Nazi Propaganda:
The Mastery of Insidious Communication

Alizeah Murillo and Maleah Diaz

Senior Division

Group Exhibit

Exhibit: 492 words

Process Paper: 418 words
For this year’s theme, “Communication in History”, we chose to evaluate a well known topic but dig deeper into the Nazi’s ideology and use of propaganda. Propaganda in Nazi Germany was used to persecute and dehumanize those deemed “inferior”, such as Jews. It also depicted those people as enemies to others in their community. Adolf Hitler and Joseph Goebbels promoted their ideals through many forms of communication such as newspapers, newsreels, radio, film and more. Communication of core ideological concepts was key to Nazi success because it allowed them to spread their views and ideas, promising a new and better society. Our project this year portrays what Nazi propaganda communicated, how it shaped German public opinion, and how propaganda has continued to permeate our culture.

We began searching for pictures, videos, and articles on the different forms of Nazi propaganda. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum was one of our most resourceful sites. We also used pictures and documents that a group member brought back with her from a trip to the Dachau Concentration Camp. We found many beneficial books such as Mein Kampf and the Goebbels Diary. After this we turned our attention towards interviews. Our first interview was with Julie Canepa who spoke on the life of Vladimir Munk. Munk was separated from his family and experienced discrimination but now goes on to speak to students at local schools about his experiences. Another interview we had was with Nicholas O’Shaughnessy, a Professor of Communications at Queen Mary University of London, spoke about the strategy behind Nazi propaganda. During this interview we also spoke about America’s propaganda and political atmosphere today.
We decided to make our project into an exhibit, as it allows us to utilize sources from the trip to Dachau and show the impact of this event through our project. After we conducted our research, we began working on the information that would be used on our board. We focused heavily on propaganda being used to indoctrinate the German public. We aided each other in the visual aspects of our board and continued to strengthen our project.

The Nazis communicated through propaganda to control public opinion. Nazi propaganda demonstrates how communication can alter a society’s perception. We build our beliefs based on information we are exposed to. However, the media can choose to share or withhold information from us, and there is always a possibility of deceit. It is our responsibility to critically evaluate the information people receive so as to protect ourselves from manipulation.
Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources

“A Fearless Adolf Hitler, in the Forefront of Massed Party Members, Is Mantled by Sunlight from the Heavens. The Dove Descending on Him Connects Him Religiously to the Baptism of Jesus Christ by John the Baptist. The Caption Reads ‘Es Lebe Deutschland’ (Germany Lives!).” Creating a Demigod Nazi Art, Adolf Hitler, and the Cult of Personality, arsof-history.org/articles/v4n2reating_a_demigod_page_2.html

This image depicts Hitler as a savior and a religious Messiah. The light shining down from the heavens and the dove tie him to Jesus Christ and the Bible. This is an important image in our project because it demonstrates how Nazi propagandists painted Hitler as the fulfiller of the people’s wants and needs.


This photo depicts a German family listening to their “people’s receiver”, a cheap radio manufactured under the order of Joseph Goebbels. We used this picture under the section, “Nazi Goals and Types of Propaganda”, to demonstrate how the Nazis disseminated their ideology to the public through many forms of communication reaching right into their homes.


In translation the text in this image means “The Struggle For Germany.” We used this image on our board to show the form of propaganda they used.

In this image you can see the Hitler Youth at camp. We used this image under “Nazi Goals and Types of Propaganda.” This was a valuable source because the Nazi regime knew that the youth were the future and they would continue the workings of propaganda.


This article, written in 1944, discusses how masters of propaganda such as Hitler perfected their systems of communication for selfish and inhumane purposes. It also addresses how propaganda greatly affects us throughout time and even today. We utilized a quote from this source in the section “Significance and Development of Propaganda”.


Doing this project has shown us that propaganda never really goes away throughout history and around the world. This image was used in our project to show different societies using propaganda.

Diaz, Maleah, and Alizeah Murillo. “Personal Interview with Holocaust Survivor Vladimir Munk.” 31 Mar. 2021

In March of this year we had the once in a lifetime opportunity to interview Mr. Vladimir Munk, a Holocaust Survivor who survived through Auschwitz death camp and several other works camps. We were able to discuss Mr. Munk’s life before the war, his emotions while being deported and surviving through the Holocaust, and how he managed to go on after the war ended. This interview helped us to develop a different perspective on Nazi propaganda, as Mr. Munk was the direct target of many Nazi propaganda campaigns. We are forever changed by our discussion with Mr. Munk and will never forget this experience and his kindness in helping us with our project.
Diaz, Maleah. “Items and Photographs Brought Back from the Dachau Concentration Camp in Dachau, Germany.” Dachau Concentration Camp, Dachau, Germany, 24 June 2018

These sources, which we will utilize in front of our exhibit, consist of postcards, documents, and pictures that were taken during a visit during a visit to the Dachau Concentration Camp in 2018. Nazi propaganda alone did not cause the Holocaust, but it played a crucial part in creating an environment of intolerance and giving Hitler the platform to carry out such atrocities. Doing this project after visiting the camp is an experience that I cannot put into words and I only hope that we can properly honor those who perished during the Holocaust by demonstrating the power of communication and how we can prevent such tragedies from occurring in the future.

