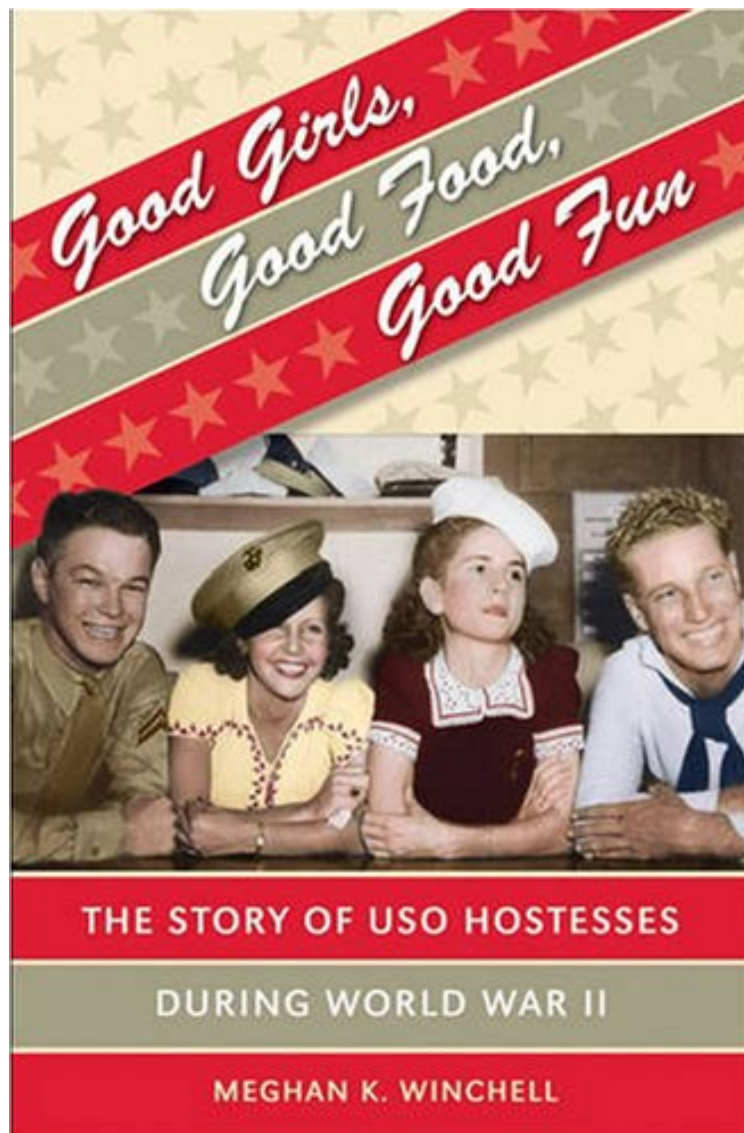


(Read now) Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun: The Story of USO Hostesses during World War II (Gender and American Culture)

## Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun: The Story of USO Hostesses during World War II (Gender and American Culture)

*Meghan K. Winchell*

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**Meghan K. Winchell : Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun: The Story of USO Hostesses during World War II (Gender and American Culture)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun: The Story of USO Hostesses during World War II (Gender and American Culture):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Well-researched and great take on women's rolls in WWII By Tam Francis Very in-depth and well-researched book. The author certainly had a slant, focusing on the sexism and dual identities and expectations women were subjected to at this time. I found a few anecdotes perfect and inspirational for my fictional writing. If you want a good understanding of woman's rolls, especially young, single women during wartime, this is a perfect read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Konrad E Braun Great product at a good price. Very fast shipping. Thank you! 3 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Very disappointing... By Denise Very academic, clearly someone's thesis or other scholarly work. While well researched, it turned a really interesting aspect of the Greatest Generation into a yawn. My mom was a USO hostess and her stories were colorful and a fascinating depiction of that time and the people. Unfortunately I can't say the same for this book. Very disappointing.

