

HISTORY WORKSHOP

The Department of History

Tuesdays ~ 12:30-1:30 pm ~ ZOOM

Women, War Savings, and Citizenship in the British World 1939-50

Dr. Carol Summers

University of Richmond

April 21, 2020

12:30-1:30 pm

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P/W: UDHHistory



During and after World War II, women and girls in the British world, from England to British Columbia, Kampala and beyond, learned from officially sponsored propaganda that they could win (or lose) the war by how they managed money. Saving money through war bonds and formal sector accounts was, in the propaganda of the era, the path toward both victory against Hitler and security for postwar individuals and families.

Part of a larger project on patriotic thrift and postwar rights, this paper looks at propaganda from Britain, Canada and Uganda to examine how new political identities emerged from the war savings initiatives' economic campaigns. The rather startling history of war savings and investment during the second world war, from British imperial metropole to leper colony in Uganda, provides a remarkable glimpse of a financially based vision of citizenship that seemed at times to offer people across the British world an opportunity to buy in to the war, and to political, social and, especially, economic rights and opportunities in the world they sought to inherit.