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## The Real Winner of the Second World War: Patriotic Consumption and the Formation of a Society of Spin

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THE REAL WINNER OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR: PATRIOTIC CONSUMPTION AND THE  
FORMATION OF A SOCIETY OF SPIN

by

JORDAN THOMAS

(Under the Direction of Craig Roell)

ABSTRACT

The unique circumstances in the United States during the Second World War allowed for business to continue as usual on the home front. Advertisers, public relations experts, and big business all worked for the government to promote the war effort. For a period of time major companies in the United States were producing advertisements that persuaded citizens to support rationing, buy war bonds, hate the enemy, and keep their brand names in mind in the post-war years. Companies who supported the war effort had their brands connected with ideas of patriotism and enjoyed the success of brand loyal consumers in the economic post-war boom. The advertisers and public relations experts cemented a place for their professions in the United States by showing their effectiveness to sway the minds of the public to support the war effort. The advertisements produced during the Second World War acted as a form of wartime propaganda, selling nationalistic ideology and demonizing the enemy alongside a service or a product. The advertising campaigns of the Second World War show a period of time where government, public relations, advertising, and business developed a relationship that changed the way Americans viewed consumerism. It is my assertion that by analyzing the advertising campaigns from the Second World War it is possible to trace the rise of consumer culture dominance, the solidification of the fields of public relations and advertising, and the connection between purchasing brand products and patriotism.

INDEX WORDS: Propaganda, Consumerism, Advertising, Public relations, Second World War, Crowd psychology

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JORDAN THOMAS

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MASTER OF ARTS

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The Second World War was a turning point for the United States. The conflict would bring many changes to daily life on the United States home front in ways that are uniquely American. The Second World War laid the foundations for the Civil Rights Movement, advanced women's rights by putting more women in the work force, pulled the United States out of the Great Depression, and gave rise to consumer-based culture within a nation that was separated from the conflict by miles of ocean. Apart from Hawaii, citizens of the United States were not experiencing the horrors of war on their doorstep, which makes the experience of those on the U.S. home front uncommon when compared to other countries involved across the Atlantic and Pacific. Citizens of the United States rationed supplies and went to work in wartime industry, which was certainly a sacrifice and a major change to their daily lives. However, the sacrifice that American civilians made rationing and purchasing war bonds cannot be compared to the sacrifice of civilians in France who were witnessing death and atrocities of war as a daily reality. Since the United States was isolated from the ravages of war it was business as usual for producers in the land of opportunity, even with the burden of wartime rationing. Since producers were still able to produce and the civilian population was still eager to buy, a unique blending of two powerful "isms" took place within the United States during the Second World War, nationalism and consumerism.

The purpose of my research is not to chronicle United States advertising during the Second World War, but rather a look at how the war provided a catalyst for the rise of public relations and advertising dominance in the business world within the United States. The Second World War gave birth to the War Advertising Council, formerly and currently known as the Ad Council. Public relations experts, the more respectable name for propagandists, saw an opportunity to market their profession as an essential component of democracy and patriotism during and after the war. The advertisements of the Second World War provide an example of how public relations and advertising professionals were able to use the war effort to launch their professions to new heights, heights that seemed unimaginable in the years of the



Great Depression and the New Deal era. Therefore, rather than focusing on propaganda produced by government agencies during the Second World War as many others have already done, the cynosure of my research will focus on wartime print advertising that promotes the same messages as the government propaganda of the time beside a product. Through these war time advertisements, we can see the messages and methods used by professional manipulators to connect the world of business to the world of patriotism. In this way, we can view how big business used the war to cement their place in the framework of American society.

As Arthur A. Berger states in his book, *Ads, Fads, & Consumer Culture*, “The medium used (in advertising) has a major impact on the creation of texts. Each medium-print (newspapers and magazines), radio, or television- has certain strengths and weaknesses. So, although the medium may not be the message...it has a lot of impact on the message.”<sup>1</sup> There is something about images that draws people in. It is for this reason that fashion, art, design, and other similar professions remain popular and influential to this day. We like things that look nice and we want things to look nice. This has been obvious in successful advertising campaigns for the better part of a century. People do not want to see an unattractive, old, single man parking a piece of junk car in front of a rundown old house when they are looking at an ad for lawn care, unless they are mocking the person who doesn’t take care of their lawn. No, a good ad for lawncare would be a happy, attractive nuclear family, driving a nice car, parking in front of a beautiful house with white picket fence wrapping around the lush, green lawn. This may seem obvious or even a little silly, but think for a moment what either of these images, the ugly old man or the attractive family, have to do with lawncare? The short answer is that they have nothing to do with growing grass, but everything to do with catching your eye with something appealing. Print advertisements during and after the Second World War generally sell you an idea of you who could be

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<sup>1</sup> Arthur A. Berger, *Ads, Fads, & Consumer Culture: Advertising’s Impact on American Character & Society*. Fifth Edition (New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 62.

with the product, not what the product does, which distinguishes the war and postwar era of advertising from its predecessors.

This emphasis on print advertising is not to discount the effectiveness of mediums like the radio, film, or television. Radio was an extremely effective tool for reaching a large audience before, during and after the Second World War. The radio was a major tool of propaganda with shows by the likes of Axis Sally and the Tokyo Rose. Franklin D. Roosevelt's fireside chats also had a major influence on United States civilian moral, with families gathering around the radio from 1933 to 1944 to hear the president address the nation. Film was another effective medium for spreading propaganda during the war. Propaganda short films by Looney Toons (*Tokio Jokio*, *Daffy the Commando*, and *The Ducktators*) and Walt Disney (*Education for Death*, *Commando Duck*, and *Der Fuehrer's Face*) were very influential in persuading the masses to buy into the war effort; there is no refuting that. The medium of television was too limited and too new to have any real wide-scale effect on the war, but it would become the dominant medium for advertising and PR in the decades following the war. In today's society we have seen the computer overtake the television as it pertains to where people get their information from and even more recently we have seen that smartphones and social media may be the best way to reach people. The point is that just because a certain medium is outdated and is no longer relevant today does not mean it was not relevant seventy-five years ago. Print advertisements would have been something that everyone would have access to see and interact with on a daily basis, regardless of socioeconomic factors. After all, if propaganda is not seen by the masses it is not propaganda. Even the most eloquent and persuasive message has little value unless it can be displayed to a large number of viewers.

Many American companies like General Motors, Goodyear, and Sears saw the war as a chance to enhance their brand name at a time when people could not buy an abundance of goods owing to the war effort and rationing. The War Advertising Council paid nearly all the cost for companies' ad campaigns if the company supported the Allied war effort in their ads. Since propagandists and advertisers are not so very different, this war-time marriage worked well and was beneficial to both the war effort and the

companies who supported it. Advertisers wanted the war to be seen not just as a victory for the United States and freedom, but also a victory for capitalist consumption. Companies that used war-time ads were marketing more than just their products. They were marketing American ideology and the promise of a prosperous post-war period. The Second World War effectively pulled the United States out of the Great Depression and put Americans back to work. Advertisers knew that the post war period would see a boom in spending, so they invested in America winning the war as well as marketing their brand names as much as possible during the conflict. As David Shi states in his book *The Simple Life*, “Prosperity returned with a flourish after World War II, and the corporate and consumer culture again came to shape the contours of American domestic life.”<sup>2</sup> To this day, brands like Coca-Cola, General Motors, Goodyear, and others that dominated advertising in the Second World War are still corporate powerhouses.

A great deal of research has been done on propaganda during the Second World War as it pertains to race, nationalism, gender, etc. However, there is very little published research in the field of wartime advertising as propaganda. There is also very little published work dealing with advertising products during wartime that cannot be sold during the war, as was the case with companies like Goodyear and General Motors. My research will focus specifically on print ads that are both selling a product (or the idea of a product) and selling the war effort in the same ad. I will analyze how American-ism and consumerism have been tied together since the rise of consumerism in the United States, and the wartime ads of the Second World War.

My research contributes to fields of political, economic, and social history of the United States during the Second World War. My research will focus less on the production of the ads and more on analyzing the advertisements themselves. This is owing to the fact that effective advertisements or propaganda are kept simple so that the masses can easily understand the message depicted; therefore, the ad itself mirrors the intent of its creator. It would be nearly impossible and unnecessary to track down

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<sup>2</sup> David Shi, *The Simple Life: Plain Living and High Thinking in American Culture* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1985),248.

insider business information about the production or effectiveness of the advertisements produced when all the information that is pertinent to my research is stated directly in the print ads. My research adds to the historiographies of propaganda, public relations, big business, and advertising in the Second World War, a topic that not many historians have explored. There is an abundance of written work on the powers of persuasion present within propaganda and the effectiveness of ad campaigns, but not many historians have delved into the subject of advertisements as a means of propaganda during the Second World War. Furthermore, there has been little attention paid by scholars to symbiotic relationship that state and business shared during the Second World War.

Why have these areas of history not been studied side by side? The war propagandists and the advertisers are often similar or even the same people, so why is it that such a small body of work exists on the connection between the two? Propaganda was used to sell the idea of the war and hatred of the enemy, wartime advertisements are used to sell the idea of the necessity of conflict, hatred of the enemy, and a brand name. How did juggernauts like General Motors and Goodyear use these war time ads to establish themselves during a conflict when people were not spending money? The post-war years saw a major boom in spending within the United States, and the companies that invested in commingling their brand name with images of patriotism during the war saw a great deal of growth in the years preceding the conflict. Was selling the idea of a prosperous postwar America more beneficial to the American government or to the advertisers and their clientele? I maintain that the unique circumstances that surrounded the United States in the war allowed the immense success of war time ad campaigns to transpire. Furthermore, I would argue that the War Advertising Council, now the Ad Council, used the war as an opportunity to show the United States government the usefulness of public relations and advertising and its effectiveness to sway to thoughts of the American population. Companies used their ads as propaganda during the war so that the consumer would begin to see a correlation that did not exist between brand named products and the democratic, American way of life.

## CHAPTER 2

## BACKGROUND: AMERICA BETWEEN WORLD WARS

The First World War had shown the habits of the American public during times of war. The public, driven by a sense of patriotism, would embrace a simpler way of living and deny themselves extravagance for the greater good of the nation. As historian Stuart Ewen points out in his definitive work on PR entitled, *PR! A Social History of Spin*,

In the aftermath of the First World War, American business leaders were buoyed by a renewed sense of confidence. As a colossal experiment in mass persuasion, the Committee of Public Information (CPI) had fostered a belief that public opinion might be managed, that a social climate, more friendly to business interests could indeed be achieved. “The war taught us the power of propaganda,” declared Roger Babson, the influential business analyst, in 1921. “Now when we have anything to sell the American people, we know how to sell it.”<sup>3</sup>

The sort of patriotism and feeling of sacrifice that emerge after a national conflict or tragedy never lasts long and it is not long before the public goes back to their normal selves. Even in my own lifetime I have experienced the patriotic fervor that is felt after an attack on the United States, like 9/11, where for a week or two Americans put aside their differences as individuals and came together as a nation. In times of crisis the United States comes together for the wellbeing of the country, but when the crisis is over it is back to the usual American way of life with all of the wonderful gluttony and greed that comes with it. It does not take people long to shake off lofty notions of self-sacrifice and to embrace a more comfortable and avaricious lifestyle. David Shi wrote of the First World War, “No sooner was the war over than the mood of patriotic self-sacrifice quickly dissipated” and that “A veritable orgy of extravagant and reckless spending takes the place of saving, waste replaces conservation.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Stuart Ewen, *PR!: A Social History of Spin* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1996), 131.

<sup>4</sup> Shi, *The Simple Life*, 216.

Although admen did an incredible job advertising the war alongside their products in the 1940s this did not mean that they all supported the war effort. Ironically, several businessmen of the time wanted to avoid at all costs the deadly war that would eventually bring big business in America back to the spotlight and into times of unseen prosperity. Perhaps this is not overly shocking considering that most of them had lived through the First World War and all the horrors that came with it. They had called the First World War the “war to end all wars” and most people across the world likely hoped in vain for that to be the case. Advertising man and political adviser Bruce Barton was extremely opposed to the idea of another World War, and actively sought ways to avoid it any cost. It should come as no surprise that his idea of how to persuade the public not to engage in war was the same tactic used to persuade the public to fight in the war, a barrage of propaganda. In the 1930s, Barton proposed that the nation spend a “pittance of their defense budget on promoting peace,” in a work titled “Let’s Advertise this Hell.” Barton had a number of anti-war ad ideas to dissuade the public that war was a good idea, including ads that had headlines like “the shooting of an obscure prince in the Balkans,” and ads that discussed how modern war should be renamed “Slaughter,” with “as much chance for heroism as cattle in the Chicago stockyards.”<sup>5</sup>

According to Richard Fried, Barton’s “dissolution with the Great War had deepened over time. He echoed the line that all conflict had given the country was prohibition, influenza, and income tax.”<sup>6</sup> Barton, like many other Americans, had no desire to be plunged into another conflict. Barton befriended and surrounded himself with anti-war activists and they accepted his friendship because Barton had ideas of how to advertise and mass market their quixotic ideas of peace. If you are attempting to get a message out to the public there is truly no better companion to have than a professional manipulator. For a man in public relations, it is slightly unusual that Barton was not a fan of propaganda that demonized the enemy. This is probably owing to the fact that painting the enemy as a monster helps to grow support for the war effort and mobilizes the masses to rise up in opposition against them. The idea of slaughtering other

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<sup>5</sup> Richard Fried, *The Man Everybody Knew: Bruce Barton and the Making of Modern America* (Chicago, IL; Ivan R. Dee, 2005), 156-157.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

human beings on a large scale is a cold and frightening concept but killing a barbaric monster is heroic, it is just, and it is the American thing to do. Fried stated that Barton “detested emotional appeals against the enemy. The year 1939, he feared, was coming to resemble 1914-1915 in the one sidedness of anti-German propaganda.”<sup>7</sup> .

Barton’s fears would soon become a reality, as the propaganda of the Second World War would indeed seek to foster the same hatred for the “enemy” as the anti-German propaganda of the First World War. However, he could have never predicted the success that his profession would enjoy during and after the war. Even the staunchest anti-war activists might feel differently about the concept of peace and war when presented with more wealth and success. Greed can be much more powerful than notions of peace and love, and it is far easier to find greed in humanity than the aforementioned. The success of big business in the United States was not a certainty in the 1930s. As Fried stated, “Challenged in the 1930s by hostile New Dealers, admen had come to fear for their profession’s survival,” and the “advent of war unnerved many advertising professionals.”<sup>8</sup>

Businessman and admen were not the only people in opposition to the then radical policies of the New Deal. There was a great deal of uncertainty within the United States in the years preceding the Second World War. Historian William Leuchtenburg, author of *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal: 1932-1940*, describes the anxieties of United States citizens while they were stuck between the First World War and the inevitability of the Second World War. “Fascism had little appeal for most Americans, but as the shadow of the depression lengthened, as the streets of Vienna and Prague echoed to the marching boots of fascism triumphant, it was not always possible to overcome the cold fear that democracy might fail, that fascism might hold the key to the future.”<sup>9</sup> The more conservative businessmen of the time while “in no way accepting the fascist creed, concurred on this one point: that the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 183.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 194.

<sup>9</sup> William Leuchtenburg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal: 1932-1940*, ed. Henry Steele Commager & Richard B. Morris (New York, NY: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963), 275.

real peril to the country lay not without but within, not in the augmented power of the Axis but in Roosevelt's consular ambitions."<sup>10</sup>

In his book, *An All-Consuming Century*, historian Gary Cross describes how the Great Depression changed marketing in the United States. "The Depression years were tough times, and mere advertising or low prices were often not enough to scare up customers. Inevitably, marketing became ever more creative. The 1930s saw the full flowering of the popular licensed image or name stamped on the consumer product."<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the Great Depression forced corporate America and admen to rethink the way they sold their products. As Cross points out, corporate America attempted to find a solution to the Depression through "consumer engineering." People were attempting to actively ignore the economic disparities of the time by denying the "economic crisis, emphasizing instead the promise of endless betterment through consumer goods offered by major corporations."<sup>12</sup> American consumerism did not fully bloom in the 1930s, but it definitely produced a bud from which a blooming period could arise in the coming decade. Even though the urge to consume was still around in the Great Depression, and even though some consumers continued to purchase frivolities, United States citizens simply did not have the money they once had to spend on consumer goods. Marketers were forced to find new ways to reach the consumer, and they would build on those techniques and perfect them during the years of the Second World War.

To say that the major corporations in the United States knew that the war would bring about a prosperous post-war boom is inaccurate. The United States government and big business had just emerged from a time in the New Deal era where government and business were working together, but nothing like the solidified partnership that emerged during and after the Second World War. Who was to say that after the war was over that this partnership between the corporations and the United States

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 277.

<sup>11</sup> Gary Cross, *An All-Consuming Century: Why Commercialism Won In Modern America* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2000), 79.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 82.



government would fade away? As historian Roland Marchand points out, the approach of war in the late 1930s and early 1940s did not seem to be a favorable omen for business executives of the time and many feared the worst-case scenario as war threatened to envelop the United States. “They suspected that unless the nation was actually called upon to defend itself, they might not receive appropriate credit for their contributions to preparedness. Moreover, if the war should not come or should it be very brief, those companies that best maintained their domestic production, and the attendant sales, service and dealer networks would enjoy an immediate advantage in the ensuing peacetime economy.”<sup>13</sup> Although those brands which did support the war effort would forever have the success of their business tied into the belief of the success of democracy, there was no way for a brand to know that was the case in 1939.

It is odd to think that when the United States was plunged into the Second World War that lives for American consumers would get better, but that is exactly what transpired. For the first time since the Great Depression, American citizens were making money, saving their money, and were optimistic about life in the post-war era. During the Second World War, like no time before in American history, the American public was being persuaded that capitalistic consumption was the legs that democracy stood upon. The citizens in the 1940s could not spend their money yet, but they believed that a modern, prosperous post-war period was right around the corner. When one thinks about it, it makes a great deal of sense that they would be optimistic. Even though United States involvement in the First World War was brief, the American public had enjoyed the economic success in post-war years of the 1920s despite a significant postwar recession in 1921. As historian Daniel Horowitz points out, “In the 1920s, millions of American believed that they lived in an era of long-standing prosperity. In the 1930s, they assumed they were in the midst of a long-term is not permanent economic depression. Looking ahead, few if any

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<sup>13</sup> Roland Marchand, *Creating the Corporate Soul: The Rise of Public Relations and Corporate Imagery in American Big Business* (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1998), 317.

observers foresaw the dimensions of the nation's development as a consumer society over the next few decades."<sup>14</sup>

Horowitz may have stated that "few if any" saw the nation developing into more of a consumer society in the years after the Second World War; few is accurate, any is not. Budget experts during the First World War had seen the war as an opportunity for permanent change in consumption, while professionals in the Second World War viewed the restraint of consumption as a something that was temporary. Experts also realized that with war came longer working days and the creation of new jobs would "increase household income." Therefore, United States citizens would have more money for purchasing even during times when most products were not available. Horowitz also points out the "ironic effects" of food rationing during the Second World War in that lower income Americans actually bought food that was more expensive. "Despite shortages, the American diet had improved significantly as millions of families increased their intake of meat, eggs, and fresh foods."<sup>15</sup>

Major corporations certainly would not have wanted to attack the credibility or become entangled in a dispute with the American government that put people back to work after the Great Depression and that sat on the brink of war. That would have been bad for their image. Instead, it was not long before those in the advertising profession made a move to solidify the field of advertising in the wartime and postwar era by working with the government. This wartime partnership was something that seemed mutually beneficial to all parties involved; the government got the support of the professional manipulators to help boost morale and bring about a cohesion of patriotic ideas and the professional manipulators were finally accepted as an integral part of maintaining and organizing a democratic society.

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<sup>14</sup> Daniel Horowitz, *The Anxieties of Affluence: Critiques of American Consumer Culture, 1939-1979*. (Boston, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 21.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

## CHAPTER 3

## A BRIEF STATEMENT ON ANALYZING ADS: DECODING THE OBVIOUS

We, as individuals, like to think that we are incapable of being persuaded to think a certain way. However, if ad and propaganda campaigns did not significantly affect how people viewed things, why would large companies and powerful countries spend millions of dollars on them? Media and communications scholar, Arthur Asa Berger, asked the question:

How do advertisers get us to salute? How do they manipulate us? How do they manufacture desire in us? How do they (when they do, that is) shape our desire and engineer our consent? One way is by wearing us down under a constant barrage of advertisements and commercials. The main way we resist-not on purpose, of course- is by decoding these advertisements and commercials aberrantly, that is, by not interpreting the advertisement the way the copyrighters and artists who created them expect us to or want us to.<sup>16</sup>

In the United States, we have been bombarded with advertising since birth. The urge to consume is as American as apple pie or the Super Bowl. At some point, Americans lost the ability to distinguish between a want and a need. If you have ever lived or stepped foot into an “average” old home built a hundred some odd years ago then you have noticed one defining characteristic: they do not have many closets, sometimes none at all. This is because average people didn’t fill their homes with useless or superfluous products because they didn’t see the need to do so. We are told by advertisers that we need their products to be happy but do their products really improve our quality of life? We are persuaded to purchase things we don’t need and purchase larger homes and storage units to house the useless things. By analyzing the ads, or “decoding” them, can we truly understand the intent of advertisers, and by

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<sup>16</sup> Berger, *Ads, Fads, & Consumer Culture*, 62.

distinguishing the intent of the advertiser, we can we more actively resist the powers of persuasion.

Knowledge truly is power.

