

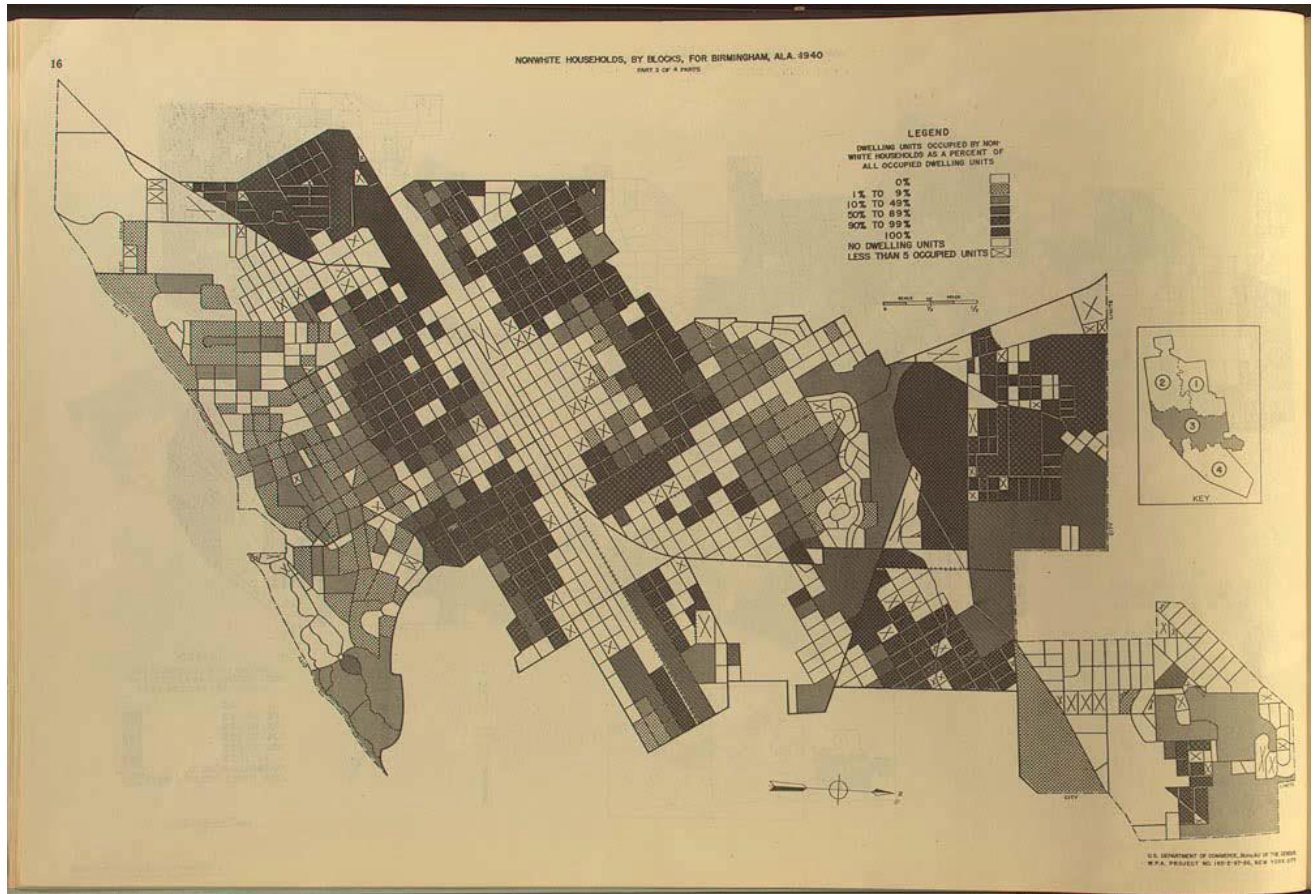
African Americans

World War II was a unique time for African Americans. They were asked to fight against Hitler's racism in Europe even though they experienced racism on a daily basis in the United States. African Americans decided to fight for Double Victory – defeating Hitler's brand of racism AND fighting against racism at home.

Think about:

- What type of racism did African Americans face during World War II?
- What roles did African Americans take on during World War II?
- Were African Americans successful to fight against racism in the United States during World War II?

Birmingham, Alabama, Block Statistics.



Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940.

Washington, 1943.

