**Women in WWII**

**WACs** (Women’s Army Corps) or Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC)

* Draft (peacetime): Oct. 1940, men 21-35
* US Declare War on Japan (Dec. 8, 1941 a day after Pearl Harbor) / Germany & Italy (Dec. 11)
* Rep. Edith Nourse Rogers (Mass) introduce bill for all volunteer women's corps in army
* WAAC (Women's Army Auxiliary Corps) - May 1942 created by Congress;   
  women were civilians working with the army (not in army)
* Oveta Culp Hobby - 1st Director  
  (background: Chief of Women's Interest Section in the Public Revelations Bureau in the War Department)
* 1st women other than nurses to serve within the ranks of the US Army
* Jobs: mechanics, repair armor, clerks, labs, mail
* 1942 deployed overseas, mostly to European Theater (8,300), others to Pacific, Far East, North Africa
* Supreme Allied Commander, General Douglas MacArthur praised the work of WAC's
* WAC (Women's Army Corps) - 1943, Congress replaced WAAC giving women military status

**WAVES** (US Navy – Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service):

* Women's Reserve of the US Naval Reserve, July 30, 1942 (Congress)
* replace men who would be released for active sea duty
* WAVES an "experiment", but 3 times the female volunteers enlisted than expected
* 1942 - Freed enough men to outfit 1 battleship, 2 large aircraft carriers, 2 heavy cruisers, 4 light cruisers, 15 destroyers
* 1943 - opened jobs exclusive to men (district headquarters, navy yards, docks, supply depots, naval air station, naval hospitals, 80% administrative work done by WAVES, entire naval mail service, manage critical naval logistics, laboratories, firing bays at the crucial Indians Head rocket powder plant)
* 1944 - Congress allows WAVES to volunteer outside mainland US --> Pearl Harbor
* 1944 - black women commissioned after pressure from enlisted black women and Eleanor Roosevelt - 72 enlisted and set precedent for integration of black men
* JOBS: Navy communication systems, airfield control towers, health and hospitals, gunnery and blind flying instruction, aerology, aviation ground crew, navigation  
  naval aviation (fixed aircraft, packed parachutes, weather information, trainers, gunnery instructors, coordinated air traffic from towers

**WASPS** (Women’s Auxiliary / Airforce Service Pilots):

* train women to fly military aircraft so male pilots could be released for combat overseas
* Commanding General of US Army Air Forces, Henry "Hap" Arnold proclaimed that women could fly as well as men
* JOBS: flew almost every type of military aircraft (B-26 and B-29 bombers), ferried new planes long distances from factories to military bases and departure points across the country
* Tested newly overhauled planes
* Towed targets to give ground and air gunners training shooting (live ammunition)
* Program canceled after 2 years --> technically all civilian volunteers until granted military status in 1970's, Obama awarded the WASP the Congressional Gold Medal

**WOW**: (Woman Ordinance Worker)

* Thousands of women worked in non-traditional fields that had been limited to men ( hammer steel, make rifles, build bombs, rockets, bullets, trucks, cannons, jeeps, airplanes…)
* 3 million women fulfilled wartime jobs to overcome a labor shortage created by the war (men drafted to serve overseas)

**Rosie the Riveter**:

War poster of a women in a red bandana working for WOW. Reflects women’s supportive role in the war by taking on non-traditional jobs.

Japanese Internment:

Executive Order 9066,   
February 19, 1942, FDR issued an executive ordered the removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans. Over 110,000 were taken from their homes and placed in military patrolled facilities based on race. Hawaii was an exception due to the fact that they were 40% of the labor force, but martial law was declared on Dec. 7, 1941, lasting till 1944. <http://caamedia.org/jainternment/ww2/eo9066.html>

Who is an American? <http://www.densho.org/causes/default.asp>

Statistics:

* 2/3 were Nisei (2nd generation)
* Over 1/2 were children
* 110,000 rounded up and placed in camps

Instigated by:

* Historical Discrimination of the Japanese in America <http://www.densho.org/sitesofshame/timeline.xml>
* Fear of an invasion on the West Coast

Camps:

* consisted of stables, shacks, military barracks
* barbed wire, armed guards, quasi military discipline

Video – color footage, silent film (16:14)  
 <http://www.theatlantic.com/video/index/243901/wwii-color-footage-of-internment-camps/>

Cities of Shame (Map & Camps) <http://www.densho.org/sitesofshame/index.html>

Camps: <http://caamedia.org/jainternment/camps/index.html>

Enlistment:

* 33,000 (20,000 from camps / 13,000 from Hawaii)
* Draft - 200 resisted

WWII and Mexican-American

Bracero Program: 1942-1964

A work program between the US and Mexico. MX laborers work in the US in domestic and agricultural jobs. This helped fulfill the wartime labor shortage. 4.5 million Mexicans worked under this program over time. Braceros could be deported at will; work conditions were unsafe and there were no unions.

2nd generation Mexicans found work in the defense industries and served in the army (along with whites). 1/2 million Mexican Americans served in the armed forces.

Bracero Program <http://amhistory.si.edu/onthemove/themes/story_51_5.html>

Zoot Suit Riots 1943

Discrimination led to violence from sailors and policemen against Mexican youth.

FEPC (Fair Employment Practices Commission) received many complaints of Mexican workers being restricted to the lowest paid jobs.

Zoot Suit Riots <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/zoot/>

**Black Americans**

Racism:

* Nazis used American prejudices as proof of its own race policies
* Washington DC remained segregated
* Red Cross - would not mix blood of whites and blacks (black scientist Charles Drew's insisted that it was an unfounded/unscientific policy)
* Lynchings continued
* Race Riots - Detroit

Time Magazine slide show:  
 [http://life.time.com/history/detroit-race-riots-1943-photos-from-a-city-in-turmoil-during-wwii/#1](http://life.time.com/history/detroit-race-riots-1943-photos-from-a-city-in-turmoil-during-wwii/%231)

**Black Americans cont...**

Military Service:

* Air force and Marines - Excluded
* Army - # limited, units segregated
* Navy - waiters, cooks
* Train in South (northern blacks experienced Jim Crow south)
* Forced to give up seats on train to Nazi POW's

GI Bill (limits)-

* education benefits only good at segregated colleges
* job training only for unskilled/low wage jobs
* loans for farms denied

March on Washington & A Philip Randolph: 1941

* a threat that thousands would descent on Washington led to Executive Order 8802
* Executive Order 8802: banned discrimination in defense jobs & created FEPC
* FEPC - Fair Employment Practices Commission: its investigations exposed the deep racial divide (want ads specified "colored" for porters and janitors, "white" for skilled jobs)

Philip Randolph <http://www.biography.com/people/a-philip-randolph-9451623>

PBS, March on Washington <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/jimcrow/stories_events_march.html>

Background: <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/march-washington-movement-1941-1947>

Black Organization that advocated for equality:

* NAACP -( National Association for the Advancement for Colored People)  
  <http://www.naacp.org/pages/naacp-history>  
  membership skyrocketed (50,000 to 500,000)
* CORE - (Congress of Racial Equality)  
  founded 1942, interracial, sit-ins in urban north

Double V Campaign: <https://historyengine.richmond.edu/episodes/view/4682>

* campaign for Victory at Home and Abroad (win the war for freedom)
* Four Freedoms for non-whites:  
  Freedom from fear - end lynching

Freedom from want - end job discrimination