

F) Women Aren't Sure

Babylon Leader, November 5, 1942

Ranger Finds Women Averse To Applying At War Plants

Many women show reluctance in applying for work in war plants because they believe they do not possess the necessary ability to perform mechanical work which has heretofore been accepted as men's sphere of operation and responsibility. This was the summary of a statement made today by Frank Shugert, industrial relations director of Ranger Aircraft Engines, Farmingdale.

"I believe women are so accustomed to accepting man as the custodian of the technical phases of industry that, as a result, they regard berths in this field out of place with their cultural background," Mr. Shugert added. "This is not true, however. When we interview applicants for engineering positions, we demand that they possess not only manual dexterity but the ability to apply themselves diligently and to use keen analytical judgment in executing the duties at hand. If a woman possesses these qualities, we don't care if she has never touched a can opener."

"The very fact that we have selected women with such characteristics who have a minimum of college mathematics and physical sciences, that they have been trained and are now holding posts in our engine-test laboratories, is proof that they are fully capable of mastering technical work. The work they are performing was executed entirely by men engineering graduates in pre-war days."

Other reasons were also given as contributing to the hesitancy on the part of women to look to war plant work. One cited the hardship brought about by lack of financial reserve to carry applicants through the necessary transition training period. Another pointed out that women not familiar with factory working conditions have a tendency to believe it drudgery and unprofessional.

Although women were only placed at engine-testing positions four months ago, the company has found in this short time that they excel men in many instances despite their lack of mechanical experience prior to entering training schools. They have shown a great degree of versatility and are most efficient at positions requiring attention to detail.

Farmingdale Post, March 18, 1943

34 Percent Women Don't Think They Are Needed in War Plants

Thirty-four percent of the women of Nassau and Suffolk Counties do not believe that they are needed to supplant men in the aircraft industry, is the startling disclosure indicated by a study among Long Island women to determine their attitudes. J.S. Wilson, employment manager at Republic Aviation Corporation, here, declared "It means that they do not realize the manpower shortage which is growing more acute daily." He pointed out that this attitude is identical to the one which existed in England for many months after the outbreak of the war. Once women became inculcated with the feeling that prosecution of war is no longer solely the domain of men, they flocked to the production plants." It is found that women who have husbands, sons or other relatives in the armed services, see more clearly the necessity of foresaking many pre-Pearl Harbor pursuits and applying for essential occupations.

Questions:

- 1- According to the company spokesmen, why were women unwilling to take jobs in defense factories?
- 2- Can you suggest other reasons why women hesitated to work in the defense factories? Why do you suggest these reasons?
- 3- Based on the experiences of these women and the aviation companies, what would you expect to happen in the post-war era? Why? Did it happen? Why?
- 4- If you could ask a representative of an aviation company a question about these articles, what would you ask him? Why?