Ernest Dichter, a Jewish intellectual who fled Vienna before the Second World War, applied the psychoanalytical approach to the consumer research. Jewish intellectuals were able to find their academic voice in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century. As Historian Lawrence Samuel points out in his book, *Freud on Madison Avenue*, “Jewish intellectuals in particular were able to find their voice, forging a holistic approach to social sciences.” He goes on to say describe how Peter Scheer argued that, “psychoanalysis in particular was a distinctly Jewish phenomenon, that with the acceptance of Jews by universities in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century their knowledge could ‘finally be phrased in academic language.’” However, as Samuel points out “In part because of the Jewish connection, psychoanalysis was a field that, despite its Viennese roots, was “despised” at the university (in fact, all universities).”<sup>17</sup>

Dichter, following the advice of a Nazi professor, made his way out of Austria and made his way first to Paris and then to the United States. In Paris, “Dichter sold fake labels from expensive clothes, to be sewn into cheaper garments to make them appear to be the real thing. Although it was a shady business, Dichter could not have received a better education in how the perceived value of products was more important than its quality.”<sup>18</sup> Why is this significant to analyzing advertisements? For starters, Dichter “the father of motivational research”, revolutionized marketing in the United States. Many of the ideas he created for advertisements are still used today and are themes that we are all familiar with. Two of his most noticeable contributions are that “sex sells” and that mothers will purchase things for their children that they know the child doesn’t need it simply because they do not want to seem like bad mothers.

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<sup>17</sup> Lawrence Samuel, *Freud on Madison Avenue: Motivational Research and Subliminal Advertising in America* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 26.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

Dichter had been asked to help Chrysler and its ad agency to figure out how to market the Plymouth models, and he came up with the idea that an automobile was perceived by American men as either a kind of wife or kind of mistress. Dichter also told Chrysler to put sexual double entendre in its advertising (“It fits me like a glove” and “You just slip it in” were two lines he suggested), certainly not something the car company had heard before. Based on his research, Chrysler decided to run ads in women’s magazines, the first time in automobile history such a thing was done.<sup>19</sup>

Dichter also thought up the idea in advertising, which seems rather obvious to us now, that mothers do not like being considered bad parents. Taking this into consideration Dichter told his supermarket clients “to place candy at the cash register to make it more of an impulse item rather than regular food, just one of many ideas he had regarding how grocery store layouts should be changed.”<sup>20</sup> If a child is begging a parent for something in front of a cashier, it gives the appearance that the parent might be cheap, or they aren’t financially stable. No one wants to be considered a bad parent, and advertising to children to get to their parents’ paycheck is unfortunately a reality of our consumer society. Dichter changed the way the consumer looked at a product and changed the way that businesses advertised their products. The sexualization of goods and playing on the anxieties of parents are just two of several major breakthroughs in advertising products that Dichter contributed. By telling the story of Dichter, it becomes obvious that we cannot take advertisements at their word. We must look past what we are being told to think and decode the ad to make a judgment for ourselves. We all know that a car is in no way at all like a woman and we know that a mother not purchasing candy for her child is the sign of a good parent and not a bad one. If we take ads at their word, we would be led to believe that both of these fallacies are true.

Arthur Asa Berger’s method of analysis for print advertisements include semiotic analysis, psychoanalytic theory, sociological analysis, historical analysis, political analysis, and myth/ritual

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.,34.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.,36.

analysis.<sup>21</sup> While all of these steps might be necessary to attempt to ascertain every message of an ad, it unfortunately takes a great deal of time to analyze an ad in this way. Indeed, Berger shows this by analyzing a relatively simple Fidji perfume ad in the six different ways mentioned above. Berger did a great job of summarizing the material and it still took him thirteen pages to analyze one ad. Obviously the subject of this paper restricts my ability to analyze ads in as much detail as Berger has, but I will borrow from his ideas while analyzing the ads in this paper. Berger also notes that ads could be analyzed in multiple other ways, as it is really all up for interpretation.

Critics and analysts with different areas of knowledge and expertise could find numerous other things to talk about in this advertisement-and in most advertisements and commercials. They are often rich in symbolism and interesting material for those who have the keys—that is, the theories and the conceptual framework—to unlock their meaning. Advertisements and commercials are richer in meaning than we might think, and it takes a good deal of work to understand how they communicate ideas and meanings and, to the extent that they are successful, shape our behavior.<sup>22</sup>

It is also worth noting that the advertisements of the Second World War are fairly straight forward and do not require the same type of in-depth approach to ascertain its purpose or true meaning. The purpose of the majority of ads in the Second World War is quite obviously to encourage the purchase of war bonds and to keep brand names in the minds of the consumer during times of rationing. What is truly fascinating is not the message of the ads of the Second World War, but how the advertisers went about conveying that message. An advertisement for tires in 1943 could be a simple statement by the tire company that says, “Buy War Bonds!” with a picture of a tire and the tire company’s name. However, that same tire company might release another ad promoting the purchasing of war bonds alongside their company name, but instead of a tire, show the picture of a small child and instead of “Buy War Bonds” add in “Keep Her Safe-Buy War Bonds!” The message of both of the ads is the same, but the method of

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<sup>21</sup> Berger, *Ads, Fads, & Consumer Culture*, 160.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 180.

getting that message out is different and makes the viewer of the ad experience a completely different emotion.

I will be dividing the wartime ads that I analyze in this paper into a few different categories. These categories will not be chronological or based on one particular company but based on the theme of the wartime ads themselves. There are a few main themes that arise when researching wartime advertisements, which show up over and over again. Some ads are meant to sell war bonds, some to link a product to the war effort, and even some other to market a product that was not even available to purchase during the war. It is essential while analyzing these ads to keep in mind who the admen are targeting with the ad. If you are selling a book, would you market it in the same way that you would sell a candy bar? Knowing which socioeconomic group an adman is pandering to makes it easier to analyze the ad and its overall message. As Berger puts it “All advertising is directed toward a target audience—the people who are the most likely purchaser of the product or service being advertised. Copywriters and artists work hard to create advertisements and commercials that will interest and appeal to members of their target audience.”<sup>23</sup> There are ads of all flavors: patriotic ads, sexist ads, racist ads, and ads that promised a prosperous postwar period. The styles of the ads are quite diverse, but generally they all share the same theme: our brand supports the war effort. Advertising fits perfectly into the mold of modern warfare. After all, advertisers consistently view their job as both a battle to persuade the public to buy a product against their business competition to produce and sell. Therefore, as historian Susan Strasser asserts, it is fitting that “Advertising men used language that described market competition as war and the market as a battlefield.”<sup>24</sup> Advertising men saw the Second World War as more than a battle against authoritative governments abroad, but as a battle for free enterprise in opposition to more government control over business. It could even be argued that the cultural solidification and dominance of advertising and public

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>24</sup> Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market With a New Preface* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 1989), 93.

relations in the United States are among the most lasting and important changes that the Second World War brought about within this country.

The advertisements I have selected to analyze in this paper are just a small portion of advertisements that I have waded through over the process of the past year. *Life* magazine has been digitized and made available on Google Books, which provides access to an enormous number of ads from 1942 to 1945. The Duke University Libraries Digital Collection also contains a large number of ads collected from different mediums and publications during the Second World War that was extremely helpful. I have flash drives crammed full of every relevant advertisement available from the Second World War, so much so that I would say only about two or three percent of them will actually appear in this paper.

I chose the advertisements in this paper based on a few certain themes and eliminated the advertisements that did not apply. The first theme I focused on were ads that encouraged the war effort or encouraged the purchasing of war bonds or rationing. This eliminated a small number of ads because not every brand went along with sponsoring the war effort in their advertisements. Another theme I looked for were advertisements that connected their brand to patriotism by displaying servicemen and women in their ads, even if the ad did not encourage the purchasing of war bonds or rationing. This kind of ad represents a small percentage of ads but nonetheless connects a brand with the war effort, most often by displaying the servicemen and women as the ideal citizen. The final theme were advertisements that demonized the enemy and promoted unity in the same way as the propaganda created by government institutions during the war. These ads often also encourage the purchasing of war bonds but do so by showing the enemy as racially inferior and Americans as superior. This distinguishes that kind of ad from other more general ads that just connect their brand name with the purchasing of war bonds.

I will be analyzing the ads in the same way that an art enthusiast might analyze a painting. Maybe what the image says to me is different than what it says to someone else, but such is the nature of art, and print advertising at its core is art. Pop art is built upon the very belief that advertisements are in fact a



form of art. Pop artists, like Andy Warhol, made names for themselves placing familiar images from consumer culture into their artwork. *The Campbell's Soup Cans* done by Warhol remain a classic of pop art to this day and it is nothing more than an image of Campbell's soup that anyone could see in any supermarket across the United States. The professional manipulators who chose label colors, picked a persuasive phrase, and created images to elicit emotions during the Second World War are producing the same kind of art the Warhol would become famous for in the 1960s.

Another reason that analyzing advertisements as a work of art is pertinent is because the creators of ad campaigns rarely release information about the purpose or intent of the ad. There are a few like Dichter, Bernays, and Barton who have chronicled their work in the field of advertising and consumer manipulation, but that is only a small percentage of those who work in the field. It is necessary to analyze ads in the same way that one would analyze art simply because the only information we can gather from most ads is the emotions that they give us upon viewing them. The creator of the ad, if the ad is effective, intended for the viewers of the ad to feel that emotion, therefore the adman's purpose becomes clear only through analysis of the ad.

At the end of every chapter I will analyze a group of advertisements that follow a specific advertising theme. I have seen several methods of putting illustrations into text and, to me, none of them suited this paper. I could have placed the ads at the very end of the paper, but the reader would have to read about the effectiveness of advertising without actually seeing the ad for another fifty or so pages. Therefore, I opted to go with the method of grouping the advertisements at the end of every section based on themes, which I think works best for this kind of paper. I could have also analyzed an ad every second page, but that would be a bit problematic as it would split up thoughts. This is the style that can be seen in John Bush Jones's book, *All-Out For Victory: Magazine Advertising And The World War II Homefront*,<sup>25</sup> which I did not think worked very well. Also, because of how similar Mr. Jones's work and my own work

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<sup>25</sup> John Bush Jones, *All-Out For Victory: Magazine Advertising And The World War II Homefront* (Waltham, MA: Brandeis University Press, 2009).

are, I have painstakingly made sure that I avoided using the same ads as he did to avoid analyzing them in similar fashion. This forced me to omit a few ads I wanted to use but spared me the anxiety using an analysis of an ad that wasn't completely my own.


The first group of ads I will analyze are for alcohol and tobacco products. I selected these ads because of all other products, the ads for alcohol and tobacco are the most diverse. I felt that analyzing these ads together, instead of thematically like the rest of the ads, was essential for showing the diversity of these kind of ads. It seems that each alcohol and tobacco company in the United States had its own idea about how best to use the war effort to advance their brand. Some focused far more on their product than the war effort in their ads, some supported the war effort much more than any product in their ads. Some even created ads that asked you not to buy their product because of war rationing, while others exclaimed that war rationing would not impact the quality of their product. It is also a little bit of fun to examine ads from the 1940s that discuss the benefits of smoking, or the fine quality and taste of bottom shelf bourbon.

CHAPTER 4


BAD FOR YOU BUT GOOD FOR AMERICA: WHISKY AND TOBACCO

ADVERTISEMENTS


**4** things you should buy  
(before you buy Four Roses)



**1.** a War Bond...




**2.** another War Bond



**3.** and then a couple  
more War Bonds!

**I**'s... up to all of us at home to do everything we can to shorten the war and save the lives of American boys.

Probably the best way we can help is to buy War Bonds—*extra* War Bonds—and buy 'em till our pocketbooks really feel the pinch. Be a good American—support the Fifth War Loan!



2/17/44 Fisher

# FOUR ROSES

A TRULY GREAT WHISKEY

*Four Roses is a blend of straight whiskeys—86 proof, Frankfort Distillers Corporation, New York City.*

CEILING PRICES	
<b>\$4.28</b>	<b>\$2.71</b>
4/5 QUART	A PINT

Figure 1.1

Some of the more clever ads produced during the Second World War were ones that encouraged people to buy bonds instead of their product, but of the course the intent of an advertisement is to sell a product. The 1944 ad entitled “4 Things You Should Buy (Before You buy Four Roses)” by Four Rose whiskey is a perfect example of this kind of advertisement. The ad is very straight-forward: the four things you should do before buying their particular brand of whiskey is to buy four war bonds instead. However, this is not the message of the ad. Of course, Four Roses does not want people *not* to purchase their product in exchange for something else. Instead Four Roses is connecting their brand with patriotism and support of the war effort.

Four Roses was banking on the United States emerging victorious from the Second World War, and when they did they were hoping that the consumer would remember which brands backed the war effort. If Four Roses thought this advertisement would encourage people to support the war effort while not supporting their product by purchasing it, they certainly would not have spent money on the creation and distribution of the ad in the first place. This is also represented by Four Roses giving the prices of their product at the bottom of the ad, which would not be necessary information unless they assumed you would be buying their whiskey. However, the last line of the ad says, “Be a good American—support the Fifth War Loan!” The more fitting line for this ad would be, “Be a good American—Support the Fifth War Loan AND Four Roses!”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Four Roses, “4 Things You Should Buy (Before You Buy Four Roses)”, Advertisement, *New York Tribune*, 1944. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4j09wq32>. (Accessed on 10/28/2018).





"TIN FISH"—that means torpedo in submarine language. The phrase, "the smoking loop is lit" means Camels are in order—for war men in the Navy, the favorite cigarette is Camel. (See Atlas.)

You want  
**STEADY NERVES**  
to launch a "tin fish"  
or make one!

**HIDE-AND-SEEK.** A deadly game of it with the T.N.T. of depth charge and torpedo. That's a game only for steady nerves! But, then, what isn't in these days—with all of us fighting, working, living at the highest tempo in years. Yes, and smoking, too—perhaps even more than you used to. If Camels are not your present brand, try them. Not just because they're the favorite in the service or at home—but for the sake of your own smoking enjoyment, try Camels. Put them to the "T-Zone" test described below and make your own comparisons.



FOR  
**STEADY PLEASURE**  
CAMELS SUIT  
ME TO A 'T'

**FIRST IN THE SERVICE—**  
In the Navy—in the Army—in the Marine Corps—in the Coast Guard—the favorite cigarette is Camel.  
(Based on actual sales records in Ship's Service Stores, Ship's Stores, Sales Commissaries, Post Exchanges, and Canteens.)  
**—THE CIGARETTE OF COSTLIER TOBACCOS**

**The "T Zone"**  
where cigarettes  
are judged

The "T-ZONE"—Taste and Throat—is the proving ground for cigarettes. Only your taste and throat can decide which cigarette tastes best to you...and how it affects your throat. For your taste and throat are absolutely individual to you. Based on the experience of millions of smokers, we believe Camels will suit your "T-ZONE" to a "T." Prove it for yourself!

CAMELS WIN WITH  
ME ON EVERY  
COUNT. THEY'RE EASY  
ON MY **T**HROAT AND  
THEY DON'T TIRE MY  
**T**ASTE



**GYROSCOPE GIRL—**Pretty Rosemary Gregory (above) calibrates automatic directional devices at a Sperry Gyroscope Co. plant, and she's just as partial to Camels as the fighting men who depend on her precision. She says: "I tried several brands; Camels suit me better all ways. For my taste and my throat, Camels are tops with a capital 'T'!"



*Camel*

Figure 1.2

“You want STEADY NERVES to launch a ‘tin fish’ or make one!” is the opening line of a Camel ad that appeared in *Life* magazine in 1942. Not every ad during the Second World War persuaded Americans to purchase more war bonds, to ration, or to hate the enemy. Some brands, like Camel, marketed their product in a way that made it seem beneficial to the war effort. “If Camels are not your present brand, try them. Not because they’re the favorite of those in the service or at home—but for the sake of your own smoking enjoyment, try Camels.” Not only does Camel suggest that it is patriotic to consume their product by saying that it is the favorite cigarette of those in the service and working in the war industries at home, they also imply that smoking Camels will help to steady your nerves in the hectic reality of combat and war manufacturing.

The happy sailor and “gyroscope girl” are both receiving “STEADY PLEASURE” from their Camel cigarettes, and indeed they should since Camels are thee favorite cigarette of those in the “Navy—in the Army—in the Marine Corp—in the Coast Guard.” The steady nerves are for working in wartime industry and that makes senses, but steady pleasure? No wonder the sailor and the “gyroscope girl” are sporting such big smiles. In a time where Americans were obviously uncertain and anxious about the future, Camel stepped in to provide a “cure” for their nervousness. In this way, it was not just patriotic to consume their product, but it was also an essential part of the war effort itself. Camel was saving Americans from their anxieties, one carcinogenic puff at a time.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Camels, “You want STEADY NERVES to launch a tin fish or make one!”, Advertisement, *Life Magazine*, October 5, 1942, 138. Google Books. [https://books.google.com/books?id=UUAEAAAAMBAJ&source=gbp\\_all\\_issues\\_r&cad=1](https://books.google.com/books?id=UUAEAAAAMBAJ&source=gbp_all_issues_r&cad=1). (Accessed on 10/30/2018).



DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION

FOR VICTORY  
BUY  
THE UNITED STATES  
WAR  
BONDS  
AND  
STAMPS



“Man, that’s ***fine*** tobacco”

...that’s **LUCKY STRIKE**  
tobacco!

yes, **LUCKY STRIKE**  
means ***fine*** tobacco

L.S./M.F.T.



Figure 1.3



This ad from Lucky Strike that appeared in *Life* magazine in 1944 straight forward and to the point as opposed to the previous ad by Camel. “Man, that’s fine tobacco’...that’s LUCKY STRIKE tobacco! Yes, LUCKY STRIKE means fine tobacco” lets you know all you need to know about the purpose of this advertisement. There is also a lot going on with underlining key phrases, making certain words bigger, and changing the color of the first letters of “Lucky” and “Strike” to help bring attention to it. All of these are rather commonplace in the advertisements of the Second World War. The image above the text is far more telling. Here we have a rustic scene where the farmer is holding up a “fine” tobacco leaf while another older gentleman is driving a mule and wagon, I would assume filled with more tobacco.

Lucky Strike is taking the advertising route of brands that sell their product as nostalgic, “old fashioned,” or from a simpler time. The war brought about many modern changes, but it is not going to change that good old timey flavor of Lucky Strike! But wait, what is that tiny image within the image in the top left-hand corner of the ad? If you can make it out, it is a statement to the viewer to, “Defend the Constitution” buy purchasing more war bonds! If the purpose of the ad is to sell war bonds, why would Lucky Strike make it the least eye-catching feature of the ad? The illustration is large and in color. The text below it has different font sizes, underlined terms, and different colors in the text. However, the war bonds message is very small and black and white. Lucky Strike is supporting the purchase of war bonds, but it is clear from the ad that their main concern is promoting their brand. If the viewer did not thoroughly analyze this ad they might miss that this ad encouraged the purchase of war bonds altogether.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Lucky Strike, “Man, that’s fine tobacco”, Advertisement, *Life* Magazine, June 5, 1944, pg. 45. Google Books. [https://books.google.com/books?id=ik8EAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs\\_all\\_issues\\_r&cad=1](https://books.google.com/books?id=ik8EAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs_all_issues_r&cad=1). (Accessed 10/31/2018).



Official U.S. Army Signal Corps photo—taken somewhere in the Southwest Pacific.

## **DOES YOUR CONSCIENCE GIVE YOU ANY CHOICE?**

No words are necessary . . .  
this picture tells its own tragic and noble story.

★

Here at home our job is to buy War Bonds.

The Fifth War Loan is now on. The needs of our fighting men are greater than ever . . . and so the goal for us is twice as many Bonds as we bought during the Fourth War Loan.

Whether we reach the goal or not is up to us . . .  
and our conscience.

Buy more . . . double what you did before . . .  
in the **FIFTH WAR LOAN**

This message is contributed by the makers of WHITE OWL cigars

*5/22/44 Tribune*

Figure 1.4

A 1944 White Owl cigar ad opens with “Does your conscience give you any choice?” Above the opening line is a picture of a soldier being laid to rest “somewhere in the South Pacific.” What is the intent of this ad? To elicit an emotional response and to shame people into purchasing more war bonds. The ad is basically implying that if you do not support the Fifth War Loan then you are partially responsible for the soldier’s death. If you were not, why would you have a guilty conscious? It is understandable that countries need money to finance wars, but to use snapshots of a soldier’s funeral to gain support for a cause is a rather heinous act.

Unlike Lucky Strike or Camel, this ad by White Owl has nothing to do with their product and everything to do with sponsoring the war effort. Nothing about this ad helps to sell White Owl cigars, except for the fact that White Owl is keeping their brand name on the consumer’s mind and connecting their brand with patriotism. The ad encourages the viewer to purchase, “twice as many Bonds as we bought during the Fourth War Loan. Whether we reach the goal or not is up to us...and our conscience.” This ad is saying, “How can you live with yourself?” to anyone who doesn’t fully support the Fifth War Loan. Guilt can be a powerful emotion, long used as advertising strategy, and that is what this White Owl ad used to convince people to continue to financially back the war effort.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> White Owl, “Does your conscience give you any choice?”, Advertisement, *Tribune Newspaper*, 1944. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4s46hr8s>. (Accessed on 10/30/2018).

# - IN A WORLD OF CHANGE



**Y**OU DON'T mind having "cuffless" trousers or "tailless" shirts or cutting down on sugar or Sunday driving . . . *no, sir, not if it helps win the war!*

And if the makers of your pet products have to make a few war-time changes, you'll play ball, just as every other red-blooded American will *for freedom's sake!*

But with all this changing going on, it's good to remember that OLD GRAND-DAD, OLD TAYLOR, OLD CROW, OLD OVERHOLT and MOUNT VERNON are products that needn't be and *won't* be changed as long as they are bonded whiskies! For generations these names have stood for the greatest bonded whiskies in the world.

Bonded whiskies are produced under the strict provisions of the Bottled-In-Bond Act which regulates the details of storage, aging, bottling and labeling to protect the whiskey until it reaches the consumer. The regulations are rigidly enforced and there are just no "cuffs" to trim off a bottle of bonded whiskey.

