolled Iñupiaq) describes as the "federal project of total assimilation through cultural genocide," Alaska's laws reified white supremacy and Alaska Natives' second-class status: "Under the law until 1945, and for years after in practice, Alaska Natives lived segregated from the Whites in public spaces."[159] Tlingit elder Shirley Kendall recalled in an oral history that Guise took in 2008 that she remained surprised when she stepped into a restaurant and was "allowed to be in there" with White people. "Apparently it still affects me," Kendall said of her prewar and wartime experience.[160]

Two Native women are closely tied to this history. In 1944, a young Iñupiaq woman, Alberta Schenk, refused to give up her seat in the "Whites Only" section of Nome's segregated Dream Theatre where she worked, and was fired for challenging Alaska's Jim Crow segregation. Only sixteen years old, she wrote an opinion piece for the *Nome Nugget* about the incident, which drew significant attention to the Native Alaskan fight for equality. She noted the White individuals who enforced Alaska's caste system "are citizens of America, but the majority are not loyal to what is written in the constitution."[161] She then returned to the theater and, with her White date, refused to move to the Native section and was subsequently arrested and jailed. Both actions inspired the Iñupiat and the wider Alaska Native community.[162]

Elizabeth Peratrovich, a Tlingit woman, further exemplifies the fight for Native rights. At the beginning of World War II, she and her husband Roy, also a member of the Tlingit Nation, moved to Juneau. The Peratroviches were barred from purchasing a home in their chosen neighborhood because of anti-Native segregation. Besides battling discrimination in housing, Elizabeth Peratrovich fought against the segregated educational system in Alaska, as her children were initially unable to attend integrated schools.[163] Peratrovich also served as President of the Alaska Native Sisterhood, an organization founded in 1914 which, with the Alaska Native Brotherhood, became the leading force in lobbying for an Alaska Equal Rights Act.[164]

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[159] Holly Miowak Guise, "Alaskan Segregation and the Paradox of Exclusion, Separation, and Integration," in *Alaska Native Studies in the 21st Century*, Beth Ginondidoy Leonard et al., eds., (Minneapolis: Two Harbors Press, 2014), 281.

[160] Coles, "Jim Crow in Alaska," 429-430. Guise, "Alaskan Segregation and the Paradox of Exclusion, Separation, and Integration," 284.

[161] National Park Service, "Alberta Schenck: Teenage Activist," https://home.nps.gov/people/alberta-schenck.htm, accessed July 25, 2024.

[162] National Park Service, "Alberta Schenck." Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, "A Recollection of Civil Rights Leader Elizabeth Peratrovich, 1911-1958," August 1991, https://www.ccthita.org/documents/A%20Recollection%20of%20Civil%20Rights%20Leader%20Elizabeth%20Peratrovich.pdf

[163] Alaska State Archive, "Anti-Discrimination Act of 1945 and Elizabeth Peratrovich," https://archives.alaska.gov/education/peratrovich.html, accessed April 29, 2021.

[164] Josephine Ukas, "Alaska Native Sisterhood Started in 1914," in "History" of Alaska Native Brotherhood, https://www.anbansgc.org/about-us/history/, accessed April 28, 2021.

Figure 2.9: Portrait of Elizabeth Peratrovich, Alaska State Library, Alaska State Library Portrait File, ASL-P01-3294.

The legislation barred discrimination but failed to pass in the Alaska legislature in 1943. In the next legislative session in 1945, Peratrovich and other activists brought a large group of Alaska Natives to the territorial capital in Juneau to demand passage. They were supported by Governor Ernest Gruening, who cited the treatment of Schenck in backing the civil rights bill. Alan Shattuck, one of the White legislative leaders who opposed the anti-discrimination legislation, proclaimed on the state house floor that "the races should be kept further apart. Who are these people, barely out of savagery, who want to associate with us Whites with 5,000 years of recorded civilization behind us?"[165] With those on the floor and in the galleries listening for her reply, Peratrovich gave a renowned speech in response calmly stating, "I would not have expected that I, who am barely out of savagery, would have to remind gentlemen with five thousand years of recorded civilization behind them of our Bill of Rights."[166] Legislators and the public responded with raucous applause.[167]

[165] National Park Service, "Alberta Schenck."
[166] Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, "A Recollection."
[167] Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, "A Recollection."

Shortly after Peratrovich's statement, the Alaska Senate passed the 1945 Alaska Equal Rights Act. The Alaska Legislation preceded the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 by nearly twenty years. It remains one of the most significant pieces of legislation for Native rights in the United States. Assessing Peratrovich's role, Guise writes, "Uncovering the many facets of Elizabeth Peratrovich's community activism, and the alliances that Native women like her built, illuminates that Indigenous women uniquely positioned themselves as mothers to argue for racial equality, greater inclusion, and Indigenous land rights. The Alaska Equal Rights Act campaign exemplifies how Indigenous women navigated and manipulated U.S. legislatures within a colonial system to advance Native rights."[168] The 1945 Anti-Discrimination Act ended (at least officially) the institutional racism that had attended war-related developments in Alaska.

Conclusion

Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Kānaka Maoli (Native Hawaiians), and Pacific Islanders who participated in or were subject to the U.S. war effort, did not have a homogenous view of the conflict. Two Ojibwe women, Cecilia DeFoe and Reva Chapman, who spent the war years on the Lac du Flambeau Reservation, expressed dismay over their brothers and cousins' decisions to enlist, since "this was a White man's war, and Indians had already lost enough to the White man."[169] Another woman who was a member of the Lac du Flambeau Band felt the opposite and joined the military Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC).[170] These varying perspectives placed Native people in line with other marginalized racial and ethnic groups that participated in the war. However, the unique circumstances of defending the nation that colonized Indigenous people made the Native American, Kānaka Maoli, Alaskan Native, and Pacific Islander experiences distinct from those of other minority populations.

Whatever their views of the war, the experience changed Native people. For many, moving away from reservations or home communities was central. A Rosebud Reservation resident returned home from service in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) but quickly decided that life on the reservation no longer suited her. She eventually settled in Los Angeles.[171] The number of Native people who moved to cities increased postwar.[172] This time, it was driven largely by the government's termination policy, which sought to break the legal obligations it had to tribes and to use cities to further eradicate Native culture and identity. As this suggests, even as they pushed Native people toward cities, the government continued to view them through racist preconceptions. Indian Service officials, echoing paternalistic concerns voiced since at least the 1930s, expressed

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[168] Holly Miowak Guise, "Elizabeth Peratrovich, the Alaska Native Sisterhood, and Indigenous' Women's Activism, 1943-1947," in *Suffrage at 100: Women in American Politics since 1920*, Stacie Taranto and Leandra Ruth Zarnow, eds., (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2020), 147.

[169] Patty Loew, "The Back of the Homefront: Black and American Indian Women in Wisconsin during World War II," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 82 (Winter 1998): 89.

[170] Loew, "The Back of the Homefront," 89.

[171] Rosenthal, *Reimagining Indian Country*, 29-30. The Twin Cities saw this pattern frequently. Miller, "Who Can Say," 45-46.

[172] Miller, *Indians on the Move*, 67.

doubt regarding adaptation to city life. As Douglas Miller writes, "The BIA underestimated the durability and portability of Indigeneity."[173] The same could certainly be said for the war years.

While some Native people found towns and cities more appealing, many wanted to be back in their traditional homelands where they found it easier to uphold the ways of their ancestors. Native veterans of World War II, represented by leaders like Edison Chiloquin (Klamath), were a key voice in the postwar sovereignty struggles and the response to the government's effort to terminate tribes and move tribal people away from their homelands. For over ten years, Chiloquin refused to allow the government to purchase his hunting and fishing rights and would not relinquish his ancestral homeland when they dissolved the Klamath Reservation. The government finally acquiesced and in 2000 it acknowledged his sovereignty claims granting him title to the land that was always his and his peoples.[174]

Seen through the lens of the trauma of ongoing colonialism, the home front years emerged in important ways as part of a continuing narrative for Native people. The story of Tayo, the main character in *Ceremony*—Leslie Marmon Silko's remarkable novel about World War II, its aftermath, and its antecedents—illustrates this.[175] Silko, her family members, ancestors, and many relatives, like Tayo and other characters in the book, had attended boarding school. Tayo returned to Laguna Pueblo land, which had been polluted by atomic production and testing. He struggled with what the U.S. government compelled him to do in the Pacific Theater in the name of a nation that had colonized and tried to exterminate his people. This made the war an event that reinscribed Native trauma, rather than opening the new possibilities many associated with wartime mobility.[176]

The fight to protect ancestral lands and sovereignty, to reinforce Native identity during and after the war, and the return home to seek healing in the land and traditional ways, are some of the legacies of a period that profoundly marked Indigenous people in all the lands associated with the United States. Another legacy is that represented by Navajo (Diné) code talkers who, though angered by what the government did to their lands, remained proud of their service. They, like Elizabeth Peratrovich, and other home front stalwarts, fought against racism and prejudice and for the distinctive rights of their nations—a struggle that continued into the postwar and to the present day.

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[173] Douglas K. Miller, "There is No Such Thing as an Urban Indian," in *Indian Cities: Histories of Indigenous Urbanization*, 223.

[174] Monika Bilka, "Klamath Tribal Persistence, State Resistance: Treaty Rights Activism, the Threat of Tribal Sovereignty, and Collaborative Natural Resource Management in the Pacific Northwest, 1954-1981," *Western Historical Quarterly* 48, no. 3 (Autumn 2017): 266. Ulrich, *American Indian Nations*, 70.

[175] Leslie Marmon Silko, *Ceremony* (New York: Viking Press, 1977).

[176] Karen Piper, "Police Zones: Territory and Identity in Leslie Marmon Silko's 'Ceremony,'" *American Indian Quarterly*. 21, 3, (1997): 483–497. Jude Todd, "Knotted Bellies and Fragile Webs: Untangling and Re-Spinning in Tayo's Healing Journey," *American Indian Quarterly* 19, no. 2 (1995): 155–70.

Latino History of the World War II Home Front

In February 1941, Mexican and Mexican American citrus pickers in Ventura County, California launched a strike against the Limoneira Company. Limoneira had rebuffed workers' demands for higher wages and better working conditions for years, as had other California growers. The exponential growth of war production industries during mobilization had seemingly promised all workers an opportunity to improve their circumstances, but discriminatory hiring practices made these well-paid manufacturing positions unavailable to most Mexicans and Mexican Americans. However, an agricultural labor shortage had occurred when White pickers left the fields for war production jobs in Los Angeles and other cities. This offered Mexican and Mexican American pickers across California leverage. They seized the opportunity to ask for increased wages. Grower organizations aggressively defied their efforts. Workers responded by organizing the Citrus Strike of 1941. It was the first of several significant job actions that Mexican and Mexican American farm workers took around the state in 1941 and 1942.[1]

The Agricultural and Citrus Workers Union assisted the strikers. Although the 1935 National Labor Relations Act had spurred a massive wave of successful strikes and unionization, the legislation did not cover farm and domestic workers. This meant that these workers did not have a federally guaranteed right to collective bargaining. Given the composition of the two affected workforces, this limitation in the legislation disproportionately impacted workers of color. Nonetheless, Mexican and Mexican American workers showed powerful solidarity. Fruit packers, including many women, at more than a dozen facilities joined the walk out, bringing the total number of strikers to six thousand. Strikers bonded by drawing on their mutual experience of poor treatment in the workplace and shared values, which centered on family. They reminded each other of these things—and of the longer history of Mexican and Mexican American oppression and resistance—by composing narrative songs known as *corridos*.[2]

After three months, the company still refused to negotiate with workers or their union, so strikers petitioned the state and federal government for assistance. Two agencies, the California State Relief Agency and the federal Farm Security Administration (FSA), offered financial support, food, and some housing. Growers saw these modest forms of government assistance as a threat to their control over workers and claimed inappropriate intervention, which caused the agencies to pull back. On May 5, 1941, bosses evicted seven hundred Mexican and Mexican American families from company housing. Local police willingly assisted. Workers continued their fight and turned to the new Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC) for assistance. The FEPC, constituted

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1 Matthew Garcia, *A World of its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 157-58.

2 For two corridos composed for the strike see, Museum of Ventura County, "Hispanic Heritage Month 'Corrido,'" https://venturamuseum.org/connect/hispanic-heritage-month-corrido/, accessed January 25, 2024. For a larger archive of these and other Mexican and Mexican American songs, see the remarkable UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, "Strachwitz Frontera Collection of Mexican and Mexican American Recordings," https://frontera.library.ucla.edu/. The birth of the collection, with a link to World War II, and the continuing vibrancy of *corridos* is discussed here: https://frontera.library.ucla.edu/blog/2020/10/artist-biography-rumel-fuentes-corridos-chicano-politics-and-birth-frontera-collection

on June 25, 1941, by Executive Order 8802, was the result of pressure that A. Philip Randolph and other Black activists put on the Roosevelt Administration. Its mandate was to investigate and act against racial discrimination in federal agencies and war-related industries. The government argued the latter was especially un-American given the burgeoning wartime emergency.[3]

The strikers hoped the Roosevelt Administration's Good Neighbor Policy—which sought to strengthen relations with Latin America by showing improvements in how it treated U.S. Latinos, among other things—would also push the government to act.[4] However because the pickers and the packers who went on strike were classified as agricultural laborers, the FEPC was unable to enforce collective bargaining and did not pursue another remedy. When the growers recruited a new cohort of White Dust Bowl migrants to work in the fields and packing sheds, the strikers' chances for victory diminished dramatically. A little more than five months after the strike began, Mexican and Mexican American workers admitted defeat and returned to their jobs for the same pay.[5]

Stories like the Citrus Strike of 1941, like those of Latinos who went into the wartime military or became essential workers on the production front, remain little known by many Americans. This is in part because they are often slighted in the most popular accounts of the war. When Ken Burns's ambitious and wide-ranging World War II documentary, *The War*, was released in 2007, there was virtually no mention of the Latino community's experiences and contributions.[6] Latinos responded by making clear their frustration that their wartime story—both on the front lines and home front—was still among the most ignored of any group in America.[7] Scholars who have explored this oversight highlight another aspect of this problem. Their research shows that World War II was transformative for Latino communities.[8] The war opened a host of new opportunities for Latinos, but the inequalities that characterized the mobilization era and before, as seen in the Citrus Strike, also continued. The modes of resistance employed in the strike—solidarity reinforced by cultural practices, drawing on allies and the government, and referencing the U.S.'s desire to solidify relations with Latin America—would define Latinos' wartime response.[9] The "Americans All" ideology that dominated home front government messaging reflected a new context and provided a new tool to demand change.

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[3] The official name was Committee on Fair Employment Practices, but it is typically referred to as the FEPC. Merl Elwyn Reed, *Seedtime for the Modern Civil Rights Movement: the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice, 1941-1946* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1991).

[4] This Volume follows the National Park Service's "Harpers Ferry Editorial Style Guide" in its use of Latino, the capitalization of White, and other style matters. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/hfc/hfc-editorial-style-guide.htm

[5] Garcia, *A World of Its Own*, 159.

[6] *The War*, Directed by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, (Washington, D.C.: PBS, 2007).

[7] See, for example, Carlos Guerra, "Commentary: Honor Latinos Sacrifice even if 'The War' Doesn't," *San Antonio Express News*, April 25, 2007, https://web.archive.org/web/20070511072741/http://www.statesman.com/opinion/content/editorial/stories/04/25/25guerra_edit.html, accessed March 19, 2024.

[8] Natalia Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home: The State, Mexicans and Mexican Americans, and Regional Consciousness in the U.S. Southwest during World War II," PhD Dissertation, University of California Berkeley, 2016, 1. Orozco discusses the views of numerous scholars. Cynthia Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 185-87.

[9] See also Lorena Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts: Latinos in the Military," *American Latino Theme Study* (National Park Service, 2013), https://www.nps.gov/articles/latinothememilitary.htm

Figure 3.1: Propaganda Poster "Americanos Todos Luchemos Por La Victoria," 1943. Leon Helguera, Courtesy of National Archives NAID: 513803.

New tensions also came into play with the community increasingly fracturing, especially along generational lines, over how to fight prejudice and racism and whether to assimilate. White supremacist practices on the home front and the circumscribed nature of new opportunities limited coalition politics, as illustrated by the relationship among different groups within the larger Latino polity and the perception of the potential economic threat of wartime contract workers from Mexico called braceros.

This chapter expands on these themes and topics, detailing the complex, sometimes contradictory, and often contextually specific home front experience of Latinos. Work, so central to each Latino community's experience, serves as a focal point. To more fully illuminate the transformations sparked by the war, this chapter considers Latino culture, politics, and social relations from Puerto Rico, to the East Coast, the Midwest, the Mountain West, and the Southwest. Further discussion focuses on California and the rest of the West Coast to understand the deeply important developments that took place on the home front in that region.

Wartime Military Service and the Latino Racial Status

For Latinos of military service age, the fundamental employment question was whether to volunteer, wait to be drafted, or seek employment in a wartime industry that might provide a deferment. For many, the military offered significant economic improvement.[10] Nonetheless, numerous Latinos and Latinas enlisted to express their patriotism. Historian Lorena Orepeza writes that, "By 1940, people of Mexican descent in the U.S. were twice as likely to have been born and raised in the States than not…[and] they strongly identified with the country of their birth."[11] For instance, Maria Sally Salazar of Laredo, Texas, wanted to serve in the Women's Army Corps so badly that she pretended to be her older sister to make the age cut-off.[12] The Sanchez family of Southern California had three sons in the army, one in the navy, and a fifth, well past military age, serving as a community civil defense air-raid warden.[13]

Although it is not certain how many Latinos served in the war because of racial classification issues and other demographic challenges, estimates indicate that between 340,000 and 750,000 Latinos joined the military, or upwards of 5 percent of U.S. troops.[14] A small but significant number of Latinas joined the Women's Army Corps (WAC) and the navy's Women Accepted for Voluntary Service (WAVES).

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[10] Silvia Alvarez Curbelo, "The Color of War: Puerto Rican Soldiers and Discrimination during World War II," in *Beyond the Latino World War Two Hero*, Maggie Rivas-Rodriguez and Emilio Zamora, eds. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 110-124.

[11] Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts."

[12] Therese Glenn, "Maria Sally Salazar," part of the *U.S. Latino & Latina WWII Oral History Project*, Nettie Lee Benson Latin American Collection, University of Texas at Austin, https://voces.moody.utexas.edu/collections/stories/maria-sally-salazar, referenced in Oropeza, "Fighting on Two Fronts."

[13] Rita Sanchez, "The Five Sanchez Brothers in World War II: Remembrance and Discovery," in *Mexican Americans & World War II,* Maggie Rivas-Rodriguez, ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 1-40.

[14] On the demographic challenges of counting Latino veterans, see Karl Eschbach and Maggie Rivas-Rodriguez, "Preface: Navigating Bureaucratic Imprecision in the Search for an Accurate Count of Latino/a Military Service in World War II," in *Latina/os and World War II: Mobility, Agency, and Ideology,* Maggie Rivas-Rodriguez and B.V. Olguin, eds., (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), 4, VIX-XII. This source sides with a smaller number. The larger number is from, "Project Background," Voces Oral History Project, University of Texas at Austin, http://www.lib.utexas.edu/v.

Figure 3.2: Puerto Rican WACs Preparing to Board Plane, 1944. Courtesy National Archives, NAID:280956913.

The racial classification of Latinos was far more complex than perhaps current generations would expect. Earlier in the twentieth century, the census categorized most Latinos as White. How they were perceived and treated depended on the time, place, and what other communities of color were present. This relational and contextual racialization did not disappear with the war. Indeed, historian Thomas Guglielmo argues that highly contextual "divisions" characterized race relations in American society and the U.S. military on both the home front and frontlines.[15]

In the racially segregated World War II military, most Latinos served in White units, but officials sometimes classified them as "Mexican" or something else.[16] There were major material and psychological ramifications to how one was classified. Being placed in a Black unit—or being considered Black even if you and your community saw yourself as something else—meant you were treated far worse. Puerto Ricans, for example, who had been considered "White" on the island could find themselves categorized as "colored" on the mainland and in the military.[17] Puerto Rican men were often assigned to Black units and given jobs as mess workers, kitchen workers, or stevedores.[18] Afro-Cuban men were almost always classified as "negro" and assigned to Black units. These examples illustrate "the capriciousness of Latina/o racial categorization" during the

[15] Thomas A. Guglielmo, *Divisions: A New History of Racism and Resistance in America's World War II Military* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021).
[16] Curbelo, "The Color of War," 115. Eschbach and Rivas-Rodriguez, "Preface," 4, VIX-XII.
[17] Curbelo, "The Color of War," 115.
[18] Curbelo, "The Color of War," 115. Eschbach and Rivas-Rodriguez, "Preface," 4, VIX-XII.

war.[19] They also suggest the ways the war remade race—creating new divisions and beginning to repair others—in the United States.

Figure 3.3: Soldiers of the 65th Infantry training in Salinas, Puerto Rico. August 1941. Courtesy United States Army.

Latino military personnel were appalled, though often not surprised, that they continued to experience "second-class citizenship," especially on the home front.[20] Their wartime service provided access to new benefits—though for many it was difficult to use the GI Bill's college funding because they had not finished high school—and for some a middle-class life. It also laid the groundwork for a more politically active generation. This reality was perhaps best represented by the American GI Forum, an organization founded in 1948 that initially sought equal medical treatment for Mexican American veterans from the Veterans Administration, then expanded its mission after the war to fight against school segregation and secure voting and other civil rights.[21] Forum members came to see themselves as "Americans of Mexican descent" and believed in the

[19] Eschbach and Rivas-Rodriguez, "Preface," 4, VIX-XII.

[20] Richard Griswold del Castillo, "The Paradox of War: Mexican American Patriotism, Racism, and Memory," in *Beyond the Latino World War Two Hero*, 11.

[21] David Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors: Mexican Americans, Mexican Immigrants, and the Politics of Ethnicity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 117. Henry Ramos, *The American GI Forum: In Pursuit of the Dream*, 1948-1983 (Houston: Arte Publico Press, 1998).

ubiquitous wartime mantra "Americans All." "Americans All" promised first-class citizenship to the wide range of racial and ethnic groups who fought for the country.[22] Like their Mexican American counterparts, many Latinos joined the fight on the home front in support of the "Americans All" vision of society.

Latino Home Front Experiences

Puerto Rico

Situated more than one thousand miles from the mainland U.S., Puerto Ricans lived on the most distinctive Latino wartime home front, a point expanded on in the environmental history chapter of Volume 2 of this study. Nonetheless, many of the challenges and patterns other Latinos experienced characterized the World War II home front in Puerto Rico. The economy, defined by centuries of land dispossession and dominated by sugar plantations, made Puerto Ricans reliant on food staples shipped from the U.S. and elsewhere. Puerto Rico, which had become a U.S. territory in 1898, was a critical node in the U.S. Navy's Atlantic and Caribbean strategies. Once the U.S. entered the war, Germany targeted the ships bringing food to and taking sugar from the island. By early 1942, prices had skyrocketed, and bare store shelves were the norm. For one almost ninety-day period, there was no rice available. When ships did make it to Puerto Rico, a substantial portion of the cargo was often earmarked for the military.[23]

Puerto Ricans that relied on industrial jobs for their wages were hit hardest by the submarine blockade. Agriculture, which paid less than industrial or construction jobs, grew to employ over 50 percent of wage workers. Unlike the mainland, unemployment was rampant in Puerto Rico during mobilization and at the beginning of the war. By September 1942 the jobless rate hit 37 percent.[24] The war, however, did bring significant economic benefits. This was the result of a major increase in rum exports and related tax income, wage repatriations from community members in the military, and U.S. government spending—particularly related to military construction and infrastructure. The effect of these developments was inconsistent, making the island's economy akin to "a roller coaster" and to an extent tying future prosperity to the continuation of military spending.[25]

The U.S. military, whose presence in Puerto Rico had begun expanding during mobilization, reshaped economic and social relations most dramatically. A substantial number of Puerto Ricans helped build the new bases that dotted the landscape. Construction jobs associated with the massive Roosevelt Roads Naval Station paid $2.25 a day, double what the sugar industry had

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[22] Ramos, *The American GI Forum*, xviii-xix, 2.

[23] James L. Dietz, *Puerto Rico: Negotiating Development and Change* (Boulder, CO: L. Rienner Publishing Co, 2003), 201-202.

[24] Jorge Rodriguez Beruff and Jose L Bolivar Fresneda, *Island at War: Puerto Rico in the Crucible of the Second World War* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2015), 116.

[25] Beruff and Fresneda, *Island at War*, 112, 124-25. The war also saw the completion of the New Deal electrification program on the island. Geoff Burrows, "Rural Hydro-Electrification and the Colonial New Deal: Modernization, Experts, and Rural Life in Puerto Rico, 1935–1942," *Agricultural History* Vol 91 No 3 (2017): 299-301, 304-305.

offered.[26] However, Puerto Ricans had virtually no access to higher paying skilled jobs as mainland employers contracted to build bases, like the Arundel Corporation, imported White workers to staff these positions. When Puerto Ricans were hired to do the same work, they were paid dramatically less. Puerto Rican truck drivers received $0.50 an hour, while White drivers made $1.57 an hour. Likewise, bosses reserved cold water for Whites. Those who complained about these racist practices "were summarily fired."[27] Suggestive of the limited wartime opportunities on the island, Puerto Ricans, when given the opportunity, continued their employment at these facilities after they were complete.[28]

U.S. military bases and the operations they supported changed not only the economy, landscape, and seascape, but also, through interactions with servicemen, the social world.[29] Fort Brooke, on the site of the fortress El Morro next to Old San Juan, housed a large military contingent, as did San Juan Naval Air Station on Isla Grande in San Juan harbor. Other defensive installations included those in eastern Puerto Rico and Vieques Island.[30] In each place, Puerto Ricans interacted with military men that, like civilian contractors, they called "continentals." While farmers were worried about land expropriation, others were excited about this new group. A young man living near Borinquen Field recalled, "the relationship between us and the continental airmen was cordial, but I remember that from time to time there was talk about unfavorable behavior on the part of some airmen. However, I don't remember any ill-feeling about continentals coming from my family or my friends."[31] Continental soldiers based in Puerto Rico echoed the sentiment.[32] The USO club in the Old City section of San Juan played a major part in fostering congenial relations, but other sites, including social clubs like the Casa de Espana, public spaces like the Plaza de Automas, which hosted a Sunday concert, and private homes that locals opened to servicemen were also part of this dynamic.[33]

In short, Puerto Ricans found their lives militarized in countless ways as the island became the linchpin for the Antilles Screen, the U.S. strategy for protecting the Caribbean. Many hoped that the U.S. pledge to support anti-colonial efforts across the globe would mean greater freedom for those on the island. Statements by New Dealers like Harold Ickes who declared on July 4, 1942, that "when the war ends, the people of Puerto Rico will be free" buttressed this optimism.[34] That freedom would not come, and others, like Vieques residents, found themselves in an even

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[26] Beruff and Fresneda, *Island at War*, 175.

[27] Beruff and Fresneda, *Island at War*, 119-120.

[28] Beruff and Fresneda, *Island at War*, 112-115.

[29] Matthew P. Johnson, "Swampy Sugar Lands: Irrigation Dams and the Rise and Fall of Malaria in Puerto Rico, 1898–1962," *Journal of Latin American Studies* Vol 51 No 2 (May 2019): 264-265.

[30] Historic American Buildings Survey, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, "U.S. Coast Guard Base San Juan…Photographs, Written Historical and Descriptive Data," https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/master/pnp/habshaer/pr/pr1400/pr1477/data/pr1477data.pdf, 3. Edwin L. Dooley, "Wartime San Juan, Puerto Rico: The Forgotten American Home Front, 1941-1945," *The Journal of Military History* Vol 63 No 4 (1999): 923-28. Park, 53. Beruff and Fresneda, *Island at War*, 174.

[31] Dooley, "Wartime San Juan," 925-926.

[32] Dooley, "Wartime San Juan," 929-930.

[33] Dooley, "Wartime San Juan," 925-926.

[34] Lorrin Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen: History and Political Identity in Twentieth-Century New York City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 140.

worse situation under the de facto military rule. The military seized the agricultural land Vieques residents relied upon, ending their main source of income. Displaced residents were pushed into crowded housing in the center of the island. Rather than return the lands they had seized on Vieques, the military decided to continue their occupation after the war.[35] Some residents joined compatriots from the main island who, because of the impact that colonialism and militarism had on the economy and way of life, felt forced to leave for better pay and a better future for themselves and their families. Often, they went first to New York or Florida, where they joined a large diasporic community.[36]

New York and Florida: Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and other "Latins"

On the cusp of the war, between forty-five thousand and one hundred thousand Puerto Ricans lived in New York City's *colonia hispana*, the Brooklyn and Manhattan neighborhoods where most resided. The colonia was also home to Dominicans, Mexicans, South Americans, Spanish-speaking Caribbeans, Spaniards, and Cubans.[37] Latinos also resided in the Northeast and Midatlantic, but it would be New York City with which they would become most closely associated.[38] The Puerto Rican population in the city grew dramatically after the Spanish-American War, though a few critical leaders like Arturo Alfonso Schomburg had migrated to the city earlier.[39] By 1930, Puerto Ricans had surpassed Spaniards as the largest Latino population, and by 1940, they comprised 46 percent of the city's Latino population. Most had emigrated for economic reasons.[40] Their numerical dominance continued during the war and grew significantly in the decades after.[41]

Though much bonded the Latino community in New York together, class, education, color, and other factors could be divisive. Jesús Colón described this diversity for Puerto Ricans alone thusly: "in search of a better economic well-being, have arrived Puerto Ricans who are poor, middle class, white like some inhabitant of a Nordic forest, trigueños like good descendants of Chief Aguaybana, black like a shining citizen of old Ethiopia. And all of them carry with them a mind that surely doesn't think alike in terms of politics, prejudice, etc., which adorns the present social organization."[42] Some of the more prosperous Puerto Ricans often described themselves as

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[35] Dooley, "Wartime San Juan," 923-28. Beruff and Fresneda, *Island at War*, 171-172.

[36] Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 24.

[37] Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 26. "Puerto Ricans," in *The Encyclopedia of New York City,* Kenneth T. Jackson, Lisa Keller, and Nancy Flood eds., (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 1059. Different sources offer different population figures. What seems clear is that between 1930 and 1950, the mainland Puerto Rican population grew by 500 percent to nearly 250,000, proportionally faster than any other immigrant group, including Mexicans, in the U.S. Thomas, 275, fn 3. The majority of growth occurred just after the war. The 1900 census showed 7,500 people from these Latino groups. "Immigration, 1900-Present" and "Latinos/Hispanics," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 642, 721-722.

[38] Víctor Vásquez-Hernández, *Before the Wave: Puerto Ricans in Philadelphia, 1910-1945* (New York: Centro Press, 2017).

[39] "Latinos/Hispanics," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 722.

[40] "Latinos/Hispanics," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 722.

[41] "Immigration, 1900-Present," "Latinos/Hispanics," and "Puerto Ricans," *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 642, 721-722, 1059.

[42] Quoted in Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 24.

"Spaniards" and spoke English. In contrast, the working class was "proud" to be Puerto Rican, even if others sometimes denigrated them.[43] Working-class Puerto Ricans were often racialized as Black, while those in the middle and upper class secured White racial identity.[44] Even with these divisions, there were spaces where the community came together and offered mutual aid and advice. Celia Acosta Vice's shop in Brooklyn was a hub for information about housing, jobs, taxes, and other aspects of living in New York City—and the U.S. mainland—for Puerto Ricans and other Spanish speakers.[45] The El Barrio neighborhood in East Harlem and other colonias in the city replicated the Puerto Rican way of life and were especially welcoming, characteristics that continued through World War II.[46]

Puerto Ricans and other Latinos sought to influence the city's civic life through a variety of organizations with labor unions being among the most successful.[47] Oscar García Rivera, who moved to New York in 1925, is exemplary. After working for a bindery, he secured a job at the City Hall Postal Office, became an active union member, and fought for better working conditions while attending college and law school. In 1937, with the backing of the American Labor Party, he was elected to state office, becoming the first Puerto Rican to gain public office in the U.S. outside of Puerto Rico. Rivera backed labor and civil rights legislation.[48] Many other Puerto Ricans were stalwarts of the American Labor Party, which was linked to garment unions and communist politics. Influential Puerto Rican writer and activist Jesús Colón was an allied organizer in the 1930s and 1940s. Colón's earlier connections to Ateneo Obrero and La Liga Puertorriqueña Hispana offer further evidence of the rich and multilayered civic life of Puerto Ricans in the 1920s and 1930s.[49] The community produced numerous other labor activists, including many like Evelina Lopez Antonetty who were active during the war.[50]

Latinos in New York City, like other residents, experienced full employment during the war. Whereas most worked in the tobacco industry in the 1920s, by the 1930s they also found work in the merchant marine, post office, and small businesses. The garment industry, which employed many Latinos, and shipbuilding made especially valuable contributions to the war effort. Unionization rates increased in parallel with jobs, as did the cost of living, a particular burden on the working class. Two-thirds of working-class Puerto Ricans, primarily residing in Brooklyn, worked in low wage jobs through the home front period and beyond.[51] Latino community leaders stepped up their organizing work, including participating in significant unionization drives for Puerto Rican and Black women who labored as laundry workers and hotel maids. They also helped the migrants who came from Puerto Rico on the cusp of the war settle into their new lives.[52]

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43 Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 24.
44 Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 23-26.
45 "Acosta Vice, Celia M.," *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 6.
46 "Puerto Ricans," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 1059.
47 "Latinos/Hispanics," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 722.
48 "García Rivera, Oscar," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 491.
49 "American Labor Party" and "Colón, Jesús," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 35, 282.
50 "Antonetty, Evelina Lopez," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 45.
51 G. Kurt Piehler, "World War II," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 1419.
52 "Latinos/Hispanics" and "New York Women's Trade Union League," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 722,

The activism and well-developed support network that characterized the Puerto Rican and larger Latino community were necessary, as the community faced heightened discrimination. This pattern was in keeping with the increased violence the community saw during the Great Depression. As Emily Brooks writes, "signs stating 'No Dogs, No Negroes, and No Spanish' marked apartment buildings and advertised the city's racial hierarchy."[53] City leaders supported repression, and the police did much to actualize it. Puerto Ricans reported these acts of violence and published accounts that exposed police complicity and harassment of community leaders.[54] Puerto Rican women "received disproportionate attention from the police" during the war, including as targets of anti-prostitution crackdowns. Some Puerto Rican men sought to join the police force, with a few succeeding. In 1943, Black and Puerto Rican men formed their own fraternal organization, the Guardians, to combat the discrimination they faced within the wartime police force.[55]

The national media did little to help the challenging circumstances that Puerto Ricans faced. Instead, Eileen Findlay's research found that throughout the 1940s they traded in racist stereotypes tied to gender norms. They effeminized Puerto Rican men, described them as "lazy," and depicted the community as "dangerously dependent." These tropes were further amplified in New York City. Publications from the city held that "the Islanders allegedly produced too many children, the men failed to work in properly masculine venues, and the women 'sucked dry' public relief funds."[56] There were links between this discourse and that of Whites who saw Puerto Ricans as "mongrels" or "little Latin brothers" unable to govern themselves and needing colonial guidance.[57] Further reinforcing the relational calculus of race on the home front, Findlay also writes that "the purported gendered perils posed by Puerto Ricans were counterposed to the supposedly unassailable masculine labor of Southern and Eastern European American groups who had made the transition to uncontested status as 'white,' escaping their own previously suspect turn of the century and inter war immigrant identities."[58]

The situation in Florida, the other major Latino center on the East Coast, complicates this picture, underscoring the importance of nuance and context. Tampa, especially the Ybor City neighborhood, was also home to a remarkable range of "Latins," including Puerto Ricans. Race, ethnicity, and class often divided the populace, but there were also strong affinities among the Spanish, Cuban, and Italian families who had dominated the neighborhood for decades before the war. Perhaps the most remarkable feature of Ybor City's Latino community was the inclusion of Afro-Cubans, who, in other parts of the city and certainly in the state, faced segregation and

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53 Emily Brooks, *Gotham's War within a War: Policing and the Birth of Law-and-Order Liberalism in World War II–Era New York City* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2023), 3, 94, 174.

54 "Colón, Jesús," *Encyclopedia of New York*, 282.

55 Brooks reports that a small number of Black women gained jobs with the city police by 1945. Brooks, *Gotham's War within a War*, 40-41, 57-58, 71, 78.

56 Eileen J. Findlay, "Dangerous Dependence or Productive Masculinity?: Gendered Representations of Puerto RIcans in the U.S. Press, 1940-1950," *Radical History Review* Vol 2017 No 128 (May 2017): 174. See also Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 13-35.

57 Thomas, *Puerto Rican Citizen*, 132. Brooks, *Gotham's War within a War*, 64.

58 Findlay, "Dangerous Dependence or Productive Masculinity?," 174.

prejudice.[59] A similar racial inclusiveness characterized some aspects of life in New York City for Black Puerto Ricans, but they lived in segregated neighborhoods.[60]

Nonetheless, Latino groups in Tampa experienced distinctive tensions leading up to the war. Spanish residents of the city, for example, faced scrutiny during wartime mobilization because during the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), they supported the Republicans, who were backed by the Soviet Union. Italians who had not filed for U.S. citizenship faced pressure as enemy aliens. The neighborhood responded by pledging their patriotism at every turn, especially through scrap drives, bond purchases, and enlisting. They did so "as *both* patriotic Americans and citizens who were proud to be Spanish, Cuban, and Italian Americans."[61]

During the war, Tampa's Spanish, Italian, and light-skinned Cuban "Latins" were classified as White and had access to the privileges of Whiteness, including serving as officers in White units. For some, however, the war felt like a call to assimilate and leave behind their distinctive ethnic identities.[62] Afro-Cubans, meanwhile, faced the full set of frustrations associated with being Black in wartime America. Those who entered the armed forces were required to serve in Black units. When they returned to Ybor City, a place that had once welcomed them as part of a remarkable multiracial community, they were treated as second-class citizens. Their former neighbors and new Latino arrivals had assimilated into the American racial structure that offered higher wages and status to those who could claim White identity. This bargain required Latinos to distance themselves from anyone deemed Black.[63]

Latino workers were able to join the skilled labor unions of Tampa, which gave them access to higher paying positions in wartime shipyards. Angel Rañon remembered the workforce at Tampa marine including people from a remarkable variety of occupational backgrounds. "They came from every trade or occupation," he said. "Some of them were farmers. Some of them were cigar makers. They didn't know anything about construction."[64] Nonetheless, after completing their training, the crew built ships critical to the war effort. White women and Latinas, who had been barred from skilled production work prior to the war, found jobs and union membership open to them in the shipyards. On the other hand, Black people, including Afro-Cubans, were not given skilled positions. Instead, they worked as cooks, janitors, and helpers (workers who assist main-line production workers by performing unskilled tasks often associated with manual labor), all of which were non-unionized jobs. This pattern was replicated across war production industries in the Jim Crow South driving many Black people to the North, Midwest, and West for opportunities. Latinos also pursued those opportunities and thereby took part in one of the most significant population shifts in U.S. history.[65]

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[59] Gary R. Mormino, "Ybor City Goes to War: The Evolution and Transformation of a 'Latin' Community in Florida, 1886-1950," in *Latina/os and World War II*, 18.

[60] "Puerto Ricans," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 1058.

[61] Mormino, "Ybor City Goes to War," 24.

[62] Mormino, "Ybor City Goes to War," 21-23.

[63] Mormino, "Ybor City Goes to War," 37.

[64] Stacy Lynn Tanner, "Progress and Sacrifice: Tampa Shipyard Workers in World War II," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 85, no. 4 (2007): 432-433.

[65] Tanner, "Progress and Sacrifice," 432-433.

