**United States History Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Unit 10: Women and African Americans in WW2 Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Double-V Campaign (1942)**

Like all true Americans, my greatest desire at this time, this crucial point of our history; is a desire for a **complete victory over the forces of evil**, which threaten our existence today. Behind that desire is also a desire to serve, this, my country, in the most advantageous way. Most of our leaders are suggesting that we sacrifice every other ambition to the paramount one, victory. With this I agree; but I also wonder if another victory could not be achieved at the same time.

Being an American of dark complexion and some 26 years, these questions flash through my mind**:** "Should I sacrifice my life to live half American?" "Will things be better for the next generation in the peace to follow?" "**Would it be demanding too much to demand full citizenship rights in exchange for the sacrificing of my life."** "Is the kind of America I know worth defending?" "Will America be a true and pure democracy after this war?" "Will colored Americans suffer still the indignities that have been heaped upon them in the past?"

The "V for Victory" sign is being displayed prominently in all so-called democratic countries which are fighting for victory over aggression, slavery and tyranny. If this V sign means that to those now engaged in this great conflict then let colored Americans adopt the double VV for a double victory; **The first V for victory over our enemies from without, the second V for victory over our enemies within.** For surely those who perpetrate these ugly prejudices here are seeing to destroy our democratic form of government just as surely as the Axis forces.

**A Woman [Adele] Remembers the War (1984)**

When the war started I was twenty-six, unmarried, and working as a cosmetics clerk in a drugstore in Los Angeles. I was running the whole department, handling the inventory and all that. It seemed asinine, though, to be selling lipstick when the country was at war. **I felt that I was capable of doing more than that toward the war effort.**

**There was also a big difference between my salary and those in defense work.** I was making something like twenty-two, twenty-four dollars a week in the drug-store. You could earn a lot much more money for your labor in the defense plants.

[I got job working in a plant making the B-17.] Where did they put women? In the burr room. You sat at a workbench, which was essentially like a picnic table, with a bunch of other women, and you worked grinding and sanding machine parts to make them smooth. That’s what you did all day long.

They started training me [for the machine shop]. They told me that it would be a real challenge because I would be the only woman in the machine shop. Every guy in the shop just looked at me. It took, I think, two weeks before anyone even talked to me. The discrimination was indescribable. They wanted to kill me. **My attitude was, “Okay, you bastards, I’m going to prove to you I can do anything you can do, and maybe better than some of you.”**

For me defense work was the beginning of my emancipation as a woman. **For the first time in my life I found out that I could do something with my hands besides bake a pie.**