**OLD GRAND-DAD**  
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY

**OLD TAYLOR**  
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY

**OLD CROW**  
KENTUCKY STRAIGHT WHISKEY—EYE OR BOURBON

**MOUNT VERNON**  
BRAND  
STRAIGHT RYE WHISKEY

**OLD OVERHOLT**  
STRAIGHT RYE WHISKEY

Figure 1.5



Even “In a world of change,” Old Grand-Dad Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey remains the same. That is the theme of the ad produced by the makers of Old Grand-Dad and other semi drinkable whiskeys like Old Taylor, Old Crow, Mount Vernon, and Old Overholt. According to this ad, the consumer doesn’t mind, “cuffless trousers or ‘tailless’ shirts or cutting down on sugar or Sunday driving...*no, sir, not if it helps win the war!* And if the makers of your pet products have to make a few war-time changes, you’ll play ball, just as every other red-blooded American will *for freedom’s sake!*” The American citizen was being asked to make many sacrifices during the war, but they could still enjoy the gut rot sensation that one gets after a few glasses of Old Grand-Dad. Anyone who has ever tasted this particular brand of libation will be left thinking, “I wish the war had changed at least the taste of Old Grand-Dad.”

To be a bonded whiskey, as Old Grand-Dad is so proud of in this ad, it has to be aged in bottle for at least four years. This ad was produced in 1942, so whiskey reserves would have still been going strong at this time. Ads like this are no longer seen in 1945, when the amount of available whiskey began to dry up. At that point liquor ads began to sell the idea of the happy post-war society of tomorrow as opposed to how the war would not impact the production of their product. This kind of ad is an example of the “business as usual” approach to United States advertising during the Second World War, mostly because no major combat took place within the continental United States.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Old Grand-Dad, “In A World Of Change”, Advertisement, *Life Magazine*, December 28, 1942, pg. 33. Google Books. [https://books.google.com/books?id=LVEEAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs\\_all\\_issues\\_r&cad=1](https://books.google.com/books?id=LVEEAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs_all_issues_r&cad=1). (Accessed 10/30/2018).

CHAPTER 5  
THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPIN: WHAT IS PROPAGANDA?

Finding a true definition for propaganda has proven to be a more laborious task than I anticipated. It seems like everyone's definition of what is or isn't propaganda depends largely on their personal outlook on the world, politics, and business. The conservative and the liberal are often at odds with one another, smearing the rhetoric of those on the other side of the political aisle as propaganda or "fake news." So, is propaganda simply a term that we apply to information we do not agree with? For some, that certainly has been and continues to be to the case. In this way, the label of "propagandist" has been diluted into something different, a sort of dirty word that we call our enemies. It has become something broader and more general that can apply to almost anyone who has views to the contrary of others. The ambiguity of propaganda has made it mean almost nothing at all, much the same way that elementary school teachers have destroyed the term "special" by telling every child that they are special. It makes the word special change from a way to describe someone or something extraordinary into something common place that everyone is inherently. It is the same with propaganda. If everything around us is referred to as propaganda then propaganda becomes nothing, just another burger commercial or stop smoking campaign.

As far as a definitive definition of what is propaganda, I do not think it would be wise or pertinent to attempt to give every definition of the term. Jacques Ellul's *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, remains the definitive work on what is and what is not propaganda and it is a dense read of over three hundred pages. Ellul is emphatic that propaganda cannot be defined, but he gave an adequate basic definition when he wrote that "Propaganda is a set of methods employed by an organized group that wants to bring the active or passive participation in its actions of a mass of individuals, psychologically unified through psychological manipulation and incorporated in an organization."<sup>31</sup> Although I agree with

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<sup>31</sup> Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes*, trans. Konrad Kellen and Jean Learner (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 61.

Ellul that propaganda is too ambiguous to have a definitive definition, his broad definition is the best of its kind. Ellul looks at propaganda from a philosophical, almost theological perspective that will leave you with far more questions than answers. I agree with his ideas about experiments and statistics on propaganda being flawed and that attempting to create a simple definition for propaganda will always be partially incorrect and a waste of time. He argued that to study propaganda we must, “turn not to the psychologist, but to the propagandist; we must examine not a test group but a whole nation subjected to real and effective propaganda.”<sup>32</sup> Propaganda is too large in scope to adequately define or reproduce with experiments in the same way that all of the oceans of the world are too vast and deep for us to explore or understand. Ellul’s work is not an “Encyclopedia of Propaganda” but a work that seeks to “bring contemporary man a step closer to an awareness of propaganda-the very phenomenon that conditions and regulates him.”<sup>33</sup>

Edward Bernays, professional propagandist and “father” of the public relations industry, said it best when he proclaimed, “the only difference between ‘propaganda’ and ‘education,’ really, is in the point of view. The advocacy of what we believe in is education. The advocacy of what we don’t believe in is propaganda.” Bernays explains that while education is considered “valuable, commendable, enlightening, and instructive,” propaganda is seen as “insidious, dishonest, underhand, and misleading.”<sup>34</sup> The dynamic between propaganda and education is a tricky one. The advertisements from the Second World War did not show the realities of the war and did not seek to educate the masses about the war effort or about efficacy of the product. Instead the advertisements sold an additional idea along with a brand name, the idea of a world made safe for democratic consumption of said brand name and the American way of life. They did not depict the mangled bodies, the piles of the dead, the rivers of blood or the homes that were irreparably broken forever. For this reason alone, one can see that the purpose of the

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., xii.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., xiv.

<sup>34</sup> Edward Bernays, *Crystallizing Public Opinion* (1923; reprint with introduction by Stuart Ewen, Brooklyn, NY: IG Publishing, 2011), 200.

advertisements used as wartime propaganda during the Second World War were not to educate but to spin a bad situation for the world into a favorable situation for American business.

As Bernays points out, there is an unsettling connection between education and propaganda. Education should, at least in theory, be without any form of spin. Education should ideally focus on nothing but facts with a great deal of focus on avoiding bias or implementing an agenda foreign to the subject. I say this is what education should be, but as we know often that is not the case. The fact that a majority of professors in a college are either conservative or liberal should not have an impact on the information presented in a lecture, but it happens almost on a consistent basis across all fields of study. In a Biology class, a more liberal professor might exaggerate the effects of climate change while a more conservative professor might underplay the effects of climate change. Technically neither are telling an untruth, but both are spinning the information in a way that correlates with their political beliefs. This happens daily all around the world. Nevertheless, simply spinning the truth does not define something as propaganda. Generally speaking, propaganda ceases to be propaganda if it does not reach the masses, persuade them of an agenda, is not based on some stereotype or partial truth and does not seek to unite the people under one banner or against a common enemy. A professor presenting his or her political beliefs as concrete facts is certainly problematic but is very small in scale. Now if all professors were mandated to teach a certain political ideology in their classrooms across the nation, then we are starting to fall under the category of propaganda. It is for this reason that standing for the pledge of allegiance and praying in schools have been met with a fair amount of resistance across the United States over the last few decades. In an ideal world it is not the place of public education to practice political and religious indoctrination on children to influence them to follow a certain method of thought.

The sane individual does not seek out war. The average person does not wish to see death and devastation on such a large scale. Nonetheless, the herd, which is made up of individuals, can be persuaded that war is necessary by means of persuasion. Of the human emotions, I would cynically say that hate is perhaps the most influential in sparking action. Those who engineer consent are well aware of



this and have used it to their benefit in countless propaganda campaigns. Leading political scientists of the twentieth century like Harold D. Lasswell had a firm understanding of exactly what propaganda was in the century of World Wars. Lasswell stated that, “There must be no ambiguity about whom the public is to hate” and “If the propagandist is to mobilize the hate of the people, he must see to it that everything is circulated which established the sole responsibility of the enemy.”<sup>35</sup> The people can quickly turn against their leadership in times of conflict, especially if the war is exacting a toll on the general public. It is essential that the blame for their hardships not be placed on their own leaders but placed on their enemies in combat. This theme is played out again and again in war time and political propaganda and is akin to the child who proclaims that everything wrong that happens is the fault of someone else.

Every individual craves to be a part of a community. There is a reason why long-term solitary confinement is one of the worst punishments for a prisoner or why small children are punished for their shenanigans with a “timeout.” We are social creatures that need to interact and exchange our thoughts with others to have a fulfilling existence. We crave to hear others and to be heard, we crave to see and be seen, we crave to fit in and we crave to be a part of a community. It is for that reason propaganda can be so easily spread to the masses, because the individual is both the target and messenger of the message. Propaganda works in half-truths and stereotypes. It cannot be based on something completely false or no one would believe it, at which point it would cease to be propaganda. Propaganda is spread by those within the community, but the message of the propaganda is usually about community and belonging. It is for this reason that propaganda is such a phenomenon. Its success is based on the public’s reaction, but the purpose of the propagandist is to influence that very action. Propaganda sells the idea of community amongst a certain group, something that all people inherently want. It sells community to those who seek community, which is as easy as shooting fish in a barrel. The reality is that the community people are

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<sup>35</sup> Harold D. Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1927) ,47.

being sold tells them to throw away their identity to fit the collective identity, which doesn't sound as happy and nice as community and belonging in a group.

Thomas Kuhne, author of *Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918-1945*, insightfully summarizes big ideas about crowd psychology and why and how we seek comradeship even if it is based in something evil or immoral. He states that no community can exist "without the other: those who do not belong, who really or supposedly threaten the community either physically or just by looking different, pursuing different ways of life, by harboring different experiences and visions- thus by challenging the identity of those who belong."<sup>36</sup> Community is built on the "they" versus the "we." In the United States during the Second World War it was those who rationed versus those who were wasteful, those who were a part of the beautiful postwar consumer society versus those who did not support the war effort against the Axis Powers. In Germany it was unifying the "Aryan race" by excluding the Jews from society. Well before the horrors of the Holocaust, Germany was fabricating a "widespread sense of national belonging by excluding the Jews" by boycotting Jewish businesses, synagogues, homes, "Aryanizing businesses, and, long before the holocaust started, forcing Jews to emigrate after stripping them of most of their possessions."<sup>37</sup>

The systematic pushing out of those of Jewish ancestry from the German speaking territories before the Holocaust had a significant impact on the United States. The kind of propaganda used was different, but the sense of belonging and giving the people a common enemy was present in both United States and German propaganda. More noteworthy is the mass immigration of those of Jewish ancestry to the United States in the years before the Second World War. Albert Einstein left Germany in 1933, not even a year after Adolf Hitler was appointed as chancellor. Albert Einstein's groundbreaking work in physics led to the creation of the atomic bomb that would solidify the United States as a world power during and after the Second World War. Ernest Dichter left Vienna for the United States in 1938 after he

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<sup>36</sup> Thomas Kuhne, *Belonging and Genocide: Hitler's Community, 1918-1945*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 37.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

has arrested, questioned, and came to the realization that his rights and ability to make a living were being stripped away because of his Jewish ancestry. His work on the psychology of advertising revolutionized American business and public relations during and after the Second World War. The success of the postwar society in the United States can almost be said to be directly tied to the intense racism and discrimination of the Nazi Regime that forced the Jewish intellectual class to flee Europe. In this way, the Nazi government inadvertently helped to strengthen their enemies and the lame themselves with the shortcomings of their own propaganda and ideology.

Propaganda is not always effective; it depends largely on the what is going on in the nation. In the United States, propaganda was more effective because the average American in the 1940s would have no way of knowing about the war apart from what they were being told through propaganda campaigns. The war was happening in Europe and in the Pacific, not in the backyards of United States citizens. If your home is destroyed by bombs and the opposing forces are marching through the streets, it might be a little more difficult to believe the propaganda that tells you that all is well. Propaganda is based in half-truths, but when faced with the true reality of a situation, all propaganda cannot maintain its narrative and breaks down. When a military is defeated while propaganda campaigns have been assuring the people that the military cannot be beaten, the myth of the propaganda falls apart and people come to the realization that they have been duped and they become understandably upset about it. To put things in a more lighthearted way and in terms of American consumer culture, I would compare it to purchasing a burger from a fast-food place after seeing it advertised on a commercial. The burger in the ad looks like the perfect burger with a steamy patty of meat covered in melty cheese and loaded down with the perfect proportions of fresh toppings. You say to yourself, "I have to go and get one of those glorious burgers." You arrive at the fast-food joint, place your order, and receive your food. As you unwrap the burger wrapper you are suddenly filled with disappointment. This burger is nothing like the one in the ad! Rather than a big, juicy burger you have a flat, greasy blob with ketchup and brown lettuce falling out of the side of the bun. You feel as if you have been intentionally misled, and indeed you have. What you were sold

was the promotion of an image, not reality, and now you are left with a situation and emotions you did not want and were not prepared for.

Nazi propaganda broke down in 1945 much like my laughably oversimplified example of the burger ads. When the general propaganda ceased to be effective in areas impacted by war, Goebbels and his propagandists started pumping out more and more atrocity propaganda and Jewish conspiracy propaganda when the heroic exploits of the unbeatable German army could no longer be sold to the public. While the Nazis were murdering Jews with vile efficiency, they were charging the Allied powers with being mercenaries of the international Jewry that conspired to take over the world.<sup>38</sup> This kind of mythos of propaganda occurs over and over. It is not about spreading truth, it is about spreading a narrative to those with no power that justifies the actions of those in power. When even the global Jew conspiracy or accounts of Germans being butchered by the evil Allies did not persuade the people to continue to support the war effort, Hitler and the Nazis turned to terror tactics to keep people under control. In the areas of Nazi occupied territory that were threatened by the Allies, Hitler set up military courts to punish those that faltered from the Nazi ideology. “The jurisdiction of these courts was almost unlimited. Cowardice and defeatism were punishable by death. Throughout the Reich the bodies of victims of court martial dangled from trees and lampposts as warnings to the rest of the population.”<sup>39</sup>

It is in such examples that many only apply the term propaganda as information produced by groups like the Nazis or the Soviets in times of war. The problem with this kind of thinking is that it implies that propaganda as a social phenomenon can only exist during tumultuous times of conflict. We know that this notion cannot be true, because we are inundated with political and social propaganda on an almost constant basis, even during times when there is no major conflict. Although propaganda cannot be defined in a few words, we can distinguish the qualities of propaganda and see how those qualities have been applied to different professions with similarly successful results. Harold Lasswell, a leading political

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<sup>38</sup> Jay Baird, *The Mythical World of Nazi War Propaganda: 1939-1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1974), 245.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 251.

scientist of his age, still remains an authority on propaganda studies almost forty years after his death. His ideas on the “satanism” of the enemy are truly telling, especially when thought about in the realm of politics and war. According to Lasswell, propaganda aims to convince the citizen that, “The enemy is inherently perfidious. The enemy conducts a lying propaganda. The enemy is not only insolent. He is sordid. The enemy is quarrelsome, crude, and destructive” and “The enemy is atrociously cruel and degenerate in his conduct of war.”<sup>40</sup> If we replace the “enemy” with a political party or political leadership, we can quickly see how the propaganda spilled over into other facets of our lives.

It goes back to the same arguments Kuhne has presented about community and belonging. It is the “us” against “them” mentality that makes the phenomenon of propaganda possible. We like to be right and we like to think that the way we see the world is the way that everyone should see the world. It is in our nature to do these things. If we are convinced that those against us are evil and that their ideas are nefarious then there is no need to listen to their ideas or interact with them. The ideas of light against dark are as old as humanity itself. Was it not the cunning and deceiving serpent that promoted as good what God had forbidden and seduced the innocent first couple to sin against God in the paradise of Eden? The narrative of the good guy versus the bad guy is reinforced repeatedly and spans through most forms of literature and cinema. Both literature and cinema borrowed this concept from the oldest stories ever written, the various religions of the world.

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<sup>40</sup> Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, 77-81.

CHAPTER 6

RACISM AND PATRIOTISM: ADVERTISEMENTS AS PROPAGANDA

# This -

**BUT FOR ONE THING -**

## Could Be Your Wife

**O**F COURSE, you've never pictured *your* wife in the hands of an Axis soldier. You're sure it couldn't happen—the war's too far away. *But—*

Our enemies didn't start this war in the expectation of losing. They were sure they could bring war here—and find victory here. And they're fighting today in confidence that they still can!

If American boys dug slit trenches in your front yard—and faced the Axis gangsters *there*. . . . If you could see them die at your doorstep defending you—watch them go down under Jap bayonets or Nazi flame-throwers so that nothing could harm you and yours. . . .

You'd gladly say—"Here! Take my dollars! Take anything—everything—to win this fight. What can I do with dollars—if you lose?"

Is it different—because they fight your fight out of sight of your doorstep? Because that boy next door chose to face our enemies *before* they stormed your street and threatened to break down your front door?

Would you rather wait until you hear the whistle of bullets before you loan your money to buy guns. . . . to keep the skies clear of hostile planes. . . . to keep the filthy hands of Axis brutes off your wife or daughter?

Yes—just loan the money! Just a fraction of what you'd gladly give—if lack of guns and bullets over there should bring the fighting over here. Just a loan—so American boys can keep this war "far away." Just a loan—to be doubly sure that it won't be your wife—and too late to do anything about it!

From now on—think of War Bonds that way! And dedicate as big a part of your pay as you can. To give that boy next door a fighting chance. To help him keep your home secure. And to let you look our fighting men in the eye some day, and say to yourself "Yes, when men were dying to save *my* home, I did what little I could to help them keep it free!"

**STEWART-WARNER  
CORPORATION**  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

*This message is published solely in the interest of national understanding and unity in the war effort. Stewart-Warner plants have long since been converted to the making of essential materials for war and war production.*



Figure 2.1

“Of course, you’ve never pictured your wife in the hands of Axis soldiers,” is the first line of a wartime advertisement produced by Stewart-Warner Corporation in 1943. The wife is covering her breasts in her nightgown while opening the door to find a smiling Japanese soldier while her small daughter is clutching at her hip. The Japanese soldier is menacingly smiling at the door and holding a flashlight, which means he is breaking in during the night. This makes the scene altogether very sinister and, although rape is never described or stated in this ad, it is certainly implied by the visual image and the description in the text. The advertisement is to gather support for purchasing war bonds, but the way it is doing so is through fear of the enemy and implied rape of American children and women. As stated in the title of the advertisement, there is only one thing that can stop this horrible scenario of rape and that is to buy war bonds and support the war.

To put this into perspective, this could have very easily (and logically) been an ad depicting hardworking Stewart-Warner employees contributing to the war effort, but it is not. The next to last line of the advertisement is also quite telling. “This message is published solely in the interest of national understanding and unity in the war effort.” The purpose of this advertisement is to unite the people and to “educate” the public about the perfidious enemy so that they might “keep the filthy hands of Axis brutes off your wife or daughter.” This advertisement says nothing about the products that are available for the consumer, but instead threatens the rape of the American men’s wives and daughters by Japanese soldiers should they not use their money to support the war effort.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Stewart-Warner Corporations, “This-But For One Thing-Could Be Your Wife”, Advertisement, *Collier’s Magazine*, 1943. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4pg1j745>. (Accessed 10/30/2018).



## Out on a Long, Long Limb



As this is written, American arms have taken the offensive. In less than a year after Pearl Harbor, American industry has equipped our fighting forces to carry the war to the enemy. And Axis dictators begin to talk in plaintive tone of black horizons and impending doom!

To the men and women of Philco who have had a part in this vast program of preparation, these events are an incentive to new and still greater achievements. The road ahead, though long and hard, is full of hope and promise. Now, more

than ever before, the war production pledge of Philco's soldiers of industry is "More-Better-Sooner."

The electronic miracles developed in the Philco laboratories, the radio communications equipment, fuzes, shells and storage batteries produced by Philco workers are today fighting for freedom in the planes, tanks, ships and guns of many battlefields. When Victory is won, their heritage of amazing inventions will bring new comfort, convenience and entertainment to the homes of the nation.

*This cartoon by S. J. Ray is another in the series being drawn for Philco by America's leading editorial cartoonists to interpret the spirit of Philco's soldiers of production. It is being posted on bulletin boards of the Philco factories as a symbol to the men and women of Philco of the purpose and significance of their work in the united effort for Victory.*

**Free Limited Offer . . .** While available, a full size reproduction of the original drawing by S. J. Ray will be furnished gladly upon request. Simply address Philco Corporation, Philadelphia, Penna., and ask for Cartoon Number 35D.

## PHILCO CORPORATION

"Our Great Nation."  
Take in *Friday* every  
evening, over your local  
Columbia Station.  
BUY WAR BONDS  
AND STAMPS

America is conserving its resources for Victory. As you save on all products of peace-time consumption, remember too to preserve the things you own. Trained service men everywhere are leaving civilian life to serve vital military needs. So be careful to maintain the condition and prolong the life of your Philco products.

**RADIOS, PHONOGRAPHS, REFRIGERATORS, AIR CONDITIONERS, RADIO TUBES \* \* INDUSTRIAL STORAGE BATTERIES FOR MOTIVE POWER, SIGNAL SYSTEMS, CONTROL AND AUXILIARY POWER**



The Army-Navy "E" Flag  
is awarded to Philco plants in  
Philadelphia, Chicago, Tempe,  
N.J., and Lincoln, Okla.

Figure 2.2

Philco Corporation and political cartoonist S.J. Ray produced a series of advertisements supporting the war and the purchasing of war bonds and stamps. This advertisement has it all when it comes to wartime propaganda. We see the three leaders of the Axis powers on a limb of an apple tree, all seeking to gain control of the apple that represents the world after they have already eaten the majority of apples, leaving nothing but their cores. All of the leaders are displayed in ways that make them either appear evil, inferior, or silly. Hitler is portrayed as relatively normal as compared to Mussolini and Hirohito apart from his intense, demonic eyes that lets the viewer know at first glance that this man is evil and deranged. Mussolini is hanging on the boot of Hitler, almost like an ape. His eyes are little black dots that almost give him an expression of cluelessness. I am unsure if the sword he has on his hip is meant to represent a phallic symbol, but it certainly appears that way. All of this comes together to make Mussolini appear comical and not to be taken seriously, even if he and Hitler are connected.