“DocsTeach in the Classroom: International Holocaust Remembrance Day Webinar 2021.” National Archives and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Webinar, 13 Jan. 2021,

While attending this webinar put on by the National Archives and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, we were able to discover some of the unbearable conditions imposed on Jews by the Nazi government and how propaganda separated them from the rest of the German public. This source allows us to understand how the Nazis singled out Jews and the role propaganda played in pinning them as enemies in society.

Facing History and Ourselves, https://www.facinghistory.org/

We used multiple sources from this site including, “Propaganda at the Movies, “The Battle for Work”, and “The Impact of Propaganda”, “The Power of Propaganda”, and Nazi propaganda posters from Nazi Germany located in their archives. These sources allowed us to view a different aspect of Nazi propaganda. We took the knowledge we gained in reading this information to create our student composed words and utilized several quotes and images from these sources in our project.
Information was heavily controlled through the German newspapers of the time. This newspaper promoted their ideas. Censorship was key in controlling what was printed in the newspapers which is why we use it on our project to show how information was filtered.


Joseph Goebbels’ diaries were a key source in our research, allowing us to understand the logic behind the head of the Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment’s thinking. In his writings he discusses the purpose of propaganda and his struggle to become chief of the propaganda ministry against Alfred Rosenberg. We used quotes from The Goebbels diaries in the section, “Significance and Development of Propaganda”.

Hitler, Adolf. *Mein Kampf.* Translated by James Murphy, 1925,
greatwar.nl/books/meinkampf/meinkampf.pdf

“Mein Kampf”, which translates to “My Struggle”, serves as the blueprint for Hitler’s plans to seize power and describes how he views propaganda as a vital tool needed to cultivate public support that would lead to Nazi success. This book played a key role in our research and we utilize several quotes from its contents throughout our project.

“Hitler's Hollywood.” *Film Details*, 2017,
www.cia.edu/cinematheque/film-schedule/2018/07/hitlers-hollywood

Goebbels was an immense contributor to production of films. We use this image on our board to show his involvement because this is where propaganda was shown as entertainment.

We utilized two resources from this site, “The End of German Democracy” and “The Persecution of German Jews After the Nazi Seizure of Power”. The first source provides historical context for our thesis as it discusses the Enabling Act of 1933 that allowed Hitler to rule by decree in a dictatorship while the second source focuses on anti-semitic propaganda targeted towards encouraging the persecution of Jews. We used the second source to develop a better understanding of propaganda that focused on Hitler’s doctrine of racial purity.

*“Jewish Children at Concentration Camp.” Anti-Semitism and Nationalism, www.mtholyoke.edu/~rapte22p/classweb/interwarperiod/holocaust.html

We used this image on our board as it displays Jewish children behind a barbed wire fence. This is an important aspect in understanding what Jewish life was like due to what was communicated about them through propaganda.


This photograph captures the head of the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels, speaking to the people of Germany. This image, in which we used under the section “Significance and Development of Propaganda”, demonstrates Goebbels’ ability to deliver powerful messages and deceive the German public.


This image of youth German girls waving Nazi flags demonstrates the psychological impact that Nazi propaganda had on the youth. This photo is featured on the right panel of our board under the section, “Result”.


This poster was one of the many forms of visual communication that the Nazi’s utilized for propaganda purposes. We utilized this under the section “Significance and Development of Propaganda”, is significant because it demonstrates how Hitler and the Nazis promoted a “national community” to the German people.

The insidious Nazi Propaganda Film, “Triumph of Will”, was shown in theatres to the German public in 1935. In the film, Hitler flies to Nuremberg, coming down from the heavens like a religious figure and receiving adoring cheers from German citizens. This source provides an example of the visual propaganda and messages the German public was exposed to.

“The Choir Performed Five Times for Adolf Hitler Personally between 1933 and 1945.”
*Adolf Hitler Was a Patron of Regensburg Boys’ Choir, The Times*,
www.thetimes.co.uk/article/adolf-hitler-was-a-patron-of-regensburg-boys-choir-j6gx3g62l

Hitler grew to be adored by many as seen in this image. This was useful for our project because it demonstrates how the people looked to Hitler due to his success with what he communicated through propaganda.

“The First Official RAF Aerial Photographs of Berlin since Its Fall.”
*Australian War Memorial, Australian War Memorial, Berlin, Germany, 1944,*

This picture of a destroyed and devastated Berlin during World War II shows the results of the war and how the German society was deceived into supporting such a deadly, violent conflict. This depiction of the Nazi’s fall from power was used on the right panel of our board under the section, “Result”.

“The Nazi Rise to Power.”
*The Holocaust Explained, The Wiener Holocaust Library,*
www.theholocaustexplained.org/the-nazi-rise-to-power/the-nazi-rise-to-power/

We utilized many articles from *The Wiener Holocaust Library*, as well as photographs and propaganda from the Third Reich. Quotes from these articles and images, which are featured throughout our project, demonstrate how Adolf Hitler and the Nazi regime rose to power through the use of propaganda.

“The Open-Air Theatre and Memorial at Annaberg Silesia.”
*The 12 Year Reich*

This image shows the theatre where propaganda took place. This is where propaganda was hidden as entertainment. We used this image under the section, “Nazi Goals And Types of Propaganda.” This was useful because you get a visualization of what it looked like during this time.
This image of the section of the Treaty of Versailles known as “The War Guilt Clause” shows how the Allies held Germany entirely responsible for the first World War. Being held responsible for the war, Germany was forced to pay reparations that they couldn’t afford, causing hyperinflation and economic instability. This set the stage for Hitler’s rise to power.

