

Once upon a time there was a newly wed couple - Henry and Margaret - living in America. It was 1914. They were a happy couple, Henry had a steady job at a factory to support his wife, who stayed at home and took care of the house. A couple months later, World War I started and he was drafted into the military. To help her country, Margaret began working in the factory. Soon enough, the war was done, the men came home victorious and took their jobs back. Flash forward ten years, Henry and Margaret had six children. Henry was still working at the factory and Margaret stayed home with the kids. Life was good. Then the Great Depression hit. The family struggled, but they pulled through. World War II came around and Henry along with their oldest son were drafted into the military. Their oldest daughter felt left out, she was a strong fearless woman. She decided to join the military as well. She was a nurse. Margaret stayed on the home front with the rest of the children. She went back to working at the factory as she did during World War I. The rest of the children did their best to help as well, those who were old enough even worked in the factory. Once the war ended, Henry, the son, and daughter returned home. Life went back to normal, as normal as it could be after war. But Margaret kept her job at the factory and the daughter got a job at the hospital as a nurse. The rest of the children grew up and soon joined the workforce, they all lived happily ever after.

However, this is no fairy tale or folk story, this is history. Millions of families went through the same string of events as Henry and Margaret. They lived through the same roller coaster - riding the ups and downs, raising and supporting a family, helping defend their country, and playing roles in the workforce. Henry was the classic factory worker and father. Margaret was the strong woman and mother that stepped up and joined the labor force, just like many of the women across the country throughout history. During World War I, women took the jobs the men left behind when they left to serve their country. But, when the men returned, women were forced to return to their house chores, however, they enjoyed helping and being part of the workforce. Some found jobs during the 20s and into the Great Depression, but the big boom was during World War II; thousands of women joined the military as nurses and mechanics, millions took up jobs men left behind to fight. This trend continued after the war ended and far into the future, in fact it hasn't ended. More women keep on joining the workforce to help support their family like Margaret everyday.

Now, I am joining the workforce as an eighteen year old female. I hope to go into science, specifically scientific research in biochemistry. Many of my friends who are also women are going into engineering, business, and computer sciences. These paths are not frequently traveled by women. However, in the future, I see any path a woman wants to take to be open, ready to be traveled all the way to success. Women will play a role in every field and occupation available. They will inspire young girls to dream big - they can be whatever they want when they grow up. Women will help the economy and push labor to the next level - they will shatter the glass ceiling, leaving no job or position out of reach.

We have come a long way since Henry and Margaret's era and we will keep on moving forward far into the future - a future filled with strong working women in every occupation and position there is.