Hirohito is displayed in the anti-Asian caricatures that are common of Second World War propaganda. Hirohito is shown as this nearly inhuman creature. While Hitler has evil eyes and Mussolini looks like a halfwit, Hirohito barely resembles a human being. With his wild hair, giant square teeth and his squinted eyes arched down to make his face look like a snarl it is obvious that the Japanese are being portrayed as inferior. The racial inferiority of the Japanese is a theme in the propaganda of the Second World War that can't be blamed solely on the attack on Pearl Harbor and has a lot to do with racism that existed in the United States well before December 7, 1941. European leaders may be evil and dumb, but they are not seen as the inhuman monsters like the Japanese.

Finally, we have Uncle Sam chopping down the tree in which they all sit. Uncle Sam is wearing the words "Unity" on his shirt and cutting down the tree with the axe of "Industry." American industry and unity will defeat the Axis Powers, but presumably at a great cost. If one cuts down the tree, would the apple not die as well? Regardless, Uncle Sam is not shown as evil, silly or inferior like the rest and instead he is displayed with a look of focus and determination, mightily swinging his axe of industry to ensure his enemies do not gain control of the world.

Not only does this advertisement demonize the enemy and foster ideas of unity, two major themes in wartime propaganda, but it also uses the themes of the prosperous postwar period and the sacrifices the company has made in the war. The “electronic miracles” like the “radio communications equipment, fuses, shells, and storage batteries” were used in the Second World War to fight for “freedom in the planes tanks, ships, and guns of many battlefields.” They conclude with a statement that ensures that after the war is over these innovations “will bring new comfort, convenience and entertainment to the homes of the nation.” This advertisement even came with a free limited offer that allowed the viewer to have their own full-size reproduction of S.J. Ray’s cartoon sent to them upon request.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Philco Corporation, “Out On A Long, Long Limb”, Advertisement, *Life Magazine*, December 28, 1942. Pg. 33. Google Books. <https://books.google.com/books?id=LVEEAAAAMBAJ>. (Accessed 10/30/2018).

It's his **軍** against your Dollars!

**公債發賣所**

Yes, Honorable Japanese glad to spend his **錢** (his Japanese money) for more of his government's war bonds... look what they pay for...

Perhaps another sneak attack like Pearl Harbor. Another massacre like Wake Island. Ruthless pillage such as at Hong Kong, Manila, Singapore.

We can't afford to take these lying down. We'll dig down in our pockets now to buy more... and more... and more, until our bonds drive every Japanese and Nazi back into a corner with his hands up.

We'll pass up the unnecessary luxuries, pool our car riding, build so many ships, planes and tanks that every Jap will think he's fighting four Americans instead of one.

That's what will turn Joe Jap's war bonds into wastepaper... make him yell for peace as our enemies did in the last war.

*This is published by The Texas Company to acknowledge the importance of YOU—the American citizen—in winning this war. Even before the war it was YOU who built the strongest military asset America had—our productive capacity. Today it serves us well.*

**THE TEXAS COMPANY**

originators of  
**FIRE-CHIEF**  
and **Sky Chief**  
gasolines

*Published 12/16/43*

Figure 2.3



“It is his [yen] against your Dollars” is the title of an interesting and racial advertisement produced by Texaco in 1943. This advertisement is a mix of nationalism and not so subtle racism against the Japanese. The opening line of “Yes, Honorable Japanese glad to spend his [kanji] for more of his government’s war bonds...” mocks and caricatures the English accent of those of Japanese descent. This is followed up by mentioning of the possibility of “another sneak attack like Pearl Harbor” and how United States citizens purchasing war bonds will turn “Joe Jap’s war bonds into wastepaper” and “make him yell for peace as our enemies did in the last war.” The written word is clearly what is meant to catch your attention in this advertisement, but the depiction of the Japanese men is also noteworthy. While the images of the Japanese in this advertisement are quite human, they are still seen as scheming and laughing at the American viewer. The man purchasing the war bonds has squinted eyes, big glasses, and smiling with his large bucked teeth, and the man behind the counter has the same characteristics except he is not wearing glasses and nefariously rubbing his hands together.

Now, what does this advertisement sell us? It certainly does not highlight the merits of Texaco gasoline or compare it to other brands to inform the reader of the superiority of what Texaco is producing. A standard advertisement seeks to inform you about a product or at the very least an idea of how the product could enhance your life; that is not what is going on here. This advertisement could have focused on rationing or how Texaco was supporting the war effort, but it did not. Instead it sought to show the Japanese as evil, which is more akin to war propaganda than any kind of advertisement. The advertisement instead sells us war bonds, hatred of the Japanese, and a sense of national unity brought to you by Texaco gasoline.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Texaco, “It is his [yen] against your Dollars!”, Advertisement, *New York Herald Newspaper*, 1943. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4vt1h87n>. (Accessed on 10/30/2018).



Figure 2.4

This relatively simply advertisement entitled, “Tokyo Next”, was produced for Sears in 1944. This ad sought to unify the American people against the Japanese enemy by showing the enemy as inferior. Racial advertisements during the Second World War are usually, but not exclusively, directed towards the Japanese. It is worth noting that the size of the Japanese officer is much smaller than the American with the bayonet, with the officer being shown as about half the height of half the length of the rifle. The small stature and large bucked teeth make the Japanese officer appear almost rat-like. This advertisement a caricatured Japanese officer with large bucked teeth, squinted eyes, and holding a sword like he is ready to attack. Above him is an American bayonet ready to strike down the bloodthirsty Japanese officer who is standing on a large X marking his spot, illuminated by a heavenly spotlight from above. The message of the text is straight forward, “War bonds will speed our armed forces to victory.... Buy more bonds!”

In the business sense, the goal if this advertisement is to promote the buying or war bonds as well as advance the Sears brand, but we learn nothing of any product Sears is selling. Instead, this kind of racially charged war time advertisement has another function: to demonize the enemy. It is in these more racially charged advertisements that you really see the distinction between wartime advertising and propaganda beginning to break down. What does a caricatured depiction of a Japanese officer have to do with Sears? Nothing. However, it gives the American public an image of a common enemy. The “Us against them” mentality is a very effective way of getting everyone on the same side, anyone who was ever a public high school student or anyone who was a part of a team/group should be familiar with that concept.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Sears, Roebuck & Company, “*Tokyo Next*”, Advertisement, *Herald Express*, 1944. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4xs5k27k>. (Accessed 10/30/2018).



**“The Japs aren’t as cross-eyed as you think”**

“I count myself lucky. I just lost a leg.

“There were eighty of us. I’m one of four who survived. That’s paying at the rate of 95%.

“When the Japs can do that with one shell, you’ve got to agree they’re not as cross-eyed as some folks make out. Take it from me, they’re tough!

“Thank the Lord they lack our imagination and initiative.

“We can’t have too many ships, ships with a great big wallop behind them if we want to win soon. The Navy can deliver that wallop — but *you* have to provide it.”

*They gave 95%. Is 10% for War Bonds too much for you to give?*

REVERE COPPER AND BRASS INCORPORATED is working now to analyze every job which men with physical disabilities could perform, so that these jobs can be made available first to returning wounded service men.

This is Chief Signalman Willard A. Murphy, of Oakland, Calif., whom we Americans sent to do our fighting with the U. S. S. Atlanta.

Figure 2.5



The ad produced for Revere Copper and Brass Inc. entitled, “The Japs Aren’t As Cross-Eyed As You Think”, let you know right away that this advertisement, like many others during the Second World War, is less about a product and more about labeling the Japanese as either evil or inferior. This advertisement is a great example of the contradiction in anti-Japanese propaganda, where the American propagandist couldn’t decide if they wanted to portray the Japanese as inferior or a powerful enemy that needed to be taken seriously. The ad states that the young American military man shown in the ad is just one of four survivors of a unit of eighty. “When the Japs can do that with one shell, you’ve got to agree they’re not as cross-eyed as some folks make out. Take it from me, they’re tough! Thank the Lord they lack our imagination and initiative.” Anyone who grew up in a small community is familiar with the backhanded compliment, and that is exactly what this ad is doing with the Japanese.

This ad is obviously anti-Japanese, but it is also a rather clever way for Revere Copper and Brass to get their name out to the American public. The point of the ad, other than to relay the contradictory messages about the Japanese enemy, is to connect the brand with supporting wounded soldiers after they have returned home and to encourage the purchasing of war bonds. In 1944 there would have been a large portion of Americans that were returning from combat badly wounded, and these people would surely be looking for some form of work to support themselves and their families. It is commonly known that disabled veterans often have not gotten the help they needed, but this ad is promoting that they are attempting to find ways to put disabled veterans back to work. “Revere Copper and Brass Incorporated is working now to analyze every job which men with physical disabilities could perform, so that these jobs can be made available first to returning wounded service men.” If you were a disabled veteran viewing this ad, you might feel a connection to the man in the chair and the message of the ad might give you hope that you could get back to work and restore some normalcy to your life.

The military man with his leg blown off and the commentary on how many men in the man’s unit were killed let you know the strength of the Japanese military, but the fact that they are “not as cross-eyed as you think” and lack our “imagination and initiative” let you know that they are still to be seen as

inferior to Americans. This is the contradictory nature of wartime propaganda. This ad calls for the American public to take seriously the power of the Japanese military while also insisting that the Japanese should not be taken seriously as they are not up to par with Americans. It is worth noting that you will find very few ads calling the Italians or Germans cross-eyed or inferior. In fact, much of the anti-German and anti-Italian ads depict the Mussolini and Hitler as evil, not German and Italian people. Americans only demonized the leadership of European nations, but they demonized the entirety of Japanese people as a whole. This shows the racism that was alive and well in the United States that remained mostly unchallenged in the 1940s. While Americans were across the Atlantic laying down their lives in order to combat Hitler's vile practices that were birthed by ideas of racial superiority, Americans here at home fostered similar beliefs of the superiority of the white race over all other races.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Revere Copper and Brass Inc., "The Japs Aren't As Cross-Eyed As You Think", Advertisement, *Time Magazine*, 1944. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4db7w934>. (Accessed 11/1/2018).

## CHAPTER 7

## THE PR MAN FROM NAZARETH: A BRIEF STATEMENT ON RELIGION AND PROPAGANDA

The connection between religion and propaganda is an intriguing, but perhaps unsurprising one. If we take out all arguments over religious faith and doctrine, there can be little argument made against the assertion that Jesus Christ was of the most successful leaders of all time. If we look at Jesus as simply a man and not as a son of God, his accomplishments as a leader of men is almost beyond comprehension. He was a man who was able to effectively lead a small number of men and spread his message in way that would lead to his word being taught all over the world, over two thousand years after his death. Bruce Barton's controversial view of Jesus as a businessman and "the Founder of Modern Business" was the focus of his best-selling book, *The Man Nobody Knows*, published in 1925 and remaining in print ever since. Barton, an adman and business executive, saw Jesus as a guy sort of like him. Jesus was not a ruler that people were forced to follow. Rather, he was a common man that convinced people to follow his teachings. He and his twelve "untrained simple men, with elementary weaknesses and passions" were able to succeed because of Jesus's personal convictions, instincts for tapping into the latent powers of those around him, his faith and patience. He started with a ragtag group of commoners in an insignificant country and within a few years he was known far and wide across the Roman Empire and a few decades after his death "the proud Emperor himself bowed his head to the teachings of this Nazareth carpenter."<sup>46</sup>

Critics scoffed at Barton's views, but that did not stop his book from becoming a best seller and one of the most influential books on business ever published. Barton pointed out connections between public relations and religion that would have been quite clear to him but perhaps seemed a radical thought to others. As we will discuss, even the term propaganda had its start with the church and when propaganda became a dirty word after the First World War, the name for those who engineer consent

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<sup>46</sup> Bruce Barton, *The Man Nobody Knows*, (1925; reprint, New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company Inc., 1980), 31.

switched from propagandist to public relations expert, in large part thanks to the influence of Barton's contemporary and the "father" or modern PR, Edward Bernays. Barton's Jesus was able to create a religion that was based out of a "despised province of a petty country" that spread across the globe and has persisted for two thousand years. "It conquered not because there was any demand for another religion but because Jesus knew how, and taught His followers how, to catch the attention of the indifferent, translate a great spiritual conception into terms of practical self-concern."<sup>47</sup> So, Jesus was able to sell an idea with no demand for the idea and take a small group of followers and turn it into a global following? That certainly makes him sound like the prototypical businessman, the kind of businessman who could sell a ketchup popsicle to a woman in white gloves.

If Jesus was the ultimate businessman, then the leaders of Christian faith were the ultimate propagandists. The term propaganda first came into use as a direct result of the Roman Catholic church and Pope Gregory XV's *Congregation for the Propagation of Faith*, and was notably written in 1622, during the time of the Reformation. He wrote that "We are shaken by pity, perceiving how their populous races, turning their backs on the gifts of heaven, have been transformed into beasts, and are nourished and perpetuated (*propagari*) for the eternal fires prepared by the Devil and his messengers." The "We" is the Roman Catholic church and they are concerned about how the messages of the devil are reaching the "populous races" and turning them into wicked creatures. Instead of the false word of devil, the people needed to hear and be saved by the word of the Catholic church. The Catholic church's mission should be "propagating (*propagandam*) the faith in the whole world" and Pope Gregory XV organized a group of cardinals to figure out how to best spread the good news and even dictated that they should meet and discuss their efforts on the propagation of the faith to masses.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>48</sup> Pope Gregory XV, "Inscutaili Divinae Providentiae Arcano," trans. Maria Teresa Pendegrast and Thomas A. Pendergrast, in *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*, ed. Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo, 19-27 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 21.

The evil that the Roman Catholic Church sought to eradicate was not truly evil at all, but rather they were simply seeking to eliminate men like Martin Luther and others like him. Martin Luther wanted to end centuries of corruption in the Roman Catholic church—notably the selling of indulgences, so he penned his famed Ninety-five Theses. It is fitting that the Roman Catholic church was the first to use the term propaganda in the modern sense, because they sought to mislead the public about their own shortcomings and corruption by using propaganda to counteract the messages of the Reformation. From its very beginning propaganda was tainted. It was not quite evil, but it is clear from the terms birth that is meant to be used as a means of mass deception.

Essentially what Pope Gregory XV had done was inadvertently create the first public relations counsel. It was a group of people who wanted to better understand how to get their message to the masses, and their message was something they viewed as essential for the betterment of the people and not to knowingly deceive or mislead them. This further demonstrates the connection between public relations and propaganda, as they are essentially the same thing. Public relations experts are an organized group who seek to spin to truth to get people to see a person or organization favorably. There are far more similarities between the two than there are differences, something that public relations experts have tried to downplay for decades. Indeed, the “father” of public relations, Edward Bernays, called everything he did “propaganda”—most notably expressed in his 1928 book titled *Propaganda*—until the negativity of the word brought on because of the First World War kindled Bernays to “rebrand” the term as “public relations.”

Humanity has always been drawn to the idea of the dichotomy of good and evil. Every Abrahamic religion (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) is based on the idea that bad is actively seeking out and antagonizing good, but good always ultimately prevails. The United States can definitively be described as a nation that has a significant Judeo-Christian heritage and still has a large Christian majority, which would have been even more true seventy to eighty years ago. Lasswell stated that, “Primitive habits of thought persist in modern life, and battles become a trial to ascertain the true and the good. If we win,

God is on our side. If we lose, God may have been on the other side.”<sup>49</sup> In that way, if the United States was a winner it was because God was on their side and if the United States was a loser it was because God was not on their side. The good versus the evil is just another version of the us versus them, because maintaining that all who disagree with us are evil is not feasible. Instead it is the suggestions of the crowd that we follow, and our notions of what is good and bad come from the leaders of those groups. If we consider that the leader of every group is simply a person like us who is susceptible to suggestion like the rest of us are, then it is easy to see how a large number of people can be influenced by the actions of a relatively small number of people. Legendary PR man Edward Bernays stated that,

If you can influence the leaders, either with or without their conscious cooperation, you automatically influence the group which they sway. But men do not need to be gathered together in a public meeting or in a street riot, to be subject to the influences of mass psychology. Because man is by nature gregarious he feels himself to be the member of a heard, even when he is alone in his room with the curtains drawn. His mind retains the patterns which have been stamped on it by the group influences.<sup>50</sup>

This brings to mind the idea of the church in a small community. Amongst the congregants are different leaders in the community, all of whom gather weekly to listen to the preacher. The preacher, the leader of the congregation, reads the words of the holy text that is a collection of writing from several different contributors, made up of leaders of different groups, about the life and accounts of the most influential leaders in history.

Most people are often followers and less commonly leaders of groups. A parent is the leader of their young child, a teacher is a leader to their students. The actions and beliefs of the leader of a group can have a direct impact on actions and beliefs of those who follow them, this has been proven true by every cult in existence. Surely the 918 people involved in the Jonestown massacre in 1978 would not have drank Kool-Aid mixed with cyanide and valium had they not been encouraged to do so by their religious

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<sup>49</sup> Lasswell, *Propaganda Technique in the World War*, 102.

<sup>50</sup> Edward Bernays, *Propaganda*, (1927; reprint, with an introduction by Mark Crispin Miller, Brooklyn, NY: IG Publishing, 2005), 73.

leader. However, this is not to say that all religious bring about such destruction. On the contrary, religious leaders around the world have helped people overcome hardships and have given them hope. Leaders can influence people to do things that they normally wouldn't on their own, and that influence can be for the betterment or the detriment of humankind. It is the same with propaganda. It is neither good nor evil, but rather a tool that can be used for good or bad. That is the nature of the propagandist, the professional manipulators seeking to persuade the leaders of groups, and therefore gaining the allegiance of the members of their groups.

Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo, editors of *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*, and co-authors of the introductory essay "Thirteen Propositions About Propaganda," see the connection between propaganda and religion but do not find propaganda to be wicked or immoral. They, much like Bernays, do not see propaganda as anything evil but as the natural flowing of ideas and messages amongst people on large scale. They maintain that, "The scope of propaganda is biblical. God's injunction against spreading false reports prompted subsequent commentators to caution against the "propagators of calumny" whose sin consists in sowing seeds of dissension and suspicion that prevent the establishment of peace on earth." They state that "Thou shall not publish" was the more fitting translation Hebrew of Exodus 23:1 according to nineteenth century theologians, and that "The truth of falsity of the message is only half of what Moses is instructed to adjudicate."<sup>51</sup>

Humanity has been faced with the anxieties of what is and isn't propaganda since before they had a term to describe it. Several religions warn about the dangers and consequences of spreading falsehoods, but the key aspect of most religions is based on converting the nonbelievers into believers. What is truth to one person is not necessarily true to another, especially in terms of something driven by emotion and faith like religion. The goal of religions based on conversion are to go forth and propagate their message to the masses, to make them see the world in the same way as they do. The holy doctrines warn against

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<sup>51</sup> Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo, "Introduction: Thirteen Propositions About Propaganda," in *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*, ed. Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1.

the accepting of the message of the “others,” those not inside our own indoctrinated group. The “other’s” message is false and evil, while “our” message is that of good and holiness. Religion is the ultimate propaganda that exists regardless of times of war or peace. The “us” and “them” that is present in all propaganda campaigns has its roots in almost every religion around the world.

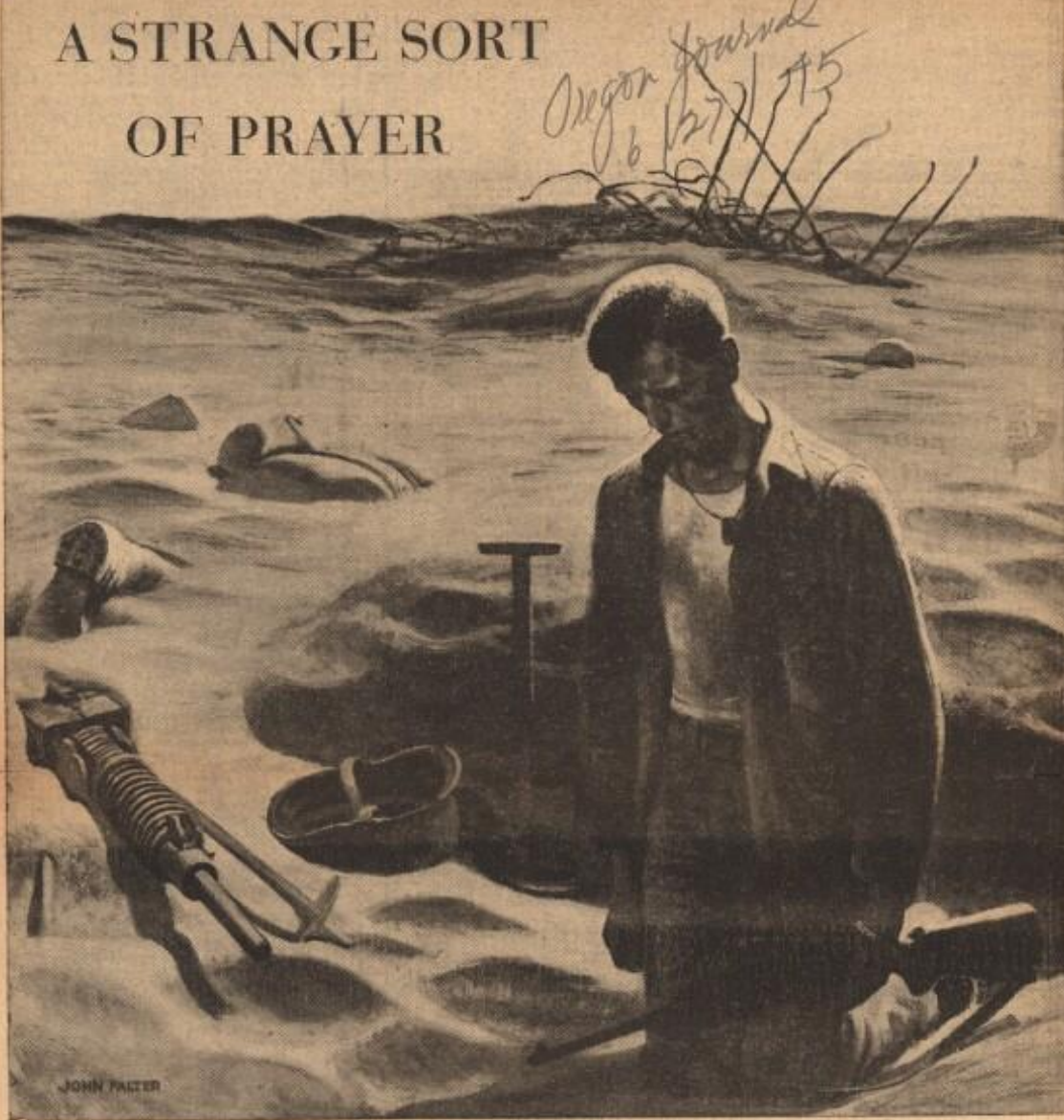


CHAPTER 8

ADVERTISING SALVATION: ADS ABOUT CHRISTIANITY

A STRANGE SORT  
OF PRAYER

*Oregon Journal  
6/27/45*



JOHN FAERBER

**W**ELL, GOD, here we are.  
You up there. Me down here, with a burning sun, a mess of insects, too much ocean, and other buddies just as lonely as me.

