



# **Women Workers in the First World War (Routledge Library Editions: Women's History)**

*Gail Braybon*

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Commentators writing soon after the outbreak of the First World War about the classic problems of women's employment (low pay, lack of career structure, exclusion from "men's jobs") frequently went on to say that the war had "changed all this", and that women's position would never be the same again.

This book looks at how and why women were employed, and in what ways society's attitudes towards women workers did or did not change during the war. Contrary to the mythology of the war, which portrayed women as popular workers, rewarded with the vote for their splendid work, the author shows that most employers were extremely reluctant to take on women workers, and remained cynical about their performance. The book considers attitudes towards women's work as held throughout society. It examines the prejudices of government, trade unions and employers, and considers society's views about the kinds of work women should be doing, and their "wider role" as the "mothers of the race". First published in 1981, this is an important book for anyone interested in women's history, or the social history of the twentieth century.

Companion volumes, *Women Workers in the Second World War* by Penny Summerfield, and *Out of the Cage: Women's Experiences in Two World Wars* by Gail Braybon and Penny Summerfield, are also published by Routledge.

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