The Treaty of Versailles was the peace treaty that ended World War I and left Germany in political and economic ruin. This document gave us insight into how this difficult time left the German people vulnerable to Nazi manipulation.

This propaganda poster was utilized by the Soviet Union during the Cold War and uses tactics similar to Nazi Propaganda such as depicting their leader as a savior. We used this under the section, “Significance Today”, to show how the lingering effects of Nazi propaganda impacted the way other nations viewed and utilized propaganda.

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum provided many sources including the Enabling Act, images of propaganda and the Third Reich, as well as information on Nazi propaganda in general. These various sources give us insight into how Adolf Hitler and his government used propaganda to gain public support and promote hatred.

This photograph of a Soviet Central Television broadcast during the Cold War shows how the Soviets followed in Hitler’s footsteps. We used this image on our board because it shows how they utilized television and visual forms of communication to disseminate their message to their people.


In this image, which we used on the left panel of our board under “Significance and Development of Propaganda”, Hitler is giving one of his speeches in a triumphant manner. This is a useful source as it shows how Hitler’s oratorical gifts and passion allowed him to influence the audience’s beliefs.

“Volksempfänger VE 301w Radio.” Volksempfänger VE 301w Radio, 1933, collection.maas.museum/object/426097

This is an image of a radio that was in many homes in 1933. We use this image as this was used for propaganda purposes and all information received through these radios were censored. This is important to our project because propaganda altered the German mindset and worked against those who were unfit in their society.


This Propaganda Election Poster depicts a strong German worker towering above small men in suits. We featured this image on the left panel of our exhibit to demonstrate how the Nazis depicted the Aryan race as strong people who support the National Socialist cause.

The text on the poster is telling the readers that Jews are typhus or lice which is encouraging others to believe they are different and shameful. This source is beneficial because it demonstrates that what is being communicated is dehumanizing to the Jews.
Secondary Sources


This article by Gregory Asmolov provides analysis on how propaganda has remained relevant throughout the course of history, although today we disguise the word as “information”. From this we understand why the study of propaganda is so important and how we can use our knowledge to avoid manipulation. We used a quote from this resource under the section, “Significance Today”.


Yanan Bie’s, “The Visual Arts Influence in Nazi Germany”, allows us to understand the influence visual art had on Nazi propaganda and its effect in communicating their ideology to the German public. We used this source to demonstrate how these aspects of propaganda, such as posters and film, were managed under Hitler and Goebbels and we used this information to create our student composed words in the section, “Goals and Types of Nazi Propaganda”.


In Boland’s article, he discusses how propaganda was integrated into German film and how it evolved during this time. He discusses important films such as one of the most popular Nazi propaganda films, Leni Riefenstahl’s “Triumph of Will”. This source allowed us to discover the importance of the use of film in propaganda and how it was altered as political tensions grew higher and the war began.

Melissa Braman’s, “How Much Did the Germans Know about the Final Solution?”, entails about what the Germans knew about the Holocaust and the deportation of their Jewish neighbors. The article also addresses how the German masses slowly became convinced into thinking that their actions and attitudes towards Jews were valid. We utilized several quotes from this site throughout our project.


This image of multiple news outlets in American media demonstrates the power of communication and how these sources have the ability to limit and control what information we are exposed to. We used this image in the section, “Significance Today,” to demonstrate how Nazi propaganda serves as an example of what happens when we do not critically evaluate information we are given.

Diaz, Maleah, and Alizeah Murillo. “Personal Interview with Julie Canepa.” 12 Jan. 2021

Our personal interview with Julie Canepa, a writer and close friend of Holocaust survivor Vladimir Munk, gave us insight into how persecution insinuated by Nazi propaganda deeply affected everyday life for Jews. Canepa recently joined Munk on a trip to visit Auschwitz 75 years after its liberation, and shared accounts of her travels and Mr. Munk’s thoughts, where his parents and many other members of his family perished. We used this interview to look into how propaganda affected the German public’s perception of the Jewish race and how it created an atmosphere of intolerance that allowed Hitler to orchestrate the mass genocide of the German Jews.
Castillo, Daniel. *German Economy in the 1920s*, University of California, Santa Barbara, Dec. 2003, marcuse.faculty.history.ucsb.edu/classes/33d/projects/1920s/Econ20s.htm

This resource discusses the political and economic crisis that Germans were facing after they were defeated in World War I. Forced to pay reparations from the Treaty of Versailles, and with the onslaught of the Great Depression, the citizens of Germany were looking for change and Hitler promised just that. This source provided historical context for our thesis and quotes for our board.

Diaz, Maleah, and Alizeah Murillo. “Personal Interview with Dr. Nicholas O'Shaughnessy.” 5 Feb. 2021

In our personal interview with Dr. Nicholas O'Shaughnessy, a professor of communications at Queen Mary University of London, we learned about the strategies and technology behind Nazi propaganda, as well as the psychological effect this propaganda had on German citizens. In discussing the political and economic climate of the Third Reich, O’Shaughnessy drew many parallels to America’s political atmosphere today in terms of propaganda within politics and our everyday news. We have taken several quotes from our interview with Dr. O’Shaughnessy and used them in our project.