Oh, God, how nice it must be back home, with Germany licked, and the folks humming, and some of the boys all finished with the fighting.

But I guess that wasn't meant for me, was it? And tomorrow and tomorrow I'll still be dodging bullets, still feeling lost in the middle of the night.

Well, no hard feelings.  
I'll go wherever You say, and do whatever You want me to. For You know what's best for me.

But say, if You can only get the people back home to remember me, maybe they'll still bear down. Maybe they'll still send us their blood, still stay on the job, still keep making the stuff we need.

You see, God, I'd like to get home, too.

**SEARS**  
ROEBUCK AND CO.  
Portland, Oregon

**Let's Do Our Part . . . By Making the 7th E BOND QUOTA**

Figure 3.1

“Well God, here we are,” which in my opinion is one of the greatest opening lines of all time, is the title of an ad produced for Sears in 1945. The ad shows a young soldier all alone in a desolate war zone, with either his comrade or an enemy lying dead behind him covered in sand. He is on his knees praying that he might make it home from the war. The soldier has “no hard feelings” that God chose for him to go overseas and fight instead of being back home, even though the tone of his prayer is about as cheery as a eulogy. The lone soldier pledges to God that he will “go wherever You say and do whatever You want me to. For You know what’s best for me. But say, if You can only get the people back home to remember me, maybe they’ll still bear down. Maybe they’ll still send us their blood, still stay on the job, still keep making stuff we need. You see, God, I’d like to get home too.”

This Sears ad appeals directly to Christian viewers for multiple reasons, all of which are obvious. The entire ad is a prayer to God, but there is also an element of intense faith and sacrifice as the soldier is okay with his terrible situation because he has faith that God has willed it so. The tone of the prayer is very somber. To me, this is old print version of the well-known ASPCA Sarah McLachlan commercials. This ad rather shamelessly appeals to the emotions in order to gain support for purchasing war bonds, but it also connects the Sears brand to the war effort as well as to its Christian consumers. Sears was an important American institution for rich and poor alike. The more affluent consumer was able to purchase a variety of goods conveniently from the Sears catalog, while poor Americans were able to use the catalog as a way to better clean their bottoms. Sadly, Sears may be in financial ruin today, but in its earlier years Sears was a major part of American life.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Sears, Roebuck & Company, “A Strange Sort of Payer”, Advertisement. *Oregon Journal*, 1945. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4m61c883>. (Accessed on 11/31/2018).



*And please,  
dear Lord*

—send my brother the airplanes he needs *quick!*

**T**HE SCENE—America—the home of millions of decent men who are willing to sacrifice their lives for freedom.

Surely, these ungrudging, unselfish millions who are giving their lives—surely these heroes are not only worth *praying for*—but *paying for*, too.

Before Victory and Peace we've got a war to *pay* for first. You, me, everybody.

10% of our pay? Yes. Every payday. At least a dime out of every dollar—a dollar

out of every ten. More if we can. We're in this together. So let's pay for it together.

The Management of your company will *save* your 10% for you. Every time it adds up to \$18.75 they'll put a WAR BOND in your hands, worth \$25 in ten years. That's \$4 back for every \$3 you put in.

*Your money* will help buy those planes sister is praying for—it will help buy the tanks, guns, and ships that will ram this war right down the throats of the bullies who started it.

And when the final curtain rings down on the Axis you'll thank your lucky stars you saved while you could. You'll feel good all over for having *more* money to enjoy the Peace.

The fight is on. The battle line runs through every home—every office—every factory—every farm. Do your part with at least a *dime* from every dollar every *payday*, in United States War Bonds. Do that so you—and yours—can face the future secure and unafraid.

#### DO YOU KNOW?

When you buy WAR BONDS, you're saving, not giving! Series E WAR BONDS are worth 33½ percent more in 10 years! You get back \$4 for every \$3 you invest!

These BONDS, when held to maturity (10 years), yield 2.9 percent per year on your investment, compounded semiannually!

Joining a Pay Roll Savings Plan makes saving easy!

Joining your bank's Victory Club

(it works like any Thrift or Christmas Club) is a convenient way to save for WAR BONDS for those who aren't members of a Pay Roll Savings Plan.

You can have enough money to do a lot of things you'd like to do, and to buy the many things you'll need after the war is over, if you save enough in WAR BONDS every payday NOW!

You can start buying WAR BONDS by buying War Stamps for as little as 10 cents. So start today!

EVERYBODY—EVERY PAYDAY  
**10%** IN  
WAR BONDS

This advertisement is a contribution to America's all-out war effort by

VOGUE

Figure 3.2



“And please, dear Lord—send my brother the airplanes he needs quick!” is the opening line of a wartime advertisement released by Vogue magazine in 1943. Vogue has remained an influential fashion and lifestyle magazine in the United States for over one hundred years. This advertisement plays on the viewers emotions by connecting their religious beliefs to financing the war effort. “Surely, these ungrudging, unselfish millions who are giving their lives—surely these heroes are not only worth *praying for*—but *paying for*, too.” This advertisement is basically telling the viewer to put their money where their mouth is.

The rest of the advertisement details the importance of purchasing war bonds for the war effort but does not make any more religious connections. In fact, nothing else about this ad makes any form of religious connection at all. The only exceptions would be the short reference of “*Your money* will help buy those planes sister is praying for,” and notions of sacrifice that have more to do with rationing than faith. This shows that the use of religious imagery like the little girl with folded hands, talking to God about the war is simply an attention getter. Appealing to people based on their religious beliefs is an extremely effective way of connecting your message with them. Roughly a decade after the Second World War, a young American Baptist minister from Atlanta, Georgia named Martin Luther King Jr. would begin using his Christian beliefs and affiliations to convince a nation of the immortality of segregation and the need for equal rights for all by appealing to the common beliefs of right and wrong shared by all those of the Christian faith.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Vogue, “And Please, Dear Lord”, Advertisement, *Vogue Magazine*, 1943. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4x34nb67>. (Accessed 10/30/2018).



Now come the bloodiest battles of the war



Now there are more crosses than before



Now you must do your share — and more!

6/15/44  
T. Johnson



**5<sup>TH</sup> WAR LOAN**

Buy more than before  
to speed **V**ictory!

★  
Contributed by

**GOOD YEAR**  
THE GREATEST NAME IN RUBBER

Figure 3.3

Some ads like this one produced by Goodyear use simple Christian symbols like the cross in order to connect their brand with its Christian consumers. “Now come the bloodiest battles of the war, Now there are more crosses than before, Now you must do your share-and more!” Aside from the Dr. Seuss style rhyming, this ad is pretty straight-forward. The message is that the war is picking up and they need more citizens to back the 5<sup>th</sup> War Loan, brought to you by Goodyear, the greatest name in rubber. But aside from all of that, there is a somewhat subtle connection to the Christian viewer. Crosses are, after all, a Christian symbol. The creators of the ad could have used grave stones instead of crosses but instead they chose to go with the cross. Had the creators of the ad went with a headstone, the person viewing the ad would not know the religious faith of those that died. With the use of the cross it denoted that those who have died were Christian.

It is easy while viewing ads from the Second World War to forget the product that is being sold in the ads. Goodyear is a company who makes tires, and tires were and remain an essential component for waging war. Goodyear has several ads that highlight their wartime production, but interestingly not as many as you would think. Goodyear produced several ads like the one aforementioned that barely mention their product at all. It would appear that the purpose of this ad is not to sell you a product at all, but to relay a message to the consumer that Goodyear tires is an American, Christian company that supports the war effort. If you support the war, if you support doing your fair share, and if you support the Christian church then Goodyear is the company for you.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Goodyear, “Now Come The Bloodiest Battles Of The War”, Advertisement, 1944. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4ww77k46>. (Accessed 10/30/2018).



Figure 3.4



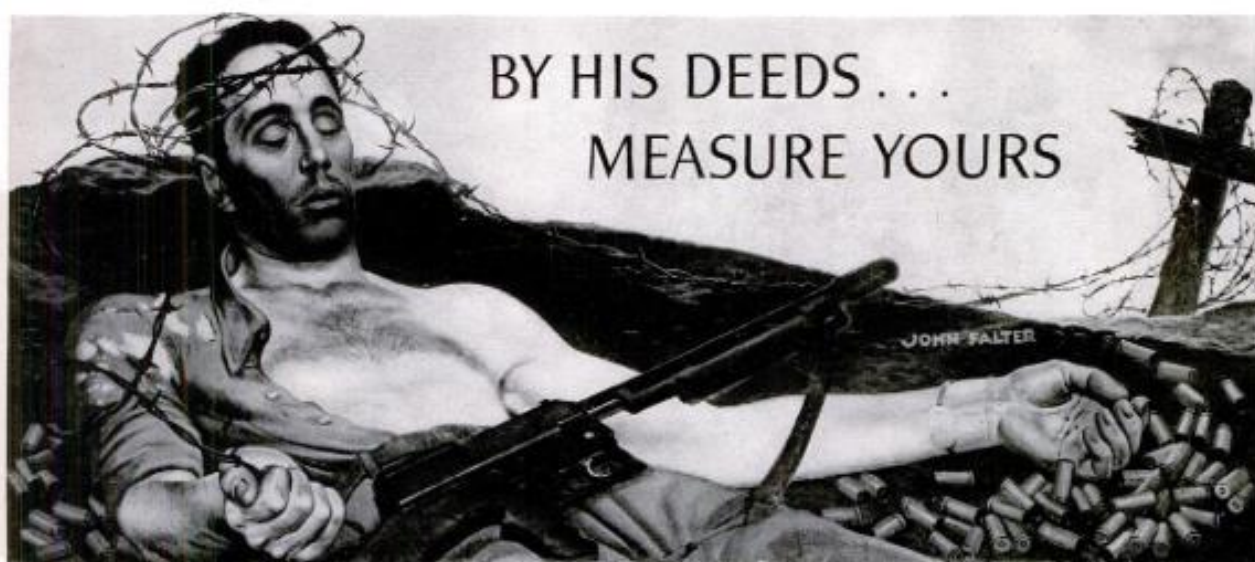
Saying a prayer in an ad was a popular theme during the Second World War. “Let us pray for victory, Let us pray for God’s protection of our fighting men and women, Let us manifest our faith by investing in war bonds more than ever before.” Above this text is a pair of praying hands, but not just any image of praying hands would do. This particular image is the known as the *Study of the Hands of an Apostle*, a famous pen-and-ink drawing by German painter and printmaker Albrecht Dürer. This famous work is still stored at the Albertina Museum in Vienna, Austria to this day. So why was it used? It would have been a popular image that some would recognize as a famous piece of artwork that also connected a brand to Christianity.

Let us return to the statement about purchasing war bonds that is disguised as a prayer. This ad is similar in fashion to what Sears was attempting to do in their ad but is not as upbeat and doesn’t tell the story of a poor Christian soldier trying to make it home. Instead they kept the prayer short and to the point. It is basically saying “God, we want victory, protection, and for people to buy more war bonds. Amen.” The International Latex Corporation produced, amongst other things, the space suits for every United States astronaut in the Apollo space program. This ad could have been something about how ILC was using this technology to help the war, but instead they went with a famous image of praying hands and a prayer for war bonds. This is ad does not tell you about ILC’s product and it doesn’t sell you the benefit of purchasing war bonds. Instead this ad attempts to gain support from its Christian viewers to buy war bonds by using religious art work, symbolism, and stating their message in the form of a prayer.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> International Latex Corporation, “Let Us Pray...”, Advertisement, *Richmond News Leader Newspaper*, 1944. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4mg7gf8m>. (Accessed 10/30/2018).

**I**t is not pleasant to have your peaceful life upset by wartime needs and restrictions and activities. . . . It is not pleasant to die, either. . . . Between you who live at home and the men who die at the front there is a direct connection. . . . By your actions, definitely, a certain number of these men will die or they will come through alive. If you do everything you can to hasten victory and do every bit of it as fast as you can . . . then, sure as fate you will save the lives of some men who will otherwise die because you let the war last too long. . . . Think it over. Till the war is won you cannot, in fairness to them, complain or waste or shirk. Instead, you will apply every last ounce of your effort to getting this thing done. . . . In the name of God and your fellow man, that is your job.



The civilian war organization needs your help. The Government has formed Citizens Service Corps as part of local Defense Councils. If such a group is at work in your community, cooperate with it to the limit of your ability. If none exists, help to organize one. A free booklet telling you what to do and how to do it will be sent to you at no charge if you will write to this magazine. This is your war. Help win it. Choose what you will do—now!

**EVERY CIVILIAN A FIGHTER**

CONTRIBUTED BY THE MAGAZINE PUBLISHERS OF AMERICA

Figure 3.5

Some of the better examples of a Christian themed advertisement during the Second World War was unsurprisingly produced by a group that knows all about the effectiveness of advertising, the Magazine Publishers of America. In their ad entitled “By His Deeds...Measure Yours” they portray the sacrifice of the American soldier in combat in the same way was Jesus on the cross. Let us focus on the image first, since it is the most interesting. The soldier has a crown of barbed wire wrapped around his head acting as Christ’s crown of thorns, his palms are faced outward like depictions of Jesus on the cross, and the very same barbed wire around the soldier’s head leads directly to the battered cross in the background. The theme of the ad is clearly sacrifice and wants the viewer to see sacrifice as a holy thing, not as a burden.

The text is pretty firm with the reader, and it comes off as if the viewer of the ad is getting a scolding by a parent. “Between you who live at home and the men who die at the front there is a direct connection...By your actions, definitively, a certain number of these men will die of they will come through alive.” The ad continues by stating that “Till the war is won, you cannot, in fairness to them, complain or waste or shirk. Instead, you will apply every last ounce of your effort to get this thing done...In the name of God and your fellow man, that is your job.” So, what is the message of this text? It is shaming people into buying war bonds by connecting the war with Christianity and by putting the lives of those who died in combat the fault of those who did not support the war effort. If you are a wasteful person, it is your fault that the soldier died and not the enemy soldier that took his life. The ad goes on advocate the joining and setting up of the Citizens Service Corps, and they would even send free information on it if you wrote in to the magazine.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Magazine Publishers of America, “By His Deeds...Measure Yours”, Advertisement, *Life Magazine*, March 15, 1943. Pg. 97. Google Books. [https://books.google.com/books?id=YIEEAAAAMBAAJ&source=gbs\\_all\\_issues\\_r&cad=1](https://books.google.com/books?id=YIEEAAAAMBAAJ&source=gbs_all_issues_r&cad=1). (Accessed 10/31/2018).

## CHAPTER 9

## PUBLIC RELATIONS: PROPAGANDA FOR THE GREATER GOOD

There are slight differences between propaganda and public relations, but the distinction between the two is not always clear. Propaganda is basically the evil twin of public relations. They are essentially the same, but one claims spreads the truth and good tidings and the other spreads lies and hatred. It is commonly accepted that propaganda is defined by persuading the public with lies while public relations persuades the public with facts mixed with emotional appeals. However, it is possible to present material that is based in truth and spin that into a different version of the truth.

The engineers of thought saw the efficacy of propaganda to persuade the masses during the First World War with President Wilson's Committee on Public Information (a committee which Edward Bernays served on), but they would need to re-brand the term "propaganda" as it had become a negative term describing information released by the enemy. As Priscilla Wald pointed out in her essay, "The 'Hidden Tyrant': Propaganda, Brainwashing, and Psycho-Politics In The Cold War Period," it was thought that rebranding the art of persuasion from propaganda to public relations was essential not only to the field of professional manipulation but also to the preservation of a democratic society. "While the use of Nazi propaganda before and during the Second World War offered an especially dramatic example of the dangers of propaganda, world events also illustrated the fragility of democracy and the need for galvanizing rhetoric and rituals and for the control of information." Those who favored the use of propaganda, like Bernays, doubled their efforts to "sell" the public propaganda under the newly created name of "public relations" and even those who had been opposed the use of propaganda, like Lippman, began to see its usefulness even if term had been tainted.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Priscilla Wald, "The 'Hidden Tyrant': Propaganda, Brainwashing, And Psycho-Politics In The Cold War Period," in *The Oxford Handbook of Propaganda Studies*, ed. Jonathan Auerbach and Russ Castronovo (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 110.

Those in public relations today say what they do is in no way propaganda, but they are simply selling the same idea that Bernays began selling nearly one hundred years earlier. The First World War tainted the term propaganda, and the way people reacted to the term was likewise forever changed. It is much like the battle flag of the Army of Northern Virginia or the “rebel flag.” There was nothing offensive about that symbol until the Klu Klux Klan made it the symbol of their group, then it became something distasteful and not to be used in civilized society. The same can be said of the swastika. An ideogram that had symbolized a connection to a more spiritual world in East Asian and Indian religions, and even in Greco-Roman Europe, was permanently transformed by the Nazis into a symbol of racial superiority and antisemitism. If one decided to flaunt their swastika or battle flag of the Army of Northern Virginia today they would be labeled as a bigot, and rightfully so. It is not that these symbols are inherently sinister, but what makes them evil is that they were used by evil people. As mentioned earlier, the term propaganda was coined by the Roman Catholic church, and although some have criticized certain Catholic practices, the Catholics meant to use propaganda for what they perceived as the greater good. Propaganda was used and accepted until hostile nations during the First World War used it for terrible things, then it became taboo and no longer an acceptable term. Propaganda was still seen as essential to sway the masses in times of conflict so the rebranding of the term into “public relations”—primarily by Edward Bernays—was necessary.

The ability to sell and spin is the hallmark of public relations and advertising. The rebranding of propaganda itself as PR was one of the field’s most successful acts of spin. Pundits spun the truth so much that now those in public relations will adamantly defend their stance that their work is not propaganda. The practice stayed the same, no matter what it was formerly and currently called. Propaganda, the swastika, and the battle flag are all relics of the past but public relations has continued to thrive and grow since its name change. If we are to believe that changing the name of something changes its very nature, as obviously many people do, then we are buying into the ideas that public relations experts are selling us. If someone took a box of rabbit droppings and called it Raisinets, you would not

simply accept it and throw a handful in your mouth. In the same way we should not accept that public relations is not propaganda rebranded.

Edward Bernays, who did not shy away from controversial statements stated in his 1927 best-selling handbook entitled appropriately, *Propaganda*, that “The normal school should provide for the training of the educator to make him realize that his job is a twofold job: education as a teacher and education as propagandist”<sup>58</sup> Bernays saw little difference between education and propaganda and thought the two should work together for the mutual benefit of both. Would it really be so bad if instead of being persuaded to buy fast food or to support political agendas that we were persuaded to pursue higher education? It certainly doesn’t sound like a terrible idea. Bernays did not see an ethical difference between using propaganda in education and using it in business and politics and warned that if propaganda and education were intermingled that, “It may be used to over-advertise an institution and create in the public mind artificial values. There can be no absolute guarantee against its misuse.”<sup>59</sup> For this very reason, education and propaganda do not belong in the same category. Education should be about seeking the truth, not misleading people. In the same sense, neither should business and politics seek to mislead people. It is embedded into our social fabric that we accept that business and politicians intentionally deceive the public and therefore there is no outcry from the public when we are deceived. Spin is not the truth, it is a manufactured version of the truth meant to color the mind in a certain way. If the word of an educator became no more credible than that of an adman or a politician then even Bernays, “The father of public relations” could not spin the truth enough to maintain the field of education’s integrity.

Although the field of public relations did not truly weave itself into the fabric of the United States until after the Second World War, it was still practicing the art of spin and manipulation in the years preceding the war. Companies, agencies, and groups realized that the way the public viewed their

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<sup>58</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 136.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 145.

business had a direct correlation to the public's willingness to purchase and support their products. Bernays stated that "Perhaps the most significant social, political, and industrial fact about the present century is the increased attention which is paid to public opinion, not only by the individuals, groups or movements that are dependent on public support for their success, but also by men and organizations which until very recently, stood aloof from the general public and were able to say, 'The public be damned.'"<sup>60</sup> William H. Vanderbilt's famous quote, "The public be damned," purportedly uttered on October 8, 1882 is a fitting example of the change in business and public relations that took place in the United States from the early nineteenth century to the twentieth and twenty-first century.<sup>61</sup> That kind of public relations nightmare would be almost unheard of today. It would be like the corporate head of McDonald's releasing a statement that they don't care if their food will destroy people's health. Even though we all know McDonald's could seemingly care less if their food hurts people as long as they can profit from it, they would never say something like that to the public because their PR people would never allow that to happen. At the start of the twentieth century it became more and more clear, at least in hindsight, that public relations would become a major aspect of not only business operations but also daily life in the United States.