Latinos who left the East Coast and Puerto Rico for better employment opportunities found a varied geography of acceptance and discrimination. In Oklahoma, Latinos, like Black Americans, faced Jim Crow laws and racism during the war, including in the workplace. White people, in contrast, found improved job opportunities available. Florida, in fact, proved to be an outlier for Latinos. In other parts of the South, employers would mostly hire Latinos for low-paying unskilled work.[66] Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans also migrated to the Midwest and Chicago in search of agricultural and war production work. Though they obviously saw themselves as distinct communities, many Chicago residents tended to view them as a single community. Because they were considered domestic migrants, Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans had more legal protections than the Mexican braceros, who were employed primarily on the railroads and were a significant part of the Latino wartime workforce in Chicago. During the war, Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans began to find common ground based on their shared language, religion, employment, and racial subordination. Lilia Fernández argues shared experiences that began on the home front would eventually lead Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans to form "bi-ethnic (and later panethnic) solidarities and alliances, ultimately leading to their identification with one another, first as 'Spanish-speaking' and later as 'Latina/os.'" They remained subject to the white supremacist views of European Americans but found themselves consistently viewed and treated better than Black Americans.[67]

The Southwest: Mexicans and Mexican Americans

As the introduction notes, the anti-immigrant rhetoric and practices that increased during the Great Depression in the Southwest framed Latinos' lives in the region during mobilization and the war. Anti-immigrant sentiment targeted not only the farm workers discussed earlier, but Mexican and Mexican American industrial workers as well. White-dominated trade unions were among those that pushed anti-immigration policies aimed at Mexicans. As Eric Meeks notes, their arguments reflected a more general muddling of concepts like "national identity with race, using the terms white, American, and citizen interchangeably."[68] White laborers in Arizona, for instance, feared that competition from Mexican and Mexican American workers would degrade their wages, and, if they were allowed to work in the same jobs as Whites, their racial status. Some White workers also believed that Mexican culture was too prominent in the region. Reflecting these beliefs, the Arizona Labor Council wrote to the American Federation of Labor president asserting that, "Industrial, social, and educational standards of Americans in Arizona's extractive industries had been dramatically undermined by the 'Mexican influx.'"[69] They were far from alone in expressing these sentiments.[70]

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[66] Douglas R. Hurt, *The Great Plains During World War II* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), xii.

[67] Lilia Fernández, "Of Immigrants and Migrants: Mexican and Puerto Rican Labor Migration in Comparative Perspective, 1942-1964," *Journal of American Ethnic History* (March 2010): 8-9 (source of quotes). Lilia Fernández, *Brown in the Windy City: Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in Postwar Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 7.

[68] Eric V. Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker': Race, Labor, and Citizenship in South-Central Arizona, 1929-1945," *Journal of the Southwest*, Vol 48, No 1 (spring 2006): 91.

[69] Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker,'" 93.

[70] Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker,'" 93-98.

Beginning in 1929, the United States Department of Labor under President Hoover responded by enacting an immigration restriction campaign, which continued into the Roosevelt years. As many as one million Mexican immigrants, many of whom had been in the U.S. legally for decades, *and* tens of thousands of Mexican Americans from the Southwest were deported.[71] The trauma of repatriation led to Mexican Americans distrusting government officials for decades.[72] In Arizona and other parts of the region, the deportations led to an ironic development. White workers from the South and the Dust Bowl, who filled jobs that Mexican and Native Americans had been forced out of, such as cotton picking, saw their racial status questioned and their abilities denigrated.[73] However, as Meeks, Matt Garcia, and others have shown, the privileges their Whiteness had previously afforded returned during mobilization. Most secured higher status work in war production industries.[74] Racist beliefs were the backbone of this inequality of opportunity. A Gallup poll at the beginning of the war found that Americans still ranked Latin "races," including Mexicans, near the bottom of those they admired. They placed English, Scandinavians, and other Whites at the top.[75] Mexicans and Mexican Americans responded in different ways. As the Lemon Strike shows, many turned to labor activism. Others followed a political strategy built on the federal government's desire for good relations with Latin America, relying on the Americanization of Latinos and legislative and legal initiatives. A third group resisted assimilation, arguing that it made little sense to join a racist society.

Mexicans and Mexican Americans, who comprised more than 50 percent of the Southwest's copper mining and smelting workforce, provide a good example of using mobilization era and wartime labor organizing for economic and social change. They and their White allies fought against the racist structure that paid them significantly less for the same work and prevented them from accessing higher paying positions. They and their families fought discrimination in their towns. Their primary strategy was to seek union representation with the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, an organization whose leadership championed interracial coalitions. As Zaragosa Vargas points out, by "the late 1930s, the mines and mills were integrated enough to remind Mexicans that white coworkers could easily take their jobs and segregated enough to cause whites to realize that their advantage could be taken away by the CIO."[76] Aware of how comparison to other mines and smelters in the region could fracture union locals, Mine Mill organizers built solidarity across state lines and the border.

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[71] Francisco Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez, *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 63-88, 119-158. Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker,'" 93, 105.

[72] Balderrama and Rodríguez, *Decade of Betrayal*, 5, 279, 299-328. Yet during the World War II years many that were forced out readily returned and supported the war effort, including in uniform.

[73] Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker,'" 96-97. Neil Foley, *The White Scourge: Mexicans, Blacks, and poor Whites in Texas Cotton Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 183-201. Foley reaches a slightly different conclusion than Meeks regarding the ability of class to trump race among agricultural White, Mexican, Black and Native American workers because of the different dynamics in Texas.

[74] Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker,'" 92, 107.

[75] Mormino, "Ybor City Goes to War," 36.

[76] Zaragoza Vargas, *Labor Rights Are Civil Rights: Mexican American Workers in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 158-65, quote from 165.

From 1939 through the start of the war, employers and their government allies, led by the infamous rightwing Democratic Texas congressman Martin Dies, fought back by labeling the union and its organizers as communist. This, and continued resistance from White workers to equal wages and better workplace conditions for Latinos, slowed progress. Workers in Mine Mill and in other unions that championed interracial equality, like the National Maritime Union, fought back with a new weapon—the government's "Americans All" campaign, which promoted the idea that all Americans, regardless of race, should be treated equally so they could contribute their skills to help the nation to win the war. They also petitioned the FEPC to hold a hearing about discrimination in the copper industry. The FEPC agreed to do so in El Paso, but other government officials succeeded in getting it canceled, claiming that publicly exposing such problems would harm the U.S.'s relationship with Latin America. Of particular concern were the ongoing negotiations with Mexico over what would become the Bracero Program.[77]

Leaders of Southwest mining unions countered the tacit opposition of the FEPC and the active opposition of some White workers by again arguing that the fight against racism was central to the U.S. war effort. They held a large Labor Day observance in 1942 in El Paso and Ciudad Juarez that promoted an anti-fascist vision. Humberto Silex, president of one of the area's Mine Mill locals, spoke in Spanish at the Ciudad Juarez gatherings, making sure the lively audience knew that "the workers of North America are united with our working brothers in Mexico in the great fight that humanity wages against its greatest enemy, international fascism."[78] Even with these novel tactics, Vargas argues that "Mexican American blue-collar workers in the end received far less from the FEPC than black workers, because federal action to remedy the inequities Mexican Americans suffered was linked to American foreign policy initiatives regarding Latin America."[79]

Mining also offers a window onto the experience of Mexican Americans outside of the Southwest. For example, the small number of Mexican American families that lived in Butte, Montana, a mining city known for its diverse population dominated by Anglos and especially Irish immigrants, were treated far better than their peers in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. These families contended that they were welcomed without prejudice. One Navarro family member remembers Mexican American families living on the East Side of Butte. Notably this was not in a Mexican enclave. Rather, they mixed in with "Finns, Serbians, Austrians, Italians, and 'just about everything else.'"[80] In contrast, the Anaconda Company and the Butte Miners Union stopped Black men from working underground.[81]

The war, with the possibility of large population migrations, changed aspects of this dynamic. As the United States Employment Service (USES) considered what to do about the labor shortage

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[77] Vargas, *Labor Rights are Civil Rights*, 168-174.
[78] Vargas, *Labor Rights are Civil Rights*, 174.
[79] Vargas, *Labor Rights Are Civil Rights*, 158.
[80] Matthew Basso, *Meet Joe Copper: Masculinity and Race on Montana's World War II Home Front* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 153.
[81] Basso, *Meet Joe Copper*, 153.

in the Butte mines early in the war, it deliberated sending braceros to staff what the government considered a critical industry. USES officials believed the history of workers of Mexican descent in Butte meant that "Spanish-Americans will be employed if available."[82] Locals and others who knew the broader history of the copper mining and smelting industry, however, questioned this assessment and, more generally, the government's plan to bring workers from Mexico. Reid Robinson, President of the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers, and a former Butte miner, wrote Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins that importing Mexican workers could "aggravate the widespread discrimination against Mexican workers that already exists" in the United States. He worried that without a strong employment agreement that the government strictly enforced, the braceros might be "used as peon slave workers" and further erode wage and working conditions standards on the home front.[83] That concern would prove prescient as during the war White miners and smeltermen tended to oppose any increase in the number of Latinos employed.

Politically oriented Mexican American leaders, especially academics and professionals in Texas, New Mexico, and California, formed another wing in the campaign to improve the situation for Latinos in the Southwest. Seeking to use the government's desire to strengthen Latin American alliances, they wrote to political leaders and agencies like the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (OCIAA)—established in 1940 to execute the Good Neighbor Policy—requesting a federal program to address the issues their communities faced. George I. Sanchez, president of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), bolstered the message by personally lobbying Nelson Rockefeller, the coordinator of OCIAA, Vice President Henry Wallace, and others. Sanchez reminded officials that there were more than five million Latinos in the U.S., nearly three million of whom were Mexican-descended residents of the Southwest. He described them as an "orphan people" who had been marginalized by dominant society to such an extent that they lived in a "veritable concentration camp."[84]

The government in fact had grown increasingly concerned about the Latino situation in the region. It undertook four studies between December 1941 and April 1942. The results affirmed Sanchez's and others' accounts. Using terms like "submerged and destitute," investigators claimed people of Mexican descent failed to "understand our way of life, our institutions, our system of government," and generally lacked "Americanism."[85] They also underscored the economic inequality that Mexican and Mexican American residents of the region faced, a fact that had emerged in government studies during the Great Depression, and echoed worries about how Latin America would view conditions in the Southwest. Collectively, officials held that discrimination and isolation were the root of the problem and contended Americanization was critically important. Without that, protest and other forms of resistance could become the hallmark of the

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[82] Basso, *Meet Joe Copper*, 153.

[83] Basso, *Meet Joe Copper*, 151.

[84] Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 35.

[85] David J. Saposs, "Report on Rapid Survey of Resident Latin American Problems and Recommended Program," 3 April 1942, Folder: Administration Meetings (General), File: "Resident Latin American Problems and Recommended Program," 3 April 1942 in 1460, General Records, 1941-1945, 1-7 Entry 127, Series Department of Press and Publications, OIAA Records. Quoted in Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 25.

Mexican and Mexican American communities, and Nazi infiltration would be a strong possibility. Combatting this trajectory would require the government to address the racism the community faced and increase the resources available to them.[86] Mexican American leaders' entreaties and these reports played a significant role in creating the Spanish Speaking Minority Project, a section within the OCIAA that would play a critical part in elevating the concerns of Mexican and Mexican American communities.[87]

Mexican American leaders in southwestern states wanted the government to intercede in ways that were sometimes distinctive to the context of those states. In Texas, Mexican American leaders, especially LULAC's Sanchez, sought government support for deeper research that would more fully identify the problems facing Mexican descent communities across the region. To identify solutions to deficient education, health, and job opportunities, as well as the segregation and disenfranchisement behind them, Sanchez argued that a large data gathering project was necessary. The government, however, was only willing to fund short-term remediation programs directly related to war needs and specific to individual states. Sanchez ultimately succeeded in gaining some financial support for the research he felt was needed. Under the direction of the University of Texas Committee on Inter-American Relations, between 1943 and 1945, he and others investigated core issues and supported action-based interventions like radio programs, teacher trainings, classes, and community centers.[88]

Mexican American leaders in Texas also asked the federal government to support state anti-discrimination legislation that would improve the experience of their community during and beyond the war. LULAC's efforts support Cynthia Orozco's argument that the group was an early leader in the Mexican American civil rights movement.[89] Throughout the war, LULAC leaders like Alonso S. Perales linked racist prejudice to "Nazi fascism," using the discourse of patriotism to fight for equal treatment.[90] Even so, LULAC leaders and others, fully aware of American racial codes and the White attitudes reflected in the above poll, consistently fought to have residents of Mexican descent categorized as "Caucasian."[91] There is no question that the variable racial

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[86] Emilio Zamora, *Claiming Rights and Righting Wrongs in Texas: Mexican Workers and Job Politics during World War II* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2009), 73-75. Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 24-25.

[87] On the history of the OCIAA, which was shuttered in 1946, see Donald Rowland, *History of the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947). Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 15, 20-22. The Spanish speaking project was in many ways marginalized within the OCIAA. Nonetheless Mendoza sees it with its domestic focus as a milestone in the relationship between Mexican Americans and the U.S. government.

[88] Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 39-44.

[89] Cynthia Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed: The Rise of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), 65-66, 185-187. Many scholars who see Mexican American civil rights activism as only occurring following World War II nonetheless see World War II as a watershed moment. For a more critical take on LULAC, especially its race politics, see Neil Foley, "Becoming Hispanic: Mexican Americans and the Faustian Pact with Whiteness," *Reflexiones: New Directions in Mexican American Studies*, ed. Neil Foley (Austin: Center for Mexican American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, 1997), 55-63.

[90] Cynthia Orozco, *Pioneer of Mexican-American Civil Rights: Alonso S. Perales* (Houston: Arte Público Press, 2020), 131.

[91] Foley, "Becoming Hispanic," 55. Orozco, *No Mexicans, Women, or Dogs Allowed*, 5-6.

classification of Mexican Americans and other Latinos significantly influenced their home front experience.

Instead of supporting LULAC's desire to achieve long-term racial equity through anti-discrimination legislation, the federal government backed White leaders in Texas who claimed instituting a state-level Good Neighbor Policy, rather than a national bill, would more effectively improve wartime relations with Latin America. Their desire was to ensure white supremacy by blocking Mexicans and Mexican Americans from seeking legal remedies for prejudicial practices through the federal government.[92] The Mexican government responded by blocking braceros from working for the agricultural industry in the state. Those workers were desperately needed. The governor countered, trying to appease the Mexican government by quickly establishing the Texas Good Neighbor Commission in August 1943. The Commission would investigate mistreatment of Mexican and Mexican American workers. As Mendoza notes, it was a milestone in Texas legislation, but it was also part of the effort to ensure anti-discrimination legislation did not pass. Notably, state leaders claimed that a significant part of their concern was that such legislation might provide legal protections for Black Texans and Latinos of African descent.[93]

New Mexico's Hispano—the term preferred by Mexican and Spanish-descended people in the state—leaders took a different tack than their peers in California and Texas. Rather than pointing out how racism had circumscribed opportunity, they held that the long history of underdevelopment, a relic of federal negligence since the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, had forced Hispanos to rely on traditional agricultural practices which had left them impoverished.[94] The war was the perfect opportunity to make up for this and help Hispanos enter the modern economy. As George I. Sanchez put it, the government needed to undertake a "comprehensive program of economic reconstruction and rehabilitation" along the same lines that they had done with Native Americans and other colonized groups.[95] Natalia Mendoza's analysis of Sanchez's argument acknowledges the unsettling nature of his characterization of the population as backward and subordinate, but notes that Sanchez refuted racial and biological arguments made about people of Mexican descent that blamed them for their impoverished conditions. Rather, Sanchez asserted the federal government was responsible for creating the situation.[96] Once again, advocates referred to the Good Neighbor Policy as they worked to push the government to amend their approach. The conditions in New Mexico paralleled those in much of Latin America, these leaders argued, and therefore U.S. government efforts in the state would show its ability to be a good partner to other nations in the region.[97]

Hispano leaders saw their situation as distinct from that of Mexicans and Mexican Americans,

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[92] Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 36-37, 41-42, 47-48. Mexican American's census categorization as White allowed courts to find they were not discriminated against, a situation that leaders realized needed specific anti-discrimination legislation focused on the Mexican and Mexican American situation to remedy.

[93] Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 52.

[94] One major source for this view was George I. Sanchez's study, *Forgotten People: A Study of New Mexicans* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico press, 1940).

[95] Sanchez, *Forgotten People*, 24-40. Quoted in Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 27-28.

[96] Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 28.

[97] Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 89-92.

even if they too were people of Mexican descent. They believed that the prejudice against Hispanos in New Mexico was less than that faced by Mexicans and Mexican Americans in other parts of the Southwest. However, the war was seemingly shifting this dynamic by taking Hispanos out of New Mexico and bringing new residents to the state who were unfamiliar with its racial norms. They highlighted incidents like young Hispano men training at the Roswell Army Flying School being barred from the municipal pool. Those running the facility told the young men that no "Mexicans" were allowed. The incident was publicized across the state. One letter to the editor castigated Roswell residents by asking, "how do you suppose the boys on Bataan and Corregidor would feel if they knew the very thing they have fought for is being defeated here in their own home state—democracy and equality of man!"[98] To underscore the patriotism of Hispanos, letter writers also referenced the large numbers of Latino soldiers at Bataan, a product of the mobilization of New Mexico National Guard units to the Philippines in 1940. Another writer used the same language as Perales to describe the discriminatory behavior as akin to Nazi ideology. Many in New Mexico blamed the racist ideas of outsiders, especially Texans. Most pointed to Hispanos as being of Spanish descent, not Mexican.[99] Outside of New Mexico, Hispano soldiers reported that matters were worse. Many Whites at military sites like induction centers refused to categorize them as anything other than "Mexican." In his complaint to the War Department, New Mexico Congressman Dennis Chavez held that Hispanos were not Mexican or Spanish but patriotic "American citizens."[100]

Leaders were not wrong about the patriotic mindset of many Mexican Americans and Latinos in the Southwest. Even after enduring an especially difficult decade-plus-long race-based backlash, many supported the cause. The Hispanos who lived in the Barelas neighborhood in Albuquerque offer a case in point. They quickly purchased war bonds, planted Victory Gardens, continued to raise chickens and goats to help with meat shortages, and commuted on bicycle to save gasoline. Like many other working-class people across the country, residents had used similar tactics to put food on the table and save money before and during the Great Depression. Thus, rather than feeling a sense of deprivation because of the unavailability of certain goods, the war felt like a continuation of established patterns. What was new was that the war, and to a lesser extent the Great Depression, opened new employment opportunities for some Mexican and Mexican American women in Barelas, such as clerical work and sales jobs. Before the 1930s, "domestic work, waitressing, and laundry" were among "the only areas of employment open to Spanish and Mexican women," the historian Carmen Chavez notes.[101] But these jobs offered much lower pay than war work. Such jobs were supposedly widely available on the West Coast, in the Midwest, and in some Mountain West cities, and Hispanos hoped they would be open to Latinos for the first time. Albuquerque, however, was not one of those cities.

As they weighed whether to leave a place their families had called home for generations, many

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[98] Quoted in Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 93.

[99] Elena M. Friot, "Remembering New Mexico's War: The Bataan Death March in History and Memory, 1942-2012" (PhD dissertation, University of New Mexico, 2020). Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 93.

[100] Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 94, 97.

[101] Carmen R. Chavez, "Coming of Age During the War: Reminiscences of an Albuquerque Hispana," *New Mexico Historical Revie*w 70, no. 4 (1995): 389.

Hispanos decided war work was the chance to improve their families' lives for the long term. Many left Barelas and New Mexico and headed for the booming wartime cities of California.[102] This was mirrored in other Latino communities across the Southwest.[103] Two events in California, the Sleepy Lagoon murder and the Zoot Suit Riots, would dominate discussions about Latinos on the home front. Scholars see both as especially "momentous events in Chicana/o history."[104]

California: The Crystallization of Home Front Patterns

As the Lemon Strike showed, before the war a lack of job mobility defined the experience of people of Mexican descent in California and other parts of the Southwest. Significant changes began in California in 1942, especially in aircraft manufacturing, but by and large, the prewar pattern continued into 1943.[105] In October 1942, War Manpower Commission official Guy Nunn confirmed this in comments about limited employment opportunities open to Mexicans and Mexican Americans in Southern California war industries. His research found they were still "confined to unskilled or semi-skilled employment, characterized by a high degree of seasonality." Access to skilled labor positions, which paid good wages and allowed for upward mobility, in war industries had "been in large measure denied to California Mexicans," a pattern replicated throughout the U.S. Nunn added that those who gained a toehold in war work would almost certainly be assigned the lowest skilled and most poorly paid positions. They were also more likely to lose jobs as a result of the "last hired first fired" policies that kept many "untrained workers" at the bottom rung of the economic ladder.[106]

Walter Laves, one of the top OCIAA officials, agreed with this assessment after visiting Los Angeles in late 1942. Laves reported that Mexicans and Mexican Americans were the "least preferred class in employment, housing, [and the] professions," did not have a clear route to receive necessary training, and had virtually no political pull to demand better treatment. Laves wanted the federal government to take the lead in changing these circumstances and hoped the desire to improve U.S.-Latin American relations would help make this a shared goal.[107] Other powerful wartime government agencies undertook their own investigations and reached similar conclusions. The Office of War Information (OWI) report emphasized the negative effects of "institutionalized discrimination against several million Latin Americans in the American southwest" on U.S. relations with Latin America. It called the situation "a mockery of the Good Neighbor

[102] Chavez, "Coming of Age During the War," 389.
[103] Chavez, "Coming of Age During the War," 389. See also Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 117.
[104] Natalia Molina, "Examining Chicana/o History through a Relational Lens," *Pacific Historical Review* 82, no. 4 (2013): 533.
[105] Elizabeth Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits: The Lives of Mexican American Women on the World War II Home Front* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 3.
[106] Kevin Leonard, *The Battle for Los Angeles: Racial Ideology and World War II* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 95. "Testimony of Guy T. Nunn," 8 October 1942, Folder: Los Angeles (County) Grand Jury 1942, Box 27, McWilliams Papers. McWilliams and others shared this assessment. Cited in Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 71.
[107] "Memorandum on Mr. Laves' trip to Los Angeles," nd, Laves mss., Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 78.

Policy, an open invitation to Axis propagandists to depict us as hypocrites to South and Central America and, above all, a serious waste of potential manpower."[108]

Younger Mexicans and Mexican Americans reacted to the circumscribed possibilities afforded them and their parents differently than their elders. Census data from 1940 indicates there were approximately twice as many American-born Mexican Americans, often children or young adults, as Mexican-born individuals in the U.S. Cultural and social tensions between the generations were an important part of home front dynamics, though historians debate the exact contours and the depth of the rift between immigrant parents and Americanizing children.[109] During the war, Mexican American youth saw themselves as "caught between two cultures."[110] The way they enacted this "in betweenness" was read by White authorities, and sometimes their parents, as a crisis that required policing, which led to conflict with those authorities and society.[111]

At the center of these tensions were the pachuco gangs, popular among second-generation young people. Pachucos were a pre-war phenomenon that emerged in El Paso and spread to Mexican American neighborhoods around San Antonio and Los Angeles. Also called cholos, they wore baggy "zoot suits" with long, large-shouldered jackets, pegged pants, and lengthy watch chains hanging over them. Shoes with thick soles and a virtually flat, wide-brimmed hat completed the outfit.[112] Young Black and Filipino men also adopted the zoot suit and would be caught up in the wartime furor. Zoot suiters felt that they and their families were treated like enemies before the war. Mobilization and the early war period—marked by limited educational opportunities, housing discrimination, employment bias, and robust policing—made matters worse. Middle-class reformers urged them to assimilate into mainstream White society, even as that society continued to treat them inequitably. Each passing month saw increased demands for patriotism and acts of violence meant to enforce conformity. Instead of accepting this situation, zoot suiters responded by more fully committing to creating autonomous cultural spaces that used fashion, art, dance, and music as vehicles of protest.[113]

The sense that pachucos—and Latino youth more generally—refused to conform to the mores of White wartime society made them a target for mainstream society, the police, and White soldiers and sailors. Tens of thousands of the latter were stationed in, recreating around, or passing

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[108] "Spanish-Americans in the Southwest and the War Effort," Report No. 24, 18 August 1942, Special Services Division, Bureau of Intelligence, Office of War Information, Special Collections, UW-Milwaukee Libraries, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI. Cited in Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 31-32.

[109] George Sánchez, in his analysis of Mexican American families and society in East Los Angeles before the war, contends a "hybrid" Chicano culture best characterizes the dynamics of the community. Other Chicano and immigration historians have tended toward seeing a stronger bifurcation between different elements in the community, especially along generational lines. For an overview of this debate, see Garcia, *A World of its Own*, 3.

[110] Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 120, 122. Basso, *Meet Joe Copper*.

[111] Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 122-23. Eduardo Obregón Pagán, *Murder at Sleepy at Lagoon: Zoot Suits, Race, and Riot in Wartime L.A.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

[112] For more on this see Kathy Peiss, *Zoot Suit: The Enigmatic Career of an Extreme Style* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

[113] Luis Alvarez, *The Power of the Zoot: Youth Culture and Resistance during World War II* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).

through Southern California at any one time. Because the public elevated the status of those in the armed forces, and because of their own sense of importance, White military men felt empowered to enforce dominant expectations, especially on communities of color.[114]

How authorities responded to the Sleepy Lagoon case dramatically escalated matters. The controversy began when José Gallardo Díaz, a young Mexican American man, was murdered after a dispute at a party on August 2, 1942. Díaz's body was thrown into the Sleepy Lagoon reservoir. Los Angeles police responded by detaining hundreds of Mexican American young men, especially pachucos, who faced prejudice from the judicial system and the mainstream media.[115] Subsequently, twenty-two were arrested and put on trial for murder.[116] Historians have shown that the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) fabricated the idea of a crime wave associated with zoot suiters.[117] Based on racial coding, perhaps best encapsulated by police captain Edward Duran Ayres's biological explanation that linked the supposed violence and criminality of Mexican American youth to their indigenous ancestry, the LAPD aggressively stereotyped residents of Mexican descent.[118] The introduction of a "war on crime" policing model that preemptively launched a campaign of intimidation and arrest based on this racist rationale escalated the situation.[119]

Sleepy Lagoon also brought young Mexican American women into the spotlight. Along with hundreds of young men, the police arrested ten young women. The press called their involvement scandalous. Media and others increasingly described them as pachucas for their ties to zoot suiters, including fashion and sensibility. Elizabeth Escobedo notes that "among the young women themselves, the label pachuca often remained a contested term."[120] This was because, while many young Mexican and Mexican American women were attracted to zoot suit culture and some of what it represented, they were not gang members, which they saw as a part of being a real pachuca. Nonetheless, whether young Mexican and Mexican American women adopted zoot suit fashion, culture, or leisure activities, the home front years changed their relationship with dominant society and their parent's generation. At the center of this shift was their expressing agency by pushing gender, sexual, work, and leisure boundaries beyond the norms they had been told to follow. Well-paying jobs that provided them with spending money and mobility played a major role in this change. Another factor was that their brothers and others who had served as

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[114] Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 123. Pagán, *Murder at Sleepy at Lagoon*. On soldiers' sense of entitlement see, Aaron Hiltner, *Taking Leave, Taking Liberties* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2021).

[115] See Eduardo Obregón Pagán, "Alice McGrath (1917-2009)," *American Experience*, https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/zoot-alice-mcgrath/, accessed April 25, 2024. McGrath describes media portrayals and the racism of the presiding judge.

[116] Pagán, "Alice McGrath."

[117] Edward J. Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity: Mexican Americans and the Los Angeles Police Department, 1900-1945* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 155-202.

[118] Ed Duran Ayres, "Statistics: The Nature of the Mexican American Criminal," 1942, Dept of Special Collections/UCLA Library, A1713 Charles E. Young Research Library, http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/special/scweb/, http://content.cdlib.org/view?docId=hb6m3nb79m&brand=oac4

[119] Alvarez, *The Power of the Zoot*. Peiss, *Zoot Suit*. Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity*.

[120] Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 25.

chaperones—a major part of Mexican and Mexican American courting prior to the war—were no longer available to fill that role because they had joined the military.[121]

Figure 3.4: Pachucas (from left to right) Frances Silva, Josephine Gonzales, Juanita Gonzales, Lorena Encina, and D. Barrios, 1942. Courtesy UCLA Charles E. Young Research Library Department of Special Collections, A1713 Young Research Library, licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

For taking the opportunities for self-definition the home front afforded them, Mexican and Mexican American young women faced a backlash. The mainstream media and police linked pachucas, and those they saw as pachucas, to prostitution and other forms of sexual delinquency associated with so-called Victory girls. At a more basic level, young Mexican American women who seized the economic possibilities and social freedoms brought by the war triggered society's broader anxieties about women's expanded roles on the home front.[122] For Whites and some Mexican and Mexican Americans, pachucas suggested that the radical race views Whites associated with zoot suiters were spreading dangerously within the community. In reality, the challenge posed by the young women who adopted some aspects of zoot suit culture was most forcefully felt by the older generation of Mexicans and Mexican Americans. They saw their daughters' newfound assertiveness and desire to create their own social, cultural, and gender norms running

[121] Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 1-3.
[122] Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 30-31.

counter to their own values and expectations, and they consistently tried to rein them in.[123] As Escobedo notes, Mexican and Mexican American women thereby well represent the contradictions that defined the home front.[124]

After the Sleepy Lagoon murder, a multiracial coalition of individuals whose communities had also faced systematic discrimination and their White allies, formed to support the young Mexican Americans who had been charged. The Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee led their efforts. Black residents of Los Angeles saw their own treatment at the hands of the police and majoritarian society as particularly linked to the defendants.[125] One Los Angeles Black newspaper described the young men charged with the murder as the Mexican Scottsboro Boys.[126] An article in the paper called what was going on "fascist racism."[127] The *Mexican Voice* urged Mexican American readers to not claim "Spanish" or Latin identity, but rather to embrace their "Mexicanness."[128] Alice McGrath, the daughter of Russian Jewish immigrants and the executive secretary of the Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee, connected the racism against Mexican Americans to the Japanese American incarceration only a few months before. Carey McWilliams, head of the committee, added "it was a foregone conclusion that Mexicans would be substituted as the major scapegoat group once the Japanese were removed."[129]

The most famous incident of scapegoating against Mexican Americans occurred over ten days in early June 1943 on the eastside and downtown Los Angeles. In what would become known as the Zoot Suit Riots, crowds of White military and civilian men roamed the city and attacked Mexi-

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[123] Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 42-44.

[124] Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 3.

[125] Luis Alvarez, "From Zoot Suits to Hip Hop: Towards a Relational Chicana/o Studies," *Latino Studies* 5 (2007): 53–75; Alvarez, *The Power of the Zoot*.

[126] The Scottsboro Boys were nine Black teenagers accused and tried for raping two White women in 1931. The case, which was retried multiple times, became internationally known as an example of American anti-Black structural racism. Among many publications about the incident see, James A. Miller, Susan D. Pennybacker, and Eve Rosenhaft, "Mother Ada Wright and the International Campaign to Free the Scottsboro Boys, 1931–1934," *American Historical Review*, vol. 106, no. 2 (April 2001): 387–430.

[127] Molina, "Examining Chicana/o History," 534.

[128] Félix Gutierrez, "The Mexican Voice Goes to War: Identities, Issues, and Ideas in World War II-era Mexican American Journalism and Youth Activism," in *Latina/os and World War II*, 124-129. On Latin identity see, Mormino, "Ybor City Goes to War," 14.

[129] Molina, "Examining Chicana/o History," 535, and Scott Kurashige, *The Shifting Grounds of Race: Black and Japanese Americans in the Making of Multiethnic Los Angeles* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 150. Also Pagán, "Alice McGrath (1917-2009)." While placing Mexican American history within the context of their southwest political, cultural, and social history, McWilliams also argued that the treatment of Mexican Americans was shaped by other comparative rationalizations like the immigration restrictions and racist views directed at the Chinese in the 19th century. Relational notions of race, he contended, played a significant role in how different communities of color experienced the World War II home front. McWilliams published books about prejudice against Japanese Americans (1942) and anti-Semitism before releasing *North from Mexico* (1949), a book often credited with offering the first full history of the Mexican American experience. In 1953 McWilliams would take over *The Nation* magazine, which gave him an even more prominent bully pulpit to address social justice issues. Molina, "Examining Chicana/o History," 532-533. Carey McWilliams, *North from Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States*, New Edition, Updated by Matt S. Meier (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1990).

can American youth on public transportation, in theaters, and on the streets. They beat them, cut their hair, and stripped them of their zoot suits. The police typically looked on as this happened and then arrested the victims on charges of disturbing the peace.[130]

Figure 3.5: Zoot suiters lined up outside Los Angeles jail en route to court during Zoot Suit Riots. Courtesy Library of Congress.

Estimates suggest 500 or more were charged, and 150 were injured. Historian Luis Alvarez notes, however, that zoot suiters "did not simply suffer beatings from White policemen and servicemen as hapless victims, but actively challenged the wartime consensus by initiating physical confrontations with White servicemen and contesting the meaning of American democracy in the home front."[131]

The *Los Angeles Times* and *Herald Express*, *Time* and *Life* magazines all blamed zoot suiters, whom they described as "roving wolf packs" and "marauding latin gangs," for the violence. The root of the trouble, they added, was the primitive ways of Mexicans.[132] This racist assertion

[130] Gutierrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 123-24.

[131] Alvarez. *The Power of the Zoot*. Quote from Sonia Song Ha Lee, "Culture, Agency, and Nation: Zoot Suiters and the Making of America," *Reviews in American History* 37, No. 1, (March 2009): 125-132.

[132] Cited in Alfredo Gutierrez, *To Sin Against Hope: Life and Politics on the Borderland*, (Brooklyn: Verso, 2013), 40. See Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity*, 115-125, on the pre-war roots of this think-

echoed the same rhetoric used when Mexicans were expelled from the U.S. during the 1930s and the deeply racist report that the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department published in 1943. The report claimed Mexicans had a violent disposition and an "utter disregard for the value of life."[133] Acting on these profoundly damaging and long held beliefs, police had been surveilling and badgering Mexican American youth for decades. After the "riots," officials and civilians began to more frequently harass all Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and Latinos in the area, as well as their allies. The increasing xenophobia of the White wartime community in Los Angeles added to racial tensions.[134]

Mexican American leaders in California responded by again aggressively asserting their community's patriotism. They noted their military and war production service records and cited the principles at the core of the American national project and the "Americans All" message that the government constantly touted. The OWI designed the "Americans All" campaign to encourage White Americans with northern and western European immigrant backgrounds to more fully accept those from other parts of Europe, Asia, and Latin America.[135] Alan Cranston, later a California senator, in coordination with the OCIAA led the campaign aimed at Latin America and Latinos in the U.S. and represented by the Spanish phrase "Americanos Todos."[136] After Cranston had met with local community leaders, he charged the OWI to ensure its posters, radio spots, and other public relations pieces highlighted the government's opposition to "discrimination against Mexicans or any the minority in the United States," the patriotism of "American Mexicans" who were desperately needed "in the American armed forces, in American factories, and on American farms," and the partnership between the nations of Mexico and the U.S.[137]

McWilliams saw the federal government's efforts to improve the situation for Latinos across the Southwest as ineffective and counterproductive. He was especially critical of the OCIAA focusing on fostering cultural understanding.[138] Writing to Rockefeller, McWilliams argued that the so-called "divided loyalties" of Mexican-descent people in California were due to the state alternating between wanting them for cheap agricultural labor and eschewing them during economic downturns. Comparing Latinos' situation to the greater economic success of the Japanese community before the war, McWilliams said Mexican Americans had become a "permanently disadvantaged, underprivileged social group" because of systematic discrimination. It was this

ing. Ayres, "Statistics."

[133] Escobar, *Race, Police, and the Making of a Political Identity*, 115-125, Ayres, "Statistics."

[134] Gutierrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 122-30.

[135] Darlene J. Sadler, *Americans All: Good Neighbor Cultural Diplomacy in World War II* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2012).

[136] "Report from Alan Cranston to Elmer Davis, Nov. 28, 1942". Folder: California Trip (NAID 4754475). *Subject Files of the Chief, 1942-1944*, (NAID 922212), cited in Daniel Dancis, "Americans All by Leon Helguera: Appealing to Hispanics on the Home Front in World War II," *The Text Message*, National Archives, Oct 11, 2018, https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2018/10/11/americans-all-by-leon-helguera-appealing-to-hispanics-on-the-home-front-in-world-war-ii/

[137] "Report from Alan Cranston," *The Text Message*.

[138] Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 56.

discrimination that led to the hostility some in the community evidenced. The solution was to facilitate their entry into well-paying jobs and to address their housing and educational needs.[139]

Nonetheless, attempts to promote cultural understanding continued to lead the effort to reduce anti-Latino racism in California. For example, the Padua Hills Little Theatre in the Los Angeles area used culture to defuse tensions, build unity, and lessen discrimination against Latinos. Located in the Claremont Hills, the theater became famous for its "Mexican Players" or "Paduanos," Mexican American community members who cooked and performed at the venue. The theatre's goal was to promote "intercultural understanding" by stressing the culture and ways of "Old California."[140] Anglo audiences found this version of history, which historian William Deverell, following Carey McWilliams, has described as the "Spanish Fantasy Past," less threatening than demands for equality and justice made by pre-war and wartime Mexican American activists.[141] For their part, the Garners, the White couple who ran the theater, believed their shows could be a wartime tool "to unite the people of the Western Hemisphere against the Axis powers."[142] They facilitated Walt Disney using the Mexican Players in the 1944 film *The Three Caballeros*. The movie was Disney's effort to foster hemispheric and home front unity by presenting the Spanish fantasy past, precisely the same mission as the Garners. Indeed, historian Matthew Garcia notes that "The antimodern appeal of Padua Hills reached its peak during World War II."[143] Herman Garner reported that many home front workers "came from quite a distance" and used a significant portion of their gasoline rationing coupons to attend performances. They found the site and performances a refreshing "escape" from the long hours on the production front.[144]

As United States Employment Service data shows, companies with deep local roots allowed their biases about Latinos and Black workers to influence their hiring practices during mobilization and the first year of the war.[145] National aircraft firms like Douglas, North American, and Lockheed Vega instead saw Mexican and Mexican Americans as a solution to their dire labor shortages. Competition for workers was fierce. Defense jobs in Los Angeles grew by over 500,000, with more than 225,000 positions tied to aircraft manufacturing. By 1944, Mexicans and Mexican Americans comprised 10 to 15 percent of the workforce at two Los Angeles Lockheed factories. Remarkably, 80 percent were women. The numbers at Douglas aircraft were as impressive, with twelve thousand Mexican and Mexican American workers. In each of these facilities they were part of a multiracial workforce that included a significant number of Black Americans. Los Angeles was an outlier, but Mexican and Mexican Americans also obtained some war production jobs in other parts of the Southwest and Midwest.[146]

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[139] Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 58.
[140] Garcia, *A World of its Own*, 123.
[141] William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 9.
[142] Garcia, *A World of its Own*, 131.
[143] Garcia, *A World of Its Own*, 142.
[144] Garcia, *A World of Its Own*, 142.
[145] Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 87.
[146] Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 75.