“The Devil's Diary Review- the Mind of Alfred Rosenberg, Hitler’s ‘Chief Ideologue’, addresses who Alfred Rosenberg was and how he helped create the foundation of Nazi ideology. Rosenberg, had many ideas for Nazi propaganda and beliefs which he recorded in his diary and also documented his struggle for power over propaganda with Joseph Goebbels. This source provides insight into Rosenberg’s ideals and the effect he had on the early forms of Nazi propaganda.


“Germans Against Hitler” discusses German Resistance to Hitler, with groups such as Socialists and Communists outwardly opposing Nazism. This demonstrates a different viewpoint from just that of the brainwashed German citizen. There were those who opposed Nazism, but fear and coercion stopped Germans from speaking out against the Nazi’s atrocities.

Grossberg’s article relates how experts discussed the Nazis use of propaganda to increase their appeal and build the Nazi movement. They state that propaganda is often assumed to hold negative connotations and although the Nazis used it to disseminate their messages, the German citizens played their part in accepting the misinformation. This article provides us with an understanding of how the Nazis were able to prey on the German citizen’s fears and vulnerability and made them believe that their messages were true.


This book was used for images and quotes in our project. It reviews the different forms of propaganda and methods used throughout this 12 year period. We used this book because it contributed to our knowledge of the different fases of nazi propaganda.


Hasic’s, “Depicting the Devil: How Propaganda Posters Portrayed Nazi Ideology”, touches on the Nazi’s use of art and glorification of Hitler within their propaganda. This resource gave us insight into how the Nazis went about conveying their messages to the public, such as their use of imagery based around a national community to create “emotionally stirring” and “provocative” posters.


This article concerning Jason Hiller’s study of cinematic propaganda, particularly during the Third Reich, allows us to take a closer look into the more technical aspects of Nazi propaganda newsreels. We used a quote from this source in the section, “Goals and Types of Nazi Propaganda” to describe how these newsreels were presented to the audience.

This film from Timeline features film of Germany society during the Third Reich and shows how Hitler saw propaganda as a powerful tool of psychological warfare that would assemble the Nazi movement. One of our interviewees, Dr. Nicholas O’Shaughnessy, is featured in this documentary. This source built our knowledge and understanding of how Hitler deployed propaganda to build the Nazi image and appeal to German values. for a national community


In “Why Germans Supported Hitler, Part 1”, the author analyzes why Germans supported Hitler and how their economic situation caused them to turn to him out of desperation and need. We used this source to provide more historical context into why the Germans believed the propaganda and how their vulnerability made them susceptible to Nazi propaganda messages.

Illinois, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, illinois.edu/

We utilized three sources from the University of Illinois, including “75 Year Later, Why Did Germans Follow the Nazis into the Holocaust”, “The Many Lives of Propaganda”, and “The Psychology of the Perpetrators”. These sources allow us to contemplate the psychological effect that Nazi propaganda had on the German public and how they were open to receiving these messages.

Kallis’s book covers Nazi propaganda and the focus of its messages during World War II. This resource about the course of German propaganda was altered during the Second World War, focusing less on anti-semetic messages in order to keep the public in the dark about the Final Solution. We used this information to create our student composed words in the section, “Result”.


Keegan’s, “The Mask of Command”, discusses how Hitler rose as a military leader and utilized propaganda to aid him in garnering support for his cause. We used sections from this book that entails about Hitler’s use of propaganda and how Nazi propaganda painted him as a savior in desperate times of need for the German population to create our student composed words.


Levi’s article discusses the different types of art that were being considered as the vision for what Nazi propaganda was to look like at the Degenerate Art exhibition in Munich, Germany. It gives us insight into the internal struggle for power and Hitler’s approval between Alfred Rosenberg and Joseph Goebbels. We quoted and used this source to create our student composed words in the section, “Significance and Development of Nazi Propaganda”.


This book by Peter Longerich discusses the techniques Nazi propagandists used to deploy anti-Jewish stereotypes and how German citizens were unaware of the dehumanizing effects the Jews experienced. We utilized several quotes from this publication to demonstrate the ways in which propagandists would depict Jews and kept the Germans informed about what was really happening to them.

Martin’s, “Propaganda: How Germany Convinced the Masses” greatly contributed to our research, as we utilized multiple quotes from this piece in our exhibit. In her work, Martin discusses how the psychological conditioning and constant repetition of Nazi ideology messages within Geman propaganda led to ordinary German citizens becoming accomplices in the persecution and ultimate genocide of Jews.


This behavioral study conducted by Karthik Narayanswami at Harvard University examines Nazi propaganda and how it affected the Geman public’s thinking and behavior. We used a quote from this source under the section, “Goals and Types of Propaganda”.


In this article, Pike discusses the economic situation prior to Hitler’s rise and how it improved after Hitler seized power. This source is important because it allows us to understand the role that the economic climate played in the public’s susceptibility to Nazi propaganda messages targeted towards the struggling German populace. We used the statistics from this source to show the rate of unemployment before Hitler came to power in the section, “German Susceptibility”.