One of the most successful public relations ventures in United States history was that of the Advertising Council during and after the Second World War. The public did not trust advertisers or the profession of advertising for the most part, and for good reason. According to historian Inger Stole, advertisers had claimed before the war to help the public by "introducing new products, encouraging competition, and ultimately leading to mass production, thereby allowing consumers to enjoy better and more competitively priced goods." The general public in the 1930s was not convinced of this and questioned the place of advertising even more so in "the changing economic situations brought on by

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<sup>60</sup> Bernays, *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, 65.

<sup>61</sup> Quoted in Clarence P. Dresser, "Vanderbilt in the West," *New York Times*, October 9, 1882. See John Steel Gordon, "The Business of America: 'The Public Be Damned'." *American Heritage* 40 (September/October 1989), <http://www.americanheritage.com/content/-public-be-damned> (Accessed October 16, 2018).

war.”<sup>62</sup> Those in the advertising industry had to sell themselves and their profession to the American public. The war provided the professional manipulators of the United States a way to enhance their image that had been in gradual decline in previous years. The stage was set for the advertising profession’s “most effective public relations campaign to date—one that would combine the use of patriotic copy with a strategic campaign to legitimize advertising in the minds of the American public and Washington officials.”<sup>63</sup>

The Advertising Council was conceived in 1941 and incorporated on February 26, 1942. Its mission statement was to “provide a means for marshaling the forces of advertising so that they may be of maximum aid in the successful prosecution of the war.” Even before the official announcement of the Ad Council in March 1942, many government agencies were enthusiastic about its potential, the most important of which was the Treasury Department that held authority over the advertising industries’ tax-deductible status as a non-profit organization. This obviously delighted the Ad Council.<sup>64</sup> This blossoming friendship with the Treasury Department would greatly benefit the advertising and public relations industry and bring about the first clear sign of their hypocrisy.

While the advertising industry urged the American public to make patriotic sacrifices, they weren’t paying their fair share of taxes while average Americans saw their taxes drastically increase in 1943 in addition to their buying war bonds. The advertising industry encouraged people to celebrate the patriotism of paying additional wartime taxes while working in wartime industry while masking the fact that the advertisers did not contribute to the war effort through paying more taxes but instead, showed their patriotism by working for the government.<sup>65</sup> The average American was being convinced to sacrifice by a group of business elites who had sacrificed very little. Their work for the government directly

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<sup>62</sup> Inger Stole, *Advertising at War: Business, Consumers, and Governments in the 1940s* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 36.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 50; “The Advertising Council, Inc.” Entity information. Division of Corporations. New York State Department of State [https://appext20.dos.ny.gov/corp\\_public/CORPSEARCH.ENTITY\\_SEARCH\\_ENTRY](https://appext20.dos.ny.gov/corp_public/CORPSEARCH.ENTITY_SEARCH_ENTRY) (Accessed October 16, 2018).

<sup>65</sup> Stole, *Advertising at War*, 55.



benefitted the industry by displaying its effectiveness in persuading the masses, solidified the profession in United States for the postwar society, and was ultimately the first step towards the society of mass consumption that admen could not have even dreamed of in the years before the Second World War.

It may seem farfetched to think that adman could link consumption with patriotism in the minds of so many Americans, but admen often made connections between things that weren't there. In journalist Larry Tye's fascinating biography of Edward Bernays, he describes how Bernays's work with the United Fruit Company helped to link the consumption of bananas to many things in order to best market them to the consumer. Bernays quickly rebranded the banana in several ways. First, he rebranded the banana as something that was good for your health. A New York pediatrician by the name of Dr. Sidney Haas "had proven years before that the tropical fruit helped cure celiac disease, a chronic digestive disorder." Bernays used Haas's fiftieth anniversary as a doctor to celebrate the fact that bananas helped digestion. "He printed 100,000 copies of a thin hardcover book on the topic and mailed them to editors, librarians, dieticians, home economists, pediatricians, and doctors specializing in digestive troubles." Bernays did not stop there. He also maintained that the banana played a role in the defense of the United States, something that Tye points out is not out of the realm of belief since the United Fruit Company's "Great White Fleet" was used in both the First and Second World War to ferry supplies and troops. Bernays went even further by trying to market the banana to all kinds of consumers. Bernays campaigned to get bananas "into hotels, railroad dining cars, airplanes, and steamers: to feed them to professional and college football teams, summer campers, YMCA and YWCA members, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, and students of all ages" to promote the banana alongside other deserts and to "secure a place for them in movie cafeterias and at top-of-the-line resorts in places like Palm Beach and Sunny Valley."<sup>66</sup> Any fan of national defense and the banana sundae certainly owes a tip of the hat to Mr. Bernays.

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<sup>66</sup> Larry Tye, *The Father of Spin: Edward Bernays & The Birth of Public Relations* (New York, NY: Crown Publishers Inc., 1998), 162.

For Edward Bernays, someone in public relations was doing the general public a service that they needed. Individuals make up groups, and those groups need leadership. Public relations and propaganda experts do not create within us a desire to do or see something a certain way, but instead they see what the public is doing and see how to best take advantage of the public to get their support. In that way, how is the public relations expert any different than an artist or performer? Are they not all seeking to influence an audience with their message? Bernays points out that the press, musicians, artists, managers, producers and authors all are working in fields that they themselves have no control over. If musicians wrote songs the way they wanted or enjoyed, but those songs were not what the public wanted to hear, they would not be successful musicians. The same can be said of the pressmen, artists, preachers, authors, etc. The fact that they must do what the public wants in order to be successful shows that it is the public, not the creator, who is truly in control. Their goal is to say what the public wants them to say because to do otherwise would risk their careers. These people do have the power to influence opinion, but they must do so within the societal constructs that are already in place.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Bernays, *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, 125.

CHAPTER 10

ADVERTISING MODERATION: ADS ABOUT RATIONING AND SACRIFICE



**Got a minute to listen  
to a guy from home?**

Forget about the arm. It's healing up, and I'll be back in action in another couple of weeks.

Where did I get it? On the beach in North Africa. My job is driving those husky Diesel tractors that handle a lot of tough jobs in this war.

I was snaking trucks out of the surf during the landing. Quite a few shells were slamming down and I caught a chunk of shrapnel.

But what I wanted to tell you folks about was this. We've got a whale of a force over here. And we're on the attack — hitting the Axis where it hurts. Our job wasn't easy to start with and the going gets rougher every minute. But it's the only way to win.

Don't worry about the spirit of these boys. There isn't a quitter in the bunch. They'll do the fighting. But there's plenty you can do, too. We'll need more men, more machines, planes, guns, ammunition and supplies—more ships to transport and convoy them.

How much have you really given up, so far, to help us get those things in *time*, and not too little or too late?

Sure you're doing war work. Sure you're paying taxes and buying bonds. Sure you're driving less, and drinking less coffee. But are you honestly doing *all* you can? How about dropping a few pleasures and socking a few more dollars a week into War Bonds?

They're an investment in your country, and remember, it won't be your country unless we win this war.

CONTRIBUTED TO THE WAR EFFORT BY  
CATERPILLAR TRACTOR CO. • PEORIA, ILLINOIS

CLARK '43

Figure 4.1

Caterpillar Tractor Company released a series of ads during the Second World War that highlighted Caterpillars contribution of tractors to the war effort and that encouraged civilians to keep backing the war effort. This particular ad focuses on a tough soldier that's smoking his cigarette, nursing a broken arm that he isn't concerned with, and telling the viewer a story about Caterpillar tractor's uses in the war. How and where did the soldier break his arm? The soldier explains that his arm was wounded "On the beach in North Africa. My job is driving those husky Diesel tractors that handle a lot of tough jobs in this war," and while he was working he "caught a chunk of shrapnel," from shells that were raining down. So what is this ad about? Caterpillar tractors. Why not highlight an image of the tractor? Because it is not as entertaining or eye catching as a tough American describing the war. The second message of the ad is that "We'll need more men, more machines, planes, guns, ammunition and supplies- more ships to transport and convoy them." Well how can the viewer help the soldier achieve this goal?

While the ad acknowledges that the civilians are already doing war work, paying taxes, buying bonds, driving less, and drinking less coffee. However, they could always drop "a few pleasures" and spend more money every week on war bonds. The last line of this ad states that purchasing war bonds are an "investment in your country, and remember, it won't be your country unless we win this war." As I have stated before, it is not the message of the ad but the way in which the ad gets the message across that is significant. How does Caterpillar sell us their brand and the war effort? They use a cool, tough soldier to tell the story to make it attractive to the viewer, they highlight the effectiveness of Caterpillar tractors on the battlefield, they encourage civilians to continue rationing, and they connect the Caterpillar brand with that of the fighting men and women of the Second World War. It is difficult to keep in mind when reading through this ad that it is really about selling tractors more than anything else.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Caterpillar Tractor Company, "Got A Minute To Listen To A Guy From Home?", Advertisement, *Collier's Magazine*, 1943. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r41j97t4w>. (Accessed 10/31/2018).





## What can you tell an 8-year-old?

SEP  
P. 24  
44

### ANOTHER REASON TO "DO MORE THAN EVER BEFORE"

His eight years old, your boy — with a dime to spend, and it burns a hole in his pocket. "Buy a war stamp," you tell him. And, because he's only eight —

"Why?" he asks.

What will you say to your eight-year-old? Can you tell him how priests, mauled and maimed by Nazis, lie in their blood-stained vestments? Can you tell him of a woman's outcry in the night? Of old men garroted? . . . Hardly. You can't talk like that to an eight-year-old.

But something — you've got to say *something*. You've got to tell him in words that are true and simple. A little story — no bigger than an eight-year-old.

What would his school be like in Poland now? How would he feel, each day, each hour, wearing a gas-mask against the unexpected terror? . . . How about his breakfast, if he were in China; or prayers spoken in fright, while an enemy raps at the door?

Even then, your boy might not grasp it. At home there is food enough, and school in clean clothes, and prayer without fear. It has never been otherwise. . . . So, bewildered, he asks a final question:

"Dad, if you only had a dime to spend, what would you do?"

What *is* your answer—now—with more than a dime to spend? Buy more Bonds than ever before! And keep them—for *him*!

*The United States Treasury considers the Fifth War Loan the most urgent of the whole war. The need is greater, and our response must be greater. Invest now — generously, to the limit — in the best and safest investment in the world!*



**BUY DOUBLE WHAT YOU DID BEFORE**

Figure 4.2

Of advertising images in the Second World War, this one from Goodyear is my favorite, showing grade-school children wearing gas masks in a traditional classroom setting. The title of the ad produced in 1944 is “What can you tell an 8-year old?” and plays on the anxieties of what will happen to children in time of war. This Goodyear ad focuses on what you would say to your eight-year-old son if he asks why he should purchase war stamps. As you can probably tell by the image in the ad, it quickly gets blown out of proportion. “Can you tell him how priests, mauled and maimed by Nazis, lie in their blood-stained vestments? Can you tell him of a woman’s outcry in the night?” both serve to let you know that this ad is not going to give you warm fuzzy feeling inside. “What would his school be like in Poland now? How would he feel each day, each hour, wearing a gas-mask against the unexpected terror?” Keep in mind that this is an advertisement for Goodyear. Goodyear sells tires, and this ad does not show tires nor describe how their tires work or help the war effort in this as.

The ad takes an obvious turn towards the end and hones in on the real point of the message. The eight-year-old asks his father, “Dad, if *you* only had a dime to spend, what would you do?” Well of course, any adult viewing this ad does have more than a dime, and the ad encourages them to “Buy more Bonds than ever before! And keep them-for him!” This Goodyear ad is using a lot of wartime advertising themes at the same time. It plays on wartime anxieties of the future and what will happen to children, it shames adults who do not give their all to supporting the war, it demonizes the Axis powers, and it pushes the purchasing on more war bonds while keeping the Goodyear brand alive during times of war rationing. Goodyear was not able to sell its product to the public during the Second World War but they wanted to keep their brand alive, which is the real purpose of this advertisement, unless one is inclined to believe that Goodyear is simply that patriotic.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Goodyear, “What Can You Tell An 8-year-old?”, Advertisement, *Saturday Evening Post Magazine*, 1944. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4cv4cb33>. (Accessed on 10/28/2018).





**.. Now you can get  
cream of mushroom soup  
again!**

**Campbell's new pack  
is at your grocer's**

GOOD NEWS about food is an event these days . . . and the good news that Campbell's Cream of Mushroom Soup is back, will be welcomed with cheers by soup-lovers all across the country. This out-of-the-ordinary soup was a great favorite of young and old alike and families everywhere asked for it again and again.

Now it's back in all its glory . . . the same smooth, rich creamy mushroom flavor . . . the same enjoyable, appetizing soup that's such satisfying eating. And you'll find it's made with that same Campbell skill from farm-fresh cream and delicate, tender young hot-house mushrooms that fairly melt in your mouth.

If you've a hankering for something really good to eat, get a few cans from your grocer today. Your old favorite couldn't be coming back at a better time. Just now when meals need every bit of nourishment you can give them, and you're at wit's end to devise tempting dishes, you'll give an extra cheer for the best food news of the year . . . Campbell's Cream of Mushroom Soup is back!

*Campbell's* CREAM OF MUSHROOM SOUP



I dig and hoe  
With all my might,  
The food I grow  
Will help the fight.



**LOOK FOR THE RED-AND-WHITE LABEL ON ALL THESE KINDS:**  
Asparagus · Bean with Bacon · Beef · Black Bean · Bontilon  
· Chicken · Chicken Gumbo · Chicken Noodle · Clean Chowder ·  
Consommé · Green Pea · Mock Turtle · Cream of Mushroom ·  
Ox Tail · Pepper Pot · Scotch Broth · Tomato · Vegetable ·  
Vegetarian Vegetable · Vegetable-Beef.

Figure 4.3



Not every advertisement that discussed rationing and sacrifice had a negative message, and Campbell's soup was one company whose advertisements remained very upbeat even during the war. This Campbell's soup ad "...Now you can get cream of mushroom soup again!" may seem funny today, but in times of rationing consumers in the United States would have been thrilled to see familiar products returning to the shelves. This ad supports the rationing of food items, as can be seen from the small child planting her victory garden with the chant "I dig and hoe with all my might. The food I grow will help the fight." Other than that, the focus of this ad is that Campbell's soup can start getting its product back into the hands of consumers. The ad even highlights that the return of Campbell's soup is the "best food news of the year."

It is odd to think that cream of mushroom soup would have such an energetic and joyous ad celebrating it. However, this shows how rationing impacted advertising and the public, and why the post-war years saw an economic boom. If American citizens were celebrating the return of Campbell's cream of mushroom soup, how would they react when the war was over, and rationing came to a close for good? Americans were eager to spend and get their hands on the familiar products that they enjoyed before the onset of the Second World War. If people could get excited for a can of cream of mushroom soup, they could be excited for the return of any product. Brands that kept their brand names alive even during times of rationing were able to enjoy all of the benefits of the energized consumer once the war came to a close. Brands like Campbell's soup remain a staple of the American diet and have had continued success well beyond the years of the Second World War.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Campbell's Soup, "Now you can get cream of mushroom soup again!", Advertisement, *Life Magazine*, June 5, 1944. Pg. 39. Google Books. [https://books.google.com/books?id=ik8EAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs\\_all\\_issues\\_r&cad=1](https://books.google.com/books?id=ik8EAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs_all_issues_r&cad=1). (Accessed 10/29/2018).



**Y**OU know we're building the biggest army in our history. You know that candy is a fine food for soldiers. Now listen:

"I want millions of special Dextrose energy tablets . . . millions of candy fruit drops. I want you to package tons of biscuits, bouillon powder, dehydrated mincemeat, prune and apricot powders. I need them . . . so . . . *Make it snappy* . . ."

This, in effect, is what an aroused War Department told Curtiss Candy Company. We rolled up our sleeves and went to work, just as every other great American company did.

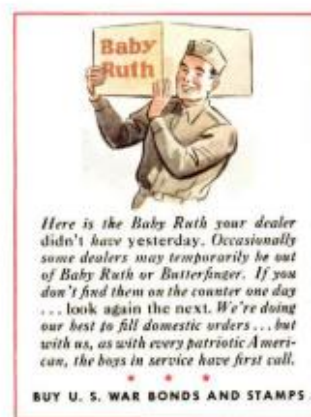
For months our great food plants have been producing and packaging large quantities of food of various

kinds. We are operating 24 hours a day.

This service we consider a duty. We are grateful for the opportunity of serving our country in this greatest of all emergencies.

With the Army, the Navy and War Production Plants all calling for Curtiss Products, there may be times when your dealer won't have a complete assortment of Curtiss Candy Bars. But such shortages are only temporary.

If you don't find Baby Ruth or Butterfinger on the candy counter one day—look again the next. We are filling domestic orders as rapidly as our production facilities permit. Every American will agree with us that Uncle Sam comes *first!*



*Here is the Baby Ruth your dealer didn't have yesterday. Occasionally some dealers may temporarily be out of Baby Ruth or Butterfinger. If you don't find them on the counter one day . . . look again the next. We're doing our best to fill domestic orders . . . but with us, as with every patriotic American, the boys in service have first call.*

**BUY U. S. WAR BONDS AND STAMPS**

*Producers of Fine Foods*  
**CURTISS CANDY COMPANY**  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Figure 4.4

Some brands advertised that their products were still in high demand even though they could only produce a small supply during war rationing. This is the case for the ads produced by the Curtiss Candy Company, makers of candy bars like Baby Ruth and Butterfinger. Their 1943 ad titled "...And make it Snappy!" deals with producing for the home front while also keeping up with war demands made by the War Department. The ad describes how candy bar companies shifted to making dextrose energy tablets, candy fruit drops, packages biscuits, bouillon powder, dehydrated mincemeat and prune and apricot powders during the war to help supply the soldiers. The ad states that "For months our great food plants have been producing and packaging large quantities of various food kinds," and "With the Army, the Navy, and War Production Plants all calling for Curtiss Products, there may be times when your dealer won't have a complete assortment of Curtiss Candy Bars. But such shortages are only temporary." The whole message of the ad is enhanced by the wonderful image of Uncle Sam staying busy on the phone, presumably with Curtiss Candy Company to place more orders.

In the bottom righthand corner of the ad there is a military man carrying a large box of Baby Ruth candy bars. The text appearing beneath is encourages the consumer to keep checking back in with their store if they are out of Baby Ruth and Butterfinger chocolates because Curtiss Candy Company was doing its "best to fill domestic orders...but with us, as with every patriotic American, the boys in service have first call." This very patriotic and upbeat ad ends with, of course, a message to the public to continue purchasing war bonds and stamps. This ad does not shame the viewer into purchasing war bonds or goad them on with notions of sacrifice. Instead this ad focuses on how rationing is a temporary inconvenience and focuses on ideas of being patriotic and putting the troops first. This ad catches the attention, supports rationing, connects the consumption of candy bars with patriotism, and it sells purchasing more war bonds and stamps to the public.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Curtiss Candy Company, "...And make it Snappy!", Advertisement, *Life Magazine*, Jan. 25, 1943. Pg. 16. Google Books. [https://books.google.com/books?id=PIEEAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs\\_all\\_issues\\_r&cad=1](https://books.google.com/books?id=PIEEAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs_all_issues_r&cad=1). (Accessed on 10/30/2018).



HORSE SENSE FROM  THE FLYING RED HORSE

# Be Prepared to Drive Your Present Car

AT LEAST 2 YEARS AFTER THE WAR!



**"That's for Wasting Wartime Horsepower!"**

### Conserve YOUR CAR—YOUR GASOLINE

IT WILL TAKE TIME—lots of it—for U.S.A.'s auto plants to meet the enormous postwar demand for new cars. Millions will need them!

So guard every mile of your present car's life. Older cars need better care . . . give yours the highest-quality lubricants and service. Don't be satisfied with anything less than Summer Mobilol—the world's best-known, largest-selling motor oil—for your engine. Get Mobilgas dealers' special protection for radiator, gears, chassis . . .

Mobilgas dealers' check-up of tires, battery, spark plugs, oil filter, air cleaner. Complete Summer Service at the Sign of the Flying Red Horse not only helps prevent wear—it can increase gasoline mileage as much as 10%! Drive in today. **60CCNY-VACUUM OIL CO., INC.** and Affiliates: Magnolia Petroleum Co., General Petroleum Corporation of Calif.

TYPE BY EDYMOND GEAR SWING—Stan Pollock, Creative Cases—D.P.M., S.M.T., Wen, Tess, West, Thors.

**Mobilgas**  **Mobiloil**

AT THE SIGN OF FRIENDLY SERVICE

Figure 4.5

Some ads, like Mobilgas's 1944 ad "That's for Wasting Wartime Horsepower," deal with the shortage of automobiles and how their product is perfect for keeping your old vehicle going. The image in this ad is a rather comical one and definitely catches the attention. It depicts a horse kicking the absolute hell out of another horse for wasting "wartime horsepower." This advertisement does, in a lighthearted way, imply that those who waste wartime horsepower deserve a beating. Other than that, the tone of the ad is very optimistic. The overall message of the ad is to "Be Prepared to Drive Your Present Car At Least 2 Years After The War." This ad is unique because it supports rationing, but more so it supports the service that Mobilgas can provide the consumer during the war. This ad does not sell war bonds, and the mentioning of rationing is only brought up to highlight that Mobilgas can keep your old car running. As the ad points out "It will take time-lots of it- for U.S. A's auto plants to meet the enormous postwar demand for new cars. Millions will need them! So guard every mile of your present car's life."