Some Mexicans and Mexican Americans sought war production work based on their patriotism. Lupe Purdy, a Mexican citizen who had lived in the U.S. for more than a decade before the war, applied for U.S. citizenship and war industry work. "I didn't go to work because I wanted more money. I wanted to help my country."[147] Purdy said she found her job at Douglas Aircraft difficult but rewarding. Others spoke more about the significant increase in wages and status that came with war work. Mexican and Mexican American women who had worked in packing houses or canneries during the Great Depression had only earned $0.30 to $0.35 an hour because of the piece rate wages their employers were allowed to pay. Those working in laundries or as domestics often made less than even migrant workers. The aircraft assembly jobs paid $0.60 to $0.65 an hour as a beginning wage. Welders or riveters made $1.32 and $1.00 an hour respectively. Working overtime hours, which most bosses welcomed as they consistently faced tight production schedules and staff shortages, increased take home pay considerably. Mexican and Mexican American wartime workers typically earned $40 to $60 a week, "an extraordinary sum," as Elizabeth Escobedo notes, compared to their prewar wages. That these wartime jobs provided steady year-round employment was also a major improvement.[148] Likewise, since most were unionized, Mexican and Mexican Americans could use the collective power of organized labor, precisely what the lemon strikers sought, to support them in the workplace.[149]

In the final years of the war, Mexican American activists and their allies focused in part on having the FEPC intervene in discriminatory workplace practices.[150] In California, efforts to gain FEPC assistance for Mexican Americans seeking war industry work were dwarfed by efforts to right the wrongs that Black laborers faced.[151] One-fifth of the cases the FEPC heard in California dealt with Latinos. In contrast, in Texas, Louisiana, and New Mexico, approximately 37 percent of the cases were related to Latinos.[152] The higher rate in New Mexico was perhaps due to the prominent advocacy of Congressman Chávez, an important FEPC supporter.[153] Collaborating with Mine Mill, Chávez urged the FEPC to go after wage and job discrimination in the copper mining industry. Chávez noted that it was not just miners of Mexican descent but also Native American miners who received substandard wages and poor job placements.[154] The government did appoint a prominent Mexican American leader, Doctor Carlos Castañeda, as an FEPC regional director. Castañeda did not veil the problem the FEPC faced. He noted that fewer than 5 percent of the Mexican descent population in the Southwest had secured work in essential war

[147] Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 76.
[148] Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 76-78.
[149] Labor unions had a good reputation among Mexican and Mexican American aircraft production workers. Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 95-96.
[150] Leaders like Alonso Perales saw the Commission as potentially a crucial new mechanism for combatting workplace discrimination. Orozco, *Pioneer of Mexican-American Civil Rights*, 131.
[151] Clete Daniel, *Chicano Workers and the Politics of Fairness: The FEPC in the Southwest, 1941-1945* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991). Neil Foley, *Quest for Equality: The Failed Promise of Black-Brown Solidarity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010). Daniel concludes that the Black activists' long history of demanding change and the high-profile nature of their work in the 1930s and at the beginning of the war, catalyzed the FEPC's focus on the workplace discrimination they faced. Foley sees the limited coordination between Mexican American and Black leaders as a missed opportunity.
[152] Orozco, *Pioneer of Mexican-American Civil Rights*, 134.
[153] Orozco, *Pioneer of Mexican-American Civil Rights*, 131.
[154] Orozco, *Pioneer of Mexican-American Civil Rights*, 131-32.

industries, and even those, no matter their qualifications, were only placed in unskilled positions.[155] Ultimately Mexican Americans saw the FEPC as a disappointment. But even with its flaws, Escobedo, citing recent scholarly reevaluations, contends that in Los Angeles, for the "African Americans and Mexican Americans who utilized the agency, it seems that the FEPC offered a significant new avenue for redress, legitimizing demands for equality and encouraging protest among people of color."[156]

The Sleepy Lagoon Defense Committee's ongoing legal and coalition-building approach offers additional insights into the strategies that Mexican Americans and their allies used to combat prejudice during the second half of the war. The coalition led a long campaign to show that the convictions echoed Nazi ideals about race as biological. The racial liberalism that came to define government and much public discourse on the home front had at its core a new understanding of race as cultural. Suggesting racism had much to do with the convictions proved a smart tactic. The appeal the committee filed on their behalf succeeded in October 1944.[157] The guilty verdicts were overturned for insufficient evidence, the failure to provide the young men counsel, and the bias shown by the original judge. The defendants were released from San Quentin prison and met their supporters at the Hall of Justice.[158]

In subsequent decades, Mexican Americans would rehabilitate the reputation of wartime pachucos as critical figures in a history of resistance against white supremacy. In contrast, pachucas, who played a significant part in wartime LA zoot suit culture, remained marginalized through the 1960s and 1970s.[159] This was due to their masculine practices, their use of "dangerous" sexuality, and their challenge to gendered systems of power. It would take a later generation of women to restore them to their rightful place as agents of change.[160]

Given mainstream society's actions and rhetoric in relation to the Japanese American incarceration during the war and imprisoning Mexican American youth during Sleepy Lagoon and the Zoot Suit Riots, historian Natalia Molina agrees with McGrath's and McWilliams's argument that the two communities of color were seen and treated as related to each other. Society scapegoated Japanese and Japanese Americans. Once they were removed from California, they looked for another racialized group to target. She concludes "that both groups were depicted as enemies of the state during World War II," but that both cases also saw a multiracial coalition form and fight for justice by demanding the U.S. live up to its stated principles.[161] Braceros, the other ma-

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[155] Orozco, *Pioneer of Mexican-American Civil Rights*, 133-34.

[156] Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 91-92, 95.

[157] On racial liberalism in the era see, Nikhil Pal Singh, *Black is a Country: Race and the Unfinished Struggle for Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005). Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), is representative. Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*, 6.

[158] Pagán, *Murder at the Sleepy Lagoon*. There is some uncertainty regarding whether they were transferred to the Hall of Justice before being released.

[159] Escobedo, *From Coveralls to Zoot Suits*.

[160] Catherine S. Ramírez, *The Woman in the Zoot Suit: Gender, Nationalism, and the Cultural Politics of Memory* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009).

[161] Molina, "Examining Chicana/o History," 535.

jor figures in the Latino home front story, also show how new groups were incorporated into the relational racial calculus that characterized home front race relations in multiracial sites like Los Angeles. They likewise further illuminate wartime employers' willingness to try and maximize profits at the expense of workers of color, and the agency of those workers in using the unique conditions of the home front to resist subjugation.

Braceros

No matter its perceived second-class status by many workers in the U.S., wartime agricultural production was seen as essential to the war effort as munitions by government officials. In 1942, the farm labor force shrank to its smallest size in decades precisely when the U.S. desperately needed to ramp up agricultural production. In response, the government began an emergency labor program, better known as the Bracero Program.[162] Workers lined up at recruitment centers in Mexico, eager to take part. They endured painful physical inspections and fumigation, long separations from their families, and grueling working conditions.[163] Ultimately, 200,000 agricultural braceros entered the U.S. during the war. Most labored in California and the Southwest, but some were sent as far as Connecticut.[164] Another 130,000 worked in the railroad industry, in resource extraction, and a few other industrial sectors, especially in the Southwest, but also as far away as Rhode Island.[165] This "wartime emergency" program would be extended into the Cold War. It allowed 4,600,000 workers temporary entry into the U.S. before the program ended in 1964.[166]

Mexican American and other agricultural laborers who hoped the wartime labor shortage in the industry would significantly improve their wages and working conditions saw braceros as a threat. Mexican American pickers and packers knew they could not call on the same New Deal labor protections as industrial workers. Braceros also influenced the treatment and perception of Latinos because dominant White society conflated them with citizens of Mexican descent. They embodied both master narratives used to frame U.S. immigration history: opportunity and exploitation. They were at once Mexican citizens, racially marked aliens, workers, and transnational subjects, as Deborah Cohen shows in her research on the braceros who migrated between Durango, Mexico, and California's Imperial Valley.[167]

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[162] Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker,'" 107.

[163] Fredy Gonzalez, "Chinese Braceros? Chinese Mexican Workers in the United States During World War II," *Western Historical Quarterly* 48 No, 2 (2017): 137-157.

[164] Shaine Scarminach, "Working in Wartime," *Homefront: Connecticut Businesses in World War II*, University of Connecticut Library Special Collections digital exhibition, https://lib.uconn.edu/location/asc/about/homefront-connecticut-businesses-in-world-war-ii/working-in-wartime/, accessed March 16, 2024.

[165] The eighty braceros who laid and maintained railroad tracks in Connecticut arrived in January 1944 and by the end of their first day had experienced winter snow. Lauren Clem, "These World War II-Era Bracero Workers Had a Hand in Rhode Island's Railroad Industry," *Rhode Island Monthly*, 19 July 2022, https://www.rimonthly.com/these-world-war-ii-era-braceros-had-a-hand-in-rhode-islands-railroad-industry/, accessed 28 March 2023.

[166] This history is recognized by the Rio Vista Bracero Reception Center, designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) in 2023.

[167] Deborah Cohen, *Braceros: Migrant Citizens and Transnational Subjects in the Postwar United States and Mexico* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

While Mexican laborers would become the symbol of White American fears about transnationalism, it was the growers who hired braceros and the government officials who facilitated the program who represented the more powerful actors. The program designers made sure to restrict Mexican agricultural workers to manual or stoop labor. The chief of the Farm Placement Bureau in Arizona told the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that prohibiting Mexican workers from "working on machines or operating machinery" was meant to ensure that better paid jobs went to "Americans."[168] For some employers, these restrictions were not enough. Many growers in California and some in other states did not believe the Bracero Program, as initially formulated, gave them enough control. As Don Mitchell writes, "under the importation program, Braceros were insufficiently tractable." The program, in other words, "was not sufficiently exploitative of the Mexican workers" in the growers' view.[169]

Most agricultural employers across the U.S. nonetheless quickly came to embrace the program, often, as Montana showed, despite opposition from other groups in the state.[170] Arizona cotton farmers, after losing an estimated twenty thousand to thirty thousand bales of cotton due to insufficient labor, employed 2,700 Mexican workers through the Bracero Program in 1943 and 1944.[171] In 1943 alone, braceros picked approximately 60 percent of Maricopa County's cotton. That cotton was used to make a variety of war materials including parachute liners.[172] In Michigan, approximately 2,000 braceros assisted with cherry and sugar beet harvests after farmers faced a severe labor shortage. Braceros were one of the factors that led to Michigan farmers' income increasing dramatically during the war years.[173] Farmers in other places allowed their prejudices to get in the way of welcoming braceros. In Iowa, it was not until 1944 that farmers turned to braceros to help save the harvest. That year, 1,100 Mexican workers labored in the fields. In 1945, the U.S. government recruited 1,500 Jamaican workers who joined them.[174]

Employers in Arkansas and other parts of the South used braceros as a reserve labor force to keep Black and Native American workers in check. They were not alone. White industrial workers believed that employers would use braceros to undercut their wages and working conditions, a dynamic that government leaders understood more clearly by 1943. That year, Brigadier General Frank McSherry, director of operations for the War Manpower Commission, told business leaders that "the program for the utilization of Mexican workers is highly confidential." McSherry feared that White workers would revolt.[175] In April 1944, managers of the copper smelter in Anaconda, Montana, told their overwhelmingly White and male workforce that the government

[168] Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker,'" 107.
[169] Don Mitchell, "Battle/fields: Braceros, agribusiness, and the violent reproduction of the California agricultural landscape during World War II," *Journal of Historical Geography* 36, no. 2 (2010): 146.
[170] Gary Glynn, *Montana's Home Front During World War II* (Missoula: Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, Inc., 1994), 87. 1,200 braceros worked in Montana during the summer of 1943.
[171] Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker,'" 107.
[172] Brad Melton and Dean Smith, eds., *Arizona Goes to War: The Home Front and the Front Lines During World War II* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003), 114-115.
[173] Alan Clive, *State of War: Michigan in World War II* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1979), 46. Farmers' incomes doubled between 1939 and 1945.
[174] Lynn Ossian, "The Home Fronts of Iowa, 1940-1945," (PhD Disseration, Iowa State University, 1998), 33, 38.
[175] Basso, *Meet Joe Copper*, 153.

would likely send Mexican braceros or Jamaican guest workers to the plant to solve its labor shortage. The three thousand men at the plant could stop this from happening if they allowed White women to work production jobs. The unionized smeltermen had blocked men of color and all women from being employed in these higher paying positions until then. In response to this April 1944 threat, one smelter man bluntly said, "I would rather work alongside a woman than a Mexican." The smeltermen accepted a small number of women into their ranks so that Black or Mexican men would not be sent to Anaconda.[176]

In Arkansas, the Southern Tenant Farmers Union had another reason to decry using braceros and prisoners of war, another group that employers tapped for wartime agricultural labor. The government housed 425,000 POWs in nearly five hundred facilities across the U.S. Many of these men were hired out to work in jobs that were not militarily sensitive, including in agriculture.[177] Braceros and POWs allowed White farmers to refuse Black laborers' demands for higher wages. Yet, when Black workers attempted to leave this exploitative system to seek higher paying jobs in war production, their employers tried to use the government to stop them.[178]

Samuel Klee has studied the Hellwig Brothers farm outside of St. Louis, Missouri, which in addition to POWs and braceros, employed a third group of laborers, incarcerated Japanese Americans. The farm's goal was to maximize profits by using workers who had been immobilized by the dynamics of the war. Even before Hellwig Brothers turned to these groups, they leveraged the coercion of wartime patriotism, Klee argues, to put women and children to work, a practice common on the home front.[179] Knowing they could work braceros much harder and assert greater control, in spring 1943, they secured fifty Mexican men who traveled from the Texas-Mexico border to pick spinach. The *Saint Louis Post Dispatch* reported that "anonymous but exhausted migrants labored 'as much as 20 hours a day'... for at least three consecutive weeks" at the farm. Their home front supervisors kept them on the property, "minimizing the distance from door to field to maximize productive labor hours."[180]

In July 1943, one hundred Japanese Americans who had been incarcerated at the Rohwer Relocation Center in Arkansas joined the braceros at the farm. They lived and worked together. The following year, sixty-five Italian POWs were put to work on the spinach harvest, later replaced by

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[176] Basso, *Meet Joe Copper*, 250. Smelterman succeeded in blocking new Black or Mexican workers from working in the plant. While women did go to work on the production floor, their numbers were small. See too: Butte-Anaconda Historic District NHL, designated July 4, 1961, revised documentation March 21, 2006.

[177] "World War II Prisoner of War Camps," *Encyclopedia of Arkansas*, https://encyclopediaofarkansas.net/entries/world-war-ii-prisoner-of-war-camps-2398/, accessed June 12, 2023.

[178] William L. Shea, "From WAACs to Weevils: A Sketch of Camp Monticello," *Drew County Historical Journal 3* (1988): 18-19. Jason Morgan Ward, "Nazis Hoe Cotton": Planters, POWS, and the Future of Farm Labor in the Deep South," *Agricultural History Society* 81, no. 4 (2007): 485-486.

[179] In the summer of 1943 11,000 school children worked in Montana's fields earning $0.90 per day. Given that the highest paid braceros earned upwards of $20 a week, child labor was a profitable enterprise. New Jersey legislators loosened already loose child labor laws to allow younger children to work in the fields for longer hours. Barbara M. Tucker, "Agricultural Workers in World War II: The Reserve Army of Children, Black Americans, and Jamaicans," *Agricultural History* 68, no. 1 (1994): 58-66. Glynn, *Montana's Home Front*, 87.

[180] Samuel Klee, "Assembling 'the Camp': Agricultural Labor and the Wartime Carceral State in Chesterfield, Missouri, 1937-1972," *Agricultural History* 95 No. 4 (2021): 638.

one hundred German POWs.[181] Farm management highly valued the productivity of these groups of workers, which they saw as sharing an inability to be move in search of better employment. Reflecting this, during the postwar period they continued to draw on the Bracero Program and supported the H2 visa program, part of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, to fill their labor needs. Tellingly, they also returned to recruiting an earlier labor force whose mobility was both catalyzed and compromised by Jim Crow laws: Black people attempting to leave the Deep South.[182]

The approximately forty thousand braceros who worked in the Pacific Northwest offer an especially revealing window into the program. There was a high level of agricultural production in the region during the war, which required a large workforce. To maximize their profits, Pacific Northwest farmers, like in many other places across the U.S., had long preferred a low wage, disorganized, and temporary workforce. Their reasoning was not difficult to follow. Permanent domestic laborers were likely to organize unions that would help them gain higher wages, which would in turn lower profits. Before they turned to braceros, the Pacific Northwest farmers experimented with hiring school children, women, prisoners of war, Japanese Americans released from incarceration camps, and the mentally ill. None of these solutions proved optimal, and farmers and others sought a guest worker program.[183]

When braceros reached the Northwest, they faced an unusual combination of inhospitable conditions, from an unfamiliar climate to an equally unfamiliar host population. In addition, historian Erasmo Gamboa argues, the guarantees built into the bilateral agreement—that workers would earn prevailing wages, be adequately housed and fed, and suffer no prejudice—were subverted by Northwestern (and other) growers who were intent on reducing labor costs.[184] These employers were among those ambivalent about the program because it offered too many protections for workers. Convinced that they desperately needed this government-assisted supply of foreign workers, they championed the program in theory, while undermining it in practice. Resenting government "interference" and largely free of supervision because of their remote location, they flagrantly violated legal standards on wages and living conditions.[185]

For braceros, the lack of government inspectors, inability to turn to a Mexican consulate, and their distance from supportive communities, meant they had to go it alone as they sought to address these inequities. Braceros launched a de facto campaign of resistance in the Northwest, including frequent strikes, slowdowns, and a very high desertion rate.[186] Because of this, historian Mario Sifuentez found that braceros had better food and housing, "received somewhat better wages in part because they took a more militant stance toward their employers and went on strike

[181] Klee, "Assembling 'the Camp,'" 640.
[182] Klee, "Assembling 'the Camp,'" 638-642.
[183] Mario Jimenez Sifuentez, *Of Forests and Fields: Mexican Labor in the Pacific Northwest* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2016), 12-13; Erasmo Gamboa, *Mexican Labor and World War II: Braceros in the Pacific Northwest, 1942–1947* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 27-28.
[184] In one housing camp in Grants Pass, 500 of 511 braceros took ill from the poor quality of the food and the unsanitary conditions. 300 of the men had to be hospitalized. Gamboa, *Mexican Labor and World War II*, 102.
[185] Gamboa, *Mexican Labor and World War II*, 32.
[186] Sifuentez, *Of Forests and Fields*, 24.

more often."[187]

A similar pattern occurred in Stockton, Sacramento, and in the Salinas Valley of California, as Sifuentez and Mitchell's research shows.[188] At the end of September 1942, the first train load of braceros arrived in Stockton and Sacramento to process sugar beets. Their contract, guaranteed by the FSA, stipulated they would "receive the same wages as those paid to other workers in the area of employment for similar work."[189]

Figure 3.6: Braceros arriving in Stockton, California, for beet harvest, May 1943. Courtesy Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Black-and-White Negatives.

Yet, within two months, workers went on strike because they were not being paid the hourly rate of their mostly White counterparts, but rather a piece rate. Through negotiations with the FSA and the Mexican consulate, workers returned to work for the contractually agreed 65 cents an hour. Braceros in the Salinas Valley complained about wages and their "living conditions in the camps, short work hours, the quality and quantity of the food they were served (and the requirement in some camps that they only eat at the camp, not in town)."[190] Local sugar beet farmers became outraged at these demands. Edward Rutledge, manager of Spreckels Sugar in the Salinas

[187] Sifuentez, *Of Forests and Fields*, 3.
[188] Mitchell, "Battle/fields," 143.
[189] Mitchell, "Battle/fields," 144.
[190] Mitchell, "Battle/fields" and Sifuentez, *Of Forests and Fields*.

Valley, told the FSA that he would rather "see the crops rot in the fields" than pay his workers 65 cents an hour.[191]
Some Mexican workers in the Salinas Valley responded by striking. Others stopped working and either blended into local Mexican American communities or headed home. The latter choice was most available to braceros working relatively close to the border in Texas, Arizona, and California.[192] Yet others broke their contracts and found employers willing to pay more for harvesting. Well north of the Salinas Valley, the Portland office of the Workforce Administration calculated that approximately 20 percent of braceros "deserted" their contracted workplaces in 1945. Far from deserting the agricultural production sector, they just shifted to employers that would pay better. Indeed, growers used a word-of-mouth network to make sure that braceros in the area knew of their farms when they paid higher wages. The practice was so widespread that it had its own term, "bootlegging." Bracero Juan Contreras reported that the group of men he worked with received five times as much per day after turning to bootlegging, purchasing better tools, and refining their skill set.[193] Dramatically higher wages and the freedom to move to guarantee better treatment outweighed their status as undocumented immigrants.

Seizing mobility, braceros inverted the principle of immobility that made the program so attractive to the large number of employers who coveted control over their workforce. Other employers, realizing the situation had changed but delighted by their profits, encouraged the now independent braceros who had done such capable work for them to "cross the border illegally" and return season after season.[194] These examples of resistance have not been part of the typical accounts of the Bracero Program, which all too often stops with the poor treatment and discrimination that workers faced. While born of racism and the limited recourse of foreign workers, the agency of these workers was certainly a major part of the bracero story.

The Bracero Program also affected others on the home front. For White laborers who had survived the Great Depression by doing farm work but were now in higher paid positions, the Bracero Program reinforced their Whiteness and its associated privileges by again tying migrant farm work to Mexican identity.[195] This concrete example of racialization in turn distanced Mexican Americans farther from Whiteness and reanimated debates about their Americanness and even their citizenship. At a Senate Committee on Labor and Education hearing in 1944, Castañeda told committee members that Arizona's wartime Mexican American community found themselves "restricted, very largely to common labor and semi-skilled jobs; and even the urgent need for manpower as the result of the war has not broken down the prejudice which bars large numbers of skilled laborers from promotion in order that they might be utilized at their highest skill and thus contribute more fully and more efficiently to the total war effort."[196] Mexican

[191] Mitchell, "Battle/fields," 143-144.
[192] Sifuentez, *Of Forests and Fields*, 24.
[193] Sifuentez, *Of Forests and Fields*, 24-25.
[194] Krys Holmes and Sue Dailey, "World War II in Montana," in *Montana: Stories of the Land* (Helena: Montana Historical Society, 2008), 379.
[195] Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker,'" 92, 107.
[196] Carlos Castañeda, "Statement on Fair Employment Practices Act," *Hearings Before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, United States Senate, Seventy-eighth Congress, Second Session, on S. 2048, a Bill to Prohibit Discrimination in Employment Because of Race, Creed, Color, National Origin, Or Ancestry,*

Americans in other parts of the U.S. faced the same situation, as did many Native Americans and Blacks.[197]

Conclusion

In some instances, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, and other Latinos formed interracial alliances to combat white supremacist discrimination during the war. Cultural institutions on the home front, like the USO in San Juan, dance halls, and the Padua Hills Theatre, and experience in the military, buttressed by the "Americans All" messaging of the government, provided opportunities to strengthen ties among Latinos and between Latinos and other Americans. In other instances, the effort to build coalitions showed the continued power of race, ethnicity, class, and gender to create roadblocks to fellowship.[198]

The experience of Gonzalo and Felicitas Mendez and their children illustrates the development of interracial alliances, the complexity of the Latino experience on the World War II home front, and how much it reflected the relational calculus that helped determine identity and power. Gonzalo Mendez arrived in the U.S. a few decades before World War II, when the demand for Mexican immigrant labor was high on Southwest farms. Felicitas Mendez and her family came from Puerto Rico and were also recruited to pick cotton in Arizona. The Mendezes leased a farm in Westminster, California, because the U.S. government had incarcerated the Japanese American Munemitsu family, who owned the property.[199] Braceros did some of the labor required to make the farm successful during the war. Although the census classified them as White, in Orange County, where Westminster was located, over 80 percent of Mexican American children went to segregated schools for students of color. Instruction was based on the presumption that children of Mexican descent would be agricultural workers and therefore did not need anything other than vocational skills.[200]

The Mendez children were told they could not attend the all-White Westminster Elementary School because of the district's segregation policies. In March 1945, with LULAC support, the Mendezes and four other Mexican American families filed a suit at the U.S. Court for the Southern District of California, stressing their identity, legally and culturally, as Americans and contending that the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause had been violated.[201] In so

August 30, 3l, September 6, 7, and 8, 1944, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1944), 206-211. This statement has important information about other states as well.

[197] Quoted in Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker,'" 106-07. Garcia, *A World of Its Own*, 225-26.

[198] Robin D.G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: Free Press, 1996), 47. Garcia, *A World of Its Own*, 234.

[199] The Munemitsus returned to their property in 1946 and the Mendezes moved back to Santa Ana, California. Maria Blanco, "Before Brown, There was Mendez," *Perspectives: Immigration Policy Center* (March 2010): 3-4, https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/Mendez_v._Westminster_032410.pdf

[200] National Park Service, "Setting the Precedent: Mendez, et al. v. Westminster School District of Orange County and the U.S. Courthouse and Post Office," https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/setting-the-precedent-mendez-et-al-v-westminster-school-district-of-orange-county-et-al-and-the-us-courthouse-and-post-office.htm, accessed May 2, 2024.

[201] Smithsonian National Museum of American History, "In Pursuit of Equality: *Méndez v. Westminster*," https://

doing, Mendez, et al. v. Westminster et al. became the first federal lawsuit against "separate but equal" school segregation.[202] The Mendezes' employment of foreign nationals and operation of a farm seized from a Japanese American family, a group that the government legally ostracized, reinforced their identity as did their claim that their families were, "of good moral habits, not suffering from disability [or] infectious disease."[203] That point spoke directly to continuing assertions of Mexican biological inferiority used to pathologize Mexicans throughout this period and the ongoing denigration of disability. The Mendez plaintiffs put forward social scientific research that showed the psychological damage caused by segregation.[204]

The superintendent of the Westminster district responded that segregation was necessary because Mexican children had "lice, impetigo, and generally dirty hands, face, neck, and ears." He also asserted they lacked the "mental ability of the white children."[205] Just as in the Sleepy Lagoon case, a diverse coalition, including the NAACP, the ACLU, the American Jewish Congress, and even the Japanese American Citizen League (JACL), supported the Mendezes. All these groups argued that legally sanctioned discrimination based on race, color, creed, language, or ancestry violated the bedrock principles of the nation and thereby affected not one but all races.[206] In a 1946 decision—upheld on an appeal in 1947 that saw Thurgood Marshall and NAACP file a supporting brief that used arguments similar to those he would use in *Brown v. Board of Education*—the White judge ruled that receiving a segregated education damaged Mexican American children pedagogically, psychologically, and socially.[207] Mexican Americans across the Southwest subsequently used the Mendez ruling to successfully challenge segregated education.[208]

The ruling in Westminster supports the optimistic view of what the war meant for Latinos offered by McWilliams in 1947. In *North From Mexico: The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States*, he summarized the change the home front had catalyzed. The long running White view of the population encapsulated by the phrase "'the Mexican Problem' began to give way to a discussion of 'The Spanish-Speaking People of the Southwest.'" For some, this shift included an acknowledgement of "the Anglo-American Problem" as the real root of prejudice. Across the Southwest, Whites had begun to recognize Mexican and Mexican Americans as people who existed not in the past but in a present defined by "widely varying Mexican-American communities."[209]

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www.americanhistory.si.edu/brown/history/2-battleground/pursuit-equality-2.html, accessed May 2, 2024. The U.S. Court House and Post Office Building in Los Angeles, where the initial trial took place, is a National Historic Landmark.

[202] National Park Service, "Setting the Precedent."

[203] Angélica Maria Bernal, *Beyond Origins: Rethinking Founding in a time of Constitutional Democracy* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), 193-222.

[204] Blanco, "Before Brown, There was Mendez."

[205] Molina, "Examining Chicana/o History," 537-39.

[206] Molina, "Examining Chicana/o History," 537-39.

[207] Zinn Education Project, "April 14, 1947: *Mendez, et al. v. Westminster Ruling*," https://www.zinnedproject.org/news/tdih/mendez-v-westminster/, accessed February 2, 2024. National Park Service, "Setting the Precedent."

[208] National Park Service, "Setting the Precedent."

[209] McWilliams, *North From Mexico*, 57, 245-247, quoted in Mendoza, "The Good Neighbor Comes Home," 14-15, see too 22.

Historian David Gutiérrez's view from decades after the war offers a less sanguine and more nuanced assessment. During and immediately after the war, Mexican American activists and their allies, like those involved in the *Mendez* case, undertook "a spirited and persistent struggle for civil rights" based on the promise of equality at the symbolic center of the American war effort, Gutiérrez writes.[210] Yet, Gutiérrez adds, "thousands more" Mexican Americans and Latinos "remained deeply ambivalent" about their cultural identity and citizenship as Americans.[211] The war was also central to this view. It was defined by the failure of dominant society to acknowledge the long history of anti-Mexican racism, demands for "ultrapatriotism" and conformity, and an amplification of xenophobia. This treatment, and their continuing familial and cultural ties to Mexico, produced this ambivalence, and sometimes open-faced resistance, as Sleepy Lagoon and the Zoot Suit Riots show. The renewal of immigration from Mexico during the war, especially in the guise of the Bracero Program, made these issues of identity even more fraught.[212]

Relatedly, after the war, some Latino veterans found that even if they had done technical work in the military, employers would not hire them for skilled work based on racist assumptions. Carlos Contreras, who had been a navy shipfitter, was stunned when employers in Phoenix would not hire him for technical work. Perhaps he should not have been. Before a celebration of Mexican American Medal of Honor winner Silvestre Herrera on August 14, 1945, the governor had to order the removal of signs around Phoenix that read, "No Mexican Trade Wanted." In Texas, Medal of Honor winner Macario Garcia protested his inability to have a meal at a cafe and was subsequently arrested after a physical altercation with the owner.[213] Oropeza notes, "nationally [Garcia] won in the court of public opinion, especially after the radio celebrity Walter Winchell decried the incident on his program. Especially after fighting a fascist dictatorship that championed an ideology of racial supremacy, the idea that wartime sacrifice merited peacetime equality resonated with more Americans than ever."[214]

Married with a child and without a high-profile White advocate, Contreras shows the limits of such sentiments. He could not gain skilled craft employment and was forced to turn to mining. There, too, he found discriminatory practices, even after Mine Mill's union organizing effort had challenged the dual wage structure that required Mexican American workers to be paid less than White workers. Contreras said that because there was no Mexican American foreman, "he was put on the railroad crew. Four Mexicans and two Indians—no Anglo of any sort, except the foreman."[215] Contreras's fight for equality would go on, as would that of other Latino civilians and veterans. Wartime achievements and sacrifices would fuel ever louder and more sophisticated demands for justice. For many, the calls for justice would come from new locales. The mobility that defined the World War II era for Latinos also defined the postwar period. Many who had moved to cities stayed. A large number of those who had gone further, to California, for instance,

[210] Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 117.
[211] Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 118.
[212] Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 118.
[213] Oropeza, *¡Raza Sí, Guerra No!*, 36.
[214] Oropeza, *¡Raza Sí, Guerra No!*, 36.
[215] Meeks, "Protecting the 'White Citizen Worker,'" 107-08.

in search of war work, chose to stay. For some, the economies of their home communities drove this decision. Puerto Ricans, who saw the militarization of their island but not the development of a manufacturing or agricultural economy that could provide a decent standard of living, felt compelled to leave for New York, Florida, and other locales in the immediate postwar period.[216]

Based on their wartime experiences, some, like the Latino veterans in the GI Forum, would see integrating their ethnic communities into mainstream society as their goal.[217] As Matthew Garcia notes, "The correlation between the creation of post-World War II grassroots political organizations such as the Community Service Organization (CSO), the Unity Leagues, and the Latin American Organization (LAO) and the return of veterans from the war cannot be understated." Their impact was almost immediate. "In the brief period between 1945 and 1950, Mexican Americans, through these groups, helped Mexican candidates get elected to local and regional government bodies, desegregated schools in Southern California with the *Mendez v. Westminster* case, and registered numerous Mexican American voters."[218] Notably, the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Valleys, where resistance to better wages and working conditions for Mexican and Mexican American pickers and packers led to unsuccessful strikes early in the war, were two of the areas where the Mexican American community most effectively asserted its unity and power after the war.[219] Others would come to see American society as too dominated by White and settler ideas and instead choose to push for a social system organized more overtly around anti-racist and anti-colonial ideals. Developments on the home front were central to Latinos more confidently fighting for both these visions.[220]

[216] "Puerto Ricans," in *Encyclopedia of New York City*, 1058.

[217] Vicki L. Ruiz, "Nuestra América: Latino History as United States History," *Journal of American History* 93 (2006): 656.

[218] For information on LAO, see González, *Labor and Community*, 172–75. For information pertaining to CSO, see Gutiérrez, *Walls and Mirrors*, 168–72. Garcia, *A World of Its Own*, 227.

[219] Garcia, *A World of Its Own*, 234.

[220] Garcia interview of Mendoza, May 6, 1994, and March 13, 1996. Cited in Garcia, *A World of Its Own*, 227. See too 234.

LGBTQ History of the World War II Home Front

Wally Jordan, from Oneida County, Wisconsin, was among the ten million men who served in the U.S. military during World War II. Jordan, initially assigned to a POW detention facility in Florence, Arizona, met Jim Kepner, a civilian from San Francisco, through a pen pal network.[1] Jordan was gay and, after exchanging a few letters with Kepner, he wondered if Kepner might be too. To discreetly answer his question, he asked Kepner about a well-known cruising area in San Francisco. Kepner's answer made Jordan confident enough to write, "so at last it is out in the open. I wondered how long we would continue to beat around the bush…it is only within the last month that I have ever known anyone else who was 'gay.' And you are my first correspondent along that line."[2] The men continued to write throughout the war.

Jordan told Kepner about his life before enlisting, including the "drag parties" he attended in Wisconsin. He described the communities he and other gay men in the military formed on home front and overseas bases. Both men wrote of the near constant reminders that they had to guard this aspect of their identity from their supervisors and, in Jordan's case, other soldiers to avoid stigmatization and punishment.[3] "Others can love in public, but we must pretend there is no affection or emotion," Jordan wrote after watching two gay men at a movie theater conduct themselves with dispassionate reserve while straight couples openly flirted.[4]

Jordan explained to Kepner why gay men in the military were so worried. It wasn't just the possibility of the "blue" or "undesirable" discharge given to many of those suspected of being homosexual, but the belief gay soldiers held that "sodomy is punishable by death in the Army" and simply being caught in bed with another man would get you a twenty-year prison term.[5] Jordan soon found out the more complicated truth. During the Allied campaign in Italy, he was brought up in front of a medical officer on the suspicion of being gay. The doctor was friendly, and Jordan did not end up in jail or even with a blue discharge. He was one of the lucky ones. Another

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1 R. Richard Wagner, *We've Been Here All Along: Wisconsin's Early Gay History* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2019), 186. Jordan also corresponded with a gay soldier stationed in Ogden, Utah, and his 19-year-old gay cousin who was in the Army Air Force and stationed in Missouri, among several others on the home front and overseas. His cousin told Jordan he was fighting for the "middle sex."

2 Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 184.

3 R. Richard Wagner, "Acting Jam in World War II: Gay Wisconsinites and the Second World War," *Voyageur Magazine: Northeast Wisconsin's Historical Review* 37, no 2. (2001): 38-40; Wagner, We've Been Here, 185.

4 Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 185.

5 Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 191-93. Jordan's growing concern to be discreet in letters was warranted. In mid-1943, Kepner received a visit from an army intelligence officer who demanded to see any correspondence he had with Jordan. Blue or "undesirable" discharges, named for the color of paper on which they were printed, had originated in World War I, but became much more widely used by the military in World War II. They were a less cumbersome way to administratively remove personnel while marking them as somewhere between honorable and dishonorable. For more on Blue Discharges, their use in World War II, and their history see: Allan Bérubé, *Coming out under Fire : The History of Gay Men and Women in World War II* (Chapel Hill: University Of North Carolina Press, 2010), 128-148; Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 145-154; and for a general overview: https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/blue-and-other-than-honorable-discharges.htm

gay soldier would later describe the war and postwar years as akin to "the terror" characterizing the last days of the French Revolution.[6]

Kepner also avoided arrest during the periodic home front anti-LGBTQ crackdowns. San Francisco being more friendly to queer people than most other cities during the war unquestionably played a part. Like other gays and lesbians, Kepner and Jordan saw the war as of fundamental importance to their sense of sexual identity and to community formation and political awakening. After the war Jordan dreamed of becoming an activist and helping organize a gay revolution, but instead lived a largely quiet existence in the upper Midwest. Kepner would play a central role in the early homophile movement.[7]

Leisa Meyer and Helis Sikk, in their introduction to the National Park Service's (NPS) *LGBTQ Theme Study*, summarize the importance of World War II to developing queer identity and communities.[8] They write:

> It was the United States' involvement in World War II that provided an unprecedented opportunity for LGBTQ people to begin to imagine themselves as part of a community that stretched across the country's rural and urban areas. The massive mobilization of people that was needed to conduct a total war (and WWII was indeed such) meant that Americans left their homes for new war-based jobs and found themselves in largely gender-segregated communities without the restrictions and constraints typical of their hometowns. This provided multiple possibilities to explore their sexualities and gender identities. For men and women conscious of a strong attraction to their own sex but constrained by social norms from acting on it, the war years eased the coming out process and facilitated entry into the 'gay' world.[9]

Thanks in large part to the groundbreaking work of Meyer and Allan Bérubé, the wartime experiences of lesbians and gays and World War II's critical role in queer identity formation have become better known over the last several decades. Primary and secondary sources reinforce Meyer and Sikk's analysis while also showing that the 'gay' world one could enter was determined by other aspects of identity, particularly gender and race. For queer women and men of color, the prejudice they faced dominated their experience and became a catalyst for social change.[10]

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6 Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 194.

7 Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 182, 199. Kepner was involved with the magazine One and later was a significant archivist for the movement. Jordan began corresponding with Kepner again in the 1970s but made his own anti-communist politics clear. Wagner, 278.

8 I follow the practice of Meyer and Sikk and other historians of queer life in the terminology and approach I use. For a good summary see Nan Alamilla Boyd, "'Homos Invade S.F.!': San Francisco's History as a Wide Open Town," in *Creating a Place For Ourselves,* Brett Beemyn, ed. (London: Taylor and Francis, 2013), 90.

9 Leisa Meyer and Helis Sikk, eds., "Introduction to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History (LGBTQ History) in the United States" in *LGBTQ America: A Theme Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History*, Megan E. Springate, ed., the National Parks Service (2016): 03-23, 03-34. https://www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/lgbtqthemestudy.htm

10 See E. Patrick Johnson's interview with Countess Vivian in *Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 481-82. That assessment of the place of race in intersectional identity

Less research has been undertaken on the role of the war, and specifically the home front, in catalyzing bisexual and transgender identity and community formation. Both groups were part of the "'gay' world," and the war years allowed them, though certainly far from unfettered, to love and live how they desired.[11] Bisexuals found a context that allowed them to more fully consider and act on their attractions thanks to the mobility the war fostered, and particularly the single-sex environment.[12] However, unlike gays and lesbians, for a variety of reasons explored below, a sense of community did not emerge around "bisexual" identity during World War II.[13]

That was not the case for transgender individuals. The increase during the war in research into attraction and identity, though often used to marginalize non-normative genders and sexualities, especially in military contexts, also affirmed transgender people's sense of self and played a significant part in the long process of shifting mainstream American views on trans and gender non-binary identity. Taking part in military theater productions or having access to towns and cities, especially San Francisco, with gay and lesbian bars featuring drag and a large queer community, gave transgender individuals the chance to live how they preferred. Most importantly, these wartime developments helped create a transgender network that continued into the postwar period.

The examination below of LGBTQ experiences on the home front revolves around the sites that catalyzed development of individual identity and collective bonds. For those who remained civilians, these included gay and lesbian bars and clubs and other commercial establishments and public spaces like parks. For transgender and non-binary people, clinics and homes—important spaces for some lesbians and gay men, too—also became key nodes for community development.[14] For those in the military, bases and those same commercial establishments and public

continued after the war as E. Patrick Johnson's other oral histories show. E. Patrick Johnson, *Black. Queer. Southern. Women: An Oral History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018), 241.

[11] Meyer and Sikk, "Introduction," 03-2, 03-13-14.

[12] On the history of bisexuality see: https://nps.gov/subjects/lgbtqheritage/upload/lgbtqtheme-bisexual.pdf. Like other terms for sexuality, bisexual has meant different things at different times. See Robyn Ochs and Sarah E. Rawley, eds., *Getting Bi: Voices of Bisexuals Around the World* 2nd ed, (Boston: Bisexual Resource Center, 2019), 7-8. Likewise, E. Patrick Johnson suggests the term—and indeed other labels associated with sexual identity—were not used among or in reference to many Black women historically because they did not represent well practice or identity. Another of his interviewees notes their aversion to bisexual as a term is the embedded assertion "that there's only two genders." Johnson, *Black. Queer. Southern. Women.*, 2-4, 151.

