



## DBQ Essay Example

### **Introduction**

The Great War and the second ordeal of conflict in Europe, played a fundamental in the increase of the rights for women. During the second world war, the British government encouraged house-wives to do the work of what was primarily traditional for men to do. Such as growing crops and butchering animals, which was generally considered to be “men’s work”. One of the slogans was “dig for victory”. The reason for this was for people to take care of themselves during the difficult times of rationing.

### **Thesis**

For several years before the Great War, the general opinions of women were highly influenced by the public figure, Queen Victoria. The former Queen of England was seen as a feminist figure, but also a housewife, and a mother to the future heirs of the throne. She was also considered to be virtuous by excluding her influence on British parliament. She isolated herself in Balmoral castle with her children.

The second world war forced women to think about the way they fit in general society, thus doing the work that traditionally men would do. Due to the fact that most men were on the front-line with Germany. This resulted in a more feminist parliament, with a dramatic decrease of male politicians. According to evidence, society had the expectation of women that they should be mother-like and compliant. At the time, men had the ignorant belief that women were incapable of holding political power, nor running a country. There was, of course, resistance from the feminist side of things, which was planted. Thus, a sexist unfairness was practically enforced upon women - meaning men had the belief that they were the dominating force.

### **Body**

Discrimination towards women in their careers was a rising problem. It was commonly based on ignorance, unfairness, and biases. On the other hand, men had a constant threat of feminism taking over the general industry, which in these times is not an issue, but back then - it was seen as a threat by the dominating men. According to evidence,



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the recruitment of women in the workplace was already happening, prior to the Great War. According to records, 6% of the industry was women. (“Women as a percentage of the industrial workforce in France, 1911 - 1926”).

During the 1940s, women were encouraged to contribute to the effort on the front-line of industry. This was portrayed to be a negative aspect of everyday life, in the point-of-view of men in parliament. The following poster states: “Votes for Heroines as well as Heroes”. This illustrates a female politician followed by a male who appears to be resistant to the rights of women. The caption which is presented reads: “Men and women protect one another in the hour of death. With the addition of the women’s vote, they would be able to protect one another in life as well.” Which is a reference to the 1915 naval boat incident, where nurses gave up their lives to make space for the soldiers on the lifeboats for damaged veterans. The hero-like and selfless nurses who gave up their own lives on a sinking ship which is summoned by the poster opposes and challenges the unfair belief that men and women are not equal.

Due to the factors of encouragement amongst women, new factors arose. The new factors being independence and entitlement. Male politicians began to get frustrated with this, due to their biases. They began to describe this revolution with demeaning choices of words, as well a continuance of their persistency of their own unfair beliefs. The language used was words like: “little woman” which was a discriminating expression at the time. Paul Von Hindenburg stated “to women’s agitation for parity in all professions, and thereby, of course, for political emancipation... After the war, we still need the woman for spouse and mother.” This passage implies that women belong outside of work, and at home - as a housewife. Not as people with equal rights to men, which is by far demeaning and disgusting.

### **Conclusion**

In the Victorian Era, it goes without saying that millions of ladies were forced to abide by the unfair rules of society, but at the same time, they had the idea of getting a career and being equal to men. Numerous women took on the image of Queen Victoria. The



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second world war did encourage the mentalities of men to go away. Women were forced to fight for equality, while the men were fighting to save the country. The question comes into mind: what forms of injustice and discrimination are still active in modern day?