We found three useful resources from PBS, an article titled “Hitler and Goebbels: A Deadly Partnership”, a description of the film, “The Man Behind Hitler”, and the article “World War II Propaganda”. These sources demonstrate the relationship between Adolf Hitler and Joseph Goebbels, and how their shared propaganda talents manipulated an entire nation to participate in the persecution of Jews and follow the Nazis into World War II. These resources deepened our understanding of Hitler’s and Goebbels influence on Nazi Propaganda and we utilized quotes from these sources under the sections, “Significance and Development of Nazi Propaganda” and “Result”.

“This image, which we used under the section “Significance Today” shows how propaganda continues to be used throughout society today. The media sensors information and determines what you can and can’t see, making it your responsibility to critically evaluate what you are being exposed to in order to avoid being manipulated.

This source from Yad Vashem, Israel’s official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust and Shoah research center, looks over how Hitler utilized propaganda to gain public support and secure his hold on Germany. This source allowed us to gain further knowledge in the ways that the Nazis ran their propaganda campaigns and how they saw propaganda as an important means to successfully carry out their plans of war and genocide.

Stacy Reed’s, “Cathedral of Light: The Nuremberg Party Rallies, Wagner and the Theatricality of Hitler and the Nazi Party” dicusses the Nazi party’s appreciation for the arts and how that translated in the use of theatre in Nazi propaganda. We used a quote from this source under the section, “Goals and Types of Propaganda”, to describe how theatre conveyed Nazi beliefs to the German audience.


In “An Affordable Radio Brought Nazi Propaganda Home,” Meier describes the “people’s receiver”, a cheap radio manufactured under the order of Joseph Goebbels as a way to disseminate Nazi ideology directly into people’s homes. This source showed how the third reich communicated and used this to alter the perception of society.


In “The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich”, the author chronologically explains the events that led to the the Nazi regime’s rise to power and their swift fall from prominence. We took sections from the book that discussed the effect that propaganda had among the masses and the enabling act to further our knowledge and understanding of the regime’s grip on the country and its citizens.


Sington and Weidenfeld focus on how propaganda was run within the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda in their book, “The Goebbels Experiment: A Study of the Nazi Propaganda Machine”. We used several quotes from this book on our board.

We used this diagram that shows the inner workings of the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, as well as the Reich Chamber of Culture, in the section “Nazi Goals and Types of Propaganda” to demonstrate the size of the propaganda department and how much effort went into keeping the German people under Nazi influence.


Utilizing propaganda, Hitler became a public figure. This source by New York Times examines how much propaganda impacted this time period and promoted Hitler as a leader.


This resource was a key element in our research, as it provided details on Hitler’s propaganda campaigns before his rise to power and throughout the Third Reich. This virtual exhibit also discussed the importance of recognizing propaganda within the media today in order to prevent such atrocities as the Holocaust from occurring again. We used multiple quotes from “State of Deception, the Power of Nazi Propaganda”, in our project.


Stone discusses how propaganda has been around for centuries, although it has now taken on negative connotations due to its relation with Nazi Germany. We utilized a quote from this article under the section, “Significance Today”, to demonstrate how propaganda has the ability to greatly impact our thoughts and beliefs. We must have an open mind and analyze the information we receive to ensure that we avoid deceit and coercion.
In this article we learn about how these news outlets did not come from different companies but from a national journalist company. In this article it states that there is bias and fake news. This site shows how you can easily be manipulated through what the media chooses for you to read.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, United States
Holocaust Memorial Museum, encyclopedia.ushmm.org/

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum was used for many different sources, including several articles, the Enabling Act, images of propaganda and the Third Reich, as well as information on Nazi propaganda in general. These various sources give us insight into how Adolf Hitler and the German government used propaganda to gain public support and promote hatred within German society.


This article focuses heavily on how effective the Nazi indoctrine was. We found it to be beneficial to our project because it speaks about how their methods and beliefs were taught and how they modified the opinions of those in the community.


This article from the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum describes the “Volksempfänger” or “people’s receiver” which was manufactured under the order of Joseph Goebbels. With the invention of the people’s receiver, radios were made cheap and affordable, and were a source of propaganda within people’s homes. We used a quote from this source in the section, “Goals and Types of Propaganda” to describe the importance of the Volksempfänger as a key way to disseminate misinformation and Nazi ideology.

In this discussion Gabriel Weimman, a professor of communication at Haifa University in Israel, reviews how the Nazis took over all forms of communication and embedded propaganda into German life. This resource allows us to analyze the effect that propaganda has had on people in history and how it continues to affect us today in ways we do not even realize.

“*Weimar Republic Hyperinflation from One to One Trillion Paper Marks per Gold Mark.*”


This diagram demonstrates how severe hyperinflation was in Germany after the Treaty of Versailles and the end of World War I. We used this image in the section, “German Susceptibility” to show how economic instability helped Hitler rise in popularity and eventually assume full dictatorial control of Germany.


“Approaches to the study of film in the third reich: a critical appraise.” The other article goes into depth on how film has received more attention by historians on how it manipulated Nazi leaders and supporters of the third reich. We used this source because film supported and integrated Nazi ideology into German life.


“What is the Holocaust?” describes the key events that led to the genocide of the German Jews. Under the section, “Who Were the Perpetrators?”, we read about how the support of millions of German citizens allowed the Nazis to carry out their plans of “racial cleansing”. This article from the *Anne Frank House* helps us to understand the role Germans played in creating an environment of dehumanization and persecution that led to the Holocaust.