[13] Steven Angelides argues that "historically, bisexuality represents a blind spot in hegemonic discourse of sexuality." Steven Angelides, *A History of Bisexuality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 16. The World War II history of bisexuality remains largely a lacuna, as evidenced by recent overviews of the history of gender and sexuality that focus in part on the war like Leila J. Rupp and Susan K. Freeman, *Understanding and Teaching U.S. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2015), and even specifically of bisexuality like Julia Shaw, *Bi: The Hidden Culture, History, and Science of Bisexuality* (New York: Abrams, 2022). One compelling account of bisexual experience during the war that confirms this assessment is Farley Granger, *Include Me Out: My Life from Goldwyn to Broadway* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2007), 70-75.

[14] Regarding using the terms "transgender" and "non-binary" for individuals on the home front, "transgender" and "non-binary" were not used until the early 1990s and 2000s, respectively. I have chosen to use these terms anachronistically as a matter of practicality and to signal connections to contemporary queer communities. The nuances of the various identity labels used by World War II-era individuals—such as "transvestite," "transsexual," "eonist," "femmepersonator," etc.— are important but would require a great deal more explanation than this chapter

spaces frequented by LGBTQ civilians were where they found out they were not alone and that community, solidarity, and love were possible.

Military Life

The military was the dominant institution in the relationship between the government and queer Americans. The power of the draft undergirded the military's centrality. Even before the war, all men between eighteen and sixty-four were required to register for the Selective Service System. Among the millions who lined up to do just that in October 1940, a significant number were attracted to other men. Although criminalizing same-sex attraction was a relatively recent phenomenon, the military, particularly the navy, had aggressively pursued and punished men accused of intimate same-sex encounters beginning in the 1920s. The vast majority were sent to Portsmouth Naval Prison "in order to bring about the 'eradication of this evil' from the Navy."[15] In 1941, the government mirrored this approach with the draft, modifying policy to bar homosexuals from enlisting. Concerned that the language left loopholes, in 1942 officials adjusted the rules again to bar others, including bisexuals. The new verbiage forbade men who participated in homosexual acts "habitually or occasionally" or even simply had "feminine" characteristics from serving.[16]

But these regulations were never applied uniformly, and even loosened between 1942 and 1944 as the need for soldiers, sailors, and marines increased. However, in 1945, with victory on the horizon, government officials again tightened the prohibition. Even more impactfully, gays, bisexuals, and lesbians already in the military faced heightened scrutiny.[17] Their experiences varied. Some were convicted of sodomy and faced imprisonment at the Portsmouth Naval Prison; the disciplinary barracks at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; Alcatraz Island; and other sites across the U.S. before they were dishonorably discharged.[18] Others, many of whom had shown great merit during their time in uniform, were not jailed but received less than honorable discharges. This made them ineligible for the GI Bill benefits that would propel so many soldiers and sailors into the middle class. Equally damning, a blue discharge out of the military bore stigma in work and social arenas. Yet others were able to leave the military with an honorable discharge.[19]

Military doctors or psychiatrists typically evaluated draftees who induction officials worried might be homosexual and people already in the armed forces accused of homosexual activity. The role of psychiatry in the wartime gay and lesbian experience is paradoxical.[20] Psychiatrists

permits. For more information, see Susan Stryker, *Transgender History* (New York: Seal Press, 2017), 10-40.

15 Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 129-132.

16 Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 2-20.

17 Rebecca Schwartz Greene, *Breaking Point: The Ironic Evolution of Psychiatry in World War II* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2023.) Greene holds that compared to the more than 700,000 men discharged for psychiatric reasons, relatively few queer GIs were discharged based on their sexuality. Based on her analysis of the discipline she asserts that on the whole psychiatrists held ambivalent views about the relationship between homosexuality and a man's ability to fight.

18 Mark Stein, "Historical Landmarks and Landscapes of LGBTQ Law," in *LGBTQ America*, 19-41, www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/lgbtqthemestudy.htm

19 Canaday, *The Straight State*, 137-173.

20 Estelle Freedman, "'Uncontrolled Desires': The Response to the Sexual Psychopath, 1920-1960," *Journal of*

provided medical rationales to further marginalize gays and lesbians. But through their input, the military, for most of the war, treated homosexuality as a medical rather than a criminal issue.[21] The payoff for the military was access to tens of thousands of additional personnel with skills critical to winning the war.[22]

Psychiatry becoming part of the formal evaluation for potential entrants had another unintended and far-reaching consequence: it prompted gay and lesbian identity formation. As Meier and Sikk write,

> The military collaboration with psychiatric professionals meant that male and female inductees were asked directly whether or not they had thought about or engaged in homosexual encounters. While intended to eliminate those soldiers, sailors, marines, and officers who might be homosexual or present stereotypical homosexual tendencies, this policy instead introduced the concept of same-sex sexuality to many of these enlistees and draftees for the first time and for some of them gave, finally, a definition that seemed consistent with how they understood themselves.[23]

Both men and women who already knew their identity as gays and lesbians and those that these exams enlightened found numerous like-minded individuals in the Armed Forces.

The Queer Geography of Military Bases and Spaces

Military bases located on the home front—where basic training and more advanced schooling took place—and the thousands of other defense facilities staffed by military personnel played a vital part in gay and lesbian community formation. In each phase of their military careers, gay men recalled immediately seeking out other gay men. In many instances, they simply wanted to know that they weren't alone, as one soldier put it.[24] Making connections was almost never a problem. Countess Vivian, a gay Black soldier, recalled quickly realizing there were numerous gay men at military bases.[25] The communities that formed became the seedbed for long-term friendships and sometimes intimate relationships.

Specific places on military installations were critical for queer community formation, as Texas illustrates. Theater performance spaces, which often hosted drag shows, like the USO club at

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American History 74, no. 1 (1987): 83-86.

[21] Medicine was often used to penalize and criminalize queer people. Jennifer Terry, *An American Obsession: Science, Medicine, and Homosexuality in Modern Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999).

[22] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 264-269. During the Cold War a similar pattern would unfold. Gays and lesbians were attacked as security threats and immoral influences domestically but were welcomed in many instances as contributing members of wartime units during hot war engagements like Korea. Harvey Milk was one such soldier. Steve Estes, "LGBTQ Military," in *LGBTQ America*, 20-8, 20-9.

[23] Meyer and Sikk, "Introduction," 3-24. Angelides suggests that the focus of psychiatry generally and psychoanalysis specifically on homosexuality in the 1940s played a significant part in marginalizing bisexuality as a sexual identity and a possible hub for community formation. Angelides, *A History of Bisexuality*, 76-77.

[24] Bob Ruffing, quoted in Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 100.

[25] Johnson, *Sweet Tea*, 486.

Camp Hulen, about one hundred miles southwest of Houston, were vital for connecting gay and lesbian soldiers. Sometimes, gay soldiers found other friendly spaces on base, like the assistant chaplain's office at Shepherd Field in Wichita Falls, Texas, near the Oklahoma border, where they threw parties. They could not, however, make those relationships public. Instead, they sought out off-base hotel rooms for privacy, as Phyllis Abry, who was stationed in Lubbock, Texas, recounted. For a chance to be themselves, if only for a short while, even more headed to bars and other commercial establishments known to be gay friendly in nearby towns and cities.[26]

Some gay men had to seek each other out for another reason: they desperately needed advice and protection as they found themselves among homophobic service members. Discrimination pervaded Howard Taylor's basic training in Texas. Other soldiers became hostile after he was "sized up as a fairy."[27] Seemingly, Taylor had no one who could teach him "to act jam," wartime gay slang for pretending to be straight. Acting jam was often a critical survival tactic on military installations, especially in barracks.[28]

As military men moved from the home front to overseas, their desire for intimacy prompted many to realize they were bisexual or to undertake practices that could define them as such. Bérubé contends that much of this later activity is best described as "a kind of situational bisexuality."[29] Specifically, he says combat "chipped away at civilian sexual taboos," which led some heterosexual men to have sex with male soldiers and some gay soldiers to have sex with women. These intimacies could be meaningful, or they could be casual, but they did not lead most to self-identify as bisexual.[30]

Actor Farley Granger, whose lifelong intimate practices would define him as bisexual, reinforces this assessment of wartime bisexual identity and its relation to community. After enlisting, Granger was sent to Hawai'i. He recalled being one of countless young men with little sexual experience and strong libidos. Many men frequented the brothels on Hotel Street, but Granger, thanks to being well-connected, had his first sexual experience with a female sex worker at a private home catering to an elite clientele. In his memoir, he also described having his first sexual experience with a man at the same home that night. This ease with which these sexual encounters occurred was similar in civilian spaces, as Brett Beemyn's account of queer wartime life in Washington, DC, shows.[31] Granger wrote that he saw nothing immoral about either encounter, but he knew the stakes were much higher if he repeated the second. "At that time 'discretion is the better part of valor' was more than a cliche, it was a necessity," Granger recalled. He did not want to belong to "any exclusive, self-defining, or special group" based on his sexuality. Tellingly, he suggests that doing so would have meant joining Hollywood's "gay life," not a bisexual

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[26] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 47, 55, 93, 101, 103.
[27] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 55.
[28] Donald Webster Corey, *The Homosexual in America: A Subjective Approach* (New York, Greenburg, 1951), 110; Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 187.
[29] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 191.
[30] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 191-192.
[31] Brett Beemyn, "A Queer Capital: Race, Class, Gender, and the Changing Social Landscape of Washington's Gay Communities, 1940-1955," in *Creating A Place for Ourselves*, 184.

community.[32]

Figure 4.1: (Above) March 1945. Washington D.C. in cherry blossom time. Germaine (the apartment mate) and I. Love, Billie. Courtesy of the Albert Gore Research Center. (Below) Steward Loomis and Unknown.

Figure 4.2: Man, WWII. Courtesy of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society. While it can be difficult —as indicated by the title of the photo above— to definitively point to some military relationships as queer,

[32] Granger, *Include Me Out,* 74-75. Most other bisexuals whose desire to be intimate with men and women lasted a lifetime, got married to an opposite sex partner as part of the culture of compulsory heterosexuality that defined the postwar. Some had clandestine same-sex affairs, others came to an accommodation with their spouse so they could continue to engage in their bisexuality, while others either suppressed this part of their identity or waited until late in life to allow it to reemerge. Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 245.

comparison with others —such as the photo of Stuart Loomis below— paints a broader picture of how military service opened opportunities for queer connections on the home front.

Lesbians in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC, subsequently known as the Women's Army Corps or WAC), the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP), the Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service (WAVES), and the Coast Guard women's unit Semper Paratus Always Ready (SPAR), created close bonds on bases in the face of a concerted campaign against the "lesbian threat" within the new women's branches. The public and government leaders saw military nurses as occupying a normative gender space and worried far less about any threat they presented to the masculine nature of military service. Whereas the Armed Forces saw sexual acts as defining homosexuality among men, women's military branch leadership had a much broader sense of problematic sexuality that hinged on inappropriate gender performance. As Leisa Meyer's research shows, public anxiety about women entering the military, which paralleled broader concerns about women taking men's jobs and responsibilities on the home front, prompted this expanded framework.[33]

To some, women's military branches provided damning proof of the masculinization of women, quickly gaining a reputation for being a hotbed of lesbian activity. Leaders fought against these assessments by enforcing feminine norms. Those who refused to follow such norms could be punished. However, constantly aware they were engaged in a PR campaign alongside serving the nation, officers tended to prosecute soldiers, sailors, or marines when they identified them as lesbians for disorderly conduct or insubordination instead of sexual impropriety.[34] They did so because they feared—accurately, it turned out—that if the public heard evidence of same-sex activity among military women, they would see it as proof justifying their worries.

The most significant investigation of lesbian activity occurred at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.[35] A mother of a WAC private found love letters that a female sergeant had sent to her daughter and demanded the War Department investigate. The mother claimed Fort Oglethorpe was "full of homosexuals and sex maniacs."[36] Seemingly aware of the military's deep concern about the reputation of its female branches, the mother said she would make the situation public unless action was taken. The WAC quickly launched an inquiry.[37] At the center of the effort was a WAC psychiatrist who evaluated the accused sergeant, alongside others whose supposed same-sex attractions came to light during the broader investigation. The psychiatrist followed military regulations which required her to assess whether a person was a "confirmed homosexual" or if they had stumbled into an "accidental" homosexual relationship.[38]

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[33] Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating GI Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women's Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 149.
[34] Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 149-150.
[35] The Fort Oglethorpe Historic District was listed on the NRHP on April 20, 1979.
[36] Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 173.
[37] Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 173.
[38] Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 175.

Figure 4.3: Still of WAC bugler from It's Your War Too film, U.S. War Department, 1944. During WWII, Woman's Army Corp (WAC) bases such as Campe Oglethorpe in Georgia acted simultaneously as gathering points and sites of government investigations against lesbians.

Paralleling what occurred on other bases, butch women identified during the Fort Oglethorpe investigation had a good chance of being labeled "true homosexuals or addicts." Femme soldiers were more likely to be considered victims, led astray by butch partners. The psychiatrist also took into account whether this was a first offense and the power relations between women of different military ranks, social classes, and educational backgrounds.[39] Ultimately, six women faced punishment. One lieutenant was forced to resign. The others were transferred to the WAC Training Center at Fort Des Moines, where they were "hospitalized . . . for psychiatric treatment . . . with a view to being either restored to duty or separated from the service, depending upon the results of the treatment." The investigation also led to the pursuit of other WACs who had a reputation for being lesbians but who had transferred to different bases.[40]

Women who volunteered for military service were aware of its transgressive reputation. Some were troubled, others attracted. Many were told to present themselves more femininely or warned about the impropriety of dancing with other uniformed women in public. Betty Somers joined the marines in 1944, and her commander at Camp Lejeune told her to change her hair to a less masculine cut. Somers, like others, recalled that once women left their training posts, they felt much more comfortable expressing their identity.[41] Even for those at training posts, though, over-

[39] Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 175.
[40] Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 175-176.
[41] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 59.

sight was sometimes lax. Pat Bond remembered attending basic training at Fort Oglethorpe in 1945 and seeing clear evidence that butch soldiers felt comfortable being themselves. In the mess hall "there were all these dykes sitting around with their feet up on the tables in fatigues with lil' Abner boots," Bond recalled.[42]

Besides dining halls and motor pools—which, along with truck driving, was an especially popular assignment for lesbians in the military—lesbians on many bases made service clubs their leisure time home.[43] It would be wrong, however, to imagine that these spaces were entirely safe. Women who worked for motor transport companies could be treated poorly because their coveralls made them seem masculine. Likewise, gays and lesbians had to be careful at service clubs, especially if they showed affection in public, as there were cases of other soldiers reporting them to their commanders. But in other instances, allies protected them.[44] Meyer argues that "regardless of the risks, army lesbians developed spaces in which to socialize together." These were critical to creating sexual identity, community, and, eventually, politics.[45]

How WAC administrators treated lesbians reinforces the argument that, although the war created new opportunities to fight for equality, it was also used to bolster intersecting gender, sexual, and racial norms. Compulsory heterosexuality was a response to the increase in wartime queer activity, identification, and women breaking stereotypical gender norms. The WAC, after all, did not discourage sexual activity among military women per se. To counter the lesbian reputation of their Corps, they promoted heterosexual relationships—as long as they were not interracial. Indeed, White leaders much more often tolerated lesbian relationships hoping to stop interracial intimacy.[46]

As with lesbians, gay men found that context often determined their treatment. When their unit was in combat and every capable GI was needed, or simply when they had a tolerant commander, gay men could be relatively open. However, at other times, especially towards the end of the war, gay soldiers, sailors, marines, and aviators were pursued and prosecuted. James Michener, a sailor in the Pacific Campaign, wrote about the widespread fear in his unit that one of them would be accused of being homosexual. The men fought "against expressing friendliness or interest in any other man. From time to time, horrifying stories would creep around a unit. 'Two men down at Noumea. Officers, too. Dishonorable discharge! Couple years at Portsmouth!' And everyone would shudder . . . and wonder."[47] The crackdown on gays, lesbians, and bisexuals in the military would only increase postwar. But efforts to discipline, punish, and erase queer community identity were unsuccessful.

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[42] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 56.
[43] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 60-61.
[44] Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 166-167. Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 102-103.
[45] Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 166-167.
[46] Meyer, *Creating GI Jane*, 152.
[47] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 225.

The Queer Geography of Civilian Life

Rural Places and Spaces

Gays and lesbians often wanted to leave intolerant small towns and rural communities, and the military or war work provided them with unparalleled opportunities. But not all rural queer people either wanted to or could leave. A study of LGBTQ individuals in southwest Missouri exemplified the challenges they faced. Worried about the supposed loosening moral standards, civic officials and other prominent citizens accelerated their effort "to establish and reinforce a benchmark of proper sexuality that marked the homosexual as deviant." Gays and lesbians responded by finding new ways to connect with and sustain each other. Commercial and social institutions in more urban parts of the region provided "an alternative to religious condemnation" by offering supportive spaces.[48]

For gays, lesbians, and bisexuals in southwest Missouri, Joplin, rather than its larger neighbor Springfield, became a magnet. From Joplin's days as a mining center, it had an established history of lively and unconstrained nightlife.[49] Joplin's gay-friendly bars thrived because of the increased busing from Camp Crowder, a training base thirty miles away that housed a rotating population of 40,000 soldiers. In turn, the increased popularity of Joplin offered an oasis for queer civilians. Camp Crowder's officers reflected the often conservative social politics of the military and the unquestionably conservative social politics of the area. Historian Elizabeth Frances George concludes that "in regions like southwest Missouri and in much of the rest of the country, the repressive regulation of sex, sexuality, and gender in the military pushed gays and lesbians into learning how to find one another while avoiding detection."[50] Joplin's bars were key to this process.[51]

Gays and lesbians in interracial relationships were in an especially difficult situation because of civilian and military segregationist policies. Nonetheless, in some communities, they found sites that offered refuge from racism and homophobia. Interracial couples at Fort Jackson or in nearby Columbia, South Carolina, knew that Jim Crow codes would not allow them to go to hotels together. Instead, they would meet in town, procure a taxi, and head to the Savoy Inn just outside of Columbia that catered to tourists and allowed Black and White customers to rent cabins.[52]

In many ways, the experience in smaller towns like Joplin replicated what occurred in larger cities. The mix of civilians and military personnel, albeit out of uniform, was typical of places

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[48] Elisabeth Frances George, "Lesbian and Gay Life in the Queen City and Beyond: Resistance, Space, and Community Mobilization in the Southwest Missouri Ozarks" (PhD Dissertation, The State University of New York, Buffalo, 2019), 61-62. Sometimes gays and lesbians also had to go underground or pretend to be heterosexual to counter their stigmatization, yet other times they defended their territory.

[49] George, "Lesbian and Gay Life," 65.

[50] George, "Lesbian and Gay Life," 64.

[51] George, "Lesbian and Gay Life," 68-69; Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 103, 104, 123-27.

[52] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 106.

near defense installations.[53] When gay and lesbian GIs went out in larger cities, they were similar to the gay soldiers who traveled to Joplin, often in sizable social groups that included allies, "fellow-travelers who were heterosexual and 'wise' to gay life," and soldiers "who had not made decisions about their own sexuality."[54] Just like larger cities, Joplin allowed gay and lesbian service members to escape military oversight. Civilian and military gays and lesbians knew by word of mouth to head to certain establishments, like those owned by Joplin resident Gladys Stewart. Billy Tipton, a performer whose biographer has described them as transgender and who was known for female impersonation, was the main attraction.[55] Tipton's popularity indicates the geographical breadth of drag performance during the war and reinforces historian Allan Bérubé's contention about drag's centrality to gay community formation and identity. These two topics, and the crucial importance of gay bars to wartime queer communities, are discussed in more detail below. The vibrancy of Joplin's queer community suggests how widespread that phenomenon was during the war.

Urban Places and Spaces

If places like Joplin show the similarities between smaller and larger regions during the war, port cities like New York, Boston, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, where the military had a massive presence, allow us to see the fuller complexity of gay and lesbian life. Tens of thousands of men in uniform arrived daily in these cities. Even smaller port towns like Norfolk, Virginia, averaged twelve thousand sailors. Historian Aaron Hiltner argues that these and similar places became militarized cities by virtue not just of large numbers of personnel but also of the military controlling policing, property, and businesses. Consequently, a sometimes-bitter relationship developed between civil and military authorities, though ultimately, given the circumstances, civilian officials chose to accommodate and cooperate. In reality, however, neither group had enough police to control the massive number of people who visited entertainment zones, including places frequented by gays, lesbians, and bisexuals.[56]

At the heart of the urban queer scene were commercial establishments, which multiple scholars have identified as crucial to developing and sustaining LGBTQ communities. Other marginalized communities could more easily turn to houses of worship and private homes to connect. That does not mean that private homes and non-commercial spaces were unimportant to home front queer history. However queer people more often used cafeterias, YMCAs, locker rooms, bath houses, other commercial establishments, and especially bars to find each other, develop a shared culture, and announce their collective presence. Many of these sites served as de facto community centers.[57]

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[53] Aaron Hiltner, *Taking Leave, Taking Liberties: American Troops on the World War II Home Front* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2020).

[54] George, "Lesbian and Gay Life," 68-69; Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 103-104, 123-127.

[55] Diane Wood Middlebrook, *Suits Me: The Double Life of Billy Tipton* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998), 128.

[56] Hiltner, *Taking Leave*, 58, 143, 164.

[57] Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy and Madeline D. Davis, *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community* (Philadelphia: Routledge, 2014); George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of a Gay Male World, 1890 to 1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Nan Amallia Boyd, *Wide-Open*

Private Homes and Non-commercial Spaces

During the war, gay and bisexual men searching for fellowship and sometimes sex met in non-commercial public spaces like streets, squares, parks, and public toilets. The latter were called "tearooms" (toilet rooms) and were popular for gay and bisexual men who desired same-sex intimacy but did not want to be seen at a gay bar. Because they "could patronize most tearooms without unduly risking public exposure... they were particularly popular with married men and those who did not identify as gay," notes Beemyn.[58] Writing about a popular public area in Atlantic City, Bryant Simon underscores gay men's agency in claiming such places. They transformed "unregulated spaces around the street into a 'cruising' zone where people could meet for sex and companionship."[59] Lafayette Park in Washington, DC; Riverside Drive in New York City; and the Presidio in San Francisco are further examples.[60] The relationship between gay public spaces and private enterprise was often symbiotic. As Simon notes of Atlantic City, "nearby guest houses simultaneously began to cater to gay customers."[61]

While less often used as organizing and community building nodes than in other movements, private homes did serve as important sites of queer identity and community formation. This was especially the case for lesbians, who, for cultural and structural reasons—they had fewer financial resources to start or support commercial establishments—often socialized differently than gay men.[62] That said, both older gays and lesbians gathered more frequently in private abodes. The lesbian community around Greenwich Village offers one example.[63] Similarly, wealthy gay men hosted dinner parties that were often more conservative than other queer gatherings, but could include working class gay men, soldiers, and sailors.[64]

Commercial Establishments other than Bars

Gay and lesbian people also gathered at cafeterias and other dining establishments. Although not as affirming of queer identity, they allowed for different kinds of conversation that were also es-

Town: A History of Queer San Francisco to 1965 (Oakland, University of California Press, 2005), 61-62.

58 Beemyn, "Queer Capitol," 199. George Chauncey shows that tearooms were especially popular before the war among men who did not identify as gay, many married with children, who nonetheless felt a strong same-sex desire. Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 200.

59 Simon, "The Life and Death," 307.

60 Chauncey, Gay New York, 180-183; Marc Stein, *The City of Sisterly and Brotherly Loves: Lesbian and Gay Philadelphia*, 1945- 1972 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 87-94; Peter Boag, *Same-Sex Affairs: Constructing and Controlling Homosexuality in the Pacific Northwest* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 113-115; John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 12; Tracy Baim, "Sex, Love, and Relationships," in *LGBTQ America*, 17-31,17-28, fn. 87; Donna J Graves and Shane E Watson, "San Francisco: Placing LGBTQ Histories in the City by the Bay," in *LGBTQ America*, 25-18—25-19.

61 Simon, "The Life and Death," 303-306.

62 Baim, "Sex," 17-30.

63 Springate, "LGBTQ Civil Rights,"18-13. Eleanor Roosevelt's friendship with queer women and same sex couples, including two women she built Val-kill with, offers another example. See also Springate' discussion of Roosevelt 's relationship with Lorena Hickok in the 1930s.

64 Baim, "Sex," 17-32.

sential to forming community and identity.[65] Bath houses like the Mount Morris Turkish Baths in Harlem and Everard in New York City's Tenderloin District offered safety and affirmation. They represent perhaps the most enduring sites of convergence for gay urban communities with prewar roots that welcomed new members during the war years.[66] Jack's Turkish Baths in San Francisco's Tenderloin had a reputation as being upscale and particularly popular with gay soldiers and sailors.[67] YMCAs filled a similar role while also offering temporary lodging.[68] Tracy Baim writes that big city YMCAs, like the Embarcadero YMCA—built in 1926 and still extant—were "a hotbed of same-sex sexual activity during World War 2."[69] Similarly, gay soldiers and sailors in "liberty cities"—urban areas around the U.S. but especially on the coasts—met in dormitories housing military personnel in transit. The best-known facilities were the Pepsi Cola Service Men's canteen in San Francisco and the Seven Seas Locker Club in San Diego. Both became so well-known that civilian gay men were rumored to borrow military uniforms to enjoy the special brand of comradery. For gay couples, the wartime context provided a similar kind of cover. Hotel rooms were in such short supply that men or women sharing a room would not be questioned.[70]

Bars

Bars were arguably the most important site for the gay community.[71] Both locals and troops passing through cities with debarkation and recreation facilities frequented establishments like the Top of the Mark in San Francisco and the Astor Bar in New York City.[72] Gay bars could be found not just in places we now associate with gay culture, but also in significant inland cities

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[65] David K. Johnson, "LGBTQ Business and Commerce," in *LGBTQ America*, 16-14–16-17. Cicero's Cafe in Baltimore, which was also a bar at night, is another example of this type of space. Susan Ferentinos and Benjamin Egerman, "Maryland LGBTQ Historic Context Study," Preservation Maryland and Maryland Historical Trust, 2020, 79.

[66] Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 207-225. Johnson, "LGBTQ Business," 16-18, fn 59 and 60; "Aviva Stampfer," "Mt. Morris Turkish Baths (former)," Place Matters: Places That Matter, July 2010, http://www.placematters.net; Alan Feuer, "Mount Morris Journal; A Gay Bathhouse in Harlem? Hey, It's No Secret," *New York Times*, January 19, 2003. The Mount Morris Turkish Baths were at 1944 Madison Avenue, New York City, New York, and the Everard Turkish Bathhouse was located at 28 West 28th Street, New York City, New York. The Romanesque façade of the building remains mostly intact.

[67] Bérubé "Gay Bathhouses," 47; Gerald Fabian, interviewed by Willie Walker, 1989 and 1990, cited in Graves and Watson, "San Francisco," 25-17. Graves and Watson state that "Jack's Baths opened at 1052 Geary Boulevard near Van Ness Avenue in the mid-1930s, according to San Francisco city directories; the building is extant. In 1941, Jack's Turkish Baths moved one block to 1143 Post Street, where it remained until it closed in the 1980s (extant)."

[68] John D'Emilio, *Sexual Politics, Sexual Communities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), 26-27.

[69] The Embarcadero YMCA was located at 169 Steuart St. Between mission and Howard. Baim, "Sex," 17-30. Also see for example the Sloane House YMCA, 356 West 34th Street, New York City.

[70] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 109.

[71] Moira Rachel Kenny, *Mapping Gay LA: the Intersection of Place and Politics* (Temple University press 2001); Ricardo J. Brown, *The Evening Crowd at Kirmsers: a Gay Life in the 1940s* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003). Kirmsers could be found at 382 N Wabasha St. in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Thomas Noel, "Gay Bars & the Emergence of the Denver Homosexual Community," *The Social Science Journal* XV (April 1978): 59-74.

[72] Top of the Mark is still located in the Mark Hopkins Hotel, 999 California Street, San Francisco, California; Astor Bar was located in Hotel Astor on Broadway between Forty-Fourth and Forty-Fifth Streets, New York City, New York. Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 125-126; Boyd, *Wide-Open Town*, 115-116, 125.

like St. Paul, Denver, Cleveland, Kansas City, Atlanta, and many others.[73] Many clubs and bars across the U.S. "went gay" after hours. Bishop's Tap Room in Oklahoma City was a straight club most hours, but later in the evening it became, according to historian Aaron Bachhofer, "the spot for gays and lesbians to socialize, commune, and get picked up."[74] Yet at other bars like Ralph Martins in Buffalo, the San Remo in New York City, and the Rendezvous Room at the Hotel Muehlebach in Kansas City, lesbians and gays mixed with straight customers.[75] Most of these establishments were easiest for White gay (but straight-passing) men to access. For people of color, effeminate men, and White lesbians, gaining entry into any gay bar—much less finding bars that catered to them—was far more difficult.[76]

Historian David Johnson notes that lesbian bars and those for and owned by queer people of color faced a distinctive set of challenges.[77] Besides the general cultural prohibition against women gathering in commercial establishments to drink and the economic hurdles for prospective women business owners, the home front's sexualized culture posed an obstacle to developing lesbian bars. Newspapers and other popular media helped spread the government's campaign against Victory girls, young women officials accused of promiscuity with soldiers and blamed for spreading venereal diseases. The widespread censure of Victory girls questioned the motivations of any group of women hoping to socialize in hotel lobbies, bars, or other public spaces. Similarly, the deep anxiety about the social dynamics of the war creating lesbians, especially in the military, made women's efforts to socialize that much more difficult. Therefore, many lesbians frequented supposedly "men only" gay bars.[78] While there were negatives to not having their own places, the era's aggressive sexism meant that lesbians in bars could be threatened by rejected heterosexual men. In these instances, having gay male allies to provide cover could be useful.[79] Not all gay bars, however, welcomed women, lesbian or straight.[80]

There were a few lesbian bars on the home front, especially in larger cities like Philadelphia, Detroit, Washington, and of course San Francisco and New York City.[81] The best known was Mona's 440 Club, which opened at 440 Broadway in San Francisco in 1938. Mona's described itself as a place "where girls will be boys" and was the most popular lesbian bar in the city.[82]

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[73] Meyer and Sikk, "Introduction," 3-24.

[74] Aaron Lee Bachhofer, "The Emergence and Evolution of the Gay and Bisexual Male Subculture in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1889-2005" (PhD dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 2006), 116. Oklahoma City queer folk also felt at home at Pat's, Green Pastures, and the Mayflower. By the post-war, there were several other possibilities in the city.

[75] Springate, "LGBTQ Civil Rights in America," 18-11, 18-12, fn. 29, 30, www.nps.gov/subjects/tellingallamericansstories/lgbtqthemestudy.htm. The Horseshoe (no longer extant), near the Mayflower Hotel at Seventeenth Street NW, Washington, DC attracted gays and lesbians during the same era.

[76] Baim, "Sex," 17-31.

[77] Johnson, "LGBTQ Business," 16-2.

[78] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 113.

[79] Rory Thorpe, "The Changing Face of Lesbian Bars in Detroit, 1938-1965," in *Creating A Place for Ourselves*, 167.

[80] Beemyn, "Queer Capitol," 186. Johnson, "LGBTQ Business," 16-2.

[81] Stein, *The City of Sisterly and Brotherly Loves*, 61-69; Beemyn, "A Queer Capital," 185-188; Thorpe, "The Changing Face of Lesbian Bars in Detroit," 166-178; Kennedy and Davis, *Boots of Leather*.

[82] Graves and Watson, "San Francisco," 25-14.

Figure 4.4: Mona's 440 Broadway, San Francisco. Photo courtesy of (Wide Open Town History Project Records 2003-05), Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

In New York City, the Howdy Club operated at 17 West 3rd Street and welcomed patrons during the 1930s and into World War II.[83] Jay Shockley's research for the NPS LGBTQ theme study found that the area along W 3rd Street in New York City housed an unusual density of lesbian bars and commercial establishments. These included Lewis Luncheon, Tony Pastor's Downtown, Swing Rendezvous, and Ernie's Restaurant (also known as the 3 Ring Circus).[84] In Buffalo, Galante's, which opened in the 1930s at 109 Wilkerson Street was the best known lesbian establishment.[85] Los Angeles was home to the Lake Shore Club, known for its all-girl band, which played each weekend, and the IF club, another gathering spot for a predominantly lesbian clientele.[86]

A significant number of home front gay bars had also operated before the war. Louisa's in Atlantic City (also known as the Entertainers Club) opened in the 1920s and continued through World War II.[87] The White Horse Inn, at 6651 Telegraph Avenue in Oakland, California, and Café Lafitte in Exile, 901 Bourbon Street, New Orleans, Louisiana, opened in 1933 after the repeal of

[83] Springate, "LGBTQ Civil Rights," 18-11, fn 29.
[84] Jay Shockley, "Preservation of LGBTQ Historic and Cultural Sites: a New York City Perspective," in *LGBTQ America*, 26-19, 26-21–26-23. A number of other Lesbian bars opened in this area soon after the war ended.
[85] Springate, "LGBTQ Civil Rights," 18-11, fn 29.
[86] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 113.
[87] Bryant Simon, "The Life and Death of Gay Spaces in Atlantic City, New Jersey, 1920-1990," *Journal of Urban History* 28, no. 3 (2002): 303-306.

Prohibition.[88] As of 2024, both remain in business. The Double Header Tavern, at 407 Second Avenue Ext S, in Seattle's Pioneer Square opened in 1934 and closed in 2015.[89] There were others, too, including numerous purportedly straight bars, like Kirmser's in St. Paul, that looked the other way and became safe spaces beginning in the Depression.[90]

The history of a Detroit establishment, the Sweetheart Bar, shows one way that bisexuals integrated into the larger gay and lesbian bar scene.[91] Rory Thorpe's research found that the bar, which opened in 1939, was divided into four sections. The front area was a neighborhood bar that attracted heterosexual people. Behind a set of double doors was the rest. First was a space for dancing and drag shows. The queer clientele knew it was safe for two men or two women to dance together there, but there were often heterosexual couples who came into the space for voyeuristic entertainment. The space behind the dance floor was for bisexuals. The last quadrant of the bar was where lesbians and gays socialized.[92] Bisexuals were seen by some as both a buffer and liminal. The ability to return easily to heterosexual life was supposedly one of the significant differences between them and gays and lesbians. However, many bisexuals did not see their identity in these terms. Their deep need for emotional and physical intimacy with male and female lovers was fundamental to who they were.

In most places, gay and lesbian bars faced challenges from law enforcement, the government, and straight society to stay open, making the longevity of the above establishments especially remarkable. In the lead up to an ominous decision for gay bars before the war, the Gloria Bar and Grill in New York City tried to prevent its liquor license from being revoked. The bar unsuccessfully argued that "there is no rule or regulation . . . which provides that a sex variant may not be served." As Marc Stein notes, the effort to overturn the decision should be understood as refuting "the criminalization of LGBTQ acts, identities and communities" and, therefore, a claim for civil rights.[93]

During the war, police periodically cracked down on gay bars. In May 1943, seven Milwaukee bars were raided, and more than half closed for the remainder of the war. Undercover detectives constantly surveilled those that survived. As in other cities, authorities were especially attuned

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[88] "Lafittes," https://lafittes.com/, accessed June 6, 2023. Madeline Wells, "The Fascinating History of Oakland's White Horse, the Bay Area's oldest gay bar," *SFGate*, June 25, 2021, https://www.sfgate.com/bars/article/White-Horse-oldest-gay-bar-Bay-Area-history-16269812.php. Countess Vivian discusses Black gay bars and Black drag in New Orleans before the war in his interview with E. Patrick Johnson. Johnson, *Sweet Tea*, 483-85.

[89] Springate, "LGBTQ Civil Rights," 18-11. Café Lafitte in Exile was added to the NRHP on October 15, 1966 and designated as an NHL on December 21, 1965. Yani Robinson, "One Last Inning for the Double Header," *Jetspace Magazine*, December 31, 2015, http://jetspacemagazine.com/last-inning-for-the-double-header, as cited in Gail Dubrow, "Considering New National Register Districts Associated with LGBTQ Communities," in *LGBTQ America*, 05-19–05-21; Nancy Wick, "Geographer Puts Gays, Lesbians on the Map," *UW Today*, July 22, 2004, http://www.washington.edu/news/2004/07/22/geographer-puts-gays-lesbians-on-the-map. Note the problem of gay districts and cities, which do not often align with normal neighborhood boundaries as used by historic preservation organizations.

[90] Brown, *The Evening Crowd*.

[91] The Sweetheart was located at 3928 3rd Street. Thorpe, "The Changing Face of Lesbian Bars in Detroit," 167.

[92] Thorpe, "The Changing Face of Lesbian Bars in Detroit," 167-68.

[93] Stein, "Historical Landmarks," 19-9.

to establishments that drew in gay military personnel. In Milwaukee, gay sailors from the Great Lakes Naval Station frequented the gay bars on weekends. Wanting to punish gay men, but realizing that sailors were under the military's jurisdiction, state legislators targeted civilian gay men. Their moral panic spiked when a private group that studied gays and lesbians in the city found "to their shock nearly 1,000 homosexuals living in the Milwaukee area."[94] Speaking to the Wisconsin legislature, which was debating a 1945 bill allowing "confirmed sodomists" to be confined, Milwaukee's police chief urged lawmakers "to take these confirmed sodomites out of circulation and either cure them or isolate them."[95] The police chief had already begun an arrest campaign. In 1944, 198 of the men his department arrested for sodomy were convicted. That figure only includes those caught *in flagrante* and successfully prosecuted. That year, scores if not hundreds more gay men in Milwaukee were charged with and convicted of other crimes, like disorderly conduct.[96]

Authorities also cracked down on San Francisco, arguably the city with the most vibrant gay nightlife, as Nan Alamilla Boyd's foundational research shows.[97] The first wave began in the summer of 1942, driven by the military's concern about soldiers overindulging in alcohol and straight and gay sex. Eighty-eight establishments had their liquor license suspended or received citations, including Finocchio's, the Black Cat Cafe, and the Top of the Mark at the Mark Hopkins Hotel. At the beginning of 1943, the army and navy initiated a new code meant to regulate the leisure time of military personnel. Enforcement followed, and several establishments, including gay bars, had their "off limits" status removed. In May 1943, it was the civil government's turn to crack down. Local police, responding to politicians' concerns about moral laxity, closed a half dozen or more of the most prominent gay bars. Gays, bisexuals, and lesbians, fearing prosecution, moved to two night spots in Chinatown. Authorities were soon there, too. Jim Kepner, whose correspondence with Wally Jordan began this essay, reported that police seemed to be especially targeting bars where more campy gay men congregated. The community went underground for several weeks but returned after the fear died down. "By the spring of 1945," Allan Bérubé adds, "San Francisco's gay nightlife prospered once again in the old as well as in some new establishments."[98]

Facing persecution, gays and lesbians resisted by claiming space and creating bonds. Fundamentally, going to a gay or lesbian bar while knowing the government and society condemned you was an act of resistance and a claim of sexual sovereignty. Beyond this, both gay bars and patrons sometimes found creative ways to defeat wartime authorities. Military police in Chicago barred soldiers and sailors—fifty thousand of whom typically converged on the city each weekend—from visiting gay bars. Bar owners posted "off limits" signs to avoid further trouble from civilian and military police, but they knew that many gay military personnel used the locker clubs that had sprung up in the area and rented civilian clothes to GIs. Out of uniform, they more

94 Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 191.
95 Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 191.
96 Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 191. The bill did not pass but similar legislation did in 1947. This fits within the pattern of increasing persecution of gays from the end of the war and into the post-war.
97 Boyd, *Wide Open Town*, 112-116.
98 Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 125-126.

easily evaded detection and continued to frequent gay bars. Solidarity was a cornerstone to this culture of resistance and claim of worth and rights. That many of these men and women had joined the wartime fight, and that the war was cast as a struggle for freedom, further supported these shared beliefs.[99]

The unity gays and lesbians felt in defeating the authorities did not mean that the other divisions of American wartime society—including class, race, and gender—passed by them. The Crown Jewel in Los Angeles, well known as a gathering place for gay white-collar workers in the 1930s and 1940s, required a driver's license for entry to police the class identity of patrons.[100] They were far from alone. The bars at posh hotels, like the Town and Country at the Palmer House in Chicago, the Biltmore just off Los Angeles' Pershing Square, and the Top of the Mark at the Mark Hopkins in San Francisco, were known for allowing gay clientele, but not patrons of certain races or classes. These acts of bias, however, did not prove detrimental to their business given the structural racism that defined the American military and society. One White gay soldier remembered that at the Biltmore, by 6:00 PM, "the guys would be packed three-deep, the servicemen among them hoping to find a reason to make America worth coming back to."[101]

As these elite venues hint, many bars and restaurants, not just in the South, were segregated; gay bars were not an exception. Black GIs in New York, unwelcome in numerous establishments, headed uptown to the vibrant gay scene in Harlem. Lucky's Rendezvous began serving gay customers in December 1942. It was a "'narrow, smoky bar,' according to *Ebony*, that catered to an interracial clientele in an atmosphere 'steeped in the swish jargon of its many lavender [gay] customers.'"[102] In 1944, *Ebony* also published an article about the annual Harlem Drag Ball at the Fun Makers Social Club.[103] Interracial drag performances were a significant part of the entertainment scene on Chicago's South Side, and performances at the Cabin Inn and Finnie's Halloween Ball were featured in the *Chicago Defender*, *Ebony*, and *Jet*. As in other locales, Black performers and audience members faced discrimination, including from some White gays and lesbians.[104]

In other large cities, especially port towns, working class and non-White gay men (categories that often overlapped), including GIs, frequented a variety of establishments. The Blue Jacket and Bradley's in San Diego, The Cavalier in Long Beach, The Silver Rail and The Old Crow in San Francisco, and Pearl's in Oakland all catered to a blue-collar *and* multiracial clientele.[105] San Francisco's North Beach and Tenderloin neighborhoods became perhaps the most famous wartime sites for interracial socializing, but the venues also attracted a voyeuristic audience drawn to

[99] John D'Emilio and St. Sukie de la Croix, *Chicago Whispers: A History of LGBT Chicago Before Stonewall* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 161-162.
[100] The Crown Jewel was located at 932 South Hill Street, Los Angeles, California, but has since been demolished.
[101] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 113-14; D'Emilio and de la Croix, *Chicago Whispers*, 162. The Dome at the Sherman hotel in Chicago is another example of this trend.
[102] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 116.
[103] Jeffrey A. Harris, "'Where We Could Be Ourselves': African American LGBTQ Historic Places and Why They Matter," in *LGBTQ America*, 13-17–13-18.
[104] Jessica Herczeg-Konecny, "Chicago: Queer Histories at the Crossroads of America," in *LGBTQ America*, 29-16.
[105] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 114-16.