Geography and Map Division. (815)

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/odyssey/archive/08/0815001r.jpg>

The Pittsburgh Courier, February 14, 1942 "The Courier's Double 'V' For a Double Victory Campaign Gets Country-Wide Support."

Last week, without any public announcement or fanfare , the editors of The Courier introduced its war slogan- a double "V" for a double victory to colored America. We did this advisedly because we wanted to test the response and popularity of such a slogan with our readers. The response has been overwhelming. Our office has been inundated with hundreds of telegrams and letters of congratulations proving that without any explanation, this slogan represents the true battle cry of colored America. This week we gratefully acknowledge this voluntary response and offer the following explanation: Americans all, are involved in a gigantic war effort to assure the victory for the cause of freedom- the four freedoms that have been so nobly expressed by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill. We, as colored Americans, are determined to protect our country, our form of government and the freedoms which we cherish for ourselves and the rest of the world, therefore we have adopted the Double "V" war cry victory over our enemies on the battlefields abroad. Thus in our fight for freedom we wage a two-pronged attack against our enslaves at home and those abroad who would enslave us. WE HAVE A STAKE IN THIS FIGHT....WE ARE AMERICANS TOO!"

<http://new.gilderlehrman.org/sites/default/files/inline-pdfs/Double%20V%20Handout.pdf>



**Private Joe Louis
Says--**

*NARA Still Picture Branch
(NWDNS-44-PA-87)*

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United States. Office of Facts and Figures.. *Pvt. Joe Louis says-- "We're going to do our part, and we'll win because we're on God's side."*. [Washington, D.C.]. UNT Digital Library.

<http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc491/>. Accessed February 13, 2013.

The War Labor Board Insists on Equal Pay for Black Workers

The War Labor Board (WLB, had a profound impact on relations between employers and unions during World War II. The WLB—made up of representatives from government, labor, and management—provided protection for unions from hostile bosses, increased the wages of the lowest-paid workers, helped set industry-wide wage patterns, and established methods of resolving shop floor disputes. Its decisions could carry powerful ideological messages. That became clear in the following document, which insisted upon the policy of equal pay for equal work—a seemingly self-evident principle that was not standard practice in American industry. This board decision mandated equal pay for African-American workers.

“The National War Labor Board abolishes the classifications “colored laborer” and “white laborer” and reclassifies both simply as “laborers” with the same rates of pay for all in that classification without discrimination on account of color. The Negro workers in this classification are hereby granted wage increases which place them on a basis of economic parity with the white workers in the same classification.”

“Economic and political discrimination on account of race or creed is in line with the Nazi program... ..Understanding religious and racial differences make for a better understanding of other differences and for an appreciation of the sacredness of human personality, as a basic to human freedom. The American answer to differences in color and creed is not a concentration camp but cooperation....”

“Whether as vigorous fighting men or for production of food and munitions, America needs the Negro; the Negro needs the equal opportunity to work and fight. The Negro is necessary for winning the war, and, at the same time, is a test of our sincerity in the cause for which we are fighting. More hundreds of millions of colored people are involved in the outcome of this war than the combined populations of the Axis Powers. Under Hitler and his Master Race, their movement is backward to slavery and despair. In America, the colored people have the freedom to struggle for freedom. With the victory of the democracies, the human destiny is toward freedom, hope, equality of opportunity and the gradual fulfillment for all peoples of the noblest aspirations of the brothers of men and the sons of God, without regard to color or creed, region or race, in the world neighborhood of human brotherhood.”

Source: Opinion by Frank P. Graham, National War Labor Board, Case No. 771 (2898-CS-D), In the Matter of Southport Petroleum Company (Texas City, Texas) and Oil Workers' International Union, Local 449, CIO, June 5, 1943. Reprinted in The Termination Report of the National War Labor Board: Industrial Disputes and Wage Stabilization in Wartime, January 12, 1942-December 31, 1945, vol. II, Appendix G, 339–340.

"Detroit, Michigan. Riot at the Sojourner Truth homes, a new U.S. federal housing project"

This photograph, made for the Office of War Information, is part of a larger series documenting racial conflict surrounding the construction of the Sojourner Truth homes in Detroit, Michigan.



Source | Arthur S. Siegel, "Detroit, Michigan. Riot at the Sojourner Truth homes, a new U.S. federal housing project," photograph, Feb. 1942, Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Collection, Library of Congress, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/fsa.8d13572>

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<http://herb.ashp.cuny.edu/items/show/1100> 11/28/2012