This writing demonstrates how the Weimar Republic was, prior to Hitler’s rise. We used this source to increase our knowledge of the failing government that placed German citizens in the hands of Hitler and to provide historical context for our thesis.
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<th>Nazi Propaganda: The Mastery of Insidious Communication</th>
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After World War I, Germany suffered political and economic instability. Adolf Hitler joined the Nazi Party, becoming its leader in 1921 and German Chancellor in 1933. Hitler and head of the Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, Joseph Goebbells, controlled communication through propaganda, selling Nazi ideology to the German public. Nazi propaganda conveyed Hitler’s anti-semetic views through all forms of communication. This dissemination cultivated an acceptance of persecution and set the stage for the Holocaust and World War II. Nazi propaganda demonstrates how communication can alter a society’s perception, reminding people to be aware of bias that exists within various outlets of communication today.

Quote featured below thesis:

“Propaganda is a truly terrible weapon in the hands of an expert”.

- Adolf Hitler

Mein Kampf
German Susceptibility

Economic and political hardship caused by reparations from the Treaty of Versailles, and the global Great Depression, left Germany's economy devastated. By 1932, 30% of Germans were unemployed. The Depression associated the economic downfall with the Weimar Republic, leaving the German people feeling disillusioned and in need of change.

“Yes. A treaty of that kind can be used for such a purpose. Its unbounded oppression and its impudent demands were an excellent propaganda weapon to arouse the sluggish spirit of the nation and restore its vitality.”

- Adolf Hitler

Mein Kampf

“Faced with reparation payments they could not afford, Germany began
printing exaggerated amounts of money. This through Germany into a state of super inflation. When the U.S. was hit by the great depression they immediately sought to get the loans, which they had made to German, paid back. This, in addition to all of Germany's other problems, practically caused the German economy to collapse. With Germany at its weakest and most vulnerable point, Hitler took the opportunity to begin his ascent to power.”

- Daniel Castillo
  “German Economy in the 1920s”
  University of California, Santa Barbara

“While only a moiety of these reparations was paid, the great bill remained and with the bill the ultimate propaganda opportunity since injustice, or perceived injustice, is the incendiary substance of all propaganda.”

- Nicholas O’Shaughnessy
  Selling Hitler: Propaganda and the Nazi Brand

“With the onset of the Great Depression, millions of Germans abandoned their previous political allegiances to vote for the Nazi party. Bad economic times, coupled with the inability of Germany’s political parties to form a viable coalition government, led to widespread voter dissatisfaction. Some turned to Hitler out of fear of impoverishment and revolutionary communism. The Nazi’s antisemitic platform may not have gained the party huge mass support, but neither did it frighten off large numbers of voters. They were willing to overlook its anti-Jewish ideology and racism.”

- “State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda”
  The United Nations
German Susceptibility Cont.

The Nazis tailored their propaganda to expose fears of instability and increase their appeal. Painted as a savior, Hitler promised jobs, economic success, and unity, rallying massive public support.

“The Nazis started advocating clear messages tailored to a broad range of people and their problems. The propaganda aimed to exploit people’s fear of uncertainty and instability. These messages varied from ‘Bread and Work’, aimed at the working class and the fear of unemployment, to a ‘Mother and Child’ poster portraying the Nazi ideals regarding woman.”

- “The Holocaust Explained”
  The Wiener Holocaust Library

“The Nazis tailored their propaganda to expose fears of instability and increase their appeal. Painted as a savior, Hitler promised jobs, economic success, and unity, rallying massive public support. The Nazis started advocating clear messages tailored to a broad range of people and their problems. The propaganda aimed to exploit people’s fear of uncertainty and instability. These messages varied from ‘Bread and Work’, aimed at the working class and the fear of unemployment, to a ‘Mother and Child’ poster portraying the Nazi ideals regarding woman.”

- “The Holocaust Explained”
  The Wiener Holocaust Library

“Nazi propagandists promoted the party as Germany's only all-encompassing movement that spoke for all non-Jewish Germans, regardless of class, religion, or region. Pledging to unite Germany, put the nation's six million unemployed back to work, and restore ‘traditional German values’, Hitler garnered massive popular support.”
“Germans did not become Nazis because they wanted to kill Jews; They became Nazis because the party appealed to their traditions and the Nazis knew that with their continuous growth in power and emphasis on propaganda, eventually their ideas could be put into action.”

- Melissa A. Braman

“How Much Did Germans Know About the Final Solution?: An Examination of Propaganda in the Third Reich”

*Western Michigan University World War II Propaganda Collections*
Significance and Development of Nazi Propaganda

In 1933, Hitler established the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda. Alfred Rosenberg and Joseph Goebbels feuded over their ideas for Nazi propaganda. Goebbels won Hitler’s affections, forcing Rosenberg out and becoming head of the ministry.

“... had a minor set-to with Rosenberg about the manner of conducting our ideological celebrations. He knows nothing about organization, that’s why he is monkeying so much with it. I will hold my own against him, however.”

- Joseph Goebbels

*The Goebbels Diaries 1942-1943*

“This young man [Goebbels] showed that he possessed something which
many an older politician could well envy him: an uncanny understanding of the psychology of the German people.”