"sexualized and racialized nightclub performances."[106] It is difficult to know how many straight patrons changed their mind about their queer fellow citizens, but the crackdown on the LGBTQ community at the end of the war does not lend itself to an optimistic assessment. Nonetheless, these bars reveal noteworthy aspects of World War II LGBTQ history.

Drag Performance Spaces

Three gay bars in North Beach—the Black Cat Café, Mona's 440 Club, and Finocchio's—had national reputations for being welcoming and for their drag performers. All three were critical to creating gay and lesbian community identity during the war. Finocchio's drew large crowds from San Francisco's LGBTQ community and those passing through. The main attraction was its "famous female impersonators, such as Walter Hart, billed as the 'Male Sophie Tucker,' and Lucian Phelps, the 'Last of the Red Hot Pappas.'"[107]

Drag was widely practiced in the United States, both among civilians and the military. National and local magazines reported about male or female impersonators or drag functions. Hollywood films regularly showcased major stars in such roles. Broadway shows also played with gender stereotypes by including male and female impersonation and non-traditional gender arrangements. The *New York Post* positively portrayed these performances at theaters such as the Stage Door Canteen including impersonations by military men of some well-known Broadway women. The paper praised "Private Alan Manson's portrait of Jane Cowl acting as a stern House Mother while the Army boys flirt with the hostesses catches some of Miss Cowl's most fetching poses." Regarding another performer they opined, "Private Julie Oshins has apparently studied Gypsy Rose Lee's striptease technique carefully. He is charmingly literary about it.'"[108]

Virtually every city's nightlife scene included drag performers. Miami's featured male and female impersonators. The clubs along NW 2nd Avenue were associated with queer culture and drew visitors from across the city and beyond. The Jewel Box Review at the Embassy Hotel on Miami Beach had more than twenty impersonators.The show was so popular that it toured from Mexico to Canada just after the war. Some city authorities fought against establishing queer spaces, but the community nevertheless built a thriving culture based on the groundwork laid during the war.[109] Perhaps nothing indicates the popularity and significance of impersonation performance to the queer community better than gay men's organization of "drag parties" in homes, often in small towns.[110]

Allan Bérubé has contended that for gay men, performing in drag allowed them to live aspects of their sexuality in "open disguise" and with little public scorn. Doing so was vital to the gay community forming and enduring. In oral histories, gay men in San Francisco said they saw drag

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[106] Graves and Watson, "San Francisco," 25-12. Tenderloin examples from the period include: the Old Crow at 962 Market Street (extant), opened c. 1935, and the Silver Rail at 974 Market Street (partially extant), opened c. 1942.
[107] Graves and Watson, "San Francisco," 25-14.
[108] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 70-71.
[109] Julio Capó, Jr., "Locating Miami's Queer History," in *LGBTQ America*, 27-7–27-8.
[110] Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 184-85.

queens "as heroines because of their overt and unabashed queerness."[111] Some straight people also cheered "female impersonators." Because of their popularity, the government saw them as important to both civilian and military morale. Even military officials understood this, and protected performers from disparagement. For gay performers, the shows also created a support network and companionship.[112]

Figure 4.5: Enlisted female impersonators performing in Irving Berlin's 1942 Broadway "This is the Army." Courtesy National Archives NAID: 535774.

The military, however, did not support drag performance when it was clearly linked to LGBTQ identity. It targeted many gay bars known for their drag shows, including the Black Cat, which it made "off limits and out of bounds" during and after the war. The policy prohibited service members from visiting on or off duty. The bar was required to advertise its "off limits" status, which often had the opposite effect. Straight military personnel found such places tantalizing, while gay soldiers and sailors knew they could feel at home. Host José Sarria, a Latino World War II veteran, made the Black Cat even more famous just after the war.[113]

[111] Graves and Watson, "San Francisco," 25-14.

[112] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 67-95.

[113] The Black Cat was located at 710 Montgomery St, San Francisco, California. It is a contributing property to the Jackson Square Historic District, which was listed on the NRHP on November 18, 1971.

Sarria, whose mother had immigrated from Colombia, reported facing discrimination in the army for his ethnic background more than his sexuality, but with the growing assault on the gay community beginning in 1945, his sexuality was more explicitly targeted. Honorably discharged, he planned to be a schoolteacher but was caught up in an undercover police sting designed to entrap gay men. Although the police had no evidence of intimacy between Sarria and the other man they detained, the arrest was enough to prevent him from gaining a teaching credential. Sarria took a job waiting tables and hosting at the Black Cat and soon used his opera training to perform wildly popular opera parodies in drag. Queer folks who witnessed Sarria's witty repartee with the bar's clientele said he "instilled a sense of cultural pride in gay patrons," including in those who had fought for their country but were increasingly seen as pariahs. A navy veteran recalled, "José was the first person to ever tell me that I was OK, that I wasn't a second-class citizen."[114] Sarria and the Black Cat's patrons famously closed the bar each night with their rendition of "God Save Us Nelly Queens," a riff on "God Save The Queen." Poet Allen Ginsberg described the Black Cat as "maybe the greatest gay bar in America."[115] Like many other gay bars, patrons often described it in even more meaningful terms: "the Black Cat was not a bar. It was family."[116]

Like other North Beach institutions, Mona's had a reputation for cross gender entertainment, with performers presenting as male.[117] During the war, Gladys Bentley, a Black drag king and lesbian who had been active since the Harlem Renaissance, had a successful career in San Francisco, where she featured at the Black Cat and especially at Mona's 440. According to Boyd, Mona's advertised Bentley's performances by describing her as "America's sepia piano artist" and the "brown bomber of sophisticated songs." The popularity of Mona's led to other lesbian and gay bars opening in North Beach, although in other places, women impersonating men were deemed a particular threat to normative society.[118]

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[114] In 1961, Sarria ran for San Francisco city supervisor as an openly gay candidate. After the bar was closed in 1964, he founded the International Imperial Court System, one of the largest LGBTQ organizations in the world. Boyd, *Wide-Open Town*, 56-60; National Park Service, "Jose Sarria," Golden Gate National Recreation Area, https://www.nps.gov/people/jose-sarria.htm, accessed May 2, 2024.

[115] Boyd, *Wide-Open Town*, 56-60; Johnson, "LGBTQ Business and Commerce," 6-8.

[116] Michael Robert Gorman, *The Empress is a Man: Stories from the Life of José Sarria* (Philadelphia: Rutledge, 2013); Boyd, *Wide-Open Town*, 16-17. Stein, "Historical Landmarks," 19-18. Like numerous other gay bars in the United States, the Black Cat was owned by a straight man, Sol Stoumen, who achieved one of the first significant gay rights victories in 1951 by defeating those that took away the bar's liquor license based on it being a "hangout for homosexuals." The California Supreme Court found in favor of Stouman, establishing the legality for a public restaurant or bar in California to serve gays and lesbians. Revocation a liquor license could only occur if evidence of immoral or illegal activity was presented. This ruling became a precedent for the right of assembly for homosexuals. It did not, however, stop bar raids from increasing.

[117] Graves and Watson, "San Francisco," 25-14.

[118] Boyd, *Wide-Open Town*, 63-76; Springate, "LGBTQ Civil Rights," 18-12, fn 31. For more on Bentley, see Gregory Conerly, "Swishing and Swaggering: Homosexuality in Black Magazines during the 1950s," in *The Greatest Taboo: Homosexuality in Black Communities*, ed. Delroy Constantine-Simms (New York: Alyson Books, 2001).

Figure 4.6: Staff and performers at Mona's 440 Club, circa 1940s. Mona's operated throughout WWII as a well-known lesbian-oriented bar "where girls will be boys." Courtesy of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society

In January 1943 for example, a nineteen-year-old woman, "Jackie" Bross, who was of Cherokee descent and worked as a machinist at a Chicago plant, was arrested on her way home from work for wearing male attire. Her reasoning for doing so was simple, she told the judge: men's clothing was "more comfortable than women's clothes and handy for work."[119] The judge nonetheless demanded she see a psychiatrist for six months. The Chicago City Council, realizing many women were wearing men's work clothes, soon amended the 1851 ordinance that prohibited cross dressing, which had led to Bross being arrested. Ignoring this, Chicago police continued to arrest those they deemed to be wearing clothes inappropriate for their perceived gender.[120] They were not alone. In numerous places on the home front authorities targeted people they saw as impersonators.[121] This fit a pattern of repression that spanned the first four decades of the 20th century and especially targeted individuals and businesses in working class parts of the city like Towertown.

[119] Herczeg-Konecny, "Chicago," 29-4.

[120] Herczeg-Konecny, "Chicago," 29-3, 29-5. The amendment Herczeg-Konecny writes "exclude[d] those people who did not intend to use clothing to conceal their sex."

[121] Surprisingly, there was not an earlier history of such bans. In 1933, the mayor of Atlantic City forbade drag shows, which had been popular at the city's Pansy Club and Cotton Club. Bryant Simon, "The Life and Death of Gay Spaces in Atlantic City, New Jersey, 1920-1990," *Journal of Urban History* 28, no. 3 (2002): 303-306.

Alfred Kinsey was also interested in LGBTQ communities. The interviews he conducted in Chicago formed the basis for his research on human sexuality. They confirmed that the city had a thriving queer subculture. That subculture included spaces where lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and individuals who would come to be identified as transgender felt welcome, even in the face of official hostility.[122]

Transgender and Non-binary History and the Home Front

Homes, bars, and, more distinctively, clinics were central sites for World War II transgender history. The medical practices today associated with transgender identity, namely hormone therapy and gender-affirming surgery, were not widely known in the United States until Christine Jorgensen's story emerged in the 1950s.[123] However as early as the 1840s, surgeons conducted what is now known as plastic surgery on individuals born with "anomalous genitals." Such procedures were not made available to those who wanted their entire body to align with their gender until the early 1900s, and then only in Europe.[124] Sex hormone therapy and its ability to offer body modification was discovered in the second decade of the 20th century and became available commercially in the 1930s.[125] In that decade, Dr. Harry Benjamin, who had offices in New York and San Francisco, was perhaps the best-known physician associated with these treatments. Benjamin, who is credited with popularizing the term "transsexual," argued for medical rather than psychiatric intervention and defended gay and lesbian rights.

Dr. Benjamin's San Francisco office in the medical dental building at 450 Sutter Street was only one of several clinics in the city important to transgender people during the war.[126] Langley Porter Clinic, established at UCSF in March 1943, increased San Francisco's prominence as a hub for critical research on gender and sexuality. Carl Bowman served as the first director. With Louise Lawrence, discussed below, and others, Bowman studied gay soldiers and sailors whose homosexuality had become known during the war. They were held in the psychiatric ward at the U.S. Naval hospital on Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay, a clear representation of how the military and civilians often treated non-normative gender identity.[127] Louise Lawrence's recollections of the Langley Porter Clinic's highly medicalized atmosphere reinforce why it did not directly foster community.[128]

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[122] Herczeg-Konecny, "Chicago," 29-4–29-7.

[123] Joanne J. Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed : A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 51-53.

[124] Suggesting the importance of movements, networks, and community development, Merowitz argues that surgical procedures were only available in Germany during this period not because of that country's technological acumen, but "because Germany had a vocal campaign for sexual emancipation." Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 21 (for quote) and 30.

[125] Elizabeth Reis, *Bodies in Doubt: An American History of Intersex* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012); Nelly Oudshoorn, *Beyond the Natural Body: an Archaeology of the Sex Hormones* (New York: Routledge 1994).

[126] Susan Stryker, "Dr. Harry Benjamin," GLBTQ Encyclopedia.com, 2015. The building was listed on the NRHP on December 22, 2009.

[127] Stryker, *Transgender History*, 41-44. Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 144.

[128] Louise Lawrence, "Autobiography of Louise Lawrence (manuscript draft with penciled revisions)," 80, in Louise

Bars and homes facilitated the connections critical to trans community building. Bars and military performance spaces that supported drag performance provided crucial spaces for not only gays, lesbians, and bisexuals, but also individuals who would come to be understood as transgender or gender non-binary, to be their true selves. Parties in homes could provide something similar, where transgender and gender non-binary people could experiment with what they and others at the time called "impersonation."[129] And they could be a different kind of refuge. During the war, Louise Lawrence's home in Haight Ashbury became a "waystation for transgender people from across the country who sought access to medical procedures in California."[130]

Lawrence, who began living as a transgender woman when she moved from Berkeley to San Francisco in 1944, was especially critical to developing a national and international transgender community support system. She placed personal ads in newspapers and contacted individuals arrested for gender impersonation to build an expansive network. Lawrence also lectured at the University of California San Francisco and collaborated with Carl Bowman, Harry Benjamin, and Alfred Kinsey as they sought to establish the legitimacy of what would be called transgender identity.[131] Florence Winter's story underscored how important the Bay Area community support was. Winter traveled to Berlin and found support for their desire to transition from female to male but when the war began, was compelled to return to their Chicago home, where they felt forced to return to living as a lesbian.[132] But San Francisco could be far from welcoming. Police harassed and arrested transgender and gender non-binary individuals, often at the behest of cisgender heterosexual residents.[133]

Dr. Margaret Chung, whose home in San Francisco hosted countless soldiers, offers another example of the politics of intersectional non-normative gender identity. Born in 1899 in Santa Barbara, Chung became the first Chinese American surgeon in the 1920s. Chung was also known for wearing "men's" clothes and driving a sports car.[134] Her large soirees for soldiers passing through San Francisco became famous. She was known as "Mom Chung" to the men she in-

Lawrence Collection, Box I, Series A, Folder 3, K113, Kinsey Institute. Copy of notes from that source taken by Jules Gill-Peterson and provided by Ms. Bob Davis, housed at Louise Lawrence Transgender Archive. My thanks to Professor Jules Gill-Peterson and Ms. Bob Davis for sharing these notes.

[129] Regarding house "drag parties" Louise Lawrence writes of the first she attended well before the war: ""Here I was in just the position I thought I had dreamed of: to be able to go places in female clothing and be accepted. Not necessarily accepted as a girl because I had clothes on but as a person." Lawrence also used, as did many others, transvestite as a term to describe what we would today call transgender. Lawrence, "Autobiography," 11, 43 (quote), 72, 76-77.

[130] Susan Stryker, *Transgender History* (New York: Seal Press, 2008), 41-44. Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*,144.

[131] Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 243. Lawrence, 94. Lawrence was drafted and then rejected based on her transgender identity after a Langley Porter clinician interceded (84).

[132] Florence Winter is the pseudonym Meyerwitz's uses to recount this history. Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed*, 29-30.

[133] Lawrence, "Autobiography," 96.

[134] Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, *Doctor Mom Chung of the Fair-Haired Bastards: The Life of a Wartime Celebrity* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005), 105-107. The 1929 San Francisco city directory lists Chung as living at 340 Stockton Place (now demolished). See *Crocker-Langley San Francisco City Directory, 1929* (San Francisco, CA: R. L. Polk and Co., 1928).

vited to her home for rest and relaxation while they were on leave.[135] Chung also advocated for women in uniform. She vociferously supported establishing the WACs and WAVES. She hoped to join the latter, but government assessors refused her application based on her race and rumored lesbianism, cited in her naval intelligence service report. That rumor spread far enough that in 1943, the Professional Women's Club of San Francisco requested that she resign.[136] Nonetheless, she remained a cornerstone of the queer community during the war and alongside Pauli Murray, Bayard Rustin, and Jiro Onuma, became a key ancestor for many queer activists of color in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century.[137]

[135] Tzu-Chun Wu, *Doctor Mom*, 120-125. *Crocker-Langley*, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945. In 1942 Chung's home was in the Telegraph Hill neighborhood of San Francisco; from 1943 to 1945 she is listed as living in what is now the Lone Mountain neighborhood, according to the city directory. Her medical practice was located at 752 Sacramento Street, in San Francisco's Chinatown.

[136] Judy Tzu-Chun Wu, *Doctor Mom*, 171-172. Scholars have speculated about Chung's sexuality based on connections with well-known lesbians in the community. Some believe she had an intimate relationship with Sophie Tucker, an actor, in the 1940s.

[137] Though Rustin may have been inspired by World War II rights activism, his actions during the war already evidenced a powerful ethical and moral compass, as well as an affinity for large scale social justice efforts. Besides his work with A. Philip Randolph on the March on Washington movement, which targeted racial discrimination in wartime hiring and the military and led to Executive Order 8802, which prohibited discrimination in federal and war-related employment. Randolph canceled the march, though Rustin wanted it to continue. He next went to California to try to protect the property of Japanese American incarcerees. He returned to the east and was arrested for trying to integrate interstate transportation. He was arrested and beaten in Tennessee, an event that prompted him to publicly announce his homosexuality. Shortly after he helped found CORE. Rustin spent 1944 to 1946 in jail as a conscientious objector. John D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004). Eric Ledell Smith, "Bayard Rustin". *Encyclopedia of African American History*. Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2010, pp. 1002–1004. Rustin would have met Pauli Murray while working with CORE if not earlier. Murray, another queer pioneer of color, created the term Jane Crow in 1941 in response to the sexism she faced at Howard University's law school. During the war, Murray and her girlfriend were arrested for trying to integrate a bus. She also participated in sit-ins against the segregationist policies of a number of Washington, DC restaurants. Murray is also known for her opposition to a segregated U.S. military. Some consider Murray transgender. Her home in North Carolina is designated a National Historic Landmark. There is an extensive historiography about Murray. See for example Sarah Azaransky, *The Dream Is Freedom: Pauli Murray and American Democratic Faith* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). Among the more than 100,000 Japanese Americans incarcerated at so-called relocation centers away from the Pacific Coast was Jiro Onuma. Onuma collected "homoerotic kitsch" and Tina Takemoto 's research suggests that while held at the Topaz incarceration camp outside of Delta, Utah, he may have had a lover named Ronald. Though there were surely far more gays and lesbians caught up in the U.S. government's "relocation" activities, Onuma is among the few found in the extant historical archive. Tina Takemoto, "Looking for Jiro Onuma: A Queer Meditation on the Incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 20, no. 3 (2013): 241-275. The ethics of shining a light on Onuma are worthy of pondering. Privacy around sexual identity was even more challenging for people of color, especially those from colonized communities, who had "more precarious relationships to individual property and identity," as Andrew Leon notes in his argument for an epistemology of the "pocket" rather than the closet, which theorists have you used to describe the situation facing queer White folks. Andrew Leong, "The Pocket and the Watch: A Collective Individualist Reading of Japanese-American Literature," *Verge: Studies in Global Asias* 1, no. 2 (2015): 76-114. Cited in Amy Sueyoshi, "Breathing Fire: Remembering Asian Pacific American Activism in Queer History," in *LGBTQ America*, 11-10.

Conclusion

During World War II, gays, bisexuals, lesbians, and transgender individuals faced policies that technically excluded them from enlisting in the military.[138] As patriotic Americans, they sought workarounds. In many instances, their straight comrades knew of their sexuality. Especially during times of high stress, including combat, biases against queer people based on their sexuality or gender identity were put aside, allowing them to be judged on their merit. Countless served with distinction.[139] Queer people who worked in war production or other home front sectors also faced legal codes that did not allow them to fully express their identity or to love who they chose. However, life on the home front could be deeply fulfilling, as many found out they were not alone. Ultimately, many of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Americans who experienced the World War II home front, either as civilians or in the military, would have agreed with historian Steve Estes that "the Second World War has come to be seen as a largely positive turning point in modern queer history."[140] As Meyer and Sikk write, "The effects of the war on the latter half of twentieth-century LGBTQ history cannot be overstated. The war years were crucial for thousands of LGBTQ to understand who they were and to be more certain than ever in their identities and collective interests, erotic or otherwise."[141]

Nonetheless, we should be careful to not underestimate how queer identity remained repressed during World War II. Robert Peters wrote in his memoir that he suppressed his sexual identity because of the derogatory messages that society sent about gay men. When a wartime friend confronted him, Peters insisted "I'm not queer."[142] For men who were outed, the dynamic often changed in telling ways. A study of twenty-one gay men at Truax Army Airfield in Wisconsin showed that in wartime, homosexuals renounced straight authorities' assertion that they were sick. They claimed their sexuality while expressing "a realistic anxiety that their homosexuality would lead to court martial."[143] For Peters, it would not be until well after World War II that he finally felt comfortable revealing his sexuality. This was "a pattern that was not uncommon among gay veterans," writes historian R. Richard Wagner. The reason was simple: many soldiers, including Peters, wanted "a return to normal life," and they knew that was not something allowed for gays or lesbians.[144]

As the often-fleeting moments of wartime tolerance gave way to full-scale backlash, many gay soldiers fought dishonorable blue discharges assigned to them because of their sexual orientation.

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[138] A 1941 U.S. military policy did not allow homosexuals to enlist. In 1942, the rules were adjusted to bar even more individuals: men who undertook homosexual acts "habitually or occasionally" or even had "feminine" characteristics. Over the following two years, as the need for soldiers, sailors, and marines increased, these policies were loosened. However, with victory on the horizon in 1945, government officials once again banned homosexuals. The Veterans Administration likewise announced that anyone discharged for homosexual activity was ineligible for veterans' benefits. Canaday, *Straight State*, 137-173.

[139] Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 189.

[140] Estes, "LGBTQ Military Service," 20-7.

[141] Meyer and Sikk, "Introduction," 3-24.

[142] Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 178-80.

[143] Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 194.

[144] Wagner, *We've Been Here*, 178-80.

Their treatment during discharge included for many being held in specially constructed holding areas, which made clear their identities were again being criminalized and the desire by many inside and outside of the military to humiliate and punish them.[145] A sizable number of gay and lesbian veterans returned to the port cities that had welcomed them during the war, because of their vibrant queer communities. Others worked even harder to assimilate and find space in the towns and cities they came to call home. As Allan Bérubé writes, they expanded their closets.[146]

In the early years of the Cold War, yet another wave of repression—the Lavender Scare—occurred as anti-communists went after gays and lesbians in government and the culture industry, arguing they were likely to be communists or be easily manipulated by communists. More fundamentally, these homophobes asserted that queer identity was anti-American.[147] This was yet another period that queer folks had to survive.[148] They continued to find ways to widen their world. Eventually, they helped form a new vanguard in the fight for LGBTQ civil rights. Without question, World War II and the sites that defined it on the home front were an immensely important catalyst in this fight.

[145] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 139-142, 180, 228-230; Canaday, *Straight State*, 137-173.
[146] Bérubé, *Coming Out*, 256, 271.
[147] There's a large literature on Cold War anti-gay crackdowns. See David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2004); Lillian Faderman, *The Gay Revolution: the Story of the Struggle* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2015). Benjamin Sumner Welles worked under President Roosevelt and was released from duty in 1943 for rumors about his sexuality. Ferentinos and Egerman, "Maryland," 82.
[148] The Dr. Franklin E. Kameny Residence, listed on the NRHP, represents this history. https://www.nps.gov/places/kameny-residence.htm

Disability History of the World War II Home Front

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, partially paralyzed due to polio, was the most famous and powerful disabled person on the World War II home front. Roosevelt's relationship to disability during the war years, much like the nation's, was complicated and shaped by pre-war experiences. Popular understanding maintains that Roosevelt did not like to be photographed using his wheelchair or in any other way that revealed his paralysis and reliance on assistants. This notion is based on the assumption that Roosevelt believed disability represented weakness. National Park Service (NPS) researchers at his home in Hyde Park, New York, however, have found Great Depression- and World War II-era evidence that complicates this perception.[1] Prior to becoming president, Roosevelt established a therapeutic center for people with polio at Warm Springs, Georgia, in 1927. The design of the grounds and buildings, guided by Roosevelt, made it accessible to wheelchair users and, by normalizing disability, it became a place where disabled people felt welcome and forged friendships and community. Roosevelt also supported research and treatment for disabled people. In 1938, he helped found one of the major organizations focused on disability in the United States, the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis (NFIP), later renamed the March of Dimes. NFIP helped fund prevention and therapy studies, as well as braces, wheelchairs, and iron lungs for people with polio who could not afford assistive devices.[2]

Warm Springs also represents Roosevelt's contradictions. The hot springs and treatments offered relief, and it helped some disabled people develop community. However that community was only available to "an elite group of the disabled," which, for the vast majority of the Depression and the war, did not include working class or people of color.[3] Likewise, his administration's Works Progress Administration (WPA) refused to employ disabled people on relief work, prompting the League for the Physically Handicapped to conduct one of the first significant disability rights protests in the 1930s.[4]

Despite these contradictions, many disabled Americans on the home front expected Roosevelt—and his administration—to be friendly to their plight. In October 1942, for instance, Bay Crockett, who used crutches and could not walk for more than a short distance, wrote to the President about his need for more gas rationing coupons to continue being a breadwinner for his family. "Like many others with mobility disabilities," he needed to use his vehicle to get to work and was worried he would lose his job because of gas rationing.[5] Another disabled correspondent,

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1 My thanks to Frank H. Futral for this information.

2 Kaye Minchew. "Roosevelt Warm Springs Institute for Rehabilitation." *New Georgia Encyclopedia*, last modified Jul 31, 2018, https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/science-medicine/roosevelt-warm-springs-institute-for-rehabilitation/, accessed April 3, 2024.

3 Naomi Rogers, "Race and the Politics of Polio: Warm Springs, Tuskegee, and the March of Dimes," *American Journal of Public Health* 97, no. 5 (May 2007): 787, 791. See too National Park Service "African Americans and the Hot Springs Baths," https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/african-americans-and-the-hot-springs-baths.htm and the "We Bathe the World" Oral History Project: https://www.nps.gov/hosp/learn/historyculture/we-bathe-the-world.htm

4 Paul K. Longmore and David Goldberger, "The League of the Physically Handicapped and the Great Depression: A Case Study in the New Disability History," *The Journal of American History* 87, no. 3 (Dec 2000): 888-922.

5 Kim E. Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012), 146.

Julia O'Brien, wrote to Roosevelt about how government policies affected her mobility, noting that since "you know what it means to have your wings clipped," she hoped he would be more sympathetic than other officials.[6] We do not know if or how the President responded. The historical record does show that, at times, he was an advocate for disabled Americans, particularly those who sought to contribute to the war production effort. It also shows that disabled advocacy groups were consistently frustrated at the slow progress during this influential period.

Research on World War II home front disability history is relatively new, but the scholarship reinforces the conclusion that, as Kim Nielsen argues in *A Disability History of the United States*, "World War Two had a profound impact on the disabled community as a whole."[7] More than ten million Americans became temporarily or permanently disabled through military and workplace injuries. Organizations focused on improving the lives of those disabled before the war grew, and new organizations were founded during the war. These developments, and the need for disabled people to participate in the labor force, increased attention on those with intellectual, sensory, and physical disabilities. The result was an array of new government and business policies. The war also created new therapeutic approaches and dramatically expanded the national infrastructure for rehabilitation. However, it is too simplistic to say that there was only progress. Disabled people and their allies hoped the conflict, with its call for all citizens to contribute to the war effort, would do much to eliminate the discrimination that they faced. They hoped the distinctive context of the home front could prompt improvements in treatment, accessibility, and views about disabled people. Like the President's relationship to his own disability, the reality was more complex. The fight for such improvements continued postwar—and continues today.

Given the centrality of the topic to home front disability history, this chapter focuses on work. The societal perception that an individual's ability to work determined their worth grew during World War II. This standard tended to further marginalize disabled Americans, but the need for workers also provided an opening for them and advocacy organizations to demand changes in attitudes, policies, and practices. Because the war was an engine of disablement, veterans' groups and labor unions joined disability advocacy organizations like the newly formed American Federation for the Physically Handicapped (AFPH) and became even more important voices in shaping disability discourse. Like the AFPH, they emphasized the need for vocational rehabilitation programs and the importance of access to paid work.

Several issues segmented and sometimes divided the home front disability community. One was whether military personnel and veterans should receive more attention and assistance. Another was how ability was linked to gender and race. Like the able-bodied community, ideologies of masculine authority and white supremacy shaped the disabled community. These ideologies and the practices they engendered limited the ability of organizations, the government, employers, and society to change in ways that improved the lives of all physically disabled people. Connecting work and an individual's worth also excluded intellectually disabled people. Several develop-

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[6] Quoted in Nielsen, *Disability History of the United States*, 147.

[7] Nielsen, *Disability History of the United States*, 146. For a brief overview see Jade Ryerson, "Disability and the World War II Home Front: Introduction," https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/disability-and-the-world-war-ii-home-front-introduction.htm

ments at the end of the war—the Allied liberation of German concentration camps and a growing focus on psychological or mental health among veterans and other supposedly non-disabled individuals—would likewise influence disability history. For both psychological and physical disability, the medical community, not disabled people themselves, would have the most influence on postwar policy.

To more fully elaborate on and contextualize changes wrought by the home front, this chapter weaves pre-World War II beliefs about disability, particularly those associated with work and war, into the wartime story. It begins with disabled Americans and the organizations that represented them, working to shape their world and influence what they believed had the best chance to improve their lives and government policy. It then looks at two of the most important federal policy areas: legislation that guided the military draft and that which determined the parameters of vocational training and rehabilitation.[8] Civilian rehabilitation, especially relating to the rapidly growing disabled population, is the chapter's next area of focus. Subsequently, it examines the creation of jobs for disabled workers and how gender and race impacted this process and their experiences. The military and Veterans Administration (VA) rehabilitation infrastructure and approach comprise the next portion of the chapter. Included here is a discussion of neuropsychological disability among armed forces personnel and veterans. The chapter then shifts to civilians with intellectual disabilities before concluding with developments from 1945 and into the postwar period.

Disability Organizations

Non-veteran organizations that advocated for physically disabled people, military and civilian alike, played a critical role in public debate and legislative initiatives during the war. Chief among them was the American Federation of the Physically Handicapped (AFPH), which emerged in 1940, headquartered in Washington, DC, with branches throughout the U.S. Although organizations like the National Association of the Deaf and the National Federation of the Blind were active during the war, the AFPH was distinctive for not focusing on one physical disability or identity group and for its prominence on the home front. Founder Paul Strachan, who became disabled in a car accident in 1929, believed in mobilizing the collective power of a wide variety of disabled individuals. As he put it, "the blind, deaf, hard of hearing, those with cardiac conditions, those with tuberculosis, arthritis, epileptics, those with poliomyelitis, those with cerebral palsy, amputees, and diabetics" should work together.[9] He argued that following an inclusive model of disability activism had the best chance of catalyzing significant change. As importantly, through activism and socializing the AFPH brought together people with different disabilities, helping to form a national community that supported each other in their ongoing fight.[10]

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[8] State level disability policies and initiatives are not covered in this chapter. But, as state agencies were often at the forefront of state and local developments, they should not be overlooked by public historians nominating sites—or by others interested in these stories.

[9] Quoted in Nielsen, *Disability History of the United States*, 151.

[10] Audra Jennings, *Out of the Horrors of War: Disability Politics in World War II America*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 4.

Notably, however, the AFPH did not include those with intellectual disabilities. Indeed, Strachan and other AFPH members emphasized physically disabled people's intellectual abilities. As the historian Audra Jennings notes, this choice "reified the notion that at least some kinds of disability justified exclusion, even as they sought to create an accessible state and dismantle, or at least reframe, disability exclusions."[11] Tacit racial exclusion was also a reality within the AFPH. The organization allowed segregated chapters and did not recognize the specific difficulties that disabled Black people faced.[12] Nonetheless, the AFPH impacted the experience of many disabled Americans on the home front. Jennings found that "thousands of disabled citizens" became politically engaged thanks to the AFPH. At the end of the war, the organization had chapters in almost ninety municipalities.[13] The organization's emergence as war loomed, and as projections about how many military personnel would become disabled and return to the home front, offered the AFPH an ideal context for publicity, growth, and to demand immediate change in how physically disabled Americans were treated.[14]

After the U.S. entered World War II, veterans' organizations, which emphasized the plight of former soldiers, joined the AFPH in playing a significant role in framing views about disability. Led by veterans of previous wars, the three main organizations were the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Disabled Veterans of America. Their focus became ensuring that disabled veterans received better support. During the 1920s and 1930s, veterans' organizations trained Americans to consider disability in relation to war in ways that benefitted veterans. The American Legion took the lead in what the historian John Kinder calls "*purposeful* remembering and forgetting."[15] The goal was to increase attention to the worthiness, sacrifices, and needs of veterans, not the larger disabled population. Eugenic arguments were mobilized as part of this veteran-focused campaign. These arguments–which used pseudo, often racist, scientific ideas to claim some people were genetically superior to others–also shaped ideas about disabled Americans generally and their work capabilities specifically. Eugenicist Charles Dight told the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* that "mental tests applied to 1,726,966 people of this country during the World War showed that 10 per cent of them had such a low intelligence and inborn mental capacity that most of them were rejected for war service. They were left to stay at home and breed their unfit kind. War always calls for and kills the best and leaves the poorest to reproduce."[16] The takeaway was clear—support veterans and hope other disabled people disappear.

Pre-World War II publicity campaigns about disabled veterans also had other, perhaps unforeseen, impacts. They taught a new generation of Americans to worry that war could cause disabil-

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[11] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors*, 4.

[12] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors*, 114-117. The AFPH did have Black chapters, like that in Atlanta. Jennings, 119.

[13] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors*, 3. Nielsen, *Disability History of the United States*, 152. AFPH grew most dramatic after the war. By 1947, it had 17,000 members and 16,000,000 by 1954. Jennings, 101-102.

[14] Audra Jennings, "Engendering and Regendering Disability: Gender and Disability Activism in Postwar America," in *Disability Histories*, Susan Burch and Michael Rembis, eds., (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 353.

[15] John Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies: American War and the Problem of the Disabled Veteran* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 213. Italics in original.

[16] C.F. Dight, "Public Pulse: Eugenics and the Next War," *Star Tribune*, March 17, 1924, 6. My thanks to Sarah Pawlicki for this source.

ity. For many citizens, they supported arguments that the nation should avoid war altogether.[17] This sentiment, grounded in the everyday examples of how combat could be disabling, became a cornerstone of the anti-militarism and isolationism that kept the nation's military small, outdated, and on the sidelines for longer than any other major power.[18] Those who wanted the U.S. to enter the war finally gained considerable traction beginning in 1940, with moments like the Battle of Britain seeing especially large shifts in public opinion. However a July 1941 Gallup Poll found 79 percent of Americans still did not want the U.S. to get involved in World War II.[19]

Anti-militarists argued for staying out of World War II using depictions of disabled veterans that promoted even more negative views of disability and disabled people.[20] In a late 1939 newspaper column, for example, Texas Catholic Pastor James Kirwin told his readers about "basket cases," quadruple amputee World War I soldiers who had to be transported in baskets. Kirwin wrote, "The basket case is helpless, but not useless. He can tell us what war is. He can tell us that if the United States sends troops to Europe, your son, your brother, father, husband, or sweetheart, may also be a basket case."[21] Kinder concludes that in "Kirwin's mind, mutilated soldiers were not heroes to be venerated; they were monstrosities."[22] In short, the images of disabled veterans that were meant to turn the audiences into anti-militarists also made them believe there was no more horrible fate than to be disabled, and that disabled veterans were beyond repair.[23]

Federal Disability Legislation

The Selective Training and Service Act (The Draft)

When peacetime conscription began in October 1940, the draft became the primary way the government and Americans assessed the relationship between war, work, and physical and intellectual abilities—and disabilities—of male citizens.[24] Officials designed the Selective Training and Service Act, which mandated that men register for the Selective Service System and guided its operation, with the nation's previous experience with veterans in mind. Civil War veterans had been instrumental in prompting the government to provide generous benefits to disabled veterans and their families.[25] In 1890, Congress recognized that war-induced disability often became an

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[17] Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 213-214.

[18] J.M. Kirwin, "Religious Musings," *Port Arthur News*, November 26, 1939, Sunday editorial, reproduced in part in Kinder, 215.

[19] Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 220-21.

[20] Angela M. Smith, *Hideous Progeny: Disability, Eugenics, and Classic Horror Cinema* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011).

[21] Kirwin, "Religious Musings."

[22] Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 215.

[23] Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 240-41. Other anti-war activists specifically customized messaging for teenagers, the next group of potential soldiers whose typical willingness to serve buttressed the case of militarists, that emphasized the bodily mutilation wrought by war. Rather than making boys into men, combat could lead to disability or bring the best of America home in body bags. Peace groups counted on youth's obsession with health and appearance to counter the mystique of going to war as life's great adventure.

[24] Matthew Basso, *Meet Joe Copper: Masculinity and Race on Montana's World War II Home Front* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 103-110.

[25] The nation's experience with war and the activism of disabled soldiers played a significant role in framing how

issue for veterans decades after their service and passed the Dependent and Disability Pension Act, which supported any U.S. Army soldier who had served ninety days or more. In her influential analysis of the origins of welfare policy, Theda Skocpol contends the act expanded disability pensions into a broader web of social support for older veterans.[26]

Suggestive of disabled veterans and their families' extensive needs, the price tag for the Dependent and Disability Pension Act and other veteran support was immense. At a time when the reach of the federal government was much more limited than in the twentieth century, the bureaucracy of veterans' care represented a major expansion. In 1893, officials calculated that approximately 41.5 percent of the national budget was supporting a little under one million veterans and/or their dependents. Between 1919 and 1940, over three billion dollars in taxes were distributed to Civil War pensioners, a figure that does not reflect the expense associated with the care and financial support now required by World War I veterans.[27] More present in public life than Civil War veterans—for example as apple sellers on city streets and through their petitioning for the payment of their bonuses which culminated in the Bonus March on Washington in 1932—World War I veterans reinforced the multiple ways war affected soldiers, families, and society.[28] They provided a new generation of veterans' advocates who shaped the political and cultural response to the U.S. potentially entering World War II.

