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The Effects of Women in Business in the Early Twentieth Century (1900-1950)
Changes in the Work Place and Changes at Home
By Jill Wallace

Working is not a new concept to women. Prior to the twentieth century, women have worked in many capacities. The most acceptable occupations for women working outside the home prior to the twentieth century included professions such as teaching, nursing and domestic work like seamstresses or cooks. At the close of the nineteenth century and upon entering the twentieth century, women's movements such as Woman's Suffrage and equal opportunity laws opened up many new positions and opened doors for woman who wanted, or needed to work in a number of new capacities. These changes did not come without hard work. These changes have been, in many ways positive. Working conditions and equality for females working in these positions, traditionally held by men have gotten better, and not just for women. Better working conditions have improved for minority workers as well. With these opportunities it is inevitable that families would experience changes from the home. Having a wife or mother that is working outside the home, has caused changes in family dynamics. This study will look at the many aspects of these changes, both positive and negative. What have professional opportunities done for the women working in them? What kinds of changes in the work environment have women had upon it? What have families experienced since women have gone to work? Are families better or worse off for having these opportunities? What kinds of balances can be met to make women working in professional positions best for everyone that it encompasses? We will be looking at several professional women, changes in laws and case studies on families with professional women to find the answers.