- Louis P. Lochner

*Introduction to The Goebbels Diaries 1942-1943*

"The essence of propaganda consists in winning people over to an idea so sincerely, so vitally, that in the end they succumb to it utterly and can never again escape from it”.

- Joseph Goebbels

*The Goebbels Diaries*

The regime used propaganda as a key aspect of government, centering it around Hitler’s doctrine, to solidify their power and cultivate an “Aryan community”.

“The function of propaganda is, for example, not to weigh and ponder the rights of different people, but exclusively to emphasize the one right which it has set out to argue for. Its task is not to make an objective study of the truth, in so far as it favors the enemy, and then set it before the masses with academic fairness; its task is to serve our own right, always, and unflinchingly”.

- Adolf Hitler

*Mein Kampf*
Nazi Goals and Types of Propaganda

Nazis sought to create a pure “Aryan” state. To accomplish their goals and disseminate their ideology, they utilized censorship and propaganda:

Newspapers -
“Every morning the editors of the Berlin Daily newspapers and the correspondents of those published elsewhere in the Reich gathered at the propaganda ministry to be told by Dr. Goebbels or by one of his aides what news to print and suppress, how to write the news and headline it, what campaigns to call off or institute and what editorials were desired for the day.”

- William L. Shirer
The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich

Film -
Film and cinema were seen by senior Nazis as key to consolidating, and then maintaining, people’s faith in the Nazi vision. Goebbels was particularly keen on developing films, as was Hitler. Between 1933 to
1945, 1361 films were produced by Goebbels. The content of the films varied, from the antisemitic *The Eternal Jew* to idealistic films intended to raise the moral of citizens during the war.

- “Life in Nazi Controlled Germany”
  *The Wiener Holocaust Library*

**Theatre**

“The National Socialist, or Nazi, Party was keenly aware of the power of the arts, the elements of the theatre, and the power of spectacle on the minds and attitudes of the German people… Theatre is one of the oldest and most evocative methods of human communication, communion, persuasion, and teaching. It is no wonder that Hitler and the Nazi party organizers utilized many aspects of theatrical performance in the programs through which they strove to control and influence the German population”.

- Stacy Reed
  “Cathedral of Light: The Nuremberg Party Rallies, Wagner, and The Theatricality of Hitler and the Nazi Party”
  *University of Hawai‘i at Hilo*

**Indoctrination of youth**

“Schools played an important role in spreading Nazi ideas to German youth. While censors removed some books from the classroom, German educators introduced new textbooks that taught students love for Hitler, obedience to state authority, militarism, racism, and antisemitism… Education in the Third Reich served to indoctrinate students with the National Socialist world view. Nazi scholars and educators glorified Nordic and other “Aryan” races, while labeling Jews and other so-called inferior peoples as parasitic “bastard races” incapable of creating culture or civilization”.

- “Indoctrinating Youth”
  *The United States Holocaust Museum*
Nazi Goals and Types of Propaganda Cont.

Posters -
“Nazi propaganda attempted to normalize the dehumanization of entire groups of people deemed unworthy according to the strict racist policies implemented on a national level. The poster became a cheap transmitter of these various messages and combined visual arts with psychological methods to incessantly repeat Nazi ideologies to the German public”

- Albinko Hasic

“Depicting the Devil: How Propaganda Posters Portrayed Nazi Ideology”
History News Network

Newsreels -
“For the German audience, the weekly newsreel or Deutsche Wochenschau (DW) gave a dramatic view of the world around them. These high quality productions followed a successful formula that featured significant political and military moments skillfully faded into the next scene with triumphant music and ominous narration. Dramatic battle
footage captured by embedded cameramen provided a climactic conclusion to each of these newsreels.”

- Jason Hiller
  Hoover Institution

Radio -
“These Volksempfängers, or "people’s receivers," are material evidence of Hitler’s technological manipulation. Developed at the request of Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels and designed to be cheaply produced, these basic, Bakelite-encased receivers made radio technology available to the general public. With tuners indicating only those German and Austrian stations that broadcasted Nazi propaganda, these devices played a central role in Hitler’s regime.”

- Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum
  Collection.cooperhewitt.org

Through these forms of propaganda, Goebbels incorporated Nazi beliefs in every aspect of communication within German society, spewing a steady stream of information through all forms of media.

“The Propaganda Ministry is divided into three sections: the first and largest section which includes propaganda coordination, radio, film, and theatre; the second, tourist traffic; and the third, press. Each of these sections is headed by an under-secretary.”

- Derrick Sington and Arthur Weidenfeld
  The Goebbels Experiment: The Study of the Nazi Propaganda Machine

“The Party Propaganda Department’s task is to instil the Nazi outlook into the whole German people. Every middle-aged civil servant must be taught
to look on approvingly at assaults on Jews by the trained hooligans of the S.S. Every German school teacher should be as anxious to teach his pupils to hate democracy as is the most enthusiastic member of the Party. In short it is the task of the Party Propaganda Department to instruct every German how he should think and feel.”

- Derrick Sington and Arthur Weidenfeld

The Goebbels Experiment: The Study of the Nazi Propaganda Machine
The Nazi’s incessant communication altered the German mindset, as most citizens accepted the ideology within the propagandistic messages.