The World War II selective service system aimed to reduce the likelihood that the government would have to care for disabled men by tightening the screening of potential conscripts for physical or psychological conditions. Evaluators screened eighteen million men. They rejected candidates for a host of medical reasons including obesity, malnourishment, flat feet, bad teeth and eyesight, and a history of illness.[29] Subjective beliefs about the connection between fitness and gender, race, class, and sexuality were part of the calculations for selective service. Local draft evaluation boards often categorized men of color as inferior, and therefore unfit to serve, based on racist stereotypes, as the chapter on Native American and Indigenous home front history in this volume elaborates.[30] Initial rejection rates of roughly 40 percent alarmed the public and offi-

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the government and society thought about disability in the years leading up to World War II—and during the war itself. The Civil War and World War I were both critical to this. For an excellent overview of this relationship see: Perri Meldon, "Military and Disability," National Park Service "Telling All Americans' Stories," Disability History series, https://www.nps.gov/articles/disabilityhistorymilitary.htm

[26] Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 128-151.

[27] Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 26.

[28] National Park Service, "Bonus Expeditionary Forces March on Washington," https://www.nps.gov/articles/bonus-expeditionary-forces-march-on-washington.htm, accessed April 2, 2024. Stephen R. Ortiz, *Beyond the Bonus March and GI Bill: How Veterans Politics Shaped the New Deal Era* (New York: New York University Press, 2009).

[29] Lt. Gen. Leonard D. Heaton, *Physical Standards in World War II* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967, 23. George Q. Flynn, *Lewis B. Hershey: Mr. Selective Service* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1985), 96.

[30] Jade Ryerson, "Unfit for Service: Physical Fitness and Civic Obligations in World War II," NPS Disability and the World War II Home Front, https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/unfit-for-service-physical-fitness-and-civic-obligation-in-world-war-ii.htm Rebecca Schwartz Greene, *Breaking Point: The Ironic Evolution of Psychiatry in World War II* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2023), 66-68.

cials. Nevertheless, the government continued to prioritize concerns about potentially inadequate military performance and an increased possibility of later disability among marginal candidates.[31]

Evaluators, often poorly trained, ascribed "neuropsychiatric disorders and emotional problems" to many of the men they screened. Ultimately 970,000 individuals would be deemed to have issues so significant that they were barred from service.[32] Roughly another 1,500,000 would be discharged from the military for neuropsychiatric reasons. Some of the diagnoses that lead to men failing their conscription medical exam or being removed from the armed forces have, for good reason, received significant attention. Dr. Winfred Overholser was among the group that wrote the psychiatric evaluation that included questions regarding sexual orientation. He was also superintendent of Saint Elizabeths Hospital, the first federally funded mental health institution in the United States. Overholser, who had worked for the U.S. Medical Corps Neuropsychiatric Section during World War I, served as president of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) during World War II.[33] He and Dr. Benjamin Karpman, another psychiatrist at Saint Elizabeths, held that allowing men and women with same-sex attraction to serve in uniform would harm the military. They linked queer identity with neuropsychiatric disability. Although they argued against categorizing homosexuality as a crime, they sought to "cure" homosexuals and subjected both civilians and military members to electroshock, lobotomy, and insulin induced coma therapies, psychoanalysis, and aversion methods. They also supported institutionalizing some queer people indefinitely because they were perceived as a threat to society.[34]

The American system of performing psychological examinations during conscription and often again during the induction process was a distinctive part of home front disability history for additional reasons.[35] These exams, which no other Allied or Axis nation undertook, illustrate the particular influence of psychology and psychiatry in the U.S. and its role in normalizing more than just heterosexuality. Psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan, who also helped create the conscrip-

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[31] Rachel Louise Moran, *Governing Bodies: American Politics and the Shaping of the Modern Physique* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 64; Ryerson, "Unfit for Service: Physical Fitness and Civic Obligations in World War II," NPS, Disability and the World War II Home Front, https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/unfit-for-service-physical-fitness-and-civic-obligation-in-world-war-ii.htm

[32] Richard Gabriel, *No More Heroes: Madness and Psychiatry at War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1988), 72, 74.

[33] Saint Elizabeths Was named a National Historic Landmark on December 14, 1990, but not for its part in World War II history. For more on Overholser, see: "Overholser, Winfred (1892-1964)," Harvard Square Library, https://www.harvardsquarelibrary.org/biographies/winfred-overholser/ "Dr. Winfred Overholser Dies; Developed Psychiatric Centers; Director of St. Elizabeth in Washington Treated Ezra Pound, the Poet," *The New York Times*, Oct 7, 1964, 47. Martin *Summers, Madness in the City of Magnificent Intentions: A History of Race and Mental Illness in the Nation's Capital*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 228. For more on the LGBTQ patients at Saint Elizabeths, see: "LGBTQ People Suffered Traumatic Treatments at St. Elizabeths Hospital for the Mentally Ill," *Washington City Paper*. For more on Karpman, see: Andy Steiner, "Once landfill-bound, the U of M's Benjamin Karpman Papers are a treasure trove of GLBT history," *MinnPost, June 19, 2017*, https://www.minnpost.com/mental-health-addiction/2017/06/once-landfill-bound-u-m-s-benjamin-karpman-papers-are-treasure-trove/

[34] Genny Beemyn, *A Queer Capital: A History of Gay Life in Washington, D.C.* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 135-137.

[35] Further reinforcing the subjective analysis that led to such diagnosis, women in the military were discharged for neuropsychiatric reasons at far higher rates than men, especially towards the end of the war. Greene argues that this reflects "growing society intolerance for women in the military." Greene, *Breaking Point*, 8.

tion psychological exam, succeeded in shaping it to attempt to identify American youth "worn out psychologically by the depression and imbued with rampant pacifism." Sullivan argued that young men showing signs of those issues would not be able to adjust to military life or, if they did, would not be able to smoothly return to civilian life.[36] Rebecca Schwartz Greene argues that, ultimately, the reasoning behind this belief was similar to that which sought to reject or remove LGBTQ individuals. The psychiatry program sought to identify "anyone suspected of, likely to, having a tendency to, or possibly being unable to adjust to military life." As she notes, this objective widened the parameters of what was considered mental illness with long term ramifications.[37] One of those ramifications was a wartime shift that tied mental health to support for the militarization of American society and culture, a theme developed more in the environmental history chapter of this volume.

Lack of enlistees eventually forced the Selective Service System to make well-publicized shifts in policy, including lowering physical evaluation standards, which brought more men, albeit often grudgingly.[38] Hence, while literary scholar Christina Jarvis is certainly right that the virile and capable soldier replaced the anxious Depression-era man to become the dominant image of White masculinity in American culture, there were considerable crosscurrents.[39] Men who were not in uniform were often denigrated as 4F—the draft classification which denoted a candidate was physically, mentally, or morally unfit for service.[40] Some disabled men were frustrated at being included in the condemnation of men who were not serving, believing they would be an asset to the military. One deaf man said, "I felt a little injustice. I wanted to join, but I was told that I couldn't because I'm deaf. Hearing people who didn't want to join were told they had to, but many deaf people felt that they could serve. If some hearing people wanted to get out, we would have been happy to take their place."[41] This assertion of patriotism was not unusual. Disabled Americans showed their patriotism by contributing to war loan funds, scrap drives, taking part in Red Cross events, and planting Victory Gardens.[42]

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[36] Greene, *Breaking Point*, 2.

[37] Greene, *Breaking Point*, 3-4.

[38] Eli Ginzberg, *The Lost Divisions: The Ineffective Soldier, Lessons for Management and the Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), 27, 35; David M. Kennedy, *The American People in World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 285; Ramy A. Mahmoud et al, "Evolution of Military Recruit Accession Standards," in *Military Preventive Medicine: Mobilization and Deployment*, Volume 1, Colonel Patrick Kelley, ed. (Washington D.C.: Office of the Surgeon General, 2003), 150-151; Basso, *Meet Joe Copper*, 95-128.

[39] Christina Jarvis, *The Male Body at War: American Masculinity during World War II* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois Press, 2004), 3-6, and 146-148 on racialization. Basso, *Meet Joe Copper*, 95-128.

[40] Jarvis, *Male Body at War*.

[41] Deaf People World War II, "Eric Malzuhn," from Deaf Mosaic, hosted by Gil Eastman and Mary Lou Novitksy, YouTube video, 0:03:44 or Gallaudet Video Services, https://media.gallaudet.edu/media/Deaf+Mosaic+104/1_fjckxwq0, 0:08:43. Cited in Jade Ryerson, "Disabled defense workers on the World War II home front," NPS, Disability and the World War II Home Front, https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/disabled-defense-workers-on-the-world-war-ii-home-front.htm.

[42] Barbara M. Kanapell, "The Forgotten Americans: Deaf War Plant Workers During World War II," Deaf People and World War II: North America, Rochester Institute of Technology, https://www.rit.edu/deafww2/sites/rit.edu.deafww2/files/documents/other/TheForgottenAmericansPDF.pdf, accessed April 4, 2024.

Civilian advocates like the AFPH, however, were more concerned with having the government create a national rehabilitation program to bring disabled workers into war production jobs faster. Like the promise to increase employment for people of color and White women in war work, the numerous pledges to bring disabled people into national defense industries were not quickly realized by the federal government.

Federal Rehabilitation and Vocational Training Acts

The Vocational Rehabilitation Act (VRA) was the primary and most consequential wartime federal disability legislation.[43] Its history illustrates some of the key difficulties in creating a nationwide rehabilitation program. The VRA, which became law in July 1943, was put forward in December 1941 at a meeting between Paul McNutt—then head of the Federal Security Agency (FSA), which oversaw Social Security, Education, Public Health, and several other entities—and President Roosevelt. Roosevelt wanted McNutt to create a program that would help get physically disabled civilians and military veterans into the wartime workforce. His reasoning was the same that prompted employing other marginalized laborers: war production needed to grow exponentially even though many industrial workers would need to serve in the military. Hence, developing new pools of workers was critical. Vocational training for disabled people also dovetailed with the Roosevelt Administration's uplift ideology, an approach that sought to use state intervention to help disabled Americans prosper, but the administration knew conservatives, who had increasingly opposed New Deal programs, would fight the initiative if they saw it in that light. In announcing the initiative, McNutt tried to get ahead of such resistance by emphasizing that job training for disabled Americans was not being brought forward "as a social gain, but as a wartime necessity."[44] Initially, however, it was not conservatives but conflicts within the government that stalled the legislation.

Disagreements within the War Manpower Commission and other government agencies and, even more tellingly, a major fight over whether civilian and veteran rehabilitation and vocational training would be under one agency, delayed the legislation. Most consequential would be the VA demanding control of any program that provided veteran assistance. This insistence, driven by veterans' groups clinging to the idea that veterans deserved exceptional treatment, would prove decisive.[45] Nonetheless, proponents of a Federal Rehabilitation Service (FRS), housed within the FSA to provide job training for disabled civilians and veterans, pushed forward in the spring and summer of 1942. In August, Senator Robert Lafollette and Representative Graham Barden introduced companion bills in the Senate and House to create the FRS.[46] Even though the legis-

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[43] Legislation supporting vocational rehabilitation for disabled workers and others also emerged after World War I. Codified in the Smith-Fess Act (also known as the Industrial Rehabilitation Act), the resulting program strongly favored White men. Richard K. Scotch, "American Disability Policy in the Twentieth Century," in *The New Disability History: American Perspectives*, Paul Longmore and Lauri Umansky, eds., (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 381. Ruth O'Brien, *Crippled Justice: The History of Modern Disability Policy in the Workplace* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 64-66.

[44] Davis R. B. Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses: Politics and Veterans during World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969), 36, 38-39.

[45] Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses*, 40.

[46] Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses*, 41-42.

lation would add funding to veterans' services, veterans' groups opposed the measure because they wanted veterans treated separately. Conservatives in Congress supported them, accusing the Roosevelt administration of trying to "capitalize upon the war sentiment to accomplish their objectives, which have to do with social uplift, and which are, to them, far more important than the rehabilitation and vocational training of our returning war disabled."[47] In an October 1942 message to Congress, the President countered that "in order to secure the most effective utilization of the capabilities of the physically handicapped it is important that a single rehabilitation service be established for both veterans and civilians."[48] His opponents did not yield and the fight continued into 1943.

After little progress in 1942, the AFPH castigated the government for wasting the opportunity to demand that agencies and war production industries utilize patriotic disabled citizens to increase critical war production.[49] Strachan and the AFPH saw support for disabled Americans as not about welfare, but rights. "Why cannot industry, and the public, generally, realize that we, too, aspire to the comfort, the feeling of security that comes from fair recognition of our rights, as citizens, and our needs, as handicapped," he asked.[50] Like selective service, employers let biases about gender, race, class, age, and supposed ability influence their hiring decisions. Strachan took a structural approach, targeting systems that excluded disabled people, a template that postwar disability activists, including disabled veterans, would follow.[51] The federation emphasized that it saw the government as the critical cog in the transformations they demanded and asserted that "it had a responsibility to move disabled citizens from the economic and civic margins to the center of the welfare state."[52]

In early 1943, the American Legion, the most powerful veterans' organization, redoubled its advocacy for distinct veterans' disability benefits. They reminded Congress that virtually every war produced a "forgotten battalion" of men who had returned disabled from the frontlines and had to rely on charity to survive.[53] This was precisely what occurred in World War I, when disabled veterans "were forced to depend on charity for their very existence" until, finally, lawmakers "got around to caring for them."[54] It had been a two-decade struggle to convince—and re-convince—non-disabled Americans that disability was one of war's inevitable consequences and that society was obligated to offer special care for those disabled by military service. Early in the war, the American Legion said they observed the same pattern. Doubling down on a symbol that had been central to the World War I Bonus March and New Deal, veterans believed that "unless the United States acted quickly, it risked creating a new army of Forgotten Men—larger, angrier, and unwill-

47 Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses*, 42-43.
48 Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses*, 44-45.
49 Jennings, *Out of the Horrors*, 17.
50 Nielsen, *A Disability HIstory of the United States*, 151.
51 Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 150-51. Julie Peterson, "Smashing barriers to access: Disability activism and curb cuts," National Museum of American History, https://www.si.edu/object/smashing-barriers-access-disability-activism-and-curb-cuts%3Aposts_15f53ddc6ec5b033f596a65209617732
52 Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 218.
53 Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 213.
54 Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 213-14.

ing to settle for pageants and parades."[55]
Finally, in March 1943, veterans' organizations and their allies triumphed. A separate veterans bill, Public Law 16, passed. The bill gave "disabled veterans the opportunity to receive special training to restore their employability."[56]

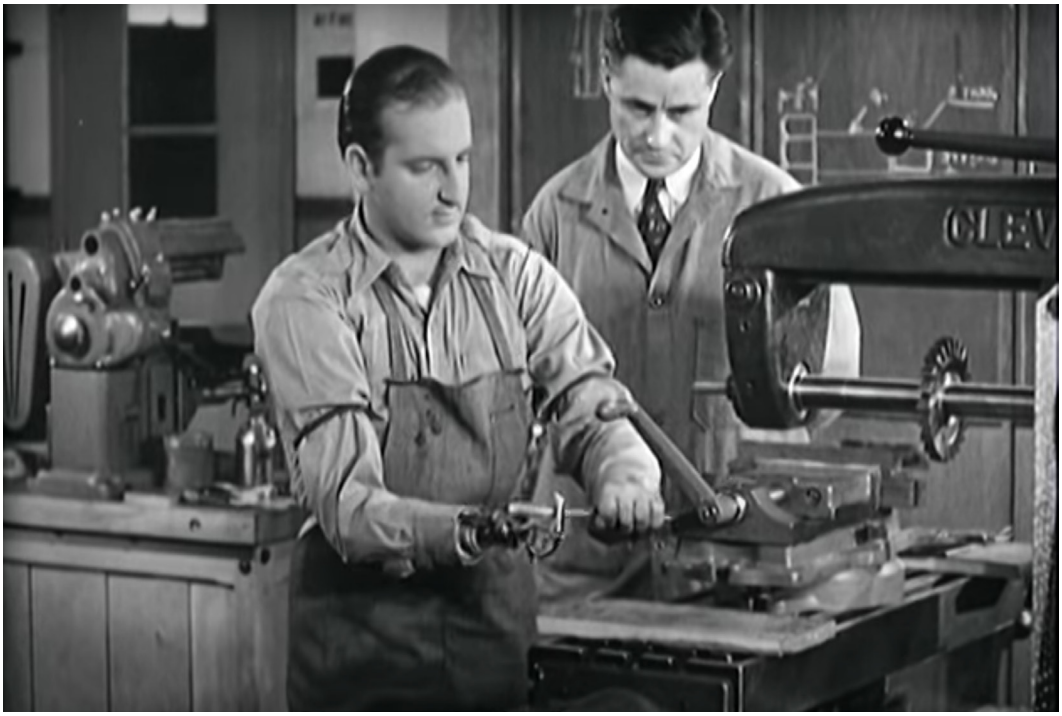

Figure 5.1: Still of Worker With Prosthetic Receiving Training, from film "Employing Disabled Workers in Industry" Courtesy National Archives, NAID:35938.

Disabled civilians would have to wait another three months for the La Follette-Barden Bill, which offered physical rehabilitation services, vocational training, and access to higher education.[57] The debate about the bill centered on the notion that rehabilitation would provide disabled Americans "productive capacity or earning power, so they can be independent and self-sustaining" instead of remaining "objects of charity" and "victim[s] of pauperization and paternalism."[58] It also reinforced how many lawmakers perceived veterans as exceptionally worthy and the concern that New Deal policies chipped away at states' rights. Continuing the long history of excluding non-White communities from rehabilitation programs, conservative lawmakers quashed adding an amendment, put forward by Delaware Republican Representative Earl Wiley, to ban discrimination "on account of race, creed, or color."[59] Mississippi Representative John E. Rankin, a Democrat, a segregationist, and one of the strongest advocates for the veteran's exceptionalism

[55] Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 213.
[56] Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses*, 48-49.
[57] Ross, *Preparing for Ulysses*, 48 footnote 51; La Follette-Barden was Public Law 113 in 1943; Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 150.
[58] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors*, 47.
[59] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors*, 48.

approach, was particularly blunt. "The amendment would just kill the bill. If the gentleman wants to destroy this legislation that is the way to do it."[60] The amendment failed, allowing, Jennings concludes, the government to treat disabled Americans of color as "separate and unequal."[61] Notably, wartime legislation prohibiting employers from discriminating against disabled individuals also failed to receive any significant support.[62]

Civilian Rehabilitation

Workers Disabled on the Job

During the fight over vocational rehabilitation legislation, the number of civilian workers disabled on the home front increased dramatically, and, therefore, so did unions' role in disability policy discussions. Workplace injuries, long a scourge in American industry, had fallen in the latter years of the Great Depression. But the pattern changed in 1942 and 1943, as new factory workers received substandard training and factories failed to focus enough on safety.[63] Death and injury statistics show that, through 1943, home front workers were in more danger than armed forces personnel.[64] Driven by this history, organized labor became a key partner in helping the AFPH deliver on its cross-disability political program. According to Jennings. "The AFL, CIO, UMWA [United Mine Workers of America], IAM [International Association of Machinists], and other unions helped to finance the AFPH," Jennings explains, "and provided it with organizational and legislative support."[65] Personal relationships facilitated these connections; Strachan worked for multiple unions, including the AFL, before launching the AFPH. Jennings underscores that shared concerns about workplace safety and health care and the overlapping nature of their memberships drove the alliance. "A great many of these [disabled] folks are members of our organizations," AFL representative Lewis G. Hines reminded listeners at a federal hearing.[66]

CIO representatives petitioning Congress helped add scale to the vast problem of workplace injury and disabilities. One official testified that during the war years, approximately two million workers were injured annually. Of these, roughly one hundred thousand were permanently dis-

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[60] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors*, 48.

[61] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors*, 48.

[62] Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 150. fn 40.

[63] On progressive era industrialization and workplace injury, see John Fabian Witt, *The Accidental Republic*, *Crippled Workingmen, Destitute Widows, and the Remaking of American Law* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 2; and Gerald Markowitz and David Rosner, "Safety and Health on the Job as a Class Issue: The Workers' Health Bureau of America in the 1920s," *Science & Society* 48 (Winter 1984/85): 466.

[64] Andrew E Kersten, *Labour's Home Front: The American Federation of Labor During World War 2* (New York: New York University Press), 2006, 177. In 1943, home front workplaces had "2,414,000 accidents, 20,100 of which resulted in death." Kersten writes "there had been enough accidents to shut down the entire nation's industrial home front for seven days and seven nights. Moreover, by the middle of the war, there were more casualties in the factories than on the battle front. In the first sixteen and a half months of war, 12,123 servicemen in the U.S. armed forces had been killed, 15,049 had been wounded, and 51,063 were missing-in-action or captured. In the same period, nearly 20,000 died because of industrial accidents, and more than two million were injured."

[65] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors*, 9.

[66] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors*, 168.

abled. Census data backed both statistics.[67] Increasingly, industrial injuries were tied to the way managers implemented the call for higher production. It was not only unions but also business friendly outlets like *Fortune* magazine that blamed the bosses. *Fortune* wrote, "When management takes the overzealous view that production must be achieved at all costs— accidents are in the making."[68] Not surprisingly, those bosses and many others disagreed. *Popular Mechanics*, linking capability to not only training but age, contended that it was "'rusty' old hands recalled from retirement" and careless new workers who were responsible for the epidemic of maiming and death.[69] Andrew Kersten's analysis of wartime workplace accidents confirms that worker safety was not a priority for management in many production facilities, which hurt employees and war production.[70] For labor leaders, this meant that it was only right that "the pressure of the union" be used to produce better disability policy results.[71] Kersten also finds that while unions and the government pressed employers to improve workplace safety, neither emphasized the issue.[72]

Championing vocational training and rehabilitation for physically disabled Americans during World War II represented a significant shift. Beginning in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, disabled Americans had faced increasingly dire circumstances driven by new economic realities associated with industrial capitalism, the modes of wage labor it relied upon, and the burgeoning ideologies about labor, morality, and fitness that buttressed it. In the past, the family economy had allowed disabled people to contribute, but in the industrialized economy workers were expected to be industrial wage earners, often for ten to twelve hours a day, six days a week. Men worthy of being citizens were workers whose wages, in theory, provided them independence, partly signified by having dependents. These expectations, coupled with a view of dependence as immoral, placed disabled people in greater precarity. Proto-eugenicists drove this view until full-fledged eugenicists put "science" behind a set of ideas that condemned people of color, some European immigrants, and disabled people, especially those born with inherited or congenital conditions, to second class status.

The treatment by business, society, and the government of disabled civilians and military personnel during and after World War I, foreshadowed some of the employment dynamics that would emerge during World War II. Prior to World War I, disabled people fought to enter the workforce based on the ideology of labor and citizenship—and because they needed the income. Their Progressive Era allies put forward policies meant to offer assistance, but made little progress. World War I stands as an anomalous bright spot, as employers hired disabled civilians. Perhaps the best example was in Akron, Ohio, where rubber companies, especially Firestone and Goodyear, hired deaf workers from across the nation, ultimately bringing hundreds to the city.[73] However, this

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[67] Kersten, *Labour's Home Front*, 167; Jennings, "Engendering and Regendering Disability," 355.

[68] "Death on the War Front," *Fortune* (supplement) 26 (July 1942), 2. Cited in Kersten, 174.

[69] Kersten, *Labour's Home Front*, 174.

[70] Kersten, 176. The industrial injury frequency rate, as reported by the U.S. census, dropped slightly in 1944 and 1945, but still remained well above 1939 and 1940 figures. U.S. Census Bureau, historical statistics of the United States, colonial times to 1970 Washington, D.C., GPO 1975, 182, cited in Kersten, *Labour's Home Front*, 168.

[71] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors of War*, 169.

[72] Kersten, *Labour's Home Front*, 181-82.

[73] The references in this essay are to "deaf" as a medical condition and, hence, are written in lowercase. "Deaf"

progress was short-lived. When the post World War I recession hit the industry and the rest of the country, these workers were the first to be fired.[74] They were far from alone. Other disabled workers were ousted and even more forcefully barred from "nearly all heavily industrialized and mechanized workplaces—and in a growing number of less-mechanized workplaces as well."[75] The one exception was disabled World War I veterans. Unlike civilians with congenital or acquired disabilities, in the 1920s many disabled veterans had the opportunity to return to the labor force after undergoing vocational rehabilitation.[76]

Vocational rehabilitators would become influential "allies" to disabled veterans and other disabled people seeking work after World War I and would continue in that role through World War II. In 1922, George Mangold, one of those influential World War I rehabilitators, illustrated the field's stance that independence was essential to being a worthy citizen. Mangold argued for vocational rehabilitation to be widely available for all disabled men, because "every man ought to be self-supporting and also able to support a family, and no man has a social right to refuse to contribute in some way to the wealth and to the progress of society...Nor has any man who is crippled a right to be idle and enjoy the gratuitous support of relatives or of a philanthropic agency or of the public."[77] In her illuminating history of disability between 1840 and the 1930s, Sarah F. Rose holds that Mangold encapsulated "the ways in which disability, work, and citizenship had intertwined" by the interwar era.[78] Disabled groups previously viewed as distinct, either because of where or if they worked or based on their impairments, were brought under "the new concept...of disability" in the rehabilitationist framing.[79]

In the years before World War II, rehabilitation became more accepted as a critical component for reintegrating disabled people back into society through work, but most programs were for veterans.[80] And, while accessing vocational rehabilitation was an improvement, these programs still often treated disabled people as second-class citizens. They subjected would-be workers to tests, exams, and interviews that "could be invasive and were often arbitrary." Relying upon what disability studies scholars call the medicalized approach, the vocational rehabilitation community did little to try to change workplaces to make them more accessible for all.[81] Nonetheless, many disabled civilians, who had long sought government support so they could contribute to society through employment, welcomed legislative initiatives that supported rehabilitation.

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capitalized means culturally deaf, someone who primarily uses sign language and is part of the Deaf community. My thanks to Selena Moon for helping me with this distinction. Kanapell, "The Forgotten Americans."

74 Sarah F. Rose, *No Right to Be Idle: The Invention of Disability, 1840s to 1930s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 127. Kanapell, "The Forgotten Americans."

75 Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 127.

76 Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 12, 225.

77 Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 3.

78 Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 3.

79 Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 3.

80 Rehabilitation lists associated with the military played a significant role in this shift, with sites like Fort Des Moines hosting clinics that innovated in the areas of orthopedics.
United States Department of the Interior, "Historic American Buildings Survey: Fort Des Moines Historic Complex," HABS No. IA-121, Denver, CO: NPS, 1987, https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/master/pnp /habshaer/ia/ia0100/ia0160/data/ia0160data.pdf (accessed 21 March 2023), 3, 31.

81 Ryerson, "Disabled Defense Workers."

Jobs for Disabled Workers

Numbers tell the story regarding what rehabilitation and vocational training meant to disabled Americans on the home front. In 1940, the first year of wartime mobilization, government agencies placed twenty-eight thousand disabled individuals in jobs. In 1945, they placed three hundred thousand, a clear sign that both industry and the government were increasingly willing to employ disabled people in a range of jobs.[82] In fact, the number of disabled people working on the home front was much higher. The *New York Times* estimated three million in 1942, adding "the number is constantly increasing as the able-bodied are called to the colors."[83]

One reason that employers were willing to hire disabled workers was a return in popularity—in part due to the intervention of vocational rehabilitationists—of the World War I-era approach of placing disabled workers in industrial jobs that suited their abilities.[84] This employment template was most closely associated with Ford Motor Company. Just after World War I, Ford's sociological and medical departments created a detailed job classification system that carefully evaluated each factory position to understand the precise physical requirements. Managers found that "670 operations could be performed by legless men; about 2,600 by one-legged men; 2 by armless men; 715 by one-armed men; and 10 by blind men." Based on this knowledge, the company hired an array of disabled men, civilian and veterans alike, at full pay.[85]

Figure 5.2: Disabled Worker Claude Spitzer Working at 24-inch Lathe, Shenandoah Valley, Virginia. Courtesy Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

[82] This trend continued into the post war. R.K. McNickel, *Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons: Editorial Research Reports*, vol. 2 (Washington D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1950). Quoted in Kim E. Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 148.

[83] Sarah Pawlicki, "Milwaukee Ordnance Plant Case Study," REPAIR Disability Heritage Collective, https://arcg.is/1zL0900, accessed 15 December 2023.

[84] Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 136.

[85] Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 131, 135.

Henry Ford drove the company's approach. Devoted to the Protestant work ethic and the early twentieth-century gospels of industrial and social efficiency, he believed that, as disabled people would always be part of society, it was society's responsibility to ensure they could contribute. He instructed his management to hire disabled men and place them in the right circumstances so they could fully earn their wages.[86] Other interwar rehabilitationists supported employing disabled people but, based in significant part on their eugenic beliefs, did not think they could thrive in mainstream workplaces. They promoted so-called "sheltered workshops" that paid disabled workers a pittance, did not train them to have transferable skills, and had them under close supervision. They claimed, however, to inculcate appropriate values, including that work was a "moral panacea" able to cure most ills.[87] Goodwill industries, which also saw dependency as the enemy of a successful life, best represents sheltered workshops. Ford and those who thought like him strongly opposed this "moralism without skills or decent wages" approach.[88]

During World War II, Ford once again hired a sizable number of disabled workers: almost 700 blind or vision impaired people, more than 150 Deaf people, and 112 people with epilepsy.[89] The company's decision to hire disabled workers mirrored their earlier philosophy but was also driven by wartime labor shortages and disabled Americans' desire to contribute to the war effort and make decent wages. The same dynamics allowed Ben Schowe, a deaf manager at Firestone, to recruit deaf workers into Akron's wartime industries. Schowe had also been responsible for the employment of deaf workers at these sites during World War I. During World War II he tapped his network of contacts at schools for the deaf and rehabilitation agencies around the U.S. Deaf individuals came to Akron from Florida, California, and numerous states in between swelling the ranks of deaf workers at Firestone and Goodyear to approximately 1,000 during the war. Schowe advertised the "highly satisfactory experience" with deaf workers of "no less than forty major employers." Research by the National Association of the Deaf found that plants in at least thirty-three states employed upwards of 5,000 deaf workers during the war.[90] However, Schowe's own records suggest that deaf Black Americans remained in segregated communities during the war and that very few were able to access these new employment opportunities.[91]

Private organizations that also facilitated employing disabled civilians reveal the evolving arguments of non-disabled advocates for providing opportunities for disabled people. Easter Seals, still known at the beginning of the war as the National Society for Crippled Children, acknowledged that pre-war it considered its placement program—akin to sheltered workplaces like Goodwill—as "community services for the disabled." By 1942, they saw their work as a service to the nation, arguing that "handicapped men and women must be prepared to take the places of

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[86] Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 131-132.
[87] Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 172.
[88] Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 132, 189.
[89] Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 134, 168.
[90] Kanapell, "The Forgotten Americans."
[91] Benjamin Schowe, Sr., "Employment of Black Deaf at Firestone" (1955), Gallaudet University Archives, *Deaf African American Vertical Files*, 20, https://ida.gallaudet.edu/daavf/20

those called for active military service."[92] This was not, however, a full endorsement of disabled workers' abilities nor a call for industry and the rest of the nation to make workplaces far more accessible so that all Americans could thrive.

Without question, disabled workers were more than ready to do their part, as their participation in home front jobs shows. The War Department illustrates the variability in government and private sectors handling of disabled workers. It launched a campaign, seen in films like "Employing Disabled Workers in Industry," depicting disabled men doing a range of tasks in machine shops and other heavy industries and disabled women sewing, operating telephones, and performing other secretarial tasks.[93] Yet the War Department's home front military bases were slow to accept disabled employees and never employed a sizable number, paralleling what occurred at many wartime workplaces. When the War Department hired disabled workers, they quickly showed their worth. Brookley Field in Alabama, which employed seventeen thousand civilians, hired eleven blind trainees in 1943. Their effectiveness motivated base officials to hire workers who were hard of hearing or deaf, paraplegic, or used prosthetic limbs.[94] The Charleston South Carolina Navy Yard employed Eugene David, Jr., a little person, to weld in cramped bulkhead areas.[95] Before David arrived, the shipyard had to cut openings into bulkheads to do that work. David's work was so impressive that the Navy Yard employed more little people as painters, plumbers, and ship fitters.[96]

[92] Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 148. footnote 36.

[93] See "Employing Disabled Workers in Industry," War Department Film, ARC Identifier 35938 / Local Identifier 111-M-1294 - Department of Defense, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiHdnQRSCn4, and Jade Ryerson, "Disabled Defense Workers on the World War II Home Front," National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/disabled-defense-workers-on-the-world-war-ii-home-front.htm

[94] Ken Burns, "The Four Towns: Mobile," *The War*, PBS, accessed August 1, 2023, https://www.pbs.org/kenburns/the-war/mobile; Allen Cronenberg, *Forth to the Mighty Conflict: Alabama and World War II* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press), 42.

[95] This essay follows contemporary disability studies scholars in using the term "little person" to describe individuals who had dwarfism or other conditions that produced short stature.

[96] Fritz P. Hamer, *Charleston Reborn: A Southern City, its Navy Yard, and World War II* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2005), 80.

Figure 5.3: "A [Little Person] and a woman worker install control wires on a "Valiant" basic trainer. At the Downey plant is made the BT-13A ("Valiant") basic trainer - a fast sturdy ship powered by a Pratt & Whitney engine." Courtesy of Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.

The War Department's ordnance plants also hired disabled workers.[97]

Gender and Race as Employment Factors

John Millard, a White man who had been rejected from jobs for eight years because employers did not trust that someone with "artificial legs" could be an asset, highlights the role of local and state agencies in providing employment and the gendered arguments put forward by those agencies and disability organizations. The Cleveland Placement Bureau helped him land a job on an assembly line, and he quickly earned the reputation of "an efficient workman." The company added "five other handicapped workers" soon thereafter.[98] His position, the bureau noted, al-

[97] The Cornhusker Ordnance Plant in Nebraska hired a number of disabled workers, including veterans disabled during World War I. Tracy Lynn Wit, "The Social and Economic Impact of World War II Munitions Manufacture on Grand Island, Nebraska," *Nebraska History* 71 (1990): 154.

[98] Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 148-49.

lowed him to once again fulfill his responsibilities as breadwinner for his wife and six children. As Rose and other scholars assert, and as Millard shows, an individual's experience of disability was deeply intersectional; that is, it often depended on the other aspects of their identity. Influential rehabilitationist George Mangold's championing the disabled *male* breadwinner decades earlier affirms the consistent place of gender ideology in disability employment and reflects the views of his fellow vocational rehabilitationists and mainstream society.[99]

The AFPH and others involved in the fight for better disability programs echoed wartime gender discourse. In May 1942, Strachan, harnessing one of the potent wartime symbols, urged Congress "not only to save scrap, but save and utilize men and women who have been, are, or may be scrapped by reason of disability."[100] His reference to disabled women was distinctive, but fit with the increasing calls to bring women into the wartime workforce. More often, though, Strachan spoke about the desire of disabled men to work. He often leveraged concerns about what would happen to male disabled veterans and connected the desire to find positions for disabled men to the manly mystique of organized labor and the ideology of male citizenship tied to work. After all, as Jennings writes, "wounded soldiers and injured workers had developed their disabilities in masculine pursuits, while they were protecting the nation and earning a living through honorable, productive labor."[101] Making these links offered the AFPH "an opportunity to counter popular beliefs about disabled men as emasculated while offering a new construction of masculine disability."[102]

Figure 5.4: Group of Workers Posing in front of Signed P51 Mustang Panel, North American Aviation Plant, Inglewood, California. Courtesy National Park Service, Rosie the Riveter/WWII Home Front National Historical Park, RORI 1678_b.

[99] Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 3 and 4.
[100] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors of War*, 17.
[101] Jennings, "Engendering and Regendering Disability," 353.
[102] Jennings, "Engendering and Regendering Disability," 353.

Many disabled women were also eager to find employment for pride and a sense of self-worth, to assist the nation, and to sustain themselves and often their families. Mary Curtis, a former student at Gallaudet College, the country's foremost institution of higher education for deaf and hard of hearing people, found clerical work at the Pentagon. After that, she helped construct fuselages for B29 bombers. Suggesting the way disabled people have been erased from home front narratives, Curtis told an interviewer well after the war: "it's not in the history books, but I'm the deaf Rosie!"[103] Many deaf women could have contested this claim, as Sarah Pawlicki's research on the Milwaukee Ordnance Plant shows.[104] The plant supervisor, Arthur Wolff, like Ben Schowe, who had been involved with the deaf community before the war, believed that deaf women would be ideal employees. He contended that using American Sign Language (ASL) had made them particularly dexterous, the noisiness of the plant would not unsettle or distract them, and that they could more easily communicate in that environment. His arguments were echoed by yet other employers of deaf people.[105]

Even if civilian rehabilitation as imagined and practiced in World War II offered disabled women far more opportunity to thrive in workplaces, it ultimately reinforced gender roles that stipulated the financial independence of men and the financial dependence of women and children This trend, mirroring what occurred with able bodied women, increased toward the end of the war.[106] Rehabilitation experts decided it was important to bolster the motherly abilities of disabled women, which they perceived as lacking, and in 1945, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) began training disabled women as homemakers. Although there were only 156 women in their cohort, .003 percent of the almost 42,000 individuals who used rehabilitation services up to that year, OVR was encouraged by the results. The program continued, expanding in the postwar period.[107]

The vocational rehabilitation community also made their ideas about race clear in the policies they supported and enacted: it was Whites they intended to help.[108] Most disabled advocates reinforced the idea of white normativity and tacitly supported white supremacy. These were positions also reflected in government policy. Helen Keller was one of the few high-profile White leaders who overtly focused on racial equality when arguing for better rehabilitation programs and facilities. In the fall of 1944, Keller spoke to Congress about the discriminatory education that deaf and blind Black students received in segregated schools across the South. Calling their treatment a "disgrace," she emphasized that the injustices Black blind children faced would limit "their employment opportunities." Keller called on the government to dramatically increase funding for educational initiatives for Black blind students.[109] In this critique, she built on that put forward by

[103] Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 149.
[104] Pawlicki, "Milwaukee."
[105] Pawlicki, "Milwaukee."
[106] Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era*, revised and expanded edition (New York: Basic Books, 2017).
[107] Jennings, "Engendering and Regendering Disability," 350.
[108] Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 3-4.
[109] "She Pleads for Negro Blind," *New York Post*, October 3, 1944, clipping in Helen Keller archive, https://www.afb.org/HelenKellerArchive?a=d&d=A-HK04-B247-F11-011.1.1&srpos=1&e=01-12-1942-01-01-1947-194-en-20--1--txt--negro----------1, accessed on August 1, 2023. A sense of Keller's stature and celebrity

the Black community regarding educational opportunities for all Black children with disabilities in places like the *Journal of Negro Education*. Suggestive of the importance of the issue to the community, the journal's second issue, which appeared in 1932, featured a long, data-rich examination of the situation faced by the Black disabled children. Written by Eva T. Honest, it took as one of its precepts "that the Negro handicapped child has a right to an education adapted to his needs and abilities." It was one of ten articles in the journal during the 1930s that considered in one way or another the lack of educational opportunities for Black disabled students. That focus would continue into the war years.[110]

Disabled Japanese Americans also received substandard support from the U.S. government.[111] When the removal order was issued, disabled Japanese Americans were exempt. But, as historian Selena Moon's research has shown, the government soon ordered all but those whose disabilities were so severe they could not be cared for in camp to leave the West Coast for incarceration camps. At Minidoka, Betty Sakurai, who used a wheelchair, could not leave her barrack because it did not have a ramp and the paths around the camp were sand. Her family constructed a porch and special chair so she could use the bathroom. Some disabled incarcerees found work in the camps. Ted Shimano, although blind, worked in the Minidoka carpentry shop as a furniture sander. Shimano was one of several blind incarcerees who taught Braille in the camps.[112] At Amache, the Braille course was a collaboration between Aiko Kuroki, a recent high school graduate, and Margaret Bland, a White state Braille instructor.[113] A number of camps had a "School for the Handicapped." The report for Topaz's school, one of the last opened in June 1944, featured student drawings.[114]

In some instances, the government realized that the camps could not meet the needs of disabled incarcerees. Kazuko Momii, considered an "outstanding" student, was sent to the Utah School

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emerges from her visit to the segregated Piney wood school in Mississippi in May 1945. "Helen Keller visits Piney Woods School," *The Pine Torch*, Vol. 7, No. 4, July-August, 1945, clipping in Helen Keller archives, https://www.afb.org/HelenKellerArchive?a=d&d=A-HK01-07-B116-F04-007.1.7&srpos=11&e=01-12-1942-01-01-1947-194-en-20--1--txt--negro----------1-1, accessed on August 1, 2023.

