

Document Based Assessment

Propaganda of World War One

Most of us have heard the term 'propaganda' used. Often it is meant in a negative way to ridicule unpopular messages. For example, a candidate running in an election might denounce his opponent's views as propaganda which tells the audience to be wary and suspicious of that message. However, propaganda can be positive or negative depending on the intention of its creator.

Propaganda is defined as 'ideas, facts, or allegations spread deliberately to further one's message or to damage an opposing cause'.

According to the Institute of Propaganda Analysis there are seven methods that propagandists use to convince people to listen to their message:

- Name Calling
- Glittering Generalities
- Transfer
- Testimonial
- Plain Folks
- Card Stacking
- Band Wagon

1. Name Calling uses negative words to create fear and hatred against the idea, people, or group that we are supposed to mistrust. Name calling appeals to our emotions rather than looking at the facts.

2. Glittering Generalities use broad and vague slogans that appeal to our emotions. This type of propaganda tries to invoke our sense of patriotism, loyalty, bravery, or honor but doesn't give us any real facts to think about.

3. Transfer takes a person, idea, or symbol that we respect such as our national flag or the Statue of Liberty to stir our emotions and win our approval.

4. Testimonial uses a respected person such as a leader, sports star, actor, to deliver the message and win our approval.

5. Plain Folks lets the audience know that the author is from humble origins and shares the same values and beliefs as the people. The appeal is for the audience to trust the messenger and know that he has your interest at heart.

6. Bandwagon tries to use peer pressure to get you to act in a certain way. The Bandwagon method says that everyone else is doing it....why aren't you?

7. Card Stacking focuses only on the positives of the propagandist's message and shows only the negatives of the opposing side. Many political campaign ads employ this technique.

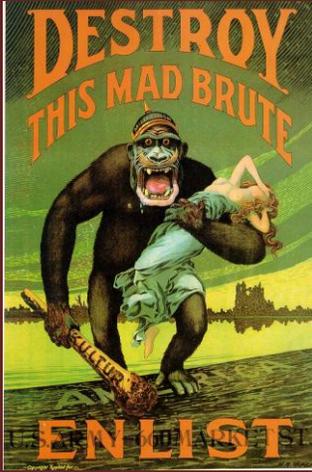
World War 1 began in 1914 from an assassination of Archduke Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of the Austro-Hungarian Empire by a minor Serbian nationalist group called the Black Hand. The war quickly spiraled out of control as Serbia and Austria called on its allies to join in. All of the combatants began recruiting new soldiers for a war that would not last past Christmas. New technologies such as poison gas and machine guns had created a modern war that by 1918 left almost 10 million dead soldiers from both sides not to mention the millions of wounded and dead civilians, ruined cities, and farmland. When it was all over no one could even say what had started the whole thing. Trench warfare had prevented either side from gaining much territory. In some of the worst battles of the war, such as the Somme, millions died to gain less than 1/2 mile of ground.

The longer the war went on the more civilians back home began to question if the war was even necessary. After all people had to ration their food, shortages of almost every basic supply became a daily struggle, and the loss of a soldier was a reality for many families.

Both the Allied and Central Powers needed to keep their peoples support for the war effort. To accomplish this the governments of all countries had special departments set up to produce propaganda to influence people to ration their food, buy war bonds, or to enlist in the armed forces.

This DBQ activity would give you a look at the propaganda posters produced by the war departments of the United States, Britain, and Germany. Pay close attention to the details of each poster such as the intent of the author, background pictures, the mood, etc.

Document 1



1. Which of the seven propaganda types is being used in this poster?

2. Why did the artist use an ape to characterize the enemy?

Document 2



Geh' o Soldat! und deine Pflicht erfülle!
Christus, der gute Hirt — bewache seine Herden —
O Herr! Zukomme uns Dein Reich und gescheh' Dein Wille
Wie in dem Himmel, also auch auf Erden.

3. Which of the seven propaganda types is being used in this poster?

4. What is the message of this poster?

Document 3



5. Which of the seven propaganda types is being used in this poster?

6. What does this poster imply about men who don't join the Navy?

Document 4



7. The poster in **Document 4** used a famous symbol of the American government, Uncle Sam, to convince Americans to join the army. What type of propaganda is this employed in this poster?

8. How might this type of propaganda be effective in gaining new recruits?

Document 5

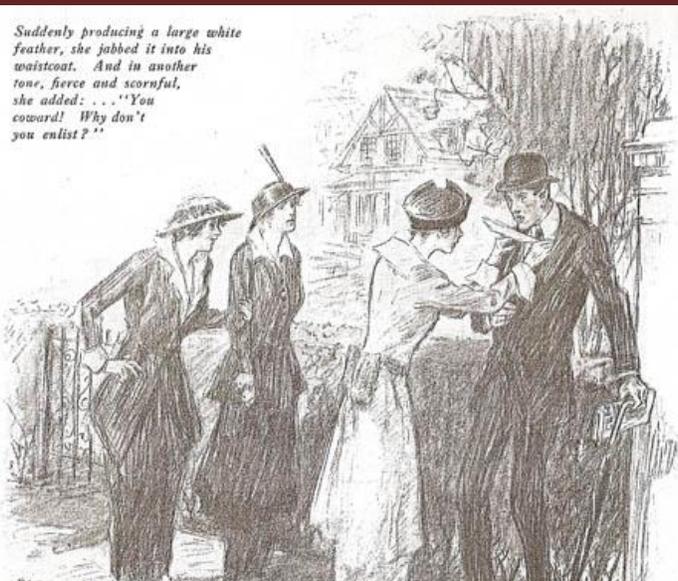


9. Which of the seven propaganda types is being used in this poster?

10. Look closely at the recruits to determine the overall message of the poster. Remember that Great Britain had a far-flung empire during the era of World War I.

Document 6

Suddenly producing a large white feather, she jabbed it into his waistcoat. And in another tone, fierce and scornful, she added: . . . "You coward! Why don't you enlist?"



The Text of the poster at right reads **'Suddenly producing a large white feather, she jabbed it into his waistcoat. And in another tone, fierce and scornful, she added..."You coward! Why don't you enlist?"**

11. Look closely at the details and message of this poster. Who is the intended audience?

12. What emotions are being evoked for the men who read this? (How are men supposed to respond?)

13. What emotions are being evoked for the women who read this? (How are women supposed to respond?)