“A pastor in the Third Reich remarked about the Nazi system that, ‘One would be pushed further, step by step, until he had crossed over the line, without noticing that his spine was being bent millimeter by millimeter.’”

- Melissa A. Braman

“How Much Did Germans Know About the Final Solution?: An Examination of Propaganda in the Third Reich”

“The constant repetition and psychological conditioning that came from the intense propaganda campaigns of Nazi Germany led to a national
identity that transformed regular citizens and soldiers into an Anti-semitic nation.”

- Tracey Martin

“Propaganda: How Germany Convinced the Masses”

California State University San Bernardino

The perpetual manipulation and an atmosphere of intolerance against Jews incited citizens to participate in persecution.

“From 1933 to 1939, Nazi Germany officially persued openly anti-Jewish policies that evolved from segregation to forced emigration. In support of these goals, Nazi propagandists played on existing negative stereotypes and denounced Jews as an ‘alien, ‘parasitic’ presence responsible for Germany’s cultural, political, and economic ‘degeneration’. While some Germans shunned this propaganda and disapproved of the increasing anti-jewish violence, the majority of Germans passively accepted the discrimination against the nation’s Jews.”

- “State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda”

The United Nations

“The Propaganda Ministry understood that persuasion was a gradual process and it became their task to convince the masses that the Jews were the enemy. Continually identifying the Jew as the enemy eventually turned them into the enemy, eventually leading to desensitization of the Germans toward the Jews’ fate.”

- Melissa A. Braman

“How Much Did Germans Know About the Final Solution?: An Examination of Propaganda in the Third Reich”

Western Michigan University World War II Propaganda Collections
The Nazi’s mastery of propaganda allowed for manipulation of communication, facilitating the persecution and mass genocide of Jews and other minorities. The German population was deceived into supporting World War II.

“When the statesman has attained one of his ends, he must immediately turn his thoughts to others; but only by degrees and the slow work of propaganda can the sentiment of the masses be shaped into an instrument for the attainment of the new aims which their leaders have decided on.”

- Adolf Hitler

*Mein Kampf*

“They may not have participated very actively, they may not have even
approved of it, but they didn’t do anything to stop it.”

- Vladimir Munk

Holocaust Survivor of Auschwitz Concentration Camp

Personal Interview

3/31/2021

“It is through this utilization of propaganda that Nazi Germany created a political machine that pumped out propagandistic messages frequently enough to sublimate the atrocities of the Holocaust into acceptable responses to the perceived Jewish problem.”

- Tracey Martin

“Propaganda: How Germany Convinced the Masses”

California State University San Bernardino

“The Nazis sought to manipulate public opinion in order to attain their goals, the end result of which was a war that cost the lives of some 55 million people, including the systematic murder of 6 million Jewish men, women, and children in the Holocaust”.

- “State of Deception: The Power of Nazi Propaganda”

The United Nations
Significance Today

After World War II, Communist China, the Soviet Union, and East Germany used tactics similar to Hitler to control information and prevent people from becoming too knowledgeable, a strategy in which George Orwell called “prolefeed” in 1949.

“This usage of propaganda led to a united German identity, founded in a response full of hatred towards the Jewish people. This look into the power of propaganda sheds appropriate light on the psychological impact of repeated information, especially in times of economic stress and war.”

- Tracey Martin
“Propaganda worked to wear down and convince millions of people to follow Hitler, showing how ordinary people can be culpable to extraordinary evil.”

  
  The University of Tulsa Graduate School
Significance Today Cont.

People build beliefs and ideas based on information presented to them by the media. Their opinions are based on these supposed facts presented. Because the media determines what they are exposed to, deceit is always present. People must be objective, and critically evaluate all media regardless of the source. Nazi propaganda and its lingering effects on other countries serve as an example of what can happen when a nation fails to do so.

“In journalistic circles it is a pleasing custom to speak of the Press as a 'Great Power' within the State. As a matter of fact its importance is immense. One cannot easily overestimate it, for the Press continues the
work of education even in adult life. Generally, readers of the Press can be classified into three groups: First, those who believe everything they read; Second, those who no longer believe anything; Third, those who critically examine what they read and form their judgments accordingly.”

- Adolf Hitler
  *Mein Kampf*

“The case of Nazi Germany must be studied carefully to understand the full power of propaganda and can be applied to contemporary times. In fact, propaganda surrounds every human being. Propaganda is seen in advertisements, commercials, newspapers, and more. Whether the propaganda is to persuade economically or racially, the use of propaganda holds more power than one may initially realize. Propaganda led an entire nation to endorse the removal of an entire race whilst turning a blind eye, even becoming accomplices in the genocide.”

- Tracey Martin
  “Propaganda: How Germany Convinced the Masses”
  *California State University San Bernardino*

“The Nazis’ Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda took propaganda to a whole new level. There was nothing enlightening about their misinformation machine that anesthetized the German people to accept and even embrace the idea of genocide. Today propaganda is alive and well in the forms of media lies and misleading advertising, and indoctrination by sinister political forces targeted at the ignorant, uneducated, and the uninformed. In its most extreme forms, it’s psychological warfare and brainwashing.”
“Propaganda, its psychology, its sociology, its anthropology, its literature, it's the hidden hand of human history. Propaganda is everything.”

- Nicholas O’Shaughnessy
Professor of Communications at Queen Mary University, London
Personal Interview
2/5/2021