[110] Eva T. Honest, "The Handicapped Child," *The Journal of Negro Education*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Jul., 1932): 304-324. Jennings, *Out of the Horrors*, 68, 84.

[111] Little is known about the history of disabled Japanese Americans, though a group of researchers are now tackling the topic. Takeshi Nakayama, "Seeking the History of Disabled Japanese Americans," *Nichi Bei News*, October 27, 2022, https://www.nichibei.org/2022/10/seeking-the-histories-of-japanese-americans-with-disabilities/, accessed May 25, 2024.

[112] Selena Moon, "Marginalized Communities at Minidoka Incarceration Camp, American Association of State and Local History, 2023. https://www.canva.com/design/DAFrnytnDlo/VzcE0rouGNMQHR3mQUDB_Q/view?utm_content=DAFrnytnDlo&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink, accessed May 25, 2024.

[113] Selena Moon, "Mixed Race and Disabled Incarcerees at Amache," Association for Asian American Studies Conference, 2022, https://www.canva.com/design/DAE4qJou07M/M55rNmVxpDDPGhAIWZEvdg/view?utm_content=DAE4qJou07M&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink, accessed May 26, 2024.

[114] Selena Moon, "Neglected Communities of Topaz Incarceration Camp," National Council for Public History Conference, 2024. https://www.canva.com/design/DAF-HnpV_-o/vPhDCxyOS-_EtPYKjM4Q-Q/view?utm_content=DAF-HnpV_-o&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=editor, accessed May 25, 2024.

for the Deaf.[115] Fourteen intellectually disabled incarcerees at Minidoka were sent to institutions. Some Topaz incarcerees were sent to either the Utah State Hospital or the American Fork Training School.[116] Japanese Americans were also keenly aware of the disabling power of war. Hiroshi Hirai, a veteran of the 442nd regiment, visited his family in Minidoka after his arm had been paralyzed from a shoulder wound.[117] Shiro "Joe" Ouye visited his family in Topaz after he was partially blinded in a racist attack before he was deployed to Europe.[118] The camps themselves were unhealthy. Several incarcerees contracted polio during their confinement in the camps.[119]

While Keller recognized and highlighted the intersection of ableism and racism in her activism and disabled Japanese American incarcerees did the same through their very existence, President Roosevelt also shone a light on this topic through his inaction.[120] Besides approving Japanese American removal and incarceration, the disabled community Roosevelt helped foster at Warm Springs was only available to a select few which, until the end of the war, did not include Black Americans, for whom he also refused to end segregation in the military.[121] Black Americans, however, were present at Warm Springs during the war—but only as bath attendants, masseurs, mercury rubbers, waiters, and cleaning staff.[122] Many Black polio survivors could not access adequate treatment, and when they could it was typically in segregated facilities. In 1939, the Tuskegee Institute, already next to a VA hospital created for Black veterans, became home to a polio treatment facility funded by the March of Dimes. In 1944, the March of Dimes opened a facility for polio survivors of all races. Finally, in 1945, after Eleanor Roosevelt—who held much more progressive racial views than her husband—interceded, Warm Springs desegregated.[123]

Active-Duty Military and Veterans Rehabilitation Approaches and Facilities

The mission of military hospitals was to treat military personnel and their dependents. The Veterans Administration, created in 1930 by combining three pre existing agencies, the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS), the Veterans Bureau, and the Pension Bureau, was tasked with the care of those who had been discharged from the military. Given what war did to bodies and minds, both military and VA officials expected to run out of capacity to treat patients. The military had to respond most quickly.

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[115] Moon, "Neglected Communities of Topaz."
[116] Moon, "Marginalized Communities at Minidoka." Moon, "Neglected Communities of Topaz."
[117] Moon, "Marginalized Communities at Minidoka."
[118] Moon, "Neglected Communities of Topaz."
[119] Moon, "Mixed Race and Disabled Incarcerees at Amache."
[120] Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 137.
[121] Naomi Rogers, "Race and the Politics of Polio: Warm Springs, Tuskegee, and the March of Dimes," *American Journal of Public Health* 97, no. 5 (May 2007): 787, 791. See too https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/african-americans-and-the-hot-springs-baths.htm and the "We Bathe the World" oral history project: https://www.nps.gov/hosp/learn/historyculture/we-bathe-the-world.htm
[122] Warm Springs, other spas, and clinics used a mercury rub as a treatment for syphilis during this period. See Carol Petravage, *Historical Furnishings Report the Fordyce Bathhouse, Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas*, (National Park Service, 1987), 68-70, http://npshistory.com/publications/hosp/hfr-fordyce-batthouse.pdf and "African Americans and the Hot Springs Baths," National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/african-americans-and-the-hot-springs-baths.htm, accessed, May 10, 2024.
[123] Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 140-41.

Military Hospitals

For large numbers of uniformed personnel wounded during World War II, the military medical system became the first step for rehabilitation. Initially they relied on facilities like Bethesda Naval Hospital, one of the last facilities to emerge from the pre-World War II approach to military health care. They also purchased civilian treatment centers; repurposed army barracks, like those at Fort McPherson, Georgia; modified other buildings; and built many new facilities. The Kellogg Sanitarium in Battle Creek, Michigan, which opened in 1866, became the Percy Jones Army Hospital in 1942. By 1945, it was the largest medical facility in the world, serving over 11,400 patients and specializing in amputation, eye prosthetics, neurosurgery, physical rehabilitation, and deep x-ray therapy.[124] From 1942 through spring 1944, the Breakers Hotel in Palm Beach, Florida was the Ream General Hospital. It housed surgical and rehabilitation clinics, including occupational therapy in its formally lavish physical plant.[125]

The military also hastily constructed large new care facilities around the home front. The Bushnell Military Hospital in Brigham City, Utah, was built in 1942 by employing a large workforce who lived with community members. The 235-acre facility cost $9 million, consisted of sixty buildings, and could house 1500 patients.[126] Valley Forge General Hospital in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, was also built in 1942 and opened in 1943. It spread 3,000 patients over a one-hundred-building campus.[127] The increasing number of men disabled by military service affirmed the military's concerns—as well as those of the American Legion and the VA—and the decision to quickly build new facilities. By mid-1944, two hundred thousand discharged veterans had been approved for disability pensions. More than 5 percent were assessed as "totally disabled." Combat intensified from D-Day, which increased this number dramatically. By the time Japan surrendered, 678,000 U.S. sailors, soldiers, airmen, and marines had been wounded or injured. Of these 44 percent had to be hospitalized and receive convalescent treatment.[128]

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[124] "Battle Creek: Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice," City of Battle Creek, Michigan, http://battlecreekmi.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2332/2013-Battle-Creek-Analysis-of- Impediments-FINAL?bidId=, 8, accessed August 1, 2023. In 2003 it was re-named the Hart-Dole-Inouye Federal Center.

[125] United States Department of the Interior, "Historic American Buildings Survey: Fort McPherson, World War II Station Hospital Structures." HABS No. GA-2282-A, Atlanta, GA: NPS, 1995, https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/master/pnp/habshaer/ga/ga0600/ga0696/data/ga0696data.pdf, accessed 21 March 2023, 6-7; M.M. Cloutier, "When the Breakers was a Hospital: Building repurposed during WWII, visited by Eleanor Roosevelt," *Palm Beach Daily News*, last modified February 1, 2019, https://www.palmbeachdailynews.com/story/news/history/2019/02/02/memory-lane -breakers-repurposed-as-hospital-during-wwii-visited-by-eleanor-roosevelt/6131836007/.

[126] Allan Kent Powell, *Utah Remembers World War II* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1991), 77.

[127] Evan P. Sullivan, "The Eye at War: American Eye Prosthetics During the World Wars," Nursing Clio, September 25, 2017, https://nursingclio.org/2017/09/25/the-eye-at-war-american-eye-prosthetics-during-the-world-wars/, accessed May 24, 2024.

[128] Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 263.

Figure 5.5: "U.S. Naval A Ward," Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite National Park, 1943. Courtesy National Parks, "History of the United States Naval Special Hospital: Yosemite National Park."

By the middle of the war, many new military medical facilities focused on specific aspects of rehabilitation. Valley Forge, for instance, was one of two hospitals, along with Letterman Hospital in San Francisco, that specialized in treating ocular injuries. Three dentists posted at Valley Forge in 1945 created a new acrylic artificial eye that was much more durable than the old glass eye prosthetics.[129] Other specialized facilities included the Marine Corps' treatment center in Klamath Falls, Oregon, designed to rehabilitate marines who caught tropical diseases in the Pacific.[130] Madigan Army Hospital in Tacoma, Washington, specialized in psychological disturbance and grievously wounded veterans.[131] Birmingham General Hospital in Van Nuys, California, opened a specialized spinal cord injury center in 1945, utilizing the holistic multidisciplinary approach that Dr. Ernest Bors pioneered.[132] The hospital also received acclaim for modifying cars for paraplegics and for creating a wing for female veterans.[133] Birmingham General Hospital proved influen-

[129] Sullivan, "The Eye at War."

[130] Richard Yates, *The Procurement and Distribution of Medical Supplies in the Zone of the Interior During World War II* (Washington, D.C.: War Department, Office of the Surgeon General, 1946), 411, https://collections.nlm.nih.gov/catalog/nlm:nlmuid-14221040R-bk, accessed date

[131] James R. Warren, *The War Years: A Chronicle of Washington State in World War II* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), XXVI.

[132] "American Paraplegia Society 1954-2004; our Legacy, our Future," *The Journal of Spinal Cord Medicine* 27, no. 4 (2004): 287-303.

[133] United States Department of the Interior, "Historic American Buildings Survey: Fort Washington, Fort," by Abbie Rowe, HABS MD-307-D, Prince Georges County, MD: NPS, 1957, https://www.loc.gov/item/md1313/, accessed 21 March 2023. There are a large number of possible examples. For instance, see also new construction at Tripler

tial in Hollywood's post-war portrayal of disabled veterans, as numerous actors visited veterans recovering there.

Military health care for sick, injured, and disabled Black personnel was substandard. Just as they faced segregation and discrimination in the Armed Forces, Black military personnel experienced segregation and discrimination in rehabilitation. The same would be true in the veterans' health care system, where accessing the same level of care as White men was nearly impossible.[134]

VA Hospitals

If wounded soldiers could not be returned to their units after discharge, they entered the VA system for additional rehabilitation. Given escalating rates of disablement, the VA became increasingly important. Initially, the VA used its pre-World War II medical facilities—like the Allen Park VA in Detroit, and the VA Medical Center, Aspinwall Division, in Western Pennsylvania.[135] The last of these facilities offers a window into developing VA care. It was part of coalescing and expanding the government hospital system following World War I, organized under the Veterans Bureau in 1921.[136] Like other VA hospitals during the interwar period , it was one of the primary places where practitioners tested "largely palliative and experimental" programs on World War I veterans. During World War II, VA specialists at Aspinwall and other sites would refine rehabilitation into the physical, mental, and emotional therapies that would characterize home front care. Medical experts like orthopedists and physical therapists teamed with vocational experts to provide veterans with treatment, training, and guidance.[137]

While the VA initially used its older facilities to care for discharged personnel disabled during the first phases of World War II, expecting demand to grow substantially, it began building new facilities during the war to treat and rehabilitate disabled former soldiers, sailors, and marines.[138] After the war ended, the VA, now led by General Omar Bradley, rolled out a plan for what it

Army Medical Facility on O'ahu, Hawai'i, designed in 1942 and completed in 1948. "Throughout World War II, Tripler averaged almost 2,000 patients per day requiring treatment for injuries and illnesses sustained in the Solomon Islands, the Marianas, the Philippines and other Pacific battlegrounds," See, William Sallette, "Tripler; past and present," U.S. Army, https://www.army.mil/article/191568/tripler_past_and_present

[134] Robert F. Jefferson, "'Enabled Courage': Race, Disability, and Black World War II Veterans in Postwar America," *The Historian* 65, no. 5 (2003): 1102–24. Nielsen, A Disability History of the United States, 133.

[135] National Park Service, Ellis Island. "Post-Peak Immigration Years: 1925-1954." https://www.nps.gov/elis/learn/historyculture/places_post_peak.htm, accessed 9 November 2022; The Detroit VA facility is now called the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center. By 1944, the demand for treatment of wounded servicemen led the War Department to allow 110 additional beds to be placed into existing wards. In January 1945, Congress authorized over $3 million to build 2 new wings to treat veterans, including those with disabilities. Capacity increased from approximately 460 to 1450. Historic American Buildings Survey, National Park Service, "Allen Park Veterans Administration Hospital… Photographs and Written Historical and Descriptive Data," https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/master/pnp/habshaer/mi/mi0600/mi0645/data/mi0645data.pdf, 7, accessed 20 March 2023. On Aspinwall: HABS Report, https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/master/pnp/habshaer/pa/pa1900/pa1910/data/pa1910data.pdf, 2, 12.

[136] Gustavus A. Weber and Laurence F. Schmeckebier, *The Veterans Administration: Its History, Activities and Organization* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1934), 153-164.

[137] Kinder, *Paying With Their Bodies*, 117, 265.

[138] United States Department of the Interior, "Historic American Buildings Survey: Fort Washington."

called "third generation hospitals." Whereas second generation hospitals were most often located in the countryside (to offer the restorative care doctors had ascribed to rural spaces before World War II), third generation facilities were more often located in urban spaces. These new facilities were usually designed as large towers instead of sprawling campuses, provided outpatient treatment options, and offered state-of-the-art physical and psychiatric rehabilitation. Bradley called for 183 new hospitals, an extraordinary expansion given the VA operated approximately 100 hospitals at the end of the war. Twenty nine of these new facilities would focus on tuberculosis, forty nine on neuropsychiatric care, and 105 on general and surgical treatment. The VA's enlarged capabilities were meant to assist the almost 13 million veterans who had entered the civilian population by June 1946.[139]

Due to the scale of this undertaking, a number of facilities shared the physical characteristics of second-generation veterans' hospitals, including the hospitals in Tomah, Wisconsin, and Montrose, New York.[140] Seven of the new facilities focused on treating paraplegia, a disability the VA had little experience with due to low survival rates during previous wars. The largest was at Hines, Illinois.[141] The VA also saw itself at the forefront of psychiatric research and treatment including insulin-shock therapy, electroconvulsive therapy, and prefrontal lobotomies, all approaches that garnered extensive criticism later in the twentieth century.[142]

Veterans Psychiatric Care

Like World War I, a large number of World War II veterans would need psychiatric care. Much pre-World War II messaging about war's disabling power focused on the body, but it was shell shock, an injury to the mind, that was arguably the signature wound of World War I.[143] As of 1940, just under 60 percent of VA patients were seeing psychiatric specialists. To give a sense of how extensive needs were, the VA operated twenty-nine neuropsychiatric facilities across the U.S. in 1940. The hospital at Northport, New York was the largest, able to handle 2,220 patients. While Americans worried about the psychological cost of war, it also had a financial cost. Neuropsychiatric care was expensive. One expert at the time calculated that each "psychiatric casualty of World War I had cost American taxpayers over $30,000."[144]

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[139] United States Department of the Interior, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: United States Third Generation Veterans Hospitals, 1946-1958," by Lindsey Hannah, ed. Virginia B. Price and Darlene Richardson, MC100002446, New Orleans, LA: Row 10 Historic Preservation Solutions, 2016, https://www.cfm.va.gov/historic/UnitedStatesThirdGenerationVeteransHospitals-1946-1958-MPSsigned.pdf, 20, accessed on August 1, 2023; United States Department of the Interior, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: United States Second Generation Veterans Hospitals," 70.

[140] United States Department of the Interior, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: United States Second Generation Veterans Hospitals," 98.

[141] United States Department of the Interior, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: United States Third Generation Veterans Hospitals, 1946-1958," 17, 20.

[142] United States Department of the Interior, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: United States Third Generation Veterans Hospitals, 1946-1958," 18; Robert Whitaker, *Mad in America: Bad Science, Bad Medicine, And the Enduring Mistreatment of the Mentally Ill* (New York: Basic Books, 2003), 98-101.

[143] Harris, *Redemption of the Disabled*, 127.

[144] Rodney R. Baker and Wade E. Pickren, *Psychology and the Department of Veterans Affairs: A Historical Analysis*

Of the approximatey eight hundred thousand U.S. soldiers who saw intense combat during World War II, the military admitted 74 percent for psychiatric care and 37.5 percent had such serious trauma that they could no longer effectively function in military operations.[145] In total, one million men faced debilitating psychiatric symptoms.[146] Ironically, many proved the fallacy of the "predisposition" theory which led to large numbers being rejected during conscription medical exams. Instead, combat—or more broadly, the environment—came to be considered the determinative factor for most neuropsychiatric issues. Once these men were removed from these sites of trauma, they could heal—at least enough to not be in mental crisis.[147] Psychiatrist Karl Menninger, in a later assessment of how the war impacted psychiatry, listed environmental factors as one of the most significant.[148] This new understanding, however, did little in the short term to improve the situation for veterans under long-term neuropsychiatric care at VA facilities. Journalist Albert Q. Maisel, among others, reported on the poor conditions at many VA mental hospitals near the end of the war. [149]

Mental Disability on the Home Front[150]

Civilians with intellectual disabilities on the home front faced equally bad, if not worse, conditions.The lack of investment in civilian psychiatric care that would help define the disability

of Training, Research, Practice, and Advocacy (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 2007), 56-57, quoted in United States Department of the Interior, "National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: United States Second Generation Veterans Hospitals," by Trent Spurlock, Karen E. Hudson, Dean Doerrfield, and Craig A. Potts. 64501132, Lexington, KY: Cultural Resource Analysts, Inc., 2011, 15 (accessed on August 1, 2023).; Albert Deutsch, "Military Psychiatry: World War II," in *One Hundred Years of American Psychiatry*, ed. J. K. Hall (New York: Columbia University Press for the American Psychiatric Association, 1944), 160-64.

145 Gabriel, *No More Heroes*, 72, 74. For an excellent primary source on this see: "Let There Be Light," 1946, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQPoYVKeQEs, original: ARC Identifier 35924 / Local Identifier 111-M-1241. Moving Images from the Department of Defense. Department of the Army. Office of the Chief Signal Officer. (09/18/1947 - 02/28/1964), National Archives, Washington, D.C., Motion Pictures, College Park, MD.

146 Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 263.

147 Greene, *Breaking Point*, 153-156. Greene notes that the government did not again institute military psychiatric screening at the level that it took place during World War II. Certainly, the lack of effectiveness of the program played a part in this. So, too did the recognition of environmental factors. The stigma that men faced on the home front and into the postwar for being rejected for military service was another factor. Greene, 9.

148 Greene, *Breaking Point*, 8.

149 Albert Q. Maisel, "Third Rate Care for First Rate Men," *Cosmopolitan*, March and April, 1945. Condensed for *Readers Digest*. VA leadership denied Maisel's high-profile accusations. Frank T. Hines, "Letter to the Editor," *Cosmopolitan*, March 21, 1945. A Congressional investigation followed. "Investigation of the Veterans' Administration with a Particular View to Determining the Efficiency of the Administration and Operation of Veterans' Administration Facilities: Hearings Before the Committee on World War Veterans' Legislation," House of Representatives, Seventy-ninth Congress, First Session, Pursuant to H. Res. 192 (79th Congress, 1st Session) a Resolution to Direct the Committee on World War Veterans' Legislation to Investigate the Veterans' Administration (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1945). https://www.google.com/books/edition/Investigation_of_the_Veterans_Administra/7vtLjgEACAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1

150 Scholar Margaret Price uses the term mental disability as an umbrella term for a variety of psychiatric and cognitive disabilities. Margaret Price, *Mad at School: Rhetorics of Mental Disability and Academic Life* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), 16.

history of World War II was rooted in prewar patterns. Rather than function as sites of treatment, state institutions, variously called hospitals or mental asylums, confined people with mental illness.[151] Between the turn of the century and World War II, the number of individuals institutionalized in state facilities grew by over three hundred thousand, while the budget for their care per capita plummeted. In 1900, these institutions had on average one doctor for approximately 137 patients. By 1943, the ratio was 1 for 277 patients.[152] Reflecting eugenic thinking in the U.S., mental hospitals and asylums removed "misfits from society" and, in a phrase used by disability scholars David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder, warehoused them in institutions.[153]

There were exceptions in the interwar period that showed a different approach was possible. Charles Bernstein's Rome Plan took the so-called "feeble minded" from asylums and similar institutions and placed them in what he described as "colonies." Residents supported each other as family members would, often with assistance from employers. Residents took jobs as agricultural or domestic laborers. Their employers, who were chronically short of workers, understood their capabilities. "In effect," Rose writes, "Bernstein created forms of employment out of the same types of labor that had been embedded in family economies in the nineteenth century and that had long been taught to pupils in idiot asylums and inmates of institutions for the feeble-minded."[154] Other places across the U.S. replicated Bernstein's plan, but when the Great Depression put a huge number of non-disabled men and women out of work, most of the disabled Bernstein colony workers, no longer in demand, were forced to return to their former institutions. Bernstein shuttered the original colony on the cusp of the war because he needed his most capable employees to operate the Rome State School in the face of the severe labor shortage.[155]

The war, which pulled men into uniform and offered higher paying employment in war industries, catalyzed this staffing crisis.[156] In most facilities across the country, underpaid attendants earning less than half of what prison guards made were largely responsible for patients' daily lives. They managed through "the liberal use of sedatives and restraints, and, if necessary, with force."[157] While physically disabled Americans and the organizations they founded would increasingly use wartime conditions to champion their causes, citizens with neuropsychiatric disabilities faced a more difficult struggle accessing the support they deserved.

Some institutions, like Saint Elizabeths Hospital in Washington, D.C., successfully employed a new dynamic approach to psychiatry. However even the high-profile Saint Elizabeths struggled

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[151] Whitaker, *Mad in America*, 67-68.

[152] Whitaker, *Mad in America*, 68-69.

[153] Whitaker, *Mad in America*, 67-68. See also Perri Meldon, "Disability History: Early and Shifting Attitudes of Treatment," National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/articles/disabilityhistoryearlytreatment.htm. Sharon Snyder and David Mitchell, *Cultural Locations of Disability* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006). Summers, *Madness in the City of Magnificient Intentions*, 218.

[154] Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 94-110, quote 109-110.

[155] Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 109. When Bernstein died in 1942, almost 4,000 people called the Rome State School home.

[156] Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 144.

[157] Whitaker, *Mad in America*, 68-69. Pennsylvania attendants made $900 a year, while guards made more than $1,900.

with overcrowding and understaffing. The hospital set admission records in 1944 and 1945. More than 50 percent of its new patients were military personnel. Many patients were only admitted temporarily. Overholser attributed this to patients—with assistance from Saint Elizabeths psychiatrists and the facilities and grounds—reestablishing their mental equilibrium after leaving a military context. Press reports and congressional investigations, however, noted the areas that treated civilians at the sprawling hospital were more problematic, comparing them to "prison holds of the prison ships of old." Representative Frank Keefe of Wisconsin suggested these sections of the facility were like concentration camps. Notably, the most deplorable part of the institution, overcrowded more than 1,850 Black patients in spaces meant for no more than 1,232. As historian Martin Summers has noted, the government's solution was to remove White active-duty military or veteran patients and transfer them to less crowded facilities.[158]

By the end of the war, eugenics had largely been discredited, due to its ties to the practices of Nazi Germany, and some citizens had grown concerned about the lives of mentally ill civilians on the home front.[159] In one of many exposés of contemporary psychiatric institutions, *LIFE* magazine described inadequate pay and staffing issues, suggesting that the legislators responsible for funding such hospitals treated mentally ill patients more harshly than individuals convicted of crimes.[160] They allowed starvation diets and incomprehensible overcrowding, leading to thousands sleeping "on blankets or on bare floors...Those who are well enough to work slave away in many institutions for 12 hours a day, often without a day's rest for years on end." Thousands of others spent weeks "locked in devices euphemistically called 'restraints.'" The author, Albert Q. Maisel, concluded, "Through public neglect and legislative penny-pinching, state after state has allowed its institutions for the care and cure of the mentally sick to degenerate into little more than concentration camps on the Belsen pattern."[161]

Trying to make Americans understand how deplorable the conditions were, journalist Albert Deutsch also compared America's mental hospitals and asylums to the Nazi concentration camps that American soldiers had recently helped liberate. He wrote, "I entered buildings swarming with naked humans herded like cattle and treated with less concern, pervaded by a fetid odor so heavy, so nauseating, that the stench seemed to have almost a physical existence of its own. I saw hundreds of patients living under leaking roofs, surrounded by moldy, decaying walls, and sprawling on rotting floors for want of seats or benches."[162] The mortality rate for patients was fifteen times that of their non-institutionalized age cohort. It was, according to Deutsch, "'euthanasia' through 'neglect.'"[163]

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[158] Summers, *Madness in the City of Magnificient Intentions*, 228-232.
[159] Summers, *Madness in the City*, 218.
[160] Albert Q. Maisel, "Bedlam 1946: Most U.S. Mental Hospitals are a Shame and a Disgrace," *Life* magazine, May 6, 1946, 102-118.
[161] Maisel, "Bedlam 1946."
[162] Albert Deutsch, *The Shame of the States* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1948), 41-42. Quoted in Whitaker, 67.
[163] Quoted in Whitaker, 69.

Maisel and Deutsch were not the first to shine a light on how inhumanely people deemed mentally ill were treated.[164] Some patients published pieces about their living conditions and calling out the hypocrisy of psychiatrists, who claimed mental hospitals provided advanced care.[165] Emblematic of this pattern was a patient writing under the pseudonym "Harold Maine." He contended in *If a Man Be Mad* that the country "had been duped with the folklore of modern institutional psychiatry."[166]

Conscientious objectors (COs) who chose employment as mental hospital attendants as their wartime service most successfully illuminated the circumstances at home front civilian and military mental hospitals. Almost three thousand strong, the advocacy of these men is represented by the book *Out of Sight Out of Mind*, which describes the criminal conditions they witnessed.[167] They also directly alerted district attorneys and reporters of the injustices they witnessed. Among other results, Ohio launched a grand jury investigation of the Cleveland State Hospital. Jury members described a situation that "shocked [them] beyond words." They wondered how their wartime community, part of "a so-called civilized society would allow fellow human beings to be mistreated as they are at the Cleveland state hospital." They wrote, "we indict the uncivilized social system which in the first instance has enabled such an intolerable and barbaric practice to fasten itself upon the people and which in the second instant permitted it to continue."[168] COs' efforts to reveal the awful conditions at the Hudson River State Hospital, Main Building created another firestorm.[169] Mennonite COs caring for approximately five thousand patients called out the full-time staff for negligence. Four full-time staff members, including two veterans, were fired. The men made their dismissal a cause célèbre and the public initially sided with them. However, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt's "My Day" newspaper column, carried in papers across the country, heralded COs' efforts to serve neglected patients.[170]

With the war dominating public concerns, the COs' plea for change, however, did not have im-

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[164] Australian sociologist Judy Singer coined the term neurodiversity (neurotypical and neurodivergent) in 1997. See, John Harris, "The mother of neurodiversity: how Judy Singer changed the world," *The Guardian*, July 5, 2023, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jul/05/the-mother-of-neurodiversity-how-judy-singer-changed-the-world

[165] There were evolutions in the field of psychiatry following World War II, including the National Mental Health Act of 1946 and shifts to psychodynamic treatment approaches. See for example Roy W. Menninger, M.D., and John C. Nemiah, M.D. eds., *American Psychiatry After World War II, 1944-1994* (APA Publishing, 2000); and Kylie M. Smith, "Different Places, Different Ideas: Reimagining Practice in American Psychiatric Nursing After World War II," *Nursing History Review: official journal of the American Association for the History of Nursing* vol. 26,1 (2018): 17-47.

[166] Harold Maine, *If a Man Be Mad* (New York: Doubleday, 1947), quoted in Whitaker, 71.

[167] Frank L. Wright, *Out of Sight, Out of Mind* (Philadelphia: National Mental Health Association, 1947). During the war, Albert Deutsch wrote about what the COs experienced working at VA mental hospitals, including the Lyons facility in New Jersey. Albert Deutsch, "Report Still Awaited on Probe at VA Hospital," *PM*, January 19, 1945.

[168] Quoted in Steven Taylor, *Acts of Conscience: World War Two, Mental Institutions, and Religious Objectors* (Rochester: Syracuse University Press, 2009), 249.

[169] Opened in 1872 and still providing care through 2003, this building still stands and was designated an NHL June 30, 1989, for its architectural significance.

[170] Taylor, *Acts of Conscience*, 258-259.

mediate results.[171] Disability scholar Liat Ben-Moshe argues that exposés like those the COs provided and Eleanor Roosevelt referenced were effective tools that arguably did more to raise awareness about the horrific treatment of institutionalized individuals with mental disabilities than expert policy pronouncements. Such testimonies gained traction after the war. However, rather than leading to deinstitutionalization, they resulted in slow, incomplete reforms.[172]

Conclusion

In 1945, non-disabled Americans were perhaps more aware of considerations for disabled people than at any time previously. However the public remained focused on disabled veterans, not the hundreds of thousands of home front workers disabled during the war, nor civilians disabled independent of the war. The one significant exception was the growing attention to the situation at the nation's neuropsychiatric facilities. Paralleling this development, widespread attention to mental health, including a willingness to see psychological treatment as normal, emerged.[173] The passage of the Mental Health Act in 1946 signaled the federal government's engagement in this area, which previously had been the bailiwick of individual states.[174] But, while concern about psychiatric institutions was part of this shift, significant change did not occur. Instead "mental health" became something to be addressed through therapies for the middle class.[175]

Rehabilitation experts were confident that with new technologies and their protocols, "the vast majority of disabled veterans could successfully readjust to postwar society as productive

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[171] Anne E. Parsons, *From Asylum to Prison: Deinstitutionalization and the Rise of Mass Incarceration after 1945* (University of North Carolina Press, 2018.)

[172] Liat Ben-Moshe, *Decarcerating Disability: Deinstitutionalization and Prison Abolition* (University of Minnesota Press, 2020), 46.

[173] What the Holocaust said about humanity and the apocalyptic worries that emerged after the atomic bomb fueled concerns about the nation's mental health. Regarding new attitudes towards psychology Greene notes that, during the war, Americans in general became much more familiar with psychiatric practices and open to psychological intervention and mental health practices and discourse. Greene, *Breaking Point*, 9-10.

[174] Summers, *Madness in the City*, 228.

[175] For the continuing critique of psychiatric institutions see, Mary-Jane Ward's semi-autobiographical novel about her institutionalization experience, *The Snake Pit* (1946), Deutsch's *The Shame of the States* (1948), Erving Goffman's *Asylums* (1961), and Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilization* (1965). Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962) and the film of the same name played perhaps the most significant role. Numerous sources speak to this view of "mental health." It is pointedly seen in its relation to World War II in the postwar film *Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*. The continuation of the problem, and the nuance around it, are equally well shown in the more contemporary film *Bedlam* and especially the critical response to it, in Leah Harris, "Bedlam: Public Media, Power, and the Fight for Narrative Justice," May 2020, https://www.madinamerica.com/2020/05/bedlam-public-media-power-fight-narrative-justice/. Scholarship on the postwar era that includes attention to the limits on and agency of disabled people is ever more extensive and includes Robert E. Emerick, "Mad Liberation: The Sociology of Knowledge and the Ultimate Civil Rights Movement," *The Journal of Mind and Behavior* 17, no. 2 (1996): 135–59. Alice Wong, "Freedom For Some is not Freedom for All," June 2020, https://disabilityvisibilityproject.com/2020/06/07/freedom-for-some-is-not-freedom-for-all/, as well as Parsons, From *Asylum to Prison*, and Ben-Moshe, *Decarcerating Disability*. My thanks to Angela Smith for sharing these sources and related insights.

citizens."[176] Prosthetics were the most public representation of technical advancement.[177] The Naval Dental Center in Annapolis used acrylic to craft another ocular implant and prostheses for personalized facial reconstruction surgery.[178] In 1945, *Popular Science* heralded these prosthetic accomplishments. The magazine announced that injuries now "are erased entirely or mended so subtly that no one knows of them except the men themselves and their families." Of the experts who designed these new devices and their nascent field, the magazine said, "war's rehabilitation engineering may well become the social engineering of the future."[179]

If technology promised to ease adaptation, how family and community members treated disabled veterans was a significant potential obstacle to their readjustment to civilian life. As the war ended, the government and media, led by the VA, blanketed the home front with information about how to help veterans adjust. Experts advised not rushing veterans, disabled or otherwise. They cautioned that veterans could be impatient, nervous, in search of excitement or diversion, and resentful of any civilians suggesting how to behave or what to do. The authors of a primer for veterans' families and friends counseled them to urge veterans to put the war in their past: "Once he has talked it out, he should try to forget it. Do not encourage him to go on reliving again and again the horrors of it all. He may be too much inclined, as many neurotics are, to linger in the past, to mull over failures and dwell on might have beens."[180] The overriding message was that veterans scarred by physical or psychological wounds had to let go to embrace the present and craft a positive future. Paralyzed veterans were deemed a special challenge for a society that crafted such a future around creating heterosexual families. Their impotence forced a reckoning with what war could do to the male body and prompted, in some circles, a redefinition of virility from function to reproduction, a shift that fit the family-centric culture of the postwar.[181]

Native American communities used a different route by continuing their long practice of reintegrating veterans through ceremonies and a return to indigenous webs of being, even in the face of ongoing settler colonialism and the economic, political, and cultural structures that made reservation life sometimes deeply challenging. Comanche veterans were welcomed home through rituals at Native American and Christian church meetings, powwows, and victory dances. Diné veterans went through the Navajo Enemy Way ceremony. Elders performed three days of rites that purified them by ridding them of the evils of war. The goal was to restore *hozho*, to bring them back into harmony with the natural world. If one did not take part in such curative ceremonies, many Native nations believed their mental and physical health would suffer.[182]

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[176] Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 265.

[177] For more on Wirtz, see: Milton S. Wirtz, D.D.S., Artificial Eye Collection: NMAH.AC.0501.

[178] David Serlin, *Replaceable You: Engineering the Body in Postwar America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 37-38. See, "A History of the U.S. Navy Dental Corps," Defense Media Network Website.

[179] Serlin, *Replaceable You*, 12. Regarding other assistive technologies, see, for example, Leila McNeill, "The Woman Who Made a Device to Help Disabled Veterans Feed Themselves—and Gave It Away for Free," *Smithsonian Magazine*, October 17, 2018, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/innovation/woman-who-made-device-help-disabled-veterans-feed-themselvesand-gave-it-away-free-180970321/.

[180] Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 265-67.

[181] Beth Linker and Whitney Laemmli, "Half a Man: The Symbolism and Science of Paraplegic Impotence in World War II America," *Osiris* 30, no. 1 (2015): 228–49.

[182] William C. Meadows, *The Comanche Code Talkers of World War II* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009),

As the war ended, experts outside of disabled advocacy organizations acknowledged that World War I disabled veterans had not fared well, but most believed that would not happen again. They echoed the optimism of Edna Yost and collaborator Dr. Lillian M. Gilbreth, authors of the 1944 tract *Normal Lives for the Disabled*. Yost and Gilbreth contended that an advanced rehabilitation approach and educating the public through expert advice would allow disabled veterans to have successful post war lives. They wrote, "as a nation, we are more awake to the rights and capacities of the able disabled for productive places in the economic system."[183] Yost and Gilbreth also believed that after Americans had experienced the war and had seen their fellow citizens willing to sacrifice for the nation, they would afford them equal support and treatment to disabled veterans regardless of race.[184] Neither assumption proved true.

Even with the nation focused on them, disabled veterans proved far from immune to the problems the American Legion and AFPH at the beginning of the war period predicted would characterize the postwar experience for people with disabilities. Work was the most fraught issue, though there were some exceptions. Ford was once again exemplary, constructing a special facility named Camp Legion. From 1944 to 1946, it provided disabled veterans lodging and meals while they went through a vocational rehabilitation training program.[185] Many other employers, able to choose from an abundance of potential employees, said concerns about liability for workplace injuries stopped them from employing disabled workers.[186] The problems ran even deeper. In 1944, the AFPH helped establish the Congressional Subcommittee to Investigate Aid to the Physically Handicapped. A two-year examination from 1944 to 1946 of disability programs and prejudice reflected this reality and highlighted other problems. Testimony offered a sadly consistent end-of-war and postwar story of "men and women rejected by government rehabilitation programs, turned away by discriminatory employers, and denied equal access to taxpayer-funded education."[187]

Major General Graves B. Erskine, who had commanded the marines who fought at Iwo Jima, partnered with AFPH president Strachan and Secretary of Labor Leslie Schwellenbach to protest and compel change. Erskine reminded employers that over 80 percent of industries had employed disabled people during the war. Compared to their non-disabled colleagues, they skipped work and left their jobs less often and had an equivalent or better production record. Yet, postwar, disabled veterans and workers who had been so successful on the home front were being slighted

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[183] Edna Yost and Lillian Gilbreth, *Normal Lives for the Disabled* (New York: Macmillan and Company, 1944), 269. Some of this optimism may have been born from a lack of knowledge about the damage war had done to veterans' bodies. The government's wartime censorship policy, which blocked still and moving images from depicting war's maiming and killing power, influenced perceptions of disabled people and the war itself. George Roeder, Jr., *The Censored War: American Visual Experience During World War Two* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).

[184] Yost and Gilbreth, *Normal Lives for the Disabled*, 72 and 284.

[185] Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 135.

[186] On the "second injury" problem's history see Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 109, 163, 167. Those laws did not cover disabled women and workers of color, who often found their labor categorized as outside the parameters of workman's compensation policies. Rose, *No Right to Be Idle*, 138.

[187] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors of War*, 162.