Throughout World War II, when Saturday nights came around, servicemen and hostesses happily forgot the war for a little while as they danced together in USO clubs, which served as havens of stability in a time of social, moral, and geographic upheaval. Meghan Winchell demonstrates that in addition to boosting soldier morale, the USO acted as an architect of the gender roles and sexual codes that shaped the "greatest generation." Combining archival research with extensive firsthand accounts from among the hundreds of thousands of female USO volunteers, Winchell shows how the organization both reflected and shaped 1940s American society at large. The USO had hoped that respectable feminine companionship would limit venereal disease rates in the military. To that end, Winchell explains, USO recruitment practices characterized white middle-class women as sexually respectable, thus implying that the sexual behavior of working-class women and women of color was suspicious. In response, women of color sought to redefine the USO's definition of beauty and respectability, challenging the USO's vision of a home front that was free of racial, gender, and sexual conflict. Despite clashes over class and racial ideologies of sex and respectability, Winchell finds that most hostesses benefited from the USO's chaste image. In exploring the USO's treatment of female volunteers, Winchell not only brings the hostesses' stories to light but also supplies a crucial missing piece for understanding the complex ways in which the war both destabilized and restored certain versions of social order.

From Publishers Weekly Think of saddle-shoed coeds jitterbugging with the boys. The dance could be as sexually evocative then as grinding is now. It was all in a night's work for the thousands of young American women who volunteered to host soldiers in United Service Organizations clubs during WWII. The USO's domestic mission was to steer idle troops away from liquor, prostitutes and venereal disease, offering instead homemade cookies and wholesome smalltown girls. In constructing a portrait of wartime sexuality through the lens of the USO's American ideal of women, Winchell highlights what she views as the USO's middle-class prejudices. But she also offers studies of leadership in minority women's lobbying for such issues as canteen integration and access for women soldiers. Winchell, an assistant professor of history at Nebraska Wesleyan University, can't seem to let impressive research speak for itself, and her insightful observations are couched in the academic language of race, class, gender and the economics of women's work. The hostesses should have been the voice of this book sometimes, they manage to be heard. 30 illus. (Nov.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "A well-researched and detailed account. . . . Winchell has significantly added to the historiography of gender, race, and class on the Home Front during World War II." -Louisiana History "Winchell does an excellent job of showing the nature of the USO's goals and methods, including its selection process and its supervision of volunteers. . . . A first-rate case study of gender, race, and class at a significant point in American history. . . . Extensive research in primary sources and her accessible writing make this a book of broad interest." -American Historical "Allows the reader to view the issue [volunteer work of USO hostesses during WWII] as part of the tapestry of society . . . provides a temporal perspective of what had happened before and suggests what might happen next." -Canadian Journal of History "A must-read for anyone interested in the home front during World War II." -Archways "An in-depth analysis. . . . Winchell skillfully demonstrates how, in an era when job opportunities for women were increasing, the USO gave traditional middle-class women a chance to make a significant contribution to the war effort." -The Journal of American History "Winchell demonstrates how the USO counterbalanced and undermined the new image of Rosie the Riveter by re-inscribing traditional roles for women and white middle-class social norms. Well written and well presented, Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun should be welcomed by both academic and nonacademic readers." Maureen Honey, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, author of Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender, and Propaganda during World War II "Meghan Winchell has written an engaging account of the young and middle-aged women who provided a home away from home for soldiers during World War II. She takes full measure of tensions surrounding gender, race, and class during the social upheavals of the war years." -Susan M. Hartmann, Ohio State University, author of The Home Front and Beyond: American Women in the 1940s "In constructing a portrait of wartime sexuality through the lens of the USO's American ideal of women, Winchell highlights what she views as the USO's middle-class prejudices. But she also offers studies of leadership in minority women's lobbying for such issues as canteen integration and access for women soldiers." -Publishers Weekly Winchell demonstrates how the USO counterbalanced

and undermined the new image of Rosie the Riveter by re-inscribing traditional roles for women and white middle-class social norms. Well written and well presented, *Good Girls, Good Food, Good Fun* should be welcomed by both academic and nonacademic readers.--Maureen Honey, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, author of *Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender, and Propaganda during World War II* Meghan Winchell has written an engaging account of the young and middle-aged women who provided a home away from home for soldiers during World War II. She takes full measure of tensions surrounding gender, race, and class during the social upheavals of the war years.--Susan M. Hartmann, Ohio State University