How do consumers protect their car and support the war effort? Well by purchasing Mobiloil for their engines and Mobilgas protection plans for their vehicle. This form of advertisement puts out that Mobilgas's product is good in spite of the war, and also that Mobilgas's product is beneficial to the war effort. Without their "superior" motor oil and services, Americans would be left with no vehicle at all should the war drag on with no end in sight. In this way Mobilgas is not only creating a product that Americans need, but it is doing a service to the United States government by promoting rationing and keeping the public "educated" about wartime rationing policies. This ad is clearly more about selling a product than supporting the war, but it promotes the product and service in a way that makes it appear to be to support the war effort.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Mobilgas, "That's for Wasting Wartime Horsepower!", Advertisement, *Life Magazine*. Jun 5, 1944. Pg. 54. Google Books. [https://books.google.com/books?id=ik8EAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs\\_all\\_issues\\_r&cad=1](https://books.google.com/books?id=ik8EAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs_all_issues_r&cad=1). (Accessed on 10/30/2018).

## CHAPTER 11

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUGGESTION: THE HERD AND PATRIOTIC CONSUMPTION

Both propaganda and ad campaigns have the same goal in mind: to influence the masses to see the world in the way that the pundits want them to see it. One person, generally speaking, is reasonable. It is when the crowd becomes involved that people lose their individuality and become a part of a group. At the head of every crowd is a “mastermind”, someone who understands the workings of the crowd and knows how to influence them. This is not to say these people are necessarily sinister, simply that they possess the qualities of leadership and the influence that comes with it. The French writer Gustave Le Bon similarly summarized the psychological effects of this “public mind” in his 1895 book *Psychologie des Foules*, translated into English in 1896 under the title *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, which is considered one of the seminal works of crowd psychology. According to Le Bon:

All the world’s masters, all the founders of religions or empires, the apostles of all beliefs, eminent statesmen, and, in a more modest sphere, the mere chiefs of small groups of men have always been unconscious psychologists, possessed of an instinctive and often very sure knowledge of the character of crowds, and it is their accurate knowledge of this character that has enabled them to so easily establish their mastery.<sup>73</sup>

While Le Bon’s work is a quite dated, his assertions about the psychology of the crowd still hold merit today. Masters of PR like Bernays, nephew of the well-known psychologist Sigmund Freud, knew that psychology had its place within advertising. Bernays would agree with Le Bon that those with the ability to lead and influence the thoughts and actions of others, should. Bernays echoed Le Bon when he said, “It might be better to have, instead of propaganda and special pleading, committees of wise men who would choose our rulers, dictate our conduct, private and public, and decide upon the best types of clothes for us

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<sup>73</sup> Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind* (New York, NY: The Macmillian Company, 1896) Kindle Location 209, Kindle.

to wear and the best kind of food for us to eat.”<sup>74</sup> Bernays aptly described the power of his profession in his 1928 best-selling book *Propaganda*:

The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country.... We are governed, our minds are molded, our tastes are formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of. This is a logical result of the way in which our democratic society is organized. Vast numbers of human beings must cooperate in this manner if they are to live together as a smoothly functioning society... In almost every act of our daily lives, whether in the sphere of politics or business, in our social conduct or our ethical thinking, we are dominated by the relatively small number or persons... who understand the mental processes and social patterns of the masses. It is they who pull the wires which control the public mind.<sup>75</sup>

Bernays's comments may sound like satire to those of us who are convinced of our own ability to avoid being so easily persuaded, but Bernays is not being tongue-in-cheek. Bernays truly believed, much like Le Bon did, that the elites in fact should manipulate the dimwitted masses to maintain a peaceful and democratic society. Is it democratic to control people, even for the greater good of the people? Is that not in opposition to freedom and liberty? The irony of propagandists stating that propaganda is essential to maintaining liberty and democracy while actively attempting to strip the individual of their own beliefs and ideas is present in almost any ad campaign within the United States during the Second World War and beyond.

The greatest achievements and the greatest calamities of human history have been the result of the herd, not the individual. There is proof all around us that by working together humanity can achieve things that the individual could never fathom on their own. People should not and were not made to be alone in society but the individual's ability to think for themselves is an essential component for the

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<sup>74</sup> Bernays, *Propaganda*, 39.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 37-38.

improvement of civilization. If we never questioned what we were told or had differing opinions, then there would be no reason to make improvements to what already existed before us. It is the mental achievements of the individual that allows for the continued success of the herd, and it is the herd mentality that is the greatest threat to individuality.

Wilfred Trotter, a pioneer in early neurosurgery and author of the 1916 classic *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War*, focused on the relationship between the individual and the herd. We are, all of us, both our own person and a member of several different groups regardless if we are aware of it or not. To summarize Trotter's words would take away from the mastery of his argument, so I will include his complete statement with no omissions.

The religious man accuses the atheist of being shallow and irrational and is met by a similar reply. To the Conservative the amazing thing about the Liberal is his incapacity to see reason and accept the only possible solution of public problems. Examination reveals the fact that the differences are not due to the commission of the mere mechanical fallacies of logic, since these are easily avoided, even by the politician, and since there is no reason to believe that one party in such controversies is less logical than the other. The difference is due rather to the fundamental assumptions of the antagonists being hostile, and these assumptions are derived from herd-suggestions; to the Liberal certain basal conceptions have acquired the quality of instinctive truth, have become a priori syntheses, because of the accumulated suggestions to which he has been exposed; and a similar explanation applies to the atheist, the Christian, and the Conservative. Each, it is important to remember, finds in consequence the rationality of his position flawless and is quite incapable of detecting in it the fallacies which are obvious to his opponent, to whom that particular series of assumptions has not been rendered acceptable by herd suggestion.<sup>76</sup>

There is a lot to unpack in this statement, but Trotter's example is one of the best when it comes to describing the irrationality of the crowd and the individuals that make it up. During and after the Second

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<sup>76</sup> Wilfred Trotter, *Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War* (New York: The Macmillian Company, 1916), 34.



World War in the United States, citizens were sold ideas by professional manipulators that would have them believe capitalistic consumption was patriotic and that it was for the betterment of a democratic society. The people were united under the banner of patriotism during the Second World War and became a part of a nationalistic herd. The logic of the individual faded away and the rationality of the group emerged with the help of these manipulators, which the government was all too fine with during the trying times of conflict. Once a part of a group, the individual cannot see the logical fallacies of the group because anything in opposition to the group view is seen as a threat to the group. This kind of group mentality spans across all aspects of life, but is especially noticeable as it pertains to politics, religion, and of course, consumer culture.

It was the adman and businessman who emerged to be the leaders of the herds after the war, not through military action but through brand sponsored consumption. You cannot tell a lifelong Coca-Cola drinker that a cheaper brand of cola is the same as their chosen brand, even if they cannot tell the difference between the two without being told so, or cannot pick their brand as proven in blind taste tests. They cannot see past the brand, past the group they are a part of. It is human nature that we all want to be right and just, and if we only listen to those who agree with us we can create a pseudo reality where our logic is always flawless.

There has been debate in the advertising ever since the mid-1920s about the rationality, or irrationality, of the consumer. It remains unclear whether or not the majority of consumers are rational or irrational beings, and that is something that is unlikely to change. What seems an irrational act to some might be a rational act to another. Vance Packard described the irrationality of human beings and how advertising agencies break down our behaviors to see how to best exploit them in his groundbreaking 1957 book, *The Hidden Persuaders*. It is worth noting that Vance Packard was ardently anti-consumer culture and blamed the capitalist system of government for the culture based on consumption that emerged in the postwar society. Packard presents a great example of the irrationality of the consumer in the way in which people brush his or her teeth. He reported that if you ask the common person what is the

function of brushing his or her teeth, almost all of them would tell you that is it clean away old food particles. However, Packard noted that studies showed that most people only brush their teeth first thing in the morning as a daily ritual and simply wanted to give their mouth a “thorough purging to get rid of the bad taste that had accumulated overnight.” Thus, advertisers changed the way they marketed their toothpaste to focus more on the clean mouth and clean breath aspect of brushing as opposed to the actual purpose of brushing your teeth, which is to clean old food particles off of your teeth.<sup>77</sup> If the consumer was rational then we would brush our teeth after every meal because we know that food is wedged between our teeth. However, the average consumer is irrational and brushes their teeth once every day, waiting for the food to essentially rot in their mouths every night before they brush in the morning to get that “clean mouth feeling.” The debate over the rational and irrational consumer has no definitive right or wrong party, but it can be said that most, but certainly not all, in the field of advertising and public relations assume the majority of consumers act irrationally. The dominance of the advertising strategy of selling to the irrational consumer mirrors that belief. However, there are those who maintain that the consumer is a rational being like the genius adman David Ogilvy, who famously stated in 1955, “The customer is not a moron. She’s your wife”, which was later published in his 1964 classic *Confessions of an Advertising Man*.<sup>78</sup>

Is consumerism democratic? We have certainly been spoon-fed that idea in the United States over and over throughout the years, especially after the two World Wars, but even dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, notably with Richard Warren Sear’s beloved catalog. This is a complicated question to answer for several reasons. Consumerism brings us choices, and there is nothing more democratic than the ability to choose what you want. Walk into a grocery store anywhere in the United States and look at all of the different brand-named options we have for things like peanut butter, toilet paper, candy bars and pretty much any other product you can think of. It is nice to have a choice, or at the very least the illusion of a

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<sup>77</sup> Vance Packard, *The Hidden Persuaders* (1957; reprint edition with introduction by Mark Crispin Miller, Brooklyn, NY: ig Publishing, 2007), 41-42

<sup>78</sup> David Ogilvy, *Confessions of an Advertising Man* (New York: Ballentine Books, 1964), 96.

choice. On the other hand, do we really have a choice? Is it democratic for others to make decisions for you and to tell you what to believe or what you should do? Bernays and those like him certainly think it is the responsibility of the elite to do so in order to preserve a democratic society, while critics like Vance Packard see these professional manipulators as the greatest threat to our democratic society.

No matter which side of the argument you might fall on, consumerism in the United States has become just as important as patriotism or democracy. Perhaps this is because we have been influenced to believe that these things are one in the same. Consumerism, as historian Gary Cross argued, has been the most powerful “ism” in the United States in the years following the Second World War.<sup>79</sup> Others, like apologist James B. Twitchell, argue that consumerism now plays the same role that religion used to play in the United States.

The best approach to understanding advertising is to realize that, like religion, it is an organizing system of meaning for surpluses. Both sell peace of mind either in this world or in the next. In both cases, the system appears to be coming from the top down, from the priests to the parishioners, from the producers to the consumers. In truth, however, it works just as well the other way around. To a considerable degree that parishioners/consumers set the agenda and the priests/producers are forever scurrying around attempting to predict where demand will next appear.<sup>80</sup>

The comparison between religion and consumerism is a bit provocative but also a very fitting. Are we influenced to believe in a religion or do we choose that religion? These are questions of human nature. The preacher and the adman are not so different after all, as we have discussed previously when analyzing Bruce Barton’s views of Jesus as a businessman. They both sell you the idea of a better you through their practices, and the idea that the more you commit your life to the church/brand the better your life will become.

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<sup>79</sup> Cross, *An All-Consuming Century*, 1.

<sup>80</sup> James B. Twitchell, *Lead Us Into Temptation: The Triumph of American Materialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 55.

Americans have always loved to consume. Historians like Lizabeth Cohen have stated that the history of consumerism in the United States can be traced all the way back to European colonization of the New World.<sup>81</sup> However, it is important to note that the more modern form of consumerism that we know today was firmly in place in the years before the Great Depression, then put on hold only to re-emerge in the years following the Second World War. While it was unpatriotic to consume *during* the war, it was certainly seen as patriotic to consume *after* the war. American citizens who had lived through the Great Depression and the war held onto the hope that the years after the war would usher in an age of prosperity. Even though they could not purchase an abundance of items during the war because of rationing, Americans saved their money to purchase them when the conflict was over. According to historian Gary Cross, “The federal budget rose from about \$9 billion in 1939 to \$100 billion by 1945, elevating the GNP from \$91 to \$166 billion. Naturally, much of this money made its way back into the private sector. Home-front workers found their wallets and purses full, many for the first time in a decade.”<sup>82</sup>

Having come out of the Great Depression and the Second World War, United States citizens were ready and willing to buy into the ideas being sold to them by the consumer culture. When you have grown used to having very little and you are finally given to opportunity to have an abundance, people jump at the chance. This is the reason why about seventy percent of lottery winners generally lose their money so quickly after a win, according to the National Endowment for Financial Education.<sup>83</sup> They are anxious and eager to spend, spend, and spend because at no point in their lives before have they had the opportunity to do so. It is the same concept for those American citizens who lived through the 1930s and 1940s. The patriotic citizens who had been urged to “save today (preferably through war bonds) so that

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<sup>81</sup> Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 2004), 20

<sup>82</sup> Cross, *An All-Consuming Century*, 84.

<sup>83</sup> Teresa Dixon Murray, “Why Do 70 Percent of Lottery Winners End Up Bankrupt?” *Cleveland (Ohio) Plain Dealer*, January 14, 2016 [http://www.cleveland.com/business/index.ssf/2016/01/why\\_do\\_70\\_percent\\_of\\_lottery\\_w.html](http://www.cleveland.com/business/index.ssf/2016/01/why_do_70_percent_of_lottery_w.html) (Accessed October 18, 2018)

they might become purchaser consumers of tomorrow,” were now in a position to advance their own social standing through the acquisition of stuff.<sup>84</sup>

No one is quite sure of the effectiveness of advertising, but we can be assured that the advertisers certainly see it as effective in shaping public opinion. As Arthur Asa Berger puts it:

If we believe what advertising agencies (and the companies they make advertisements and commercials for) tell us, we have to conclude that advertising works in strange and mysterious ways and that although nobody is sure precisely how it works, it does have an impact-though its power to shape any given individual’s behavior is (or seems to be) really quite minimal.<sup>85</sup>

It is unclear to what extent that these campaigns to persuade the public of a common duty or need truly are, but it cannot be said that they do not hold a position of importance in shaping the thoughts of consumers and citizens. Take a look through a collection of wartime advertisements and you will find little difference between the ads and the wartime propaganda produced by the government. The goals of the ads and the goals of the government propaganda were essentially the same, with the exception that the ads also attempted to sell a product alongside their message of sacrifice and patriotism.

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<sup>84</sup> Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic*, 70

<sup>85</sup> Berger, *Ads, Fads, & Consumer Culture*, 3.

CHAPTER 12

ADVERTISING POSTWAR PROSPERITY: ADVERTISEMENTS FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

IT'LL BE MORE FUN  
"GETTING THERE"



There's a *Ford* in your future!

▶ Long trips, short trips—even an after-dinner spin around the block—they're all going to be more fun when peace brings your new Ford car.

... For your coming Ford will be big and roomy—youthful in action and in styling, too. Rich looking—inside and out—its smart lines will surely rate a

"second look" on street and highway. ... Naturally, this new car will live up to the famous Ford tradition for economy and reliability. Into it will go all the skill and experience that Ford has gained in more than 40 years.

... When? We're going to start production plans as soon as we receive the

necessary "go ahead." Meanwhile, the full Ford resources will continue to be engaged in helping speed the Victory.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY



Figure 5.1

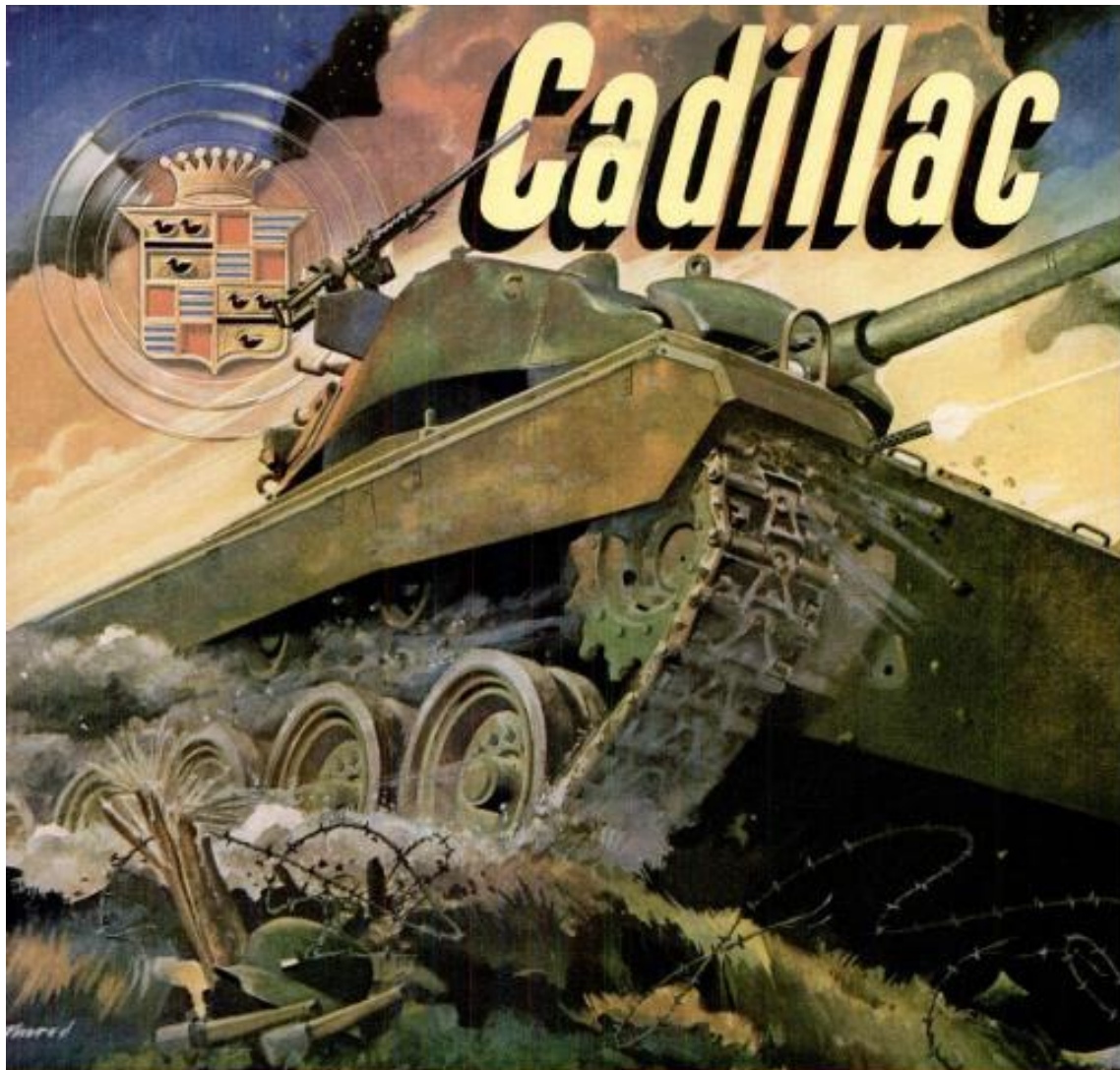
There's a Ford in your future!" is the opening line of this Ford advertisement in 1945. The purpose of this ad is not to sell the American public war bonds or to help foster hatred for the enemy, but instead it focuses on the beautiful postwar world of tomorrow. This advertisement even incorporates the crystal ball, implying that the future has great things in store for the audience of the advertisement in the years after the war. It is not irregular for advertisements produced in the last year of the war to be more optimistic than the advertisements produced in the more tumultuous years at the beginning of the war. Ford would have been producing for the armed forces during the Second World War but they promise in this ad that, "We're going to start production plans as soon as we receive the necessary 'go ahead.' Meanwhile, the full Ford resources will continue to be engaged in helping to speed the Victory."

This Ford ad promised that the Ford of tomorrow will be "Big and roomy-youthful in action and in styling. Rich looking inside and out." The description of the car is almost like they are describing a luxurious home, but at least they are not describing the vehicle in a sexual way like Dichter was so fond of doing. The advertisement has a different tone than those produced in 1942 or 1943. It is far more optimistic, and it implies that the time for sacrifice is nearly at its end and the time for enjoying oneself is right around the corner. The image of the happy son and father on a fishing trip in the mountains further illustrates how much grander life will be when the war finally comes to a close and Ford can start producing vehicles again for consumers. This idea of the beautiful postwar society can be seen in almost all advertisements at the close of the Second World War, but more so in vehicle production than anything else.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Ford, "There's a Ford in your future!", Advertisement, *Life Magazine*, Feb 26, 1945. Pg. 17. Google Books. [https://books.google.com/books?id=H1MEAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs\\_all\\_issues\\_r&cad=1](https://books.google.com/books?id=H1MEAAAAMBAJ&source=gbs_all_issues_r&cad=1). (Accessed on 10/30/2018).





## Preview of Cadillac Power

If you were to watch the new M-24 wide-tread tank in action—watch it tear its way through heartbreaking mud and over all kinds of difficult terrain—you would surely conclude that it had some specially-designed, heavy-duty motive power.

But like its predecessors—the M-5 light tank and the M-8 Howitzer Motor Carriage—this new Cadillac-built weapon is powered

by two Cadillac V-type engines, driving through Cadillac Hydra-Matic transmissions.

Fundamentally, these are the same famous engines and transmissions that had piled up millions of miles of service in passenger cars long before Cadillac and U. S. Army Ordnance Engineers adapted them to tank design. However, they have been vastly improved as a result of their hard usage on the battlefield.

We doubt whether any other power units originally designed for passenger car use have ever been put to such a grueling test. We feel sure they will prove a revelation when peace returns.

*Every Sunday Afternoon . . . GENERAL MOTORS SYMPHONY OF THE SIX-NBC Network*

CADILLAC MOTOR CAR DIVISION



GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION



LET'S ALL  
BACK THE ATTACK  
BUY WAR BONDS

Copyrighted material

Figure 5.2

Some brands, like Cadillac, depicted their product in ads that displayed how the innovations of war had improved their products and how their products were essential to victory. The ad shows a giant tank with the name “Cadillac” in large letters and the Cadillac logo next to it. This 1945 ad titled “Preview of Cadillac Power” shows how Cadillac technology is being used in tanks during the war. “If you were to watch the new M-24 wide tread tank in action...you would surely conclude that it had some specially designed heavy-duty motive power. But like its predecessors-the M-5 light tank and the M-8 Howitzer Motor Carriage- this new Cadillac-built weapon is powered by two Cadillac V-type engines, driving through Cadillac Hydra-Matic transmissions.” The inevitable victory of Cadillac power is symbolized by the German helmet and grenades that the tank is rushing over as it crushes through barbed wire German defenses. The famous Cadillac logo, with its shield and crown, is sustained above the tank in an almost religious sense, seemingly bearing holy halos. Certainly, no enemy could withstand its might! Nevertheless, these new innovations were not so new after all. According to the ad, “These are the same famous engines and transmissions that piled up millions of miles of service in passenger cars” long before the Second World War.

Not only does the ad boast of its success in aiding the war effort, but it also proclaims that the war was vastly improved the product. “They (engines and transmissions) have been vastly improved as a result of their hard usage on the battlefield...We feel sure they will prove a revelation when peace returns.” In this ad, the war is seen as almost a positive thing, something that brought about innovations that will improve the lives of all. Cadillac advertised that their product helped the war and the war helped them to create a better product. At the bottom right corner, Cadillac includes a message about backing the attack and encourages the viewer to purchase war bonds. Cadillac is selling the superiority of their product, their contributions to technology and to the war effort, and the continued purchasing of war bonds.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Cadillac, “Preview of Cadillac Power”, Advertisement, *Life Magazine*, Feb 12, 1945. Pg. 7. Google Books. [https://books.google.com/books?id=IIMEAAAAMBAJ&source=gbv\\_all\\_issues\\_r&cad=1](https://books.google.com/books?id=IIMEAAAAMBAJ&source=gbv_all_issues_r&cad=1). (Accessed 10/31/2018).



LOOK TO THE LEADER FOR PROGRESS

Young America is for . . .

# Wilson

When one name marks vast quantities of the sports equipment that Young America is using—that's acceptance • And when the name on that equipment is "Wilson," you can accept it as the unfailing mark of what's newest and best in modern equipment for modern play. Wilson equipment is needed to serve our boys in training camps, rest areas, convalescent hospitals and rehabilitation centers, so there is little available for civilians these days. But when the war is over, you'll find plenty of new Wilson equipment. And you'll enjoy many innovations created by the Wilson staff during the war years • Wilson Sporting Goods Co., and Wilson Athletic Goods Mfg. Co., Inc., Chicago, New York and other leading cities.

CHAMPIONSHIP  
Wilson  
APP. U.S. L.T.A.  
100% WOOL

WILSON

SPORTS

☆ IT'S WILSON TODAY IN SPORTS EQUIPMENT

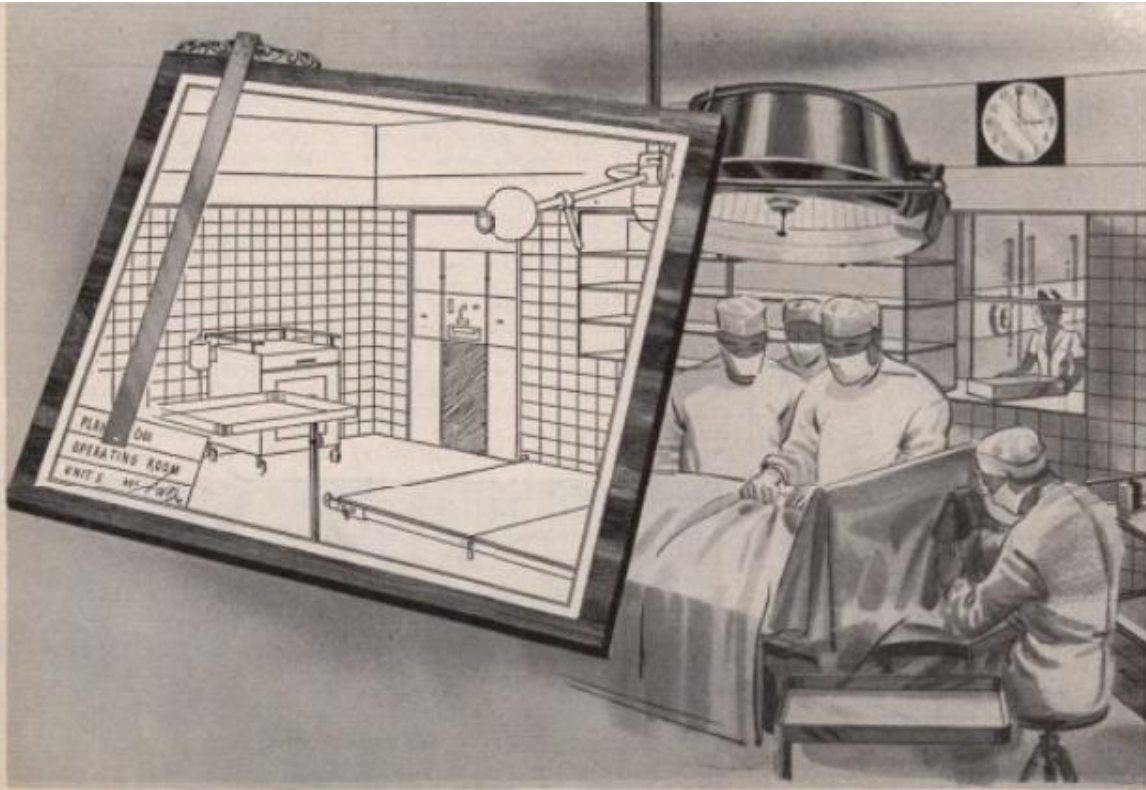
Figure 5.3

When thinking of the prosperous postwar society and reflecting on the things that were being rationed during the war, I think few would have Wilson athletic supplies come to mind. However, as Wilson points out in this 1945 ad, “Wilson equipment is needed to serve our boys in training camps, rest areas, convalescent hospitals and rehabilitation centers, so there is little available for civilians these days. But when the war is over, you’ll find plenty of new Wilson equipment.” In a society based on acquiring happiness through the acquisition of consumer goods, it is hard to imagine a time when new tennis rackets and tennis balls were rationed and only available for those in the military.

This Wilson ad, much like the previously examined Cadillac ad, highlights how their products is helping the war effort and how the war has improved their product. “You’ll enjoy many innovations created by the Wilson staff during the war years,” lets the viewer know that Wilson has not been sitting around complacently during the war and has been creating new and innovative products. It also implies it is a product of the future by its headline “Young America is for...Wilson.” The young are the generations of the future, and if American youth support Wilson then Wilson is the brand of the future. The image in the ad does not show a military scene and does not promote war bonds, but instead shows a modern tennis racket and tennis ball with a young man playing, oddly enough, tennis by himself. Both the racket, court, and sky are all red like the Wilson logo on the racket. Wilson remains a powerhouse in tennis equipment to this day, and it appears that it may well have been the tennis equipment of the future after all.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Wilson, “Young America is for...Wilson”, Advertisement, *Life Magazine*, July 16, 1945. Pg. 61. Google Books. [https://books.google.com/books?id=fEgEAAAAMBAAJ&source=gbv\\_all\\_issues\\_r&cad=1](https://books.google.com/books?id=fEgEAAAAMBAAJ&source=gbv_all_issues_r&cad=1). (Accessed on 10/31/2018).



## Tomorrow's Full-Time Operating Rooms are on Architects' Drawing Boards Today

In summer, without air conditioning, hospital operating room schedules are confined to the cool hours of morning and evening. Surgeons and assistants can perform effectively only when temperature and humidity are right.

With modern air conditioning, any hour of any day of the year is the *right* time. Operating room temperature, humidity and air cleanliness are all controlled at the correct point for best effect on staff and patient alike.

Modern Air Conditioning means Westinghouse—and its years of pioneering research and engineering experience.

For essential war uses in factories, hospitals, airports, military bases, etc., Westinghouse Air Conditioning and Industrial Refrigeration Equipment is available today.

For executives, architects and engineers now planning postwar building and modernizing, dependable data and competent application engineering assistance are ready.

Phone your nearest Westinghouse office, or write on your letterhead to Westinghouse Electric Elevator Company, 150 Pacific Avenue, Jersey City 4, New Jersey for your copy of a new booklet, "How To Plan Your Postwar Air Conditioning Today."

### HERMETICALLY-SEALED FOR DEPENDABILITY

Westinghouse pioneered the Hermetically-Sealed Compressor. Hermetically-sealed means light weight • small size • low maintenance and operating costs • high efficiency • long life.

**Westinghouse**  
PLANTS IN 25 CITIES . . . OFFICES EVERYWHERE  
*Air Conditioning*

Westinghouse presents John Charles Thomas • Sunday, 2:30 E.W.T., N.B.C.  
Ted Maltzer • Mon. Wed. Fri. 10:15 E.W.T., Blue Net.



Figure 5.4



The ads that emphasized the beautiful postwar world of tomorrow were those created by brands selling technological innovations that had not been readily available before the Second World War. The title of this ad produced by Westinghouse Air Conditioning in 1944 is “Tomorrow’s Full-Time Operating Rooms are on Architects Drawing Boards Today.” The innovation of air conditioning, as described in this ad, had been extremely helpful in wartime hospitals to allow the surgeons and assistants to do their jobs no matter the condition. Before air conditioning, “Surgeons and assistants can perform effectively only when temperatures and humidity are right,” but now with Westinghouse’s product “any hour of any day of the year is the *right* time.” In 1944, while rationing and wartime industries were still in full swing, the air conditioner was only used in wartime “factories, hospitals, airports, military bases, etc.”

However, with the war coming to a close, “Executives, architects, and engineers now planning postwar building and modernizing, dependable data and competent application engineering assistance are ready.” The ad encourages the reader to phone or mail a letter to their nearest Westinghouse office for more information. What was once a product only for plants and hospitals would now be available in the homes of the post-war citizen, that is if they could afford such luxuries. Westinghouse showed their contribution to the war effort by their product being used in wartime industry, and Westinghouse is now marketing that product to the American citizen when the war is over. This ad does not push war bonds or use patriotic imagery, but instead focuses on the product being sold and its uses during and after the war.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Westinghouse, “Tomorrow’s Full-Time Operating Rooms are on Architects’ Drawing Boards of Today”, Advertisement, *Time Magazine*, 1944. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4gb1z076>. (Accessed on 10/30/2018).

## Look... the Smiths are building a new home!



Stamp by Stamp and Bond by Bond—the Smiths are building for the future. Buying bonds to bring Victory nearer . . . building for a prosperous peace.

**To Serve You in Wartime**  
The General Electric Consumers Institute is dedicated to the service of America's homes and carries on constant research on such subjects as: Nutrition · Food Preparation · Food Preservation · Appliance Care · Appliance Repair · Laundering · Food Conservation · Home Making

**AFTER VICTORY—THE HOME YOU HAVE ALWAYS WANTED!**  
Look at it this way. U. S. War Bonds and Stamps are common sense savings . . . Four dollars at maturity for every three invested now. After Victory, your Bond purchases can be used as part payment on the kind of a home you have always wanted . . . *with everything in it that makes a real home.* Act today—buy Bonds and save—your nation and your future both depend on it.

**GENERAL ELECTRIC**  
CONSUMERS INSTITUTE

SUCCESSFUL FARMING, FEBRUARY, 1943

Figure 6.5



“Stamp by Stamp and Bond by Bond—the Smiths are building for the future.” As we have seen, many businesses in the Second World War sold their products by connecting them to a prosperous world of tomorrow. In this ad the Smiths are, quite literally, building their home with stamps and bonds. The whole family is involved in the process from the kids to the grandparents, symbolizing familial unity. The ad states that “After Victory, your Bond purchases can be used as part payment on the kind of home you have always wanted. . . . *with everything in it that makes a real home.* Act today—buy Bonds and save—your nation and your future both depend on it.” This General Electric ad does a good job of advertising their products along with the war effort, even though this ad contains no images or descriptions of their products. It is implied in the ad that a “real home” is furnished with GE products, because why else would they state what made a real home?

People who had endured the intense poverty of the Great Depression and the restrictive practices of total war rationing would surely have wanted a new home filled with new products, and this ad plays on those feelings and promises that after the war things will be better. The Smiths will be able to enjoy all of the warmth and comforts of a modern home, but only if they buy more bonds and stamps and only if they fill their home with wonderful GE products. The ad pushes the idea that “After Victory—The Home You Have Always Wanted.” This General Electric ad sells the idea that life will be wonderful when the Second World War comes to a close, and the sooner victory is achieved the sooner people can start living in the futuristic world of tomorrow.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> General Electric, “Look...The Smiths Are Building A New Home”, Advertisement, *Collier's Magazine*, 1943. <https://idn.duke.edu/ark:/87924/r4gt5g138>. (Accessed on 10/31/2018).

## CONCLUSION

The Second World War on the U.S. home front was a unique experience from that of other countries participating in the conflict. The advertisements themselves, for a short period of time, became propaganda. Nearly every company was looking to connect their brand to the war effort in the hopes that a United States victory would usher in a utopian era of advancement and wealth. Companies achieved this in many different ways, as has been discussed in previous pages. The extent to which advertisers and propagandists have the ability of to influence the masses remains unclear, however it should be clear that businessmen and governments across the world would not invest time and money into something that did not produce results. The wartime advertisements not only persuaded Americans to support the war, to ration, to demonize the enemy, or to plant victory gardens, but it also encouraged them to spend their money on certain brands when the prosperous postwar period was finally before them. When the war was finally over, American morale was at an all-time high and Americans had wallets and pocketbooks full of money that they were ready to spend. What was a loss for economic restraint and the rational consumer was a victory for the propagandists, for the adman, for United States business, and for the society consumed by consumption.

In America, we love democracy so much that we want democracy in all aspects of our lives. The large availability of goods available for purchase was the hallmark of American consumerism, the consumer could “vote” for the product they wanted amidst a multitude of other products. The consumer has a choice (or at the very least an illusion of choice) and the American consumer was grateful for it. After the Second World War, as historian David Shi notes:

Native and foreign observers alike marveled at the democratization of goods and services generated by America’s prolific industrial plant...Such widespread plenty was understandably a source of great national pride, especially in the midst of the Cold War. Life magazine gleefully reported shoppers filling a \$5 million grocery store, picking from

thousands of items on the high-piled shelves until their carts became cornucopias filled with abundance that no other country in the world had ever known.<sup>91</sup>

So, was American consumerism really so bad? It was a great sense of national pride. In the postwar world, Americans enjoyed a high standard of living—arguably the highest the world had ever seen—and it distinguished the United States from the frigid and deprived Soviets during the tumultuous years that came to be called the Cold War. The Great Depression, the Second World War, and the Cold War that followed were a perfect powder keg for the rise of the modern era of American consumption. The Second World War pulled the United States out of the Great Depression, but it also opened the door for professional manipulators and corporate America to gain federal support and solidify a foothold for their profession in the postwar years. Admen were able to persuade the masses that consumption was patriotic and that the brands they sold supported the American way of life. In the hysteria of the Cold War, this unlikely connection between patriotism and consumption was more alive and well than ever. It was a perfect storm for paving the ideology of consumerism into the roadwork of democracy.

For better or for worse, the United States was transformed after the Second World War into a society that was almost completely dominated by consumer culture. Americans lost the ability to make distinctions between wants and needs, and rather than distrusting big business and advertisers the American public now saw big business as essential to preserving democracy in the postwar years. This at least partially because the American public had been fed the idea for half a decade during the Second World War. The advertisements of the Second World War provide a glimpse into the unique situation surrounding the United States that allowed for the professional advertisers to convince the American public that only by supporting big business could the “American Dream” be achieved. It can be argued that the American Dream has never had anything to do with being a member of a group, but rather it is more to do with the accomplishments of the individual.

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<sup>91</sup> Shi, *The Simple Life*, 249.

As author and professor of marketing James A. Roberts points out in his book, *Shiny Objects: Why We Spend Money We Don't Have in Search of Happiness We Can't Buy*, the American Dream has become diluted into something that must be bought. "Freedom and opportunity have always undergirded the American Dream- but the freedom to do what? Postwar Americans had a simple answer to that question: the freedom and opportunity to buy what they wanted, not what they needed- in other words, to become the world's überconsumers."<sup>92</sup> Was being convinced to buy products we did not need by nameless, faceless admen really the American Dream that so many fought for? The American Dream should apply to all people, not simply the ones with enough money to play the game of consumerism. The American Dream cannot be simply to purchase what we want when we want it, because that dream would then only apply to the most affluent in American society.

In the United States, Americans loved consumer culture so much that they allowed the mentality of consumption to spill over into other aspects of their lives. When the government, advertisers, and public relations experts began to work together in the Second World War it showed the possibilities of advertising and PR could play in persuading the public of things outside of war or business. One of the most troubling homes that PR found was in the realm of politics. Public Relations—that is, the convincing of a group of people to be a certain way by a leader—has always been present within politics. That is indisputable. However, politicians and political parties now hire professional manipulators to manage their campaigns as well as their reputations.<sup>93</sup> I am not saying that politicians were ever honest, but it certainly did not help the situation when those who spin truth for a living stepped into the political arena. In some ways, we are electing the idea sold to us about a politician as opposed to who the politician really is. Anyone whose pockets are deep enough could hire a team of PR experts to clean up their image, no matter how foul they may be. We are aware that the information we are receiving has been spun until the truth is hardly recognizable and we accept it as an unavoidable reality.

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<sup>92</sup> James A. Roberts, *Shiny Objects: Why We Spend Money We Don't Have in Search of Happiness We Can't Buy* (New York, NY: Harper One, 2011), 46.

We allowed advertising to penetrate and influence the very health of our nation, even beyond fast food and sugary breakfast cereals being marketed to children. “Happy meals” from McDonald’s are probably the last thing a young child needs. They market the meal to children by offering them a toy with their artery clogging food, and unsurprisingly it is a favorite of children in the United States. Obesity and the health risks associated with it continue to plague American youth while brands like McDonald’s continue to market happy meals with a toy to children, ironically making it one of the saddest possible meals for a child. Sugary cereals are probably the last thing a child should be eating for breakfast, but advertisers place cartoon characters on cereal boxes and buy ad space on children’s TV networks to market their product to children. Advertisers shamelessly market their product in almost any way they please, no matter how harmful it might be to people.

Perhaps the most wretched impact of our consumer-based society is the advertising of prescription drugs in this country. Of all the countries in the world, the United States and New Zealand are the only countries where advertisers are permitted to market prescription drugs directly to the consumer. Does that not strike Americans as odd that we are the only large nation that supports this kind of advertising? Is it not a red flag that advertising should be more closely regulated? The advertisements of the Second World War alone prove the power and effectiveness of advertising. Advertising has had a terrible impact on healthcare in this country but has had a positive economic impact for big pharmaceutical companies. According to an article produced by Harvard Medical School, “The ad blitz of expensive brand-name drugs is often cited as a factor for rising health care costs. Prescription drugs accounted for nearly 17% of total health care spending in 2015, up from about 7% in the 1990s before the revised FDA guidelines went into effect.” The primary goal of the pharmaceutical companies is not to help the sick, but to sell a product. “The information is designed to tell you what it is for and why you need it—but not if you need it,” says Dr. Sarpatwari.<sup>94</sup> Medications are supposed to be for healing

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<sup>94</sup> “Do not get sold on drug advertising.” Harvard Men’s Health Watch, Harvard Health Newsletters. Harvard Health Publishing. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/drugs-and-medications/do-not-get-sold-on-drug-advertising> (Accessed on 10/28/2018).

peoples' illnesses, but they are made and marketed by people who only care about getting maximum earnings from their product. Meanwhile prescription pill abuse and deaths related to prescription pills are at an all-time high in the United States and, not so surprisingly, so is the amount of money pharmaceutical companies are putting into advertising. This kind of money grubbing in the medical field does not stop there. There are immunotherapies available for cancer treatment that are less harmful to the body and more effective in combating the disease than chemotherapy, but since chemotherapy is much more expensive insurance companies force the patient to undergo a certain number of rounds of chemotherapy before immunotherapy can be made available. This type of business approach of advertising and accumulating profits does not belong in the medical field. Business do not care if people suffer as long as they are making a profit, and that is what happened when we applied principles of capitalism and consumption to aspects of our lives in which it did not belong.

Our acceptance of the necessity of advertising and support of big business was solidified in during the Second World War, when companies connected their brand with patriotism through the exploits of professional manipulators. The Cold War only strengthened the belief that big business and brand products were essential to democracy and freedom. Now we are left with so many negative consequences of consumer capitalism that destroys individuality, strips us of the difference between wants and needs, and that sees nothing morally wrong with Americans dying if it means making a quick buck.

The Second World War was a turning point for the United States. Government, business, advertisers and PR experts all worked together out of necessity to help win the war over the Axis Powers and preserve freedom and democracy in the United States and abroad. However, it opened the door for professional manipulators to cement their professions in the United States. The print advertising campaigns that were discussed in this paper highlight how those in PR and advertising were able to use the war to connect brand names with patriotism and show their effectiveness in mobilizing the masses. The solidification of the fields of advertising and public relations led to a boom in United States big

business in the post-war years and was bolstered by the call for capitalistic consumption that came out of the Cold War. The United States emerged from the conflict with more wealth, more available consumer goods, and a higher standard of living. For all that we gained, we lost something even more important: the truth. In a society based on nothing but gaining profits from spinning the truth, there is always a reason for producers to mislead consumers. That ideology of business leaked over into other aspects of our lives, like politics and healthcare, to the detriment of the American people. It was American big business and professional manipulators, not the United States government, who emerged as the clear victors of the Second World War.



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