"in favor of the worker with no disability."[188] In June 1946, the rehabilitation programs assisting disabled veterans only secured positions for one in every twenty-one applicants. Schwellenbach underscored that the nation had 250,000 unemployed disabled veterans. He described these men as "the bravest of the brave," and added "that they should suffer from discrimination or selfishness on the part of the employers is the rankest injustice."[189]

Circumstances were far worse for disabled Black workers and veterans.[190] Disabled in a training accident in California, Henry Williams rehabilitated in a military hospital and initially received a 60 percent disabled rating. However, the VA reduced his rating to 20 percent, which disqualified him for compensation. They refused to reassess him and national veterans organizations like the American Legion ignored his requests for assistance. He turned to fellow Black veterans who, as the historian Robert F. Jefferson describes, also experienced second class treatment, and often open racism, in their quest for equal treatment. Together these men undertook "wheel-ins" and "body pickets" at the Cleveland mayor's office and other sites in a fight to gain full access to rehabilitation services and appropriate housing. Williams said of his protest, "Though broken in body, I was fighting ... to stamp out those same principles that we fought against during the war. Basically, sir, I was fighting for the civil rights of every disabled citizen."[191]

Divisions among disabled people and disability organizations hampered the ability of activists to use the war to more fully address the injustices facing disabled Americans. The National Association of the Deaf (NAD), for example, represented a constituency who very often did not see themselves as disabled and resented being lumped in with disabled populations. Disabled veterans—who most frequently received federal benefits—were reluctant to cede their exceptional status and align with disabled civilians.[192] For all its democratic rhetoric, the AFPH also fostered divisions among disabled people. It allowed racial segregation in its Southern chapters and subscribed to a hierarchical view of disability, highlighting the strengths of physically disabled people to the detriment of people with intellectual disabilities.[193]

The AFPH, born during mobilization, offers other insights into the disability history of the home front. They "privileged work and workers" over "aid to those who could not" underscoring the place of paid labor in home front disability history.[194] For disabled people to be valued and fight

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[188] Thomas L Stokes, "'Bravest of the Brave' Fight Prejudice Caused by Extent of their Sacrifice," *State Journal* (WI), August 17, 1946. Quoted in Nielsen, A Disability History of the United States, 153.

[189] Quoted in Nielsen, *A Disability History of the United States*, 153

[190] Jefferson, "'Enabled Courage,'" 1102–24. Jennings, *Out of the Horror*, 195-198.

[191] Jefferson, "'Enabling Courage,'" 1102-1103, 1121.

[192] "Which is appropriate, "deaf child" or "child who is deaf," National Association of the Deaf, https://www.nad.org/about-us/faq/#:~:text=The%20National%20Association%20of%20the%20Deaf%20(NAD)%20believes%20that%20being,and%20hard%20of%20hearing%20people.

[193] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors of War*, 162.

[194] Jennings, *Out of the Horrors of War*, 162. More unexpectedly, it became clear that AFPH's wartime demands for disability research had inadvertently lent authority to the medical professionals the AFPH had hoped to supplant. Strachan and the AFPH staunchly advocated for disabled people to have control over developing and managing federal disability policy, while other organizers, such as rehabilitation specialists and physicians, argued that their professional training made them uniquely equipped to oversee these programs. This controversy over the jurisdiction of federal disability initiatives eventually played out in turf wars between the Department of Labor

for their rights, they needed to participate in full-time work associated with American productive might. The shift was confirmed when VA conceptualized postwar disability care and rehabilitation as built around urban structures close to most workplaces rather than the interwar pastoral campuses or the branches of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers (NHDVS) before that.

Ultimately, World War II era disability rights organizations garnered enough support from society and the state so that some disabled people—primarily White veterans and physically disabled male civilians—did not feel as forgotten. Technological advances and educational campaigns helped remove some of the stigma associated with physical disability. The view that disability was horrific and disabled people were monstrous grew less common. Arguably, the individual who most clearly showed—and had the biggest effect on—these shifting attitudes was Harold Russell, a veteran disabled in a training accident. Russell went on to star in one of the most important films of the early postwar era, The *Best Years of Our Lives* (1946). He received two Academy Awards: one for Best Supporting Actor, and another for "bringing aid and comfort to disabled veterans."[195] Though the movie famously featured Russell using prosthetics, his portrayal—and that of other veterans in the film—centered on both physical disability and mental health.

Even after the critical and popular success of *Best Years of Our Lives* and efforts to integrate disabled veterans back into society, Russell continued to worry about the situation that physically disabled people faced. In 1951 he noted that even after changes during the home front and early postwar years, many Americans still thought of physically disabled people as likely to be "street beggars." Russell, other disabled activists, organizations like American Veterans and Disabled American Veterans, and federal commissions continued their fight for equity and justice for the disabled community, however gender and racial disparities persisted. That they were forced to try to counter this negative narrative toward disability for decades after the war indicates the uneven and limited impact of war-time developments on disability rights in the United States.[196]

(whose associates tended to align with the former approach) and the Federal Security Agency (whose representatives tended to espouse the latter). Ultimately, Jennings finds that during the Cold War medical and rehabilitation specialists' agenda prevailed. This "medicalization" of disability policy reduced the AFPH's influence, contributing to its demise, and led disability activists in the 1970s and 1980s to work outside the government in their campaigns for rights, even as they built from the groundwork laid by the AFPH. Jennings, *Out of the Horrors of War*, 189.

[195] Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 255-56.

[196] Kinder, *Paying with Their Bodies*, 255-56.

National Historic Landmark Registration Guidelines (Abbreviated)[1]

Associated Property Categories

All of the properties on the Study List fit within one or more of the six thematic categories of historic home front properties identified in the World War II and the American Home Front Theme Study, Volume 1, pages 128-129, (referred to there as "property types") and repeated below, or a seventh new category–places associated with environmental change—added in Volume 2.

- **Places associated with production** are where the military, industry, universities, and the federal government—often in close cooperation—produced essential wartime goods and technology. These places may be where manufacturers produced military equipment and transport vehicles, where scientists designed and produced advanced wartime technology, or where engineers produced the infrastructure needed to supply power to wartime industries.
    - Examples include factories, government arsenals, shipyards, and ordnance plants, industrial installations built by the government, private plants converted from civilian to military production, research laboratories and testing facilities, transportation facilities, and hydroelectric plants.

- **Places associated with manpower** are those that supported the defense industry and the military workforce to meet phenomenal wartime productivity demands. These places may be where workers lived, where organized labor fought against wage controls, or where troops and their supplies traveled across the country and overseas as thousands of new recruits entered the military.
    - Examples include union headquarters, embarkation ports, military training camps and bases, and housing constructed for military dependents and war workers.

- **Places associated with politics and government** are where federal agencies developed policies and directed programs, where individuals influenced politics, where major political leaders and public officials made important speeches, held meetings, or debated policies; or places that reflect governmental policy.
    - Examples include government agency headquarters, homes, and public meeting facilities.

- **Places associated with civil rights** are where individuals or groups faced prejudice, discrimination, segregation, or internment, or engaged in resistance and activism toward equality.[2] Throughout the war, the federal government housed and trained Black and White soldiers in separate facilities, treated soldiers from other minority groups unequally, and interred persons of Japanese descent and other refugees. Local and state governments, businesses, and individuals also employed discriminatory practices. A remarkable

[1] See Volume 1 for additional registration guidelines information.

[2] The definition of places associated with civil rights has been updated for Volume 2.

range of individuals and groups fought against marginalization and advocated for their rights, including through legal challenges, resulting in World War II often being considered the birth of the modern civil rights movement, as noted in the NPS's Civil Rights Framework.[3]

- Examples include segregated workers' housing, segregated military facilities, war relocation centers, refugee camps, and factories or public spaces where important racial or ethnic conflicts, incidents, or acts of resistance and activism occurred.

- **Places associated with morale and propaganda** are where federal government programs either encouraged a sense of popular participation in the war effort or censored war-related events that could alarm the public. Morale and propaganda places may also include those associated with individuals who portrayed the war to the American public, and places that exemplify active public participation in home front campaigns supporting the war effort.[4]
  - Examples include movie studios that made propaganda films; homes associated with important individuals; Victory Gardens; and captured enemy vessels on government tours to promote bond sales.

- **Places associated with home defense** include buildings the federal government used to defend the home front against attack.
  - Examples include radar stations, coastal defense fortifications, and ports where convoys were assembled.

- **Places associated with environmental change** include sites where the American landscape was transformed by the exploitation, destruction, or conservation of natural resources in support of the war effort, and places that exemplify the militarization of the environment that accompanied home front mobilization. This category includes previously overlooked locations and communities that suffered chemical and industrial pollution and despoliation because of wartime production.
  - Examples include natural resource extraction sites where the priorities of the war impacted conservation or exploitation, sites of pollution and environmental racism, and places where Americans negotiated new relationships to the environment.

Criteria of National Significance

National Historic Landmarks regulations (Code of Federal Regulations [CFR], Title 36, Part 65.4 [a and b]) establish how nationally significant properties may be designated. According to these regulations, the qualities of national significance are ascribed to districts, sites, and objects that possess exceptional value or quality for illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States in history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture; possess a high degree of

[3] National Historic Landmarks Program, *Civil Rights Framework, Civil Rights in America: A Framework for Identifying Significant Sites* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, Department of the Interior, 2002, Revised 2008). https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/upload/Civil-Rights-Framework-2018.pdf

[4] The definition of places associated with morale and propaganda has been updated for Volume 2.

integrity; and meet one or more of the criteria presented below. For a more detailed explanation of National Historic Landmarks criteria, see NHL Bulletin: Guidelines for Preparing National Historic Landmark Nominations (2023).

Criterion 1. Properties that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to, and are identified with, or that outstandingly represent, the broad national patterns of United States history and from which an understanding and appreciation of those patterns may be gained.

Criterion 2. Properties that are associated importantly with the lives of persons nationally significant in the history of the United States.

Criterion 3. Properties that represent some great idea or ideal of the American people.

Criterion 4. Properties that embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type specimen are exceptionally valuable for the study of a period, style, or method of construction; or that represent a significant, distinctive, and exceptional entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

Criterion 5. Properties that are composed of integral parts of the environment not sufficiently significant by reason of historical association or artistic merit to warrant individual recognition but collectively compose an entity of exceptional historical or artistic significance; or outstandingly commemorate or illustrate a way of life or culture.

Criterion 6. Properties that have yielded or may be likely to yield information of major scientific importance by revealing new cultures, or by shedding light upon periods of occupation of large areas of the United States. Such sites are those which have yielded, or which may reasonably be expected to yield, data affecting theories, concepts, and ideas to a major degree.

National Historic Landmark Criteria Exceptions

Certain kinds of property are not usually considered for National Historic Landmark designation. These include: cemeteries, birthplaces, graves of historical figures, properties owned by religious institutions or used for religious purposes, structures that have been moved from their original locations, reconstructed historic buildings, and properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years. Nevertheless, these properties can still be designated if they meet special requirements called NHL Criteria Exceptions in addition to the aforementioned NHL criteria. Such properties may be found to qualify, if they meet one or more of the following exceptions. For a more detailed explanation of the NHL criteria exceptions, see the NHL Bulletin: Guidelines for Preparing National Historic Landmark Nominations (2023):

Exception 1. A religious property deriving its primary national significance from architectural or artistic distinction or historical importance.

Exception 2. A building or structure that has been moved from its original location but that is nationally significant primarily for its architectural merit or for consequential association with persons or events of transcendent importance in the nation's history.

Exception 3. A site of a building or structure no longer standing but with a consequential association with a person or event of transcendent importance in the nation's history. The requirements for this exception are rarely met.

Exception 4. A birthplace, grave, or burial site if it is of a historical figure of transcendent national significance and no other appropriate site, building, or structure directly associated with the productive life of that person exists.

Exception 5. A cemetery that derives its primary national significance from graves of persons of transcendent importance, or from an exceptionally distinctive design or an exceptionally significant event.

Exception 6. A reconstruction of a building or ensemble of buildings of extraordinary national significance when accurately executed in a suitable environment and presented in a dignified manner as part of a restoration master plan, and when no other buildings or structures with the same association have survived.

Exception 7. A property primarily commemorative in intent if design, age, tradition, or symbolic value has invested it with its own national historical significance.

Exception 8. A property achieving national significance within the past fifty years if it is of extraordinary national importance. This importance must exceed that for which a property has exceptional significance.

Study List Methodology

The process for developing the National Historic Landmark study list for Volume 2 began in 2020. The theme study research team first checked the status of twenty-six sites identified in Volume 1 as potentially nationally significant. Any that had not been designated NHLs since the release of the original theme study in 2007 were added to the group of potential properties to consider for this 2024 theme study update. Additionally, we considered two National Register of Historic Places-listed properties, and thirty-nine potential National Register listings named in appendices to the 2007 study as potential NHLs. The author of this theme study also contacted State Historic Preservation Officers and National Register coordinators through the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO) requesting a list of World War II home front properties in their jurisdictions that had received some form of state or federal recognition. The properties put forward were evaluated for potential national significance. Any that met this threshold were added to the potential study list properties.

This first stage identified seventy-two properties. These were combined with a list of fifty-one additional potentially nationally significant properties identified during the research associated with writing the five thematic chapters in Volume 2 and a second project undertaken by the research team to produce state and territory histories in support of the NPS's World War II Home Front Heritage Cities program. This phase of research focused on properties related to the environmental, Native American and Indigenous, Latino, LGBTQ, and disability histories of the home front. The author of this volume, in consultation with leading home front scholars and NPS historians, identified these five areas as especially needing expanded analysis given their importance to new understandings of the home front era and the related richness of the scholarship published since 2000 in these areas.

In consultation with NPS historians, the research team conducted a preliminary evaluation of the national significance and known integrity of the 123 properties on the combined list and produced the list of twenty properties recommended for inclusion in the final Volume 2 study list. The first part of this group is composed of selected properties from the 2007 theme study that were considered most worthy of reassessment based on their national significance and potential high degree of integrity. The second part is composed of properties with potential national significance related to one or more of the themes in Volume 2 and compared to similar properties. Each of the properties in this second group is discussed in greater detail in the related theme study chapter. This preliminary evaluation did not involve comprehensive site visits or primary research but instead relied on secondary research and digital investigation to determine whether properties were extant.

Survey Results

The following results are divided into two sections. The first section updates the Volume 1 list of National Historic Landmarks (NHLs) associated with the World War II home front with those that were designated after 2007. The second section, "National Historic Landmarks Study List," includes properties that appear to have potentially nationally significant associations with the home front and to retain some historic integrity, but that need further study to determine whether they fully meet NHL criteria. Part A of this second section includes selected properties previously identified for further study in *World War II and the American Home Front* Volume 1. Part B of the second section lists newly identified properties mainly associated with one or more of the five new subject areas considered in Volume 2—environmental, Native American and Indigenous, Latino, LGBTQ, and disability history. This list includes places already designated as National Historic Landmarks but not in relation to their World War II home front history.

Some properties identified for further study in relation to the World War II home front may have other nationally significant themes and periods of significance outside the scope of this study. These will need to be identified and evaluated as part of any NHL inquiry. This study list is not exhaustive and there may be other sites that are not identified here that merit additional NHL evaluation.

World War II Home Front National Historic Landmarks Designated Since 2007[5]

***B Reactor, 100-B/C Area at Hanford*, Richland, WA (NHL designation August 19, 2008)**
NHL Criterion: 1
Production

Represents the first production nuclear reactor and its role in providing the plutonium 239 used in Manhattan Project testing and the bomb dropped on Nagasaki. The new Environmental Change property type also applies to this site. There is potential for national significance under this categorization, as the environmental history chapter in this volume suggests.

***Camp Evans*, Wall Township, NJ (NHL designation October 16, 2012)**
NHL Criterion: 1
Production

Represents one of the principal U.S. sites associated with the development of radar, beginning during World War II.

[5] The Volume 1 list does not include primarily military NHLs such as vessels, military installations, or conflict sites designated under the *World War II in the Pacific* (1985) and *Warships Associated with World War II in the Pacific* (1984) theme studies. An exception is the Manenggon Concentration Camp NHL designated in 2024. It also omits sites designated under the *Japanese Americans in World War II* National Historic Landmarks Theme Study (2012).

***Manenggon Concentration Camp*, Yona Municipality, GU (NHL designation December 13, 2024)**

NHL Criterion: 1

Civil Rights

Associated with the Japanese occupation of Guam during World War II and the wartime experiences of civilian Indigenous Pacific Islanders. This site embodies the deprivation and brutality endured by the CHamoru people during Japanese occupation and holds symbolic meaning as a testament to CHamoru triumph over adversity.

***Pennsylvania Railroad Depot and Baggage Room*, Dennison, OH (NHL designation June 17, 2011)**

NHL Criterion: 1

Morale and Propaganda

Represents the movement of millions of servicemen and women across the United States during World War II and the mobilization of civilians on the home front. Also represents World War II canteen history as the location of the third largest Salvation Army canteen in the country.

National Historic Landmarks Study List

Part A. Selected Volume 1 Study List Properties

This section provides a selected list of properties from the *World War II and the American Home Front* Theme Study, Volume 1 that have not been designated as NHLs and still appear to have strong associations with nationally significant events and patterns related to World War II home front history. These properties are again recommended as possible candidates for NHL designation. However, further study is needed before an evaluation can be completed. All evaluations must develop a full context associated with their respective significance, assess high integrity, and compare the subject property with others that share the same significance. Further study may reveal that a property did not have, or has since lost, the high integrity required for NHL consideration or that the property's historic significance is not at the national level. Potential NHL criteria and property categories are provided for each entry.

Astoria Studios (AKA Army Pictorial Center, Paramount Studios, Kaufman Astoria Studios) Queens, NY

NHL Criterion: 1

Morale and Propaganda

Founded in 1920 close to Broadway, some of the earliest silent films and 'talkies' were filmed here over the next two decades. In 1942, the facility was commandeered by the Signal Corps' Army Pictorial Service to produce training and propaganda films until 1971. Thousands of short films, newsreels, and training videos were produced during World War II, including *Why We Fight*, a series of seven propaganda films directed by Frank Capra. Among the most famous

films of the war, the project was originally intended to explain to servicemembers why the U.S. was at war. President Roosevelt intervened to have the films shown to a wide general audience in hopes of building popular support. Astoria Studios allowed the army to mass-distribute moving picture footage and thereby powerfully shape news and information on the home front. Servicemen who trained at the studio in the use of motion picture cameras to bring back footage for home front newsreels would become the next generation of the motion picture industry after the war. The techniques and technology developed by Astoria impacted the entire film industry.

Belle Isle, Detroit, MI

NHL Criterion: 1
Civil Rights

The nation's worst race riot since 1919 began in June 1943 at this urban park in Detroit, one of the nation's most important World War II production centers. Shifting wartime demographics intensified racial tensions. Accounts disagree over what started the violence, but rumors of racial conflict quickly circulated through both Black and White neighborhoods resulting in a murderous riot that lasted for over twenty-four hours and ended in the deaths of twenty-five Black and nine White people. The rioting in Belle Isle put a national spotlight on wartime racial conflict and forced the federal Office of War Information to devise a strategy on how to deal with racial tension. From that point on, the government was reportedly prepared to use police power to quickly stop the violence if needed. The government also responded to the Detroit Race Riot started at Belle Isle by devising a method of tracking racial tensions, which helped defuse major wartime race riots on the home front after the late summer of 1943.

Fort Ontario, Oswego County, NY

NHL Criterion: 1
Politics and Government

Fort Ontario is the site of the only refugee center opened in the United States during World War II. In January 1944, President Roosevelt, responding to the plea that his administration help Jewish refugees, issued Executive Order 9417 to create the War Refugee Board (WRB). The WRB was given the mission to begin rescue and relief operations for European Jews and others targeted by the enemy for persecution. Just under one thousand Jewish refugees were brought to the United States to live at Fort Ontario for the remainder of the war. Before World War II, Fort Ontario served in the Seven Years War (1754-1763), the American Revolution (1775-1783), and the War of 1812 (1812-1815), and was destroyed or damaged and rebuilt after each encounter. A Special Resource Study to evaluate Fort Ontario's potential for inclusion in the National Park System was completed in 2024.

Social Security Building, Washington, D.C.

NHL Criterion: 1
Politics and Government

Located at 330 Independence Avenue SW in Washington, D.C., the Social Security Administration building was erected from 1939-1940. The building was originally designed to house the new Social Security Office's national headquarters as well as the Railroad Retirement Board but was quickly repurposed to house War Department agencies as the United States entered World War II. The new agencies housed in the building were some of the most important and controversial agencies throughout the war, including the War Production Board, War Manpower Commission, and Office of War Information. The building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on July 6, 2007.

Part B. New Sites Identified in the World War II and the American Home Front Theme Study, Volume 2

This section provides a list of properties identified in *World War II and the American Home Front* Theme Study, Volume 2 that appear to have strong associations with nationally significant events and patterns or persons related to World War II home front history. These properties are recommended as possible candidates for NHL designation. At the end of this section are two properties that have already been named NHLs based on their significance to other historical contexts that could be considered for updated documentation recognizing World War II homefront themes. In all of these cases further study is needed before an evaluation can be completed. All evaluations must develop a full context associated with their respective significance, assess high integrity, and compare the subject property with others that share the same significance. Further study may reveal that a property did not have, or has since lost, the high integrity required for NHL consideration or that the property's historic significance is not at the national level. Potential NHL criteria, property category, and Volume 2 and other related theme(s) (if applicable) are provided for each entry.

Black Cat Café, San Francisco, CA

NHL Criterion: 1
Civil Rights
Theme: LGBTQ history

During World War II, the Black Cat Café established itself as one of the best known gay bars in the United States. It represents the critical role wartime bars and nightclubs played in the development of gay community and culture. Holocaust survivor and straight man Sol Stoumen purchased the Black Cat in the 1940s, drawing in a young, queer clientele with drag performances. For many military members and defense workers, the Black Cat helped them establish a sense of belonging and awareness of their identities. With the large number of servicemen coming into the Bay Area during the war, police and the military began to crack down on gay-friendly businesses, temporarily closing the Black Cat in 1943. Once it reopened, queer civilian and military customers returned in large numbers. For the latter, it was off limits, which for many patrons made it even more attractive as they saw their visitation as, in part, an act of resistance. After numerous wartime and postwar citations and the revocation of the Black Cat's liquor license, Stoumen sued the State Board of Equalization, and the case went to the California Supreme Court in

1951. The court found that homosexuals had the right to public association and businesses could not be penalized for catering to gay and lesbian customers. This landmark case for civil rights affirmed the legality of gay bars. The Black Cat Café remained at the center of early LGBTQ politics in the 1950s and 1960s. Bar manager, entertainer, and World War II veteran José Sarria ran for the city Board of Supervisors in 1961 under the radical platform that "gay is good."

Margaret Chung Residence, 347 Masonic Avenue, San Francisco, CA

NHL Criterion: 2
Civil Rights; Morale and Propaganda
Theme: LGBTQ, Asian American, and Women's history

Margaret Chung, a well-known figure on the home front, advocated for women's military service and became a "one-woman USO" for thousands of soldiers during World War II. The first known American-born Chinese woman to become a physician, Chung opened the first Western medical practice in San Francisco's Chinatown in the 1920s. After Japan's invasion of China in 1931, Chung became an impassioned advocate for the U.S. military. Hosting servicemen in her home and sending care packages throughout the war, she was known as "Mom Chung" to over 1500 military "sons." Servicemen came to Sunday dinners and holiday parties at her small home throughout the war, with one Thanksgiving dinner including over 175 attendees. To provide aid to the U.S.'s wartime ally China, Chung established Rice Bowl Parties in cities across the U.S., which successfully raised over $325,000. Continuously breaking gender barriers, she used her celebrity and political connections to lobby for women's right to serve in the military. Upon the successful creation of the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service), however, Chung was not allowed to join because of her age, race, and suspected lesbianism. Chung's residence, thus, is also significant as the home of a celebrated and controversial figure who represents the public emergence of the gay and lesbian community during the war.

Dugway Proving Grounds, UT

NHL Criterion: 1
Production
Themes: Environmental history; Native American and Indigenous history

The Department of War established the Dugway Proving Grounds in Utah's West Desert in 1942 to provide the Chemical Warfare Service (CWS) with a facility to develop and test chemical and biological weapons. The army selected the West Desert, which is the ancestral homeland of the Goshute Nation and the location of the Skull Valley Band of Goshute Reservation, for its aridity, wide open alkali flats, remoteness, and sparse population. A textbook example of environmental racism, the army's establishment of Dugway Proving Grounds reflects their belief that they could test weapons to advance the war effort without concern for the land or the people that relied on it. Dugway is nationally significant for both what it did to the local environment and to international environments. Weapons developed at Dugway had an outsized role in American foreign policy and reputation during both World War II and the Vietnam War. Chemical weapons tested at Dugway include cyanide, the choking agent phosgene, mustard gas, and napalm. Scientists have found that mustard gas can contaminate land, water, and the food supply for years after

its use. The CWS tested napalm, America's most infamous chemical weapon, for the first time at Dugway during World War II. The army went on to use it with devastating effect in the firebombings of Dresden and Tokyo. Napalm, which causes severe burns and destroys vegetation, is incredibly damaging to the ecology of the places where it was tested or used. The CWS also developed the 4.2" chemical mortar at Dugway, tested "bat bombs," and developed flamethrowers used in the Pacific theater. Dugway played a central role in the development of biological agents and gases. Designed for use during World War II against fortified cave systems in the Pacific Islands, the army tested these weapons in privately owned mines in the West Desert, leaving them polluted for decades.

Intersection of 12th Street and Central Avenue, Los Angeles, CA

NHL Criterion: 1
Civil Rights; Politics and Government
Theme: Latino history

The so-called Zoot Suit Riot that took place June 3-8, 1943, is arguably the best-known event in World War II Latino home front history. The riot, now often seen by historians as a series of related conflicts or riots, began when about fifty White servicemen left the Chavez Ravine Armory and traveled south along Figueroa and other streets toward downtown, looking to exact revenge on zoot suiters. The servicemen were reacting to a rumor that pachucos, young Mexican American men who formed a culture of resistance in several southwestern cities and often wore high-waisted, wide-leg and shoulder menswear called zoot suits, had assaulted a sailor. Over the next ten days, thousands of rampaging White servicemen and civilians terrorized Latino, Filipino, and Black zoot suiters by stripping and sometimes beating them, often while police looked on. When police did intercede, they arrested the zoot suiters for "disturbing the peace." Officials at City Hall responded by voting to ban the wearing of zoot suits in Los Angeles. Zoot suiters fought back, especially in the area around 12th and Central, an intersection marked by LA's Coca Cola plant. By the end of the riot, over 150 had been stripped and beaten, sometimes after being dragged out of theaters, including the Carmen and Orpheum. Around 500 zoot suiters were arrested and sent to the city's Hall of Justice. The Zoot Suit Riots made national headlines and became the spark for efforts by the federal government, driven in part by concerns over the U.S.'s wartime relationship with Latin America, to stop discrimination against Mexicans and Mexican Americans.

Kokugo Gakkō (Seattle Nihongo Gakkō Japanese Language School), Seattle, WA

NHL Criterion: 1
Civil Rights
Theme: Asian American History

Before World War II, the Pacific states had four dozen Japanese language schools. Seattle's school, founded in 1902 near Pioneer Square before moving to its current location on South Weller in 1913, was the first. Today only four remain, with Seattle being the most prominent historically. From the 1930s to the postwar period, it tells a story of agency, resistance, resilience, and revival. In the years before the war, the school was a key site for maintaining, in the

face of prejudice and demands for full assimilation, the cultural traditions that Issei brought to America and for connecting their Nisei and Sansei children to the language and customs of their ancestors. By the 1930s about 1800 students studied Japanese in classes that began after public schools let out for the afternoon. After the 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, the federal government shuttered, then confiscated the school property. After Seattle's Japanese American community was sent away to internment camps, the U.S. Army Air Force commandeered the building for use as a training center. Some graduates of the school served in the U.S. military as translators and interrogators. At the end of the war the building was retrofitted into a hostel that housed internee families returning to the area and looking for housing. It subsequently was at the center of the community's revival.

Mona's 440 Club, 440 Broadway Street, North Beach, San Francisco, CA

NHL Criterion: 1
Civil Rights
Theme: LGBTQ and Women's history

Arguably the first lesbian bar in San Francisco, Mona's 440 Club catered to the thousands of lesbian and bisexual women who came to the city during World War II. Owner Mona Sargent and her then-husband, Jimmie Sargent, both White, opened the bar, which welcomed an interracial clientele in 1934. To keep up with its popularity, in 1939 they moved the club to a larger property at 440 Broadway Street, the heart of an area with many bars, clubs, hotels, and bathhouses that welcomed queer clientele. Unlike these other spaces, Mona's 440 specialized in lesbian entertainment, hiring both local and touring male impersonators to perform floor shows each night alongside a waitstaff of women dressed in men's tuxedos. In 1941, Babe Scott, a local queer entertainer, took over as manager and brought many of the nation's most popular White and Black male impersonators to Mona's, including Tina Rubio, Kay Scott, Gladys Bentley, and Beverly Shaw. Mona's 440 built a national reputation as an integrated and safe space for queer women, many of whom gained financial and social independence through military service and defense industry jobs in the Bay Area. Spaces like Mona's 440 allowed a visibly public lesbian community and culture to develop and grow. Using the popular success of Mona's 440 Club as an example, dozens of other lesbian bars opened in the area and across the United States throughout the 1940s and 1950s.

Monument Valley Mine No. 2, Monument Valley, Apache County, AZ

NHL Criterion: 1
Production
Themes: Environmental; Native American and Indigenous history

In 1942, a young Navajo (Diné) named Luke Yazzie brought uranium-bearing rock samples to Harry Goulding, a White man, at Goulding's Trading Post near Monument Valley. The government, seeking a steady domestic supply of uranium for its secret Manhattan Project, tasked the Vanadium Corporation of America (VCA) to find it. Corporate officials had in turn asked Goulding to be on the lookout for a source of uranium in the area. Yazzie subsequently took a VCA employee to the site where he found the uranium, a location later known as Monument Valley Mine

No. 2. The mine became the cornerstone of the U.S.'s critically important wartime uranium supply. By the end of the war, 489 tons of uranium ore had come from the Monument Valley mines, much of it mined by Navajo (Diné). Uranium mining, which increased in Monument Valley after the war, would produce a major and long-running health crisis for the Navajo Nation. Both miners and family members suffered high rates of cancer due to their proximity to the mines.

Navajo Ordnance Depot (now Camp Navajo), Bellemont, AZ

NHL Criteria: 1, 5
Civil Rights; Manpower; Production
Theme: Native American and Indigenous History

The Navajo Ordnance Depot, constructed at the beginning of the war at the cost of $30 million by approximately 8,000 workers, is located twelve miles west of Flagstaff. Over 200 miles of roads, thirty-eight miles of rail, approximately 170 buildings, and nearly 800 ammunition storage igloos made it one of the largest—and most important—military facilities of its kind during World War II. At over 28,000 acres, the facility is roughly the size of the city of Boston. The property is associated with the 2,500 Navajo and Hopi who relocated to build the facility. They represent the largest known Native American home front workforce. Many were later among the 2,000 person staff that worked at the Depot as full-time employees. In 1942 the War Department acknowledged their importance by renaming the facility in recognition of their work and dedication to the war effort.

Percy Jones Army Hospital, Battle Creek, MI

NHL Criterion: 1
Manpower; Politics and Government
Theme: Disability history

The federal government purchased the facility, previously called the Kellogg Sanatorium, in anticipation of needing to offer treatment to large numbers of wounded and disabled World War II military personnel. In February 1943, the hospital opened, and by 1945 it was the largest medical facility in the world with 11,427 patients at one point. During its brief period of operation, the hospital treated more than 100,000 patients. Doctors at Percy Jones specialized in neurosurgery, amputations, paraplegic rehabilitation, artificial eye therapy, and other war injuries. The hospital's contributions to wartime medical treatment and rehabilitation are representative of a critical aspect of home front disability history. Deactivated after the war based on the availability of new treatment centers, the hospital briefly reopened during the Korean conflict before permanently closing its doors as a hospital in 1954.

Elizabeth and Roy Peratrovich House, 644 West 12th Street, Juneau, AK

NHL Criterion: 2
Civil Rights; Politics and Government
Themes: Native American and Indigenous History; Women's History

Elizabeth Peratrovich, a Tlingit woman, was the central protagonist in the bellwether fight for Alaska Native rights that took place on the World War II home front. In 1942 Elizabeth and her husband Roy Peratrovich (Tlingit) moved from Klawock, a town on Prince of Wales Island, to Juneau, Alaska's territorial capital. There they fought against both segregated housing and the segregated educational system in Alaska. They were among the first Alaska Nativess to integrate their Juneau neighborhood, and their children were in the initial cohort of Alaska Natives to attend public school in the city. During the war Peratrovich also served as president of the Alaska Native Sisterhood, the leading force in lobbying for an Alaska Anti-Discrimination Act, which she helped author. The act was designed to address the Jim Crow-style racial segregation and prejudice that World War II had exacerbated, but that Alaska Natives had faced since the beginning of settler colonialism in the territory. Peratrovich and her allies used the federal government's wartime anti-discrimination campaign and the link between racism and Nazi ideology as a key tool in this fight. The act failed to pass in 1943 and 1944. In 1945 Peratrovich and her fellow activists brought together a large body of Alaska Natives at the Alaska Federal and Territorial Building, now the state capitol, to demand passage of the legislation. In a famous speech and subsequent exchange with a White legislator opposed to the act, Peratrovich powerfully called out prejudice and argued for Native equal rights. Legislators and the public responded with raucous applause. Shortly after, the Alaska senate made the 1945 Alaska Equal Rights Act law. The legislation preceded the federal civil rights act by nearly twenty years and influenced the fight for civil rights for Native and other marginalized people in the United States and internationally. Peratrovich's example has inspired generations of Native and Indigenous people fighting against racism and for equal rights.

Sherman Institute (Sherman Indian High School), Riverside, CA

NHL Criterion: 1
Civil Rights; Manpower; Production
Theme: Native American and Indigenous History

The Sherman Institute, a boarding school established in 1901 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, provided industrial education as part of its assimilationist pedagogy. In 1941, the school initiated a formal program to train Native American men for war industry jobs throughout Southern California, one of the nation's fastest growing and most important war production centers. The school expanded recruitment efforts to Native people outside of California. The area's employment opportunities and the Institute's classes attracted Native American men and women, for whom the school added an industrial training program, from around the Western U.S. and beyond. Many went to work in the vital Los Angeles aircraft production industry. They were a significant part of the wartime migration of Native people to cities, a development that had profound ramifications on both reservation and urban Native American communities and that played a role in the government's use of cities for assimilation during postwar termination policies.

Stibnite/Yellow Pine Mining District, ID

NHL Criteria: 1, 5
Production
Theme: Environmental history

The Stibnite/Yellow Pine mining district provided 90 percent of the antimony and 40 percent of the tungsten critical to a variety of armaments and other war goods. Antimony was used in alloys with lead and tin to make bullets and bearings, improving the rigidity of those metals. Tungsten has the highest melting point of all known metals and was used in penetrating projectiles and other weapons because of its hardness, density, and resistance to high temperatures. It was also used in radiation shielding and industrial production. Both were among the first metals designated as essential, strategic materials after Hitler's 1939 invasion of Poland under the Strategic Mineral Investigations Enabling Act. Based on national need, tungsten mining began at Stibnite/Yellow Pine with the first ore milled in August 1941. An expansion of the underground mine and removal of gravel in anticipation of open pit operations took place in 1942. By May 1943 Stibnite was an open pit operation, with the Bailey tunnel dug the previous winter to divert the South Fork of the Salmon River. Milling also took place on site. Stibnite, fourteen miles to the southeast of the town of Yellow Pine, was a community of 1,800 workers by 1943. Work proceeded twenty-four hours a day through the winter, and by 1944 the mill had increased its capacity from 450 to 800 tons a day. One official estimate asserted the resources provided by Stibnite shortened the war by a year, underscoring the national significance of this mining district to Allied home front production. It came at a major cost to the environment. Mining and waterway diversion dramatically altered the landscape polluting land and water. Equally destructive, wartime tailings piles, waste rock dumps, and spent ore piles—some in places near waterways that are important fish habitats—resulted in a legacy of metal concentrates, including arsenic, in the water and soil. The combined environmental impact of the mine on the Stibnite/Yellow Pine area led to the Environmental Protection Agency naming it a Superfund site. The Stibnite/Yellow Pine Mining District is representative of the environmental impacts of the wartime production-at-all-costs ethos.

Valley Forge General Hospital, Phoenixville, PA.

NHL Criterion: 1
Manpower; Politics and Government
Theme: Disability history

Valley Forge General Hospital was built in 1942 and opened on the anniversary of President George Washington's birth date on February 22, 1943. Besides representing the military's commitment to rehabilitation of disabling wartime injuries, Valley Forge was significant as one of two military hospitals (alongside Letterman General Hospital in San Francisco) that specialized in blinding eye injuries. Hospital medical staff developed innovative eyecare field protocols. Three army dentists posted to Valley Forge in 1945 helped develop an acrylic artificial eye that was significantly better than the glass eye. Valley Forge General Hospital had a capacity for 3,000 patients. Treatment was spread over one hundred mostly two-story buildings connected by breezeways. Valley Forge continued to treat service members until early 1974.

Vieques Island, Puerto Rico

NHL Criteria: 1, 5
Home Defense

Themes: Environmental history; Latino history

Vieques Island, a 33,000-acre island eight miles off the east coast of Puerto Rico, became one of the U.S. Navy's most important training sites and bombing ranges during World War II, to the detriment of the island's residents and ecology. Vieques Island's national significance lies in the impact on the Puerto Rican residents of the U.S. government's expropriation of the island's land and the littoral environment around it for a massive bombing range. It is a stark example of the government's practice of making parts of U.S. territories into what scholars call national sacrifice zones. The navy's expropriation of approximately 80 percent of the island's land mass ended the sugar industry and subsistence farming that residents relied on and forced them to cluster in a slum at the center of the island. Military operations at the bombing ranges directed thousands of tons of explosives at the island. One navy document suggests Vieques was bombarded 180 days a year. After the navy left in 2003, the entire island was subsequently classified as a Superfund site by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

National Historic Landmarks Recommended for Updated Documentation

Hudson River State Hospital, Main Building, Poughkeepsie, NY (NHL 1989)

NHL Criterion: 1
Civil Rights; Politics and Government
Theme: Disability history

Wartime Conscientious Objectors (COs) working at the Hudson River State Hospital brought to light the mistreatment of patients in psychiatric wards across the U.S. during the war. In April 1945, a group of COs working as attendants and responsible for approximately 5,000 patients notified the hospital superintendent that regular attendants employed at the hospital were abusing patients. Four regular attendants were fired, two of which were veterans. When news of the situation broke, many sided with the attendants, and some threatened harm to the COs. Public opinion changed when First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt visited the hospital and wrote one of her famous "My Day" newspaper columns supporting the COs and their efforts to keep patients safe. The column helped prompt a series of exposés, including a book by the COs, which changed the national conversation about neuropsychiatric care. The hospital served patients with mental health-related disabilities from its opening in 1872 until it closed in 2003. The main building was designated an NHL in 1989 under Criterion 4 as a High Victorian Gothic institutional facility, but its disability history warrants consideration for an update to its NHL designation adding Criterion 1.

St. Elizabeths Hospital, Washington, DC (NHL 1990)

Criterion: 1
Civil Rights; Politics and Government
Themes: Disability; LGBTQ history

Located just east of the Anacostia River in Washington, D.C., St. Elizabeths Hospital has been a prominent institution for mental health and veteran treatment since its founding in 1852.

As the first federally funded mental health institution in the United States, the hospital set an institutional precedent, and its doctors were seen as some of the best in the country. At the start of World War II, Winfred Overholser, superintendent of the hospital and president of the American Psychiatric Association, helped to draft the guidelines for the psychiatric evaluation of military draftees, including guidelines that excluded gay men and lesbians from service. Overholser, joined by a fellow psychiatrist at St. Elizabeths, Benjamin Karpman, argued that allowing homosexuals to serve would be a detriment to the military. Using the guidelines created by the St. Elizabeths' doctors, psychiatrists and other medical personnel across the U.S. screened over eighteen million servicemen during World War II, excluding some based on homosexuality. Overholser opposed criminalization but championed medical intervention meant to "cure" patients of their homosexuality at the hospital, a practice that was also used on military men and women identified as homosexual during the war. Based in part on protocols developed at St. Elizabeths, gays and lesbians were treated with electroshock, lobotomy, insulin-induced coma, psychoanalysis, and aversion therapy. It would not be until decades later that LGBTQ Americans could openly serve in the military. St. Elizabeths was designated an NHL in 1990 under Criteria 1, 2, and 4, but its World War II history warrants consideration for an update to its NHL designation.

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For more on the National Historic Landmarks Program, which represent only part of the National Park Service's contribution to commemorating and honoring American history, visit: